Nowhere-zero Flows: An Introduction

Daniel W. Cranston Virginia Commonwealth University dcranston@vcu.edu

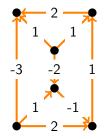
Slides available on my webpage

VCU Discrete Math Seminar 25 November 2014

- **Def:** A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that
 - 1. D is an orientation of G,
 - 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
 - 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex

Def: A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that

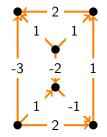
- 1. D is an orientation of G,
- 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
- 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex



Def: A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that

- 1. D is an orientation of G,
- 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
- 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex

Def: A *k*-flow is flow where $|f(e)| \in \{0, 1, ..., k-1\}$ for all $e \in E(G)$. A flow is nowhere-zero or positive if f(e) is for all $e \in E(G)$.

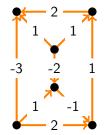


Def: A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that

- 1. D is an orientation of G,
- 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
- 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex

Def: A *k*-flow is flow where $|f(e)| \in \{0, 1, ..., k-1\}$ for all $e \in E(G)$. A flow is nowhere-zero or positive if f(e) is for all $e \in E(G)$.

- 1. G has a positive k-flow.
- 2. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow.
- 3. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow for each orientation of G.

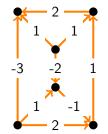


Def: A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that

- 1. D is an orientation of G,
- 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
- 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex

Def: A *k*-flow is flow where $|f(e)| \in \{0, 1, ..., k-1\}$ for all $e \in E(G)$. A flow is nowhere-zero or positive if f(e) is for all $e \in E(G)$.

- 1. G has a positive k-flow.
- 2. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow.
- 3. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow for each orientation of G.
- Pf: Reverse edge and negate flow value

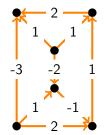


Def: A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that

- 1. D is an orientation of G,
- 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
- 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex

Def: A *k*-flow is flow where $|f(e)| \in \{0, 1, ..., k-1\}$ for all $e \in E(G)$. A flow is nowhere-zero or positive if f(e) is for all $e \in E(G)$.

- 1. G has a positive k-flow.
- 2. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow.
- 3. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow for each orientation of G.
- **Pf:** Reverse edge and negate flow value (repeatedly).

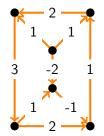


Def: A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that

- 1. D is an orientation of G,
- 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
- 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex

Def: A *k*-flow is flow where $|f(e)| \in \{0, 1, ..., k-1\}$ for all $e \in E(G)$. A flow is nowhere-zero or positive if f(e) is for all $e \in E(G)$.

- 1. G has a positive k-flow.
- 2. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow.
- 3. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow for each orientation of G.
- Pf: Reverse edge and negate flow value (repeatedly).

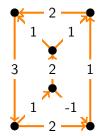


Def: A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that

- 1. D is an orientation of G,
- 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
- 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex

Def: A *k*-flow is flow where $|f(e)| \in \{0, 1, ..., k-1\}$ for all $e \in E(G)$. A flow is nowhere-zero or positive if f(e) is for all $e \in E(G)$.

- 1. G has a positive k-flow.
- 2. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow.
- 3. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow for each orientation of G.
- **Pf:** Reverse edge and negate flow value (repeatedly).

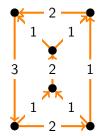


Def: A flow on a graph G is a pair (D, f) such that

- 1. D is an orientation of G,
- 2. f is a weight function on E(G), and
- 3. "flow in" equals "flow out" at each vertex

Def: A *k*-flow is flow where $|f(e)| \in \{0, 1, ..., k-1\}$ for all $e \in E(G)$. A flow is nowhere-zero or positive if f(e) is for all $e \in E(G)$.

- 1. G has a positive k-flow.
- 2. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow.
- 3. G has a nowhere-zero k-flow for each orientation of G.
- **Pf:** Reverse edge and negate flow value (repeatedly).



Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree. **Lem:** G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree.Lem: G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even.Pf: If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree.
Lem: G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even.
Pf: If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit.
If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree.
Lem: G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even.
Pf: If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit.
If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree.
Lem: G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even.
Pf: If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit.
If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0;

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree. **Lem:** G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even. **Pf:** If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit. If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0; edges within S add 0 to net.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree.
Lem: G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even.
Pf: If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit.
If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0; edges within S add 0 to net. **Cor:** So if G has a nowhere-zero flow, then G is bridgeless.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree. **Lem:** G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even. **Pf:** If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit. If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0; edges within S add 0 to net. **Cor:** So if G has a nowhere-zero flow, then G is bridgeless.

Key Lemma: Suppose $V(G_1) = V(G_2)$.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree. **Lem:** G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even. **Pf:** If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit. If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0; edges within S add 0 to net. **Cor:** So if G has a nowhere-zero flow, then G is bridgeless.

Key Lemma: Suppose $V(G_1) = V(G_2)$. If G_1 has a nowhere-zero k_1 -flow f_1 and G_2 has a nowhere-zero k_2 -flow f_2 , then $G_1 \cup G_2$ has a nowhere-zero k_1k_2 -flow.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree. **Lem:** G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even. **Pf:** If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit. If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0; edges within S add 0 to net. **Cor:** So if G has a nowhere-zero flow, then G is bridgeless.

Key Lemma: Suppose $V(G_1) = V(G_2)$. If G_1 has a nowhere-zero k_1 -flow f_1 and G_2 has a nowhere-zero k_2 -flow f_2 , then $G_1 \cup G_2$ has a nowhere-zero k_1k_2 -flow. **Pf:** Extend f_1 and f_2 to $E(G_1 \cup G_2)$ by giving "extra" edges flow 0;

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree.
Lem: G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even.
Pf: If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit.
If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0; edges within S add 0 to net. **Cor:** So if G has a nowhere-zero flow, then G is bridgeless.

Key Lemma: Suppose $V(G_1) = V(G_2)$. If G_1 has a nowhere-zero k_1 -flow f_1 and G_2 has a nowhere-zero k_2 -flow f_2 , then $G_1 \cup G_2$ has a nowhere-zero k_1k_2 -flow. **Pf:** Extend f_1 and f_2 to $E(G_1 \cup G_2)$ by giving "extra" edges flow 0; call these \hat{f}_1 and \hat{f}_2 .

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree. **Lem:** G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even. **Pf:** If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit. If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0; edges within S add 0 to net. **Cor:** So if G has a nowhere-zero flow, then G is bridgeless.

Key Lemma: Suppose $V(G_1) = V(G_2)$. If G_1 has a nowhere-zero k_1 -flow f_1 and G_2 has a nowhere-zero k_2 -flow f_2 , then $G_1 \cup G_2$ has a nowhere-zero k_1k_2 -flow. **Pf:** Extend f_1 and f_2 to $E(G_1 \cup G_2)$ by giving "extra" edges flow 0; call these \hat{f}_1 and \hat{f}_2 . Now $k_2\hat{f}_1 + \hat{f}_2$ is the desired flow.

Lem: A linear combination of flows (same orientation) is a flow. **Pf:** The net flow at each vertex is still 0.

Def: A graph is even if each vertex has even degree.
Lem: G has a nowhere-zero 2-flow iff G is even.
Pf: If G is even, then each component has Eulerian circuit.
If G has nowhere-zero 2-flow, then each degree is even.

Lem: The net flow through any vertex set S is 0. **Pf:** The net flow at each v in S is 0; edges within S add 0 to net. **Cor:** So if G has a nowhere-zero flow, then G is bridgeless.

Key Lemma: Suppose $V(G_1) = V(G_2)$. If G_1 has a nowhere-zero k_1 -flow f_1 and G_2 has a nowhere-zero k_2 -flow f_2 , then $G_1 \cup G_2$ has a nowhere-zero k_1k_2 -flow. **Pf:** Extend f_1 and f_2 to $E(G_1 \cup G_2)$ by giving "extra" edges flow 0; call these \hat{f}_1 and \hat{f}_2 . Now $k_2\hat{f}_1 + \hat{f}_2$ is the desired flow. **Cor:** Each bridgeless G has nowhere-zero k-flow for some k.

Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable.

Thm: 3-regular G has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color G with colors a, b, c.

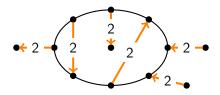
Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*.

Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow.

Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow.

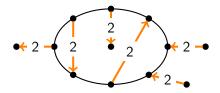
Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor.

Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor.

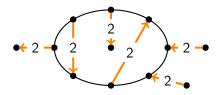


Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each

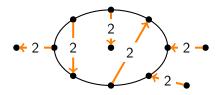
cycle C in remaining 2-factor has even length.



Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C) is 0.

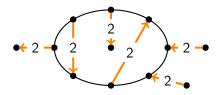


Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C) is 0. Chords of *C* add 0 to net flow.

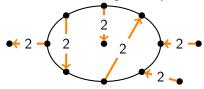


Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C)

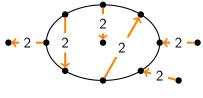
is 0. Chords of C add 0 to net flow. Incident edges all weighted 2.

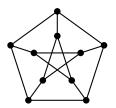


Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C)is 0. Chords of *C* add 0 to net flow. Incident edges all weighted 2. Same number of edges into/out of *C*, so *C* has even length.

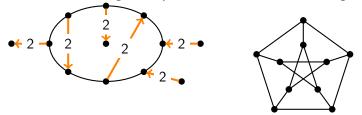


Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C)is 0. Chords of *C* add 0 to net flow. Incident edges all weighted 2. Same number of edges into/out of *C*, so *C* has even length.



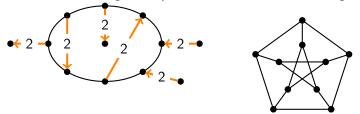


Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C)is 0. Chords of *C* add 0 to net flow. Incident edges all weighted 2. Same number of edges into/out of *C*, so *C* has even length.



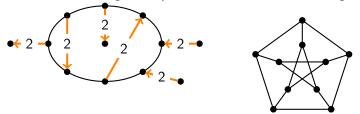
Cor: Petersen has no 3-edge-coloring, so no nowhere-zero 4-flow.

Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C)is 0. Chords of *C* add 0 to net flow. Incident edges all weighted 2. Same number of edges into/out of *C*, so *C* has even length.



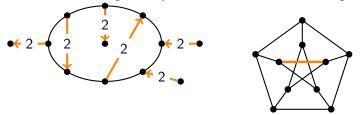
Cor: Petersen has no 3-edge-coloring, so no nowhere-zero 4-flow. **Pf:** Suppose *P* has 3-edge-coloring;

Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C)is 0. Chords of *C* add 0 to net flow. Incident edges all weighted 2. Same number of edges into/out of *C*, so *C* has even length.



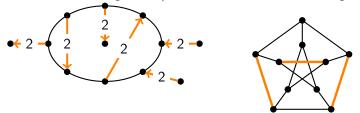
Cor: Petersen has no 3-edge-coloring, so no nowhere-zero 4-flow. **Pf:** Suppose *P* has 3-edge-coloring; each color at each vertex.

Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C)is 0. Chords of *C* add 0 to net flow. Incident edges all weighted 2. Same number of edges into/out of *C*, so *C* has even length.



Cor: Petersen has no 3-edge-coloring, so no nowhere-zero 4-flow. **Pf:** Suppose *P* has 3-edge-coloring; each color at each vertex. Inner 5-cycle uses each color.

Thm: 3-regular *G* has a nowhere-zero 4-flow iff 3-edge-colorable. **Pf:** Edge-color *G* with colors *a*, *b*, *c*. Let H_1 be union of colors *a* and *b*; let H_2 be union of colors *a* and *c*. Each H_i is even, so has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, *G* has nowhere-zero 4-flow. In nowhere-zero 4-flow, "2" edges induce 1-factor. We show each cycle *C* in remaining 2-factor has even length. Net flow into V(C)is 0. Chords of *C* add 0 to net flow. Incident edges all weighted 2. Same number of edges into/out of *C*, so *C* has even length.



