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ON STRONG DIGRAPHS WITH A PRESCRIBED ULTRACENTER

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Summary. The (directed) distance from a vertex u to a vertex v in a strong digraph D is the length of a shortest u - v (directed) path in D . The eccentricity of a vertex v of D is the distance from v to a vertex furthest from v in D . The radius $\text{rad}D$ is the minimum eccentricity among the vertices of D and the diameter $\text{diam}D$ is the maximum eccentricity. A central vertex is a vertex with eccentricity $\text{rad}D$ and the subdigraph induced by the central vertices is the center $C(D)$. For a central vertex v in a strong digraph D with $\text{rad}D < \text{diam}D$, the central distance $c(v)$ of v is the greatest nonnegative integer n such that whenever $d(v, x) \leq n$, then x is in $C(D)$. The maximum central distance among the central vertices of D is the ultraradius $\text{urad}D$ and the subdigraph induced by the central vertices with central distance $\text{urad}D$ is the ultracenter $UC(D)$. For a given digraph D , the problem of determining a strong digraph H with $UC(H) = D$ and $C(H) \neq D$ is studied. This problem is also considered for digraphs that are asymmetric.

1. INTRODUCTION

The distance $d(u, v)$ between two vertices u and v in a connected graph G is the length of a shortest u - v path. The eccentricity $e(v)$ of a vertex v of G is the distance between v and a vertex furthest from v . The minimum eccentricity among the vertices of G is the radius $\text{rad}G$ of G , and the maximum eccentricity is the diameter $\text{diam}G$. A vertex whose eccentricity is $\text{rad}G$ is called a *central vertex*. The subgraph of G induced by its central vertices is the *center* $C(G)$ of G . The center of a connected graph has been the subject of much study. In [4], Winters introduced a subgraph of $C(G)$ which is, in a certain sense, more central than the center itself.

For a central vertex v in a connected graph G with $\text{rad}G < \text{diam}G$ the *central distance* $c(v)$ is the greatest nonnegative integer n such that whenever $d(v, x) \leq n$

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for a vertex x of G , then x is a central vertex. The maximum central distance among the central vertices of G is the *ultraradius* $\text{urad}G$ of G , and the subgraph of $C(G)$ induced by those central vertices v with $c(v) = \text{urad}G$ is the *ultracenter* $UC(G)$ of G . Chartrand, Novotny and Winters studied the ultracenter further in [1]. Among the results presented is that for every graph G , there exists a connected graph H such that $UC(H) = G$ and $C(H) \neq G$. Furthermore, the minimum order of such a graph H is 4 more than the order of G . It is the object of this paper to study the analogous concepts for digraphs.

The (directed) *distance* $d(u, v)$ from a vertex u to a vertex v in a strong digraph D is the length of a shortest u - v (directed) path in D . The *eccentricity* $e(v)$ of a vertex v of D is the distance from v to a vertex furthest from v . The minimum eccentricity among the vertices of D is called the *radius* $\text{rad}D$ of D and the maximum eccentricity is the *diameter* $\text{diam}D$. A vertex v in a strong digraph D is called a *central vertex* if $e(v) = \text{rad}D$. The subdigraph induced by the central vertices of D is called the *center* $C(D)$ of D . Two vertices u and v are *adjacent* in a digraph D if D contains at least one of the arcs (u, v) and (v, u) . If (u, v) is an arc of D , then u is *adjacent to* v , and v is *adjacent from* u . A digraph D is *asymmetric* if whenever u and v are adjacent in D , then exactly one of the arcs (u, v) and (v, u) is present in D . Chartrand, Johns, and Tian [2] showed for every asymmetric digraph D , there exists a strong asymmetric digraph H with $C(H) = D$. In [3], Shaikh showed for every (not necessarily asymmetric) digraph D , there exists a strong digraph H such that $C(H) = D$.

Let v be a central vertex of a strong digraph D with $\text{rad}D < \text{diam}D$. The *central distance* $c(v)$ of v is the largest nonnegative integer n such that whenever $d(v, x) \leq n$ the vertex x is in the center of D . Let $m = \max\{c(v)\}$, where the maximum is taken over all central vertices v of D . The subdigraph of $C(D)$ induced by those vertices v with $c(v) = m$ is called the *ultracenter* of D , which we denote by $UC(D)$. The number m is referred to as the *ultraradius* of D and is denoted by $\text{urad}D$.

For example, each vertex of the digraph D of Figure 1 is labeled with its eccentricity. Thus, $\text{rad}D = 6$ and $\text{diam}D = 9$. Furthermore, each central vertex of D is labeled with its central distance and so $\text{urad}D = 3$.

