

# Flows in Networks: Bipartite Matching

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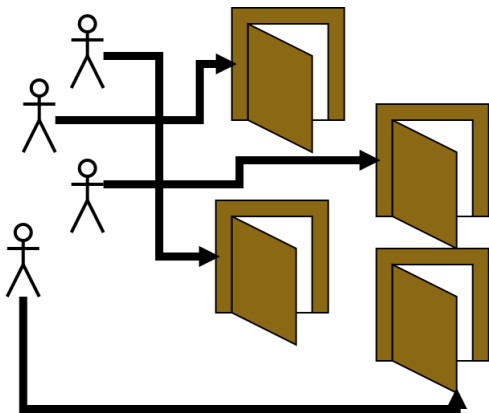
Advanced Algorithms and Complexity  
Data Structures and Algorithms

# Learning Objectives

- Discuss some problems that can be solved with bipartite matching.
- Understand the correspondence between bipartite matching problems and flow problems.
- Understand obstacles to finding large matchings.

# Matching

You are trying to coordinate housing in a college dormitory.



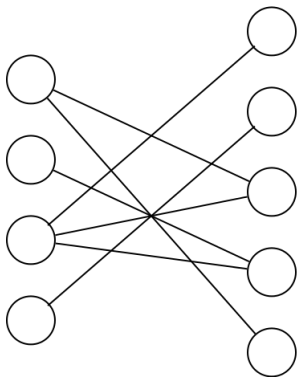
# Matching

- Have  $n$  students and  $m$  rooms.
- Each student has a list of acceptable rooms.
- Want to place as many students as possible in an acceptable room.
- Cannot place more than one student in the same room.

# Organizing Data

Students

Rooms

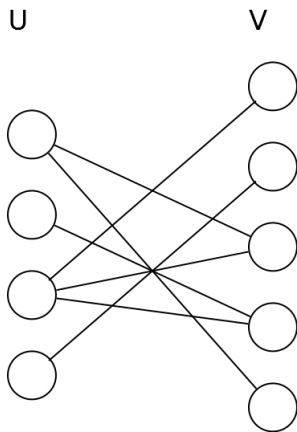


# Bipartite Graph

## Definition

A bipartite graph is a graph  $G$  whose vertex set is partitioned into two subsets,  $U$  and  $V$ , so that there all edges are between a vertex of  $U$  and a vertex of  $V$ .

# Example



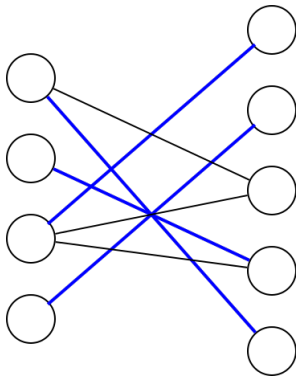
# Matchings

## Definition

Given a graph  $G$ , a **matching** on  $G$  is a collection of edges of  $G$ , no two of which share an endpoint.



# Example



# Bipartite Matching

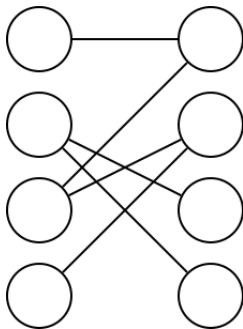
## Bipartite Matching

**Input:** Bipartite graph  $G$ .

**Output:** A matching on  $G$  consisting of as many edges of possible (ideally pairing up all the vertices).

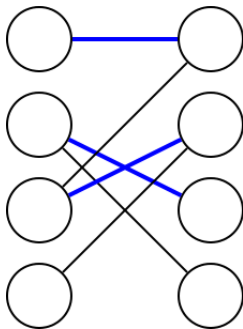
# Problem

What is the size of the largest matching?



# Solution

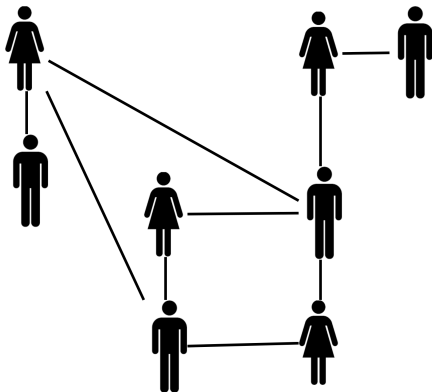
Best is 3.