Cor: Petersen has no 3-edge-coloring, so no nowhere-zero 4-flow. **Pf:** Suppose *P* has 3-edge-coloring; each color at each vertex. Inner 5-cycle uses each color. Outer 5-cycle uses each color twice!

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.)

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is k-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero k-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is k-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero k-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

Proved for nowhere-zero 6-flow.

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

- Proved for nowhere-zero 6-flow.
- We sketch proof for nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is k-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero k-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

- Proved for nowhere-zero 6-flow.
- We sketch proof for nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Tutte's 4-flow Conj: [1966] Every bridgless graph with no Petersen minor has a nowhere-zero 4-flow.

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is k-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero k-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

- Proved for nowhere-zero 6-flow.
- We sketch proof for nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Tutte's 4-flow Conj: [1966] Every bridgless graph with no Petersen minor has a nowhere-zero 4-flow.

Proved for cubic graphs

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is k-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero k-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

- Proved for nowhere-zero 6-flow.
- We sketch proof for nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Tutte's 4-flow Conj: [1966] Every bridgless graph with no Petersen minor has a nowhere-zero 4-flow.

Proved for cubic graphs; implies 4CT.

Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

- Proved for nowhere-zero 6-flow.
- We sketch proof for nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Tutte's 4-flow Conj: [1966] Every bridgless graph with no Petersen minor has a nowhere-zero 4-flow.

- Proved for cubic graphs; implies 4CT.
- condition not necessary



Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is k-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero k-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

- Proved for nowhere-zero 6-flow.
- We sketch proof for nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Tutte's 4-flow Conj: [1966] Every bridgless graph with no Petersen minor has a nowhere-zero 4-flow.

- Proved for cubic graphs; implies 4CT.
- condition not necessary

Tutte's 3-flow Conj: [1970s] Every

4-edge-connected graph has a nowhere-zero 3-flow.



Thm: [Tutte 1954] A plane bridgeless graph is k-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero k-flow. (Like Tait's Theorem.) **Rem** So nowhere-zero flows generalize the idea of coloring the planar dual of a graph, for graphs that aren't planar.

Tutte's 5-flow Conj: [1954] Every bridgless graph has a nowhere-zero 5-flow.

- Proved for nowhere-zero 6-flow.
- We sketch proof for nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Tutte's 4-flow Conj: [1966] Every bridgless graph with no Petersen minor has a nowhere-zero 4-flow.

- Proved for cubic graphs; implies 4CT.
- condition not necessary

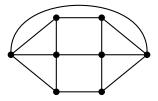
Tutte's 3-flow Conj: [1970s] Every

4-edge-connected graph has a nowhere-zero 3-flow.

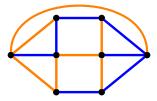


Tree-packing Thm: A multigraph contains k edge-disjoint spanning trees if and only if for every partition P of its vertex set it has at least k(|P| - 1) cross-edges.

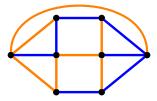
Tree-packing Thm: A multigraph contains k edge-disjoint spanning trees if and only if for every partition P of its vertex set it has at least k(|P| - 1) cross-edges.



Tree-packing Thm: A multigraph contains k edge-disjoint spanning trees if and only if for every partition P of its vertex set it has at least k(|P| - 1) cross-edges.

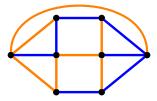


Tree-packing Thm: A multigraph contains k edge-disjoint spanning trees if and only if for every partition P of its vertex set it has at least k(|P| - 1) cross-edges.



Necessity is easy, since each spanning tree must contain at least |P| - 1 cross-edges.

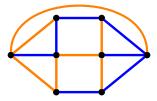
Tree-packing Thm: A multigraph contains k edge-disjoint spanning trees if and only if for every partition P of its vertex set it has at least k(|P| - 1) cross-edges.



Necessity is easy, since each spanning tree must contain at least |P| - 1 cross-edges.

Cor: Every 2*k*-edge-connected multigraph *G* has *k* edge-disjoint spanning trees.