Let D be a strong digraph with $\text{rad}D < \text{diam}D$. If v is a vertex with central distance k then there is a path $P: v = v_0, v_1, v_2, v_3, \dots, v_{k+1}$ of length $k + 1$ from v to a vertex v_{k+1} not in the center of D . Thus, $c(v_i) = k - i$ for $0 \leq i \leq k$. The following theorem is a consequence of this observation.

Theorem 1. *Let D be a strong digraph with $\text{rad}D < \text{diam}D$ and $\text{urad}D = m$. For each integer i ($0 \leq i \leq m$), there exists a central vertex u_i with $c(u_i) = i$.*

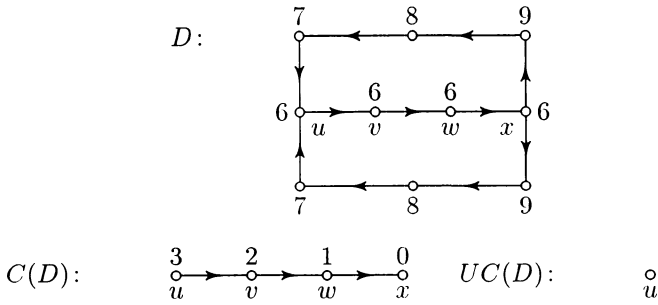


Figure 1. The center and ultracenter of a strong digraph

Let D be a strong digraph with $\text{rad } D < \text{diam } D$ and $\text{urad } D = m$. If some vertex of $UC(D)$ is adjacent to a noncentral vertex, then, by definition, $m = 0$. So, $C(D) = UC(D)$. Thus, if $m \geq 1$, then there are no vertices in $UC(D)$ adjacent to noncentral vertices. In a special case, we can provide information about the structure of the ultracenter of a strong digraph.

Theorem 2. *Let D be a strong digraph with $\text{rad } D < \text{diam } D$. If there is a unique central vertex of D that is not in the ultracenter of D , then $UC(D)$ is connected.*

Proof. Let x be the central vertex of D that does not belong to the ultracenter. Suppose, to the contrary, that $UC(D)$ is disconnected. Let v be a vertex of D such that $d(x, v) = e(x)$. Suppose, first, that v does not belong to $C(D)$. Let w be a vertex of $UC(D)$ that is adjacent to x , that is, $c(w) = 1$. Consequently, $\text{urad } D = 1$ and every vertex of $UC(D)$ is adjacent to x . Hence $d(w, v) = 1 + d(x, v)$, and so $e(w) > e(x)$, which is impossible. Therefore, v belongs to $UC(D)$.

Let u be a vertex in $UC(D)$ such that u and v belong to distinct components of $UC(D)$. Then each u - v path contains x . Thus, $e(u) \geq d(u, v) \geq 1 + d(x, v) = 1 + e(x)$, contradicting the fact that u and x have the same eccentricity. \square

2. THE ULTRACENTRAL APPENDAGE NUMBER OF DIGRAPHS

The minimum number of vertices needed to be added to a digraph D to produce a strong digraph H such that $UC(H) = D$ and $C(H) \neq D$ is called the *ultracentral appendage number* of D and is denoted by $ua(D)$. Such a digraph H is called a *minimum ultracentral superdigraph* of D . Since H contains a central vertex that is not in D , and H contains a noncentral vertex, $ua(D) \geq 2$. The *central appendage number* $A(D)$ of a digraph D is the minimum number of vertices that must be added to D to produce a digraph H such that $C(H) = D$. The central appendage number was studied by Shaikh [3], who showed that $0 \leq A(D) \leq 3$ for every digraph D .

For example, consider $D \cong 2K_1$, where $V(D) = \{u, v\}$. The strong digraph H of Figure 2 has the property that $UC(H) = D$ but $C(H) \neq D$. In fact, $C(H)$ contains the vertices x and y as well. Thus, $ua(D) \leq 3$. If $ua(D) = 2$, then there is a unique central vertex of a minimum ultracentral superdigraph H that is not in the ultracenter of H . So by Theorem 2 $UC(H)$ is connected, producing a contradiction. Therefore, $ua(D) \geq 3$, which gives $ua(D) = 3$.

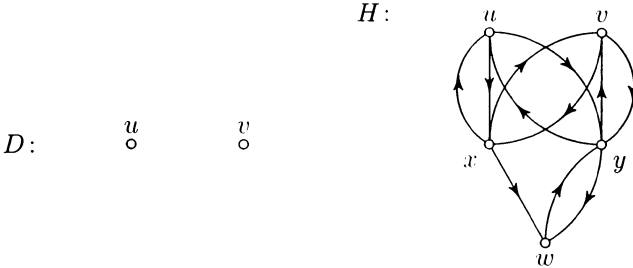


Figure 2. A digraph ultracentral appendage number 3

We now show that every digraph has ultracentral appendage number 2 or 3.