# Applications

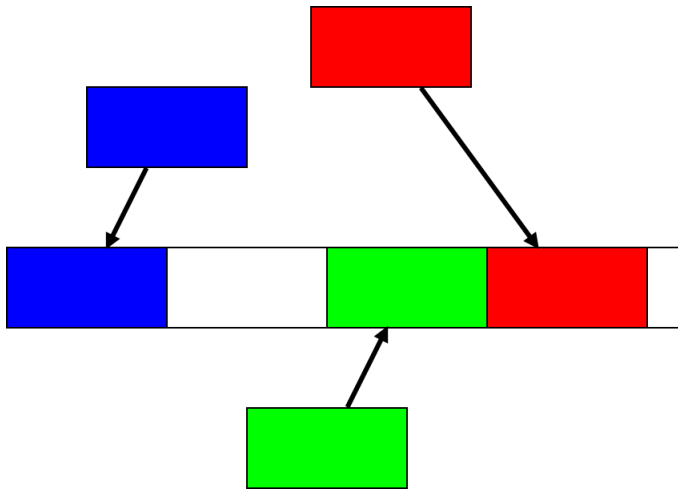
Bipartite matching has a number of applications.

# Matchmaking



[Though if there are gay people, it becomes computationally much more complicated.]

# Scheduling



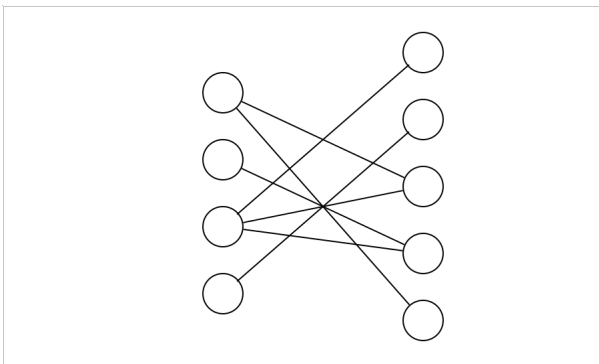
# Connection to Flows

- Need to connect nodes on left to nodes on right without putting too many connections through any given node.
- Have source connect to left nodes.
- Have right nodes connect to sink.



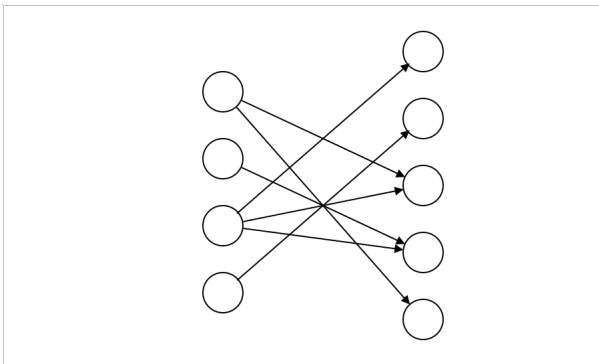
# Convert to Network

Start with bipartite graph.



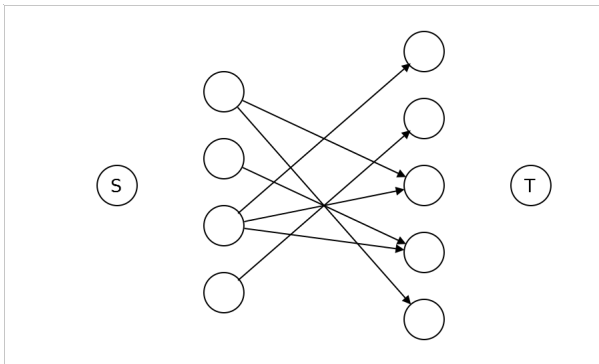
# Convert to Network

Direct edges left to right.



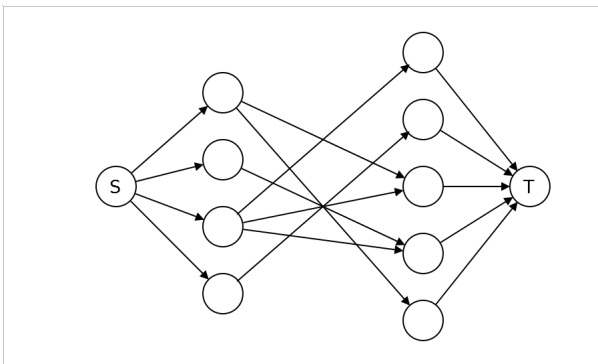
# Convert to Network

Add source and sink.



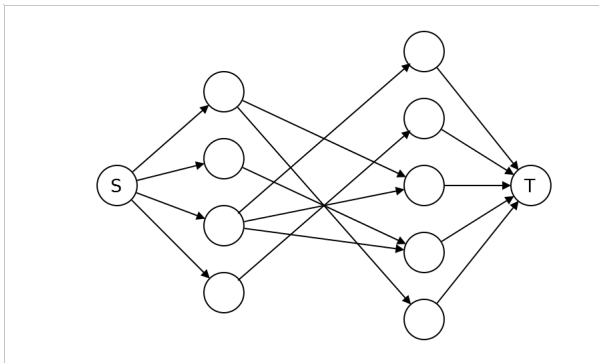
# Convert to Network

Connect source/sink to vertices.