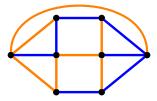
Tree-packing Thm: A multigraph contains k edge-disjoint spanning trees if and only if for every partition P of its vertex set it has at least k(|P| - 1) cross-edges.



Necessity is easy, since each spanning tree must contain at least |P| - 1 cross-edges.

Cor: Every 2k-edge-connected multigraph Ghas k edge-disjoint spanning trees.Pf: Every set in P is joined to other sets by at least 2k edges.

Tree-packing Thm: A multigraph contains k edge-disjoint spanning trees if and only if for every partition P of its vertex set it has at least k(|P| - 1) cross-edges.



Necessity is easy, since each spanning tree must contain at least |P| - 1 cross-edges.

Cor: Every 2k-edge-connected multigraph G has k edge-disjoint spanning trees. **Pf:** Every set in P is joined to other sets by at least 2k edges. So number of cross-edges is at least $\frac{1}{2} \sum_{S \in P} 2k = \frac{1}{2}(2k)|P| = k|P|$.

Def: A parity subgraph of G is a subgraph H such that $d_G(v) \equiv d_H(v) \mod 2$ for all $v \in V(G)$.

Def: A parity subgraph of G is a subgraph H such that $d_G(v) \equiv d_H(v) \mod 2$ for all $v \in V(G)$.

Lem: Every spanning tree contains a parity subgraph.

Def: A parity subgraph of G is a subgraph H such that $d_G(v) \equiv d_H(v) \mod 2$ for all $v \in V(G)$.

Lem: Every spanning tree contains a parity subgraph. **Pf:** Pick a root *r* arbitrarily.

Def: A parity subgraph of G is a subgraph H such that $d_G(v) \equiv d_H(v) \mod 2$ for all $v \in V(G)$.

Lem: Every spanning tree contains a parity subgraph. **Pf:** Pick a root *r* arbitrarily. Direct all tree edges toward *r*.

Def: A parity subgraph of *G* is a subgraph *H* such that $d_G(v) \equiv d_H(v) \mod 2$ for all $v \in V(G)$. **Lem:** Every spanning tree contains a parity subgraph. **Pf:** Pick a root *r* arbitrarily. Direct all tree edges toward *r*. Working towards *r*, put each edge \vec{uv} into/out of *H* as needed by *u*.

Def: A parity subgraph of G is a subgraph H such that $d_G(v) \equiv d_H(v) \mod 2$ for all $v \in V(G)$.

Lem: Every spanning tree contains a parity subgraph. **Pf:** Pick a root r arbitrarily. Direct all tree edges toward r. Working towards r, put each edge \vec{uv} into/out of H as needed by u. Works for r, thanks to parity.

Def: A parity subgraph of G is a subgraph H such that $d_G(v) \equiv d_H(v) \mod 2$ for all $v \in V(G)$.

Lem: Every spanning tree contains a parity subgraph. **Pf:** Pick a root r arbitrarily. Direct all tree edges toward r. Working towards r, put each edge $u\vec{v}$ into/out of H as needed by u. Works for r, thanks to parity. Formally, induction on |V(G)|.

Def: A parity subgraph of *G* is a subgraph *H* such that $d_G(v) \equiv d_H(v) \mod 2$ for all $v \in V(G)$. **Lem:** Every spanning tree contains a parity subgraph. **Pf:** Pick a root *r* arbitrarily. Direct all tree edges toward *r*. Working towards *r*, put each edge \vec{uv} into/out of *H* as needed by *u*. Works for *r*, thanks to parity. Formally, induction on |V(G)|.

Obs: The complement of a parity subgraph is an even graph.

Nowhere-zero 8-flows in bridgeless graphs

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow.

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected.

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected. By doubling each edge, we get a 6-edge-connected graph,

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected. By doubling each edge, we get a 6-edge-connected graph, which contains three edge-disjoint spanning trees T_1, T_2, T_3 .

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected. By doubling each edge, we get a 6-edge-connected graph, which contains three edge-disjoint spanning trees T_1 , T_2 , T_3 . In G, they aren't edge-disjoint, but no edge is in all three.