Theorem 3. *The ultracentral appendage number of every digraph D is well-defined and $2 \leq ua(D) \leq 3$.*

Proof. Let D be a digraph and let H be the strong digraph obtained from D by adding the vertices x_1 , x_2 , and y and the arcs indicated in Figure 3. Thus, x_1 and x_2 are adjacent to and from every vertex of D . Observe that all vertices of D and x_1 and x_2 are central vertices, while y is not. Also $UC(H) = D$. Thus $ua(D)$ is well-defined and $ua(D) \leq 3$. We have previously noted that $ua(D) \geq 2$ for every digraph D and thus $2 \leq ua(D) \leq 3$. \square

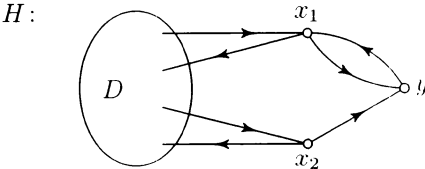
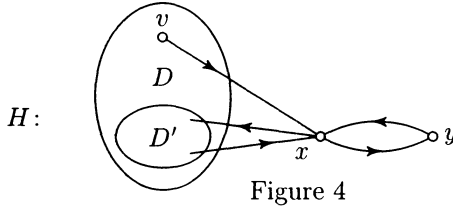


Figure 3

Now we show that the bounds presented in Theorem 3 are sharp.

Theorem 4. *If D is a nontrivial digraph containing a vertex v such that $d_D(u, v) \leq 2$ for all vertices u in D , then $ua(D) = 2$.*

Proof. By Theorem 3, $ua(D) \geq 2$. Let $D' = D - v$. The strong digraph H shown in Figure 4 is an ultracentral superdigraph for D . The vertex x is then adjacent to and from every vertex of D' . Thus, $ua(D) \leq 2$. \square



We have already seen that if $D \cong 2K_1$, then $ua(D) = 3$. We next show the existence of an infinite class of digraphs with ultracentral appendage number 3.

Theorem 5. *If D is a digraph containing no vertex that is reachable from all other vertices of D , then $ua(D) = 3$.*

Proof. Assume, to the contrary, that $ua(D) = 2$. Let H be a minimum ultracentral superdigraph for D , where x is the central vertex of H that is not in D and y is the noncentral vertex of H . Let w be a vertex of H such that $d(x, w) = e(x)$. Since x must be adjacent to y and $e(x) > 1$, we must have $w \in V(D)$. Let u be a vertex of D different from w . If some shortest $u - w$ path contains x , then $d(u, w) \geq 1 + e(x)$, which gives $e(u) > e(x)$, producing a contradiction. Therefore, there exists a $u - w$ path in D for every vertex u of D , giving the desired result. \square

Corollary 6. *If D is a disconnected digraph, then $ua(D) = 3$.*

3. THE ASYMMETRIC ULTRACENTRAL APPENDAGE NUMBER OF ASYMMETRIC DIGRAPHS

In this section we consider only asymmetric digraphs. For an asymmetric digraph D , we define the (*asymmetric*) *ultracentral appendage number* $ua^*(D)$ of D as the minimum number of vertices to be added to D to produce an asymmetric digraph H with $UC(H) = D$ and $C(H) \neq D$. The (asymmetric) central appendage number $A^*(D)$ was studied by Chartrand, Johns, and Tian [2], who showed that $0 \leq A^*(D) \leq 4$ for all digraphs D .

Theorem 7. *For every asymmetric digraph D , $ua^*(D)$ exists and $3 \leq ua^*(D) \leq 5$.*

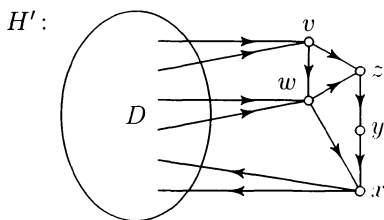


Figure 5

Proof. Let D be an asymmetric digraph. The digraph H' of Figure 5 is obtained by adding the vertices v, w, x, y, z and all those arcs so that every vertex of D is adjacent to both v and w , and adjacent from x . Therefore, H' is strong and asymmetric with $UC(H') = D$ and $C(H') \neq D$. Thus $ua^*(D)$ exists and $ua^*(D) \leq 5$.