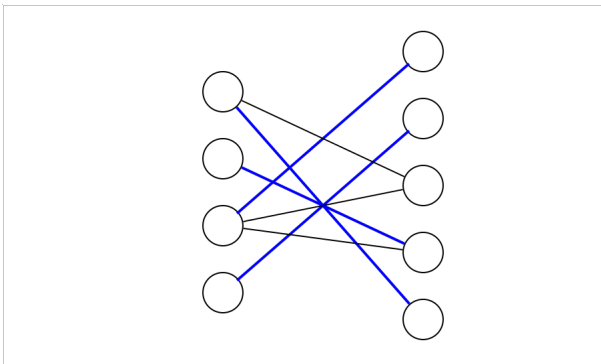
# Convert to Network

All capacities are 1.



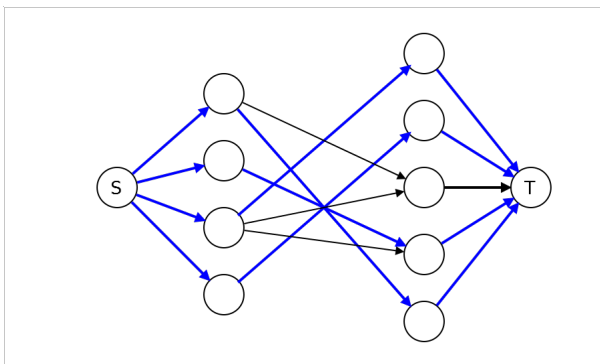
# Correspondence

To every matching



# Correspondence

To every matching we have a flow



# Formally

## Lemma

Let  $G$  be a bipartite graph and  $G'$  the corresponding network. There is a 1 – 1 correspondence between matchings of  $G$  and integer-valued flows of  $G'$ .



# Matching to Flow

- Run flow through each edge of the matching.
- Run flow from  $s$  to each utilized vertex of  $U$ .
- Run flow to  $t$  from each utilized vertex of  $V$ .

# Flow to Matching

- Use middle edges with flow in them.
- Cannot have two with same vertex in  $U$  (not enough flow in).
- Cannot have two with same vertex in  $V$  (not enough flow out).

# Algorithm

## BipartiteMatching( $G$ )

Construct corresponding network  $G'$

Compute Maxflow( $G'$ )

Find corresponding matching,  $M$

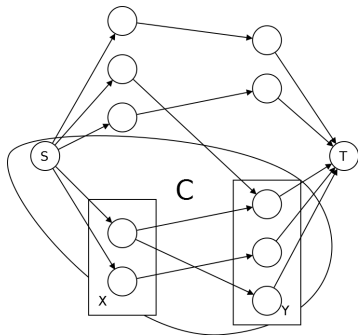
return  $M$

# Maxflow-Mincut

We can also apply the Maxflow-Mincut theorem to the corresponding flow. This will tell us something useful about when we can find large matchings.

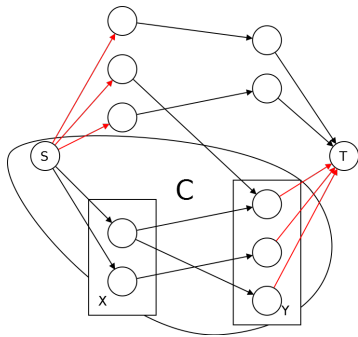
# Mincut

- Let  $X = C \cap U$ ,  $Y = C \cap V$ .
- Elements of  $V$  connecting to  $X$  in  $Y$ .



# Cut Size

$$\text{Size} = |U \setminus X| + |Y|.$$



# Another Viewpoint

- All edges of  $G$  connect to either  $Y$  or  $U \setminus X$ .
- Can bound matching size by finding such a set of vertices.

# König's Theorem

## Theorem

For  $G$  a bipartite graph, if  $k$  is the size of the maximal matching, there is a set  $\mathcal{S}$  of  $k$  vertices so all edges of  $G$  are adjacent to  $\mathcal{S}$ .



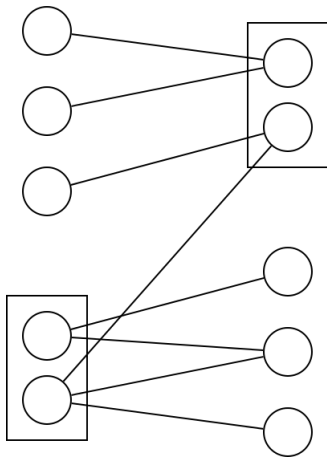
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Note that if you can find such an  $\mathcal{S}$ , the maximal matching has size at most  $|\mathcal{S}|$ .

# Example



# The Marriage Lemma

## Theorem

Let  $G$  be a bipartite graph with  $n$  vertices on either side. Then there is a perfect pairing on  $G$  (a matching using all vertices) unless there is some set,  $\mathcal{S}$  of  $m$  vertices of  $U$ , such that the total number vertices adjacent to a vertex in  $\mathcal{S}$  is less than  $m$ .

# Summary

- Solve maximum matching problems by reducing to flow problems.
- Maxflow-Mincut gives characterization of maximum matching.