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected. By doubling each edge, we get a 6-edge-connected graph, which contains three edge-disjoint spanning trees T_1 , T_2 , T_3 . In G, they aren't edge-disjoint, but no edge is in all three.

In each T_i , find parity subgraph R_i .

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected. By doubling each edge, we get a 6-edge-connected graph, which contains three edge-disjoint spanning trees T_1, T_2, T_3 . In G, they aren't edge-disjoint, but no edge is in all three.

In each T_i , find parity subgraph R_i . Now let $H_i = G \setminus E(R_i)$. Recall that each H_i is even.

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected. By doubling each edge, we get a 6-edge-connected graph, which contains three edge-disjoint spanning trees T_1, T_2, T_3 . In G, they aren't edge-disjoint, but no edge is in all three.

In each T_i , find parity subgraph R_i . Now let $H_i = G \setminus E(R_i)$. Recall that each H_i is even. Since no edge is in all T_i , each edge is in some H_i . So $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$.

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected. By doubling each edge, we get a 6-edge-connected graph, which contains three edge-disjoint spanning trees T_1 , T_2 , T_3 . In G, they aren't edge-disjoint, but no edge is in all three.

In each T_i , find parity subgraph R_i . Now let $H_i = G \setminus E(R_i)$. Recall that each H_i is even. Since no edge is in all T_i , each edge is in some H_i . So $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$. Since each H_i is even, it has a nowhere-zero 2-flow.

Thm: Every bridgeless graph has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. **Pf sketch:** Find subgraphs H_1, H_2, H_3 such that $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$ and each H_i has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has a nowhere-zero 8-flow. How to find H_i ?

Reduce to when G is 2-connected and 3-edge-connected. By doubling each edge, we get a 6-edge-connected graph, which contains three edge-disjoint spanning trees T_1 , T_2 , T_3 . In G, they aren't edge-disjoint, but no edge is in all three.

In each T_i , find parity subgraph R_i . Now let $H_i = G \setminus E(R_i)$. Recall that each H_i is even. Since no edge is in all T_i , each edge is in some H_i . So $G = H_1 \cup H_2 \cup H_3$. Since each H_i is even, it has a nowhere-zero 2-flow. By Key Lemma, G has nowhere-zero 8-flow.

Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:
 - ▶ 5-flow: all graphs

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:
 - 5-flow: all graphs
 - 4-flow: no subdivision of Petersen

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:
 - 5-flow: all graphs
 - 4-flow: no subdivision of Petersen
 - 3-flow: 4-edge-connected

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:
 - 5-flow: all graphs
 - 4-flow: no subdivision of Petersen
 - 3-flow: 4-edge-connected
- All conjectures still open, but major progress

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:
 - 5-flow: all graphs
 - 4-flow: no subdivision of Petersen
 - 3-flow: 4-edge-connected
- All conjectures still open, but major progress
 - 4-flow conjecture implies 4CT,

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:
 - 5-flow: all graphs
 - 4-flow: no subdivision of Petersen
 - 3-flow: 4-edge-connected
- All conjectures still open, but major progress
 - 4-flow conjecture implies 4CT, proved for 3-regular

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:
 - 5-flow: all graphs
 - 4-flow: no subdivision of Petersen
 - 3-flow: 4-edge-connected
- All conjectures still open, but major progress
 - 4-flow conjecture implies 4CT, proved for 3-regular
 - 5-flow conjecture proved for 6-flow (we proved 8-flow)

- Nowhere-zero flows extend face-coloring to non-planar graphs.
 - ► A plane bridgeless graph is *k*-face colorable if and only if it has a nowhere-zero *k*-flow.
- Tutte conjectured sufficient conditions for nowhere-zero flows in bridgeless graphs:
 - 5-flow: all graphs
 - 4-flow: no subdivision of Petersen
 - 3-flow: 4-edge-connected
- All conjectures still open, but major progress
 - ▶ 4-flow conjecture implies 4CT, proved for 3-regular
 - ► 5-flow conjecture proved for 6-flow (we proved 8-flow)
- This talk follows presentation from West's textbook.