Since every ultracentral superdigraph of D contains a central vertex that is not in D and a noncentral vertex, $ua^*(D) \geq 2$. Suppose, to the contrary, that $ua^*(D) = 2$. Then there is a minimum ultracentral superdigraph H of D containing two vertices that are not in D . Let x be the central vertex that is not in D and let y be the noncentral vertex of H . Necessarily x is adjacent to y , and every vertex of D is adjacent to x . Let $z \in V(H)$ such that $e(x) = d(x, z)$.

Since $e(x) > 1$, we have that $z \in V(D)$. Consequently, $d(x, z) = d(y, z) + 1$. Certainly,

$$\max_{w \in V(D)} d(y, w) = d(y, z).$$

Since $e(y) > e(x)$, it follows that $e(y) = d(y, x)$. Since $d(y, x) = 2$, it follows that $e(y) = 2$, which implies that y belongs to $UC(H)$, producing a contradiction. \square

Next, we show that the lower bound given in Theorem 7 for $ua^*(D)$ cannot be improved in general. For example, consider $D \cong K_1$, and let $V(D) = \{u\}$. The asymmetric digraph H' in Figure 6 has the property that $UC(H') = D$ but $C(H') \neq D$. Thus $ua^*(D) = 3$. However, $A^*(D) = 0$ in this case.

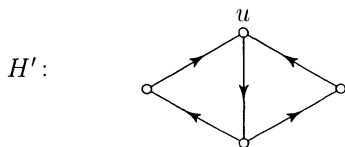


Figure 6. $ua^*(K_1) = 3$

If D is an asymmetric disconnected digraph, then we can improve the upper bound presented in Theorem 7.

Theorem 8. For every disconnected digraph D , $3 \leq ua^*(D) \leq 4$.

Proof. Assume that D is an asymmetric disconnected digraph, where D_1 is one component of D and D_2 is the union of the remaining components. By Theorem 7, $ua^*(D) \geq 3$. The digraph H in Figure 7 is obtained by adding to D the four vertices u, v, x, y and the arcs $(u, v), (u, y), (v, x), (v, y)$, as well as all those arcs such that x is adjacent to every vertex of D_1, y is adjacent to every vertex of $D_2,$ and u and v are adjacent from every vertex of D . Since $UC(H) = D$ and $C(H) \neq D$, it follows that $ua^*(D) \leq 4$. \square

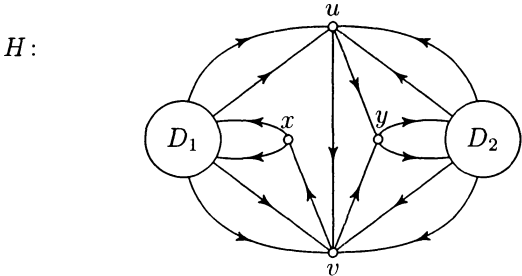


Figure 7

We have seen that there exists an asymmetric digraph D with $ua^*(D) = 3$. We now show that an asymmetric digraph exists with ultracentral appendage number 4.

Theorem 9. *There exists an asymmetric digraph D with $ua^*(D) = 4$.*

Proof. Let $D \cong 2K_1$. By Theorem 8, either $ua^*(D) = 3$ or $ua^*(D) = 4$. Suppose, to the contrary, that $ua^*(D) = 3$. Let H be a minimum ultracentral superdigraph (necessarily of order 5) such that $UC(H) = D$ and $C(H) \neq D$. Let $V(H) = \{u, v, w, x, y\}$ and suppose that $UC(H) = \{\{u, v\}\}$. By Theorem 2, there must be two central vertices of H that are not in the ultracenter of H . Suppose that w and x are these vertices. We consider two cases.

Case 1. Suppose that $urad H = 2$. Then $c(u) = c(v) = 2$. Also, exactly one of w and x must have central distance 1, say $c(w) = 1$ and so $c(x) = 0$. This situation is illustrated in Figure 8.

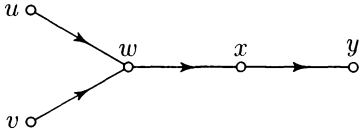


Figure 8. A subdigraph of H

No further arcs from u or v can be present in H since $c(u) = c(v) = 2$. Thus, $d(u, v) \geq 3$ and so $\text{rad } H \geq 3$. Since $e(x) < e(y)$, at least one of the arcs (x, u) and (x, v) must be present in H , say (x, u) . Since $e(x) \geq 3$, neither (x, v) nor (y, v) is present in H . This, however, implies that H is not strong, producing a contradiction.

Case 2. Suppose that $\text{urad } H = 1$. Thus, both w and x are adjacent to y . Also, since H is strong, y must be adjacent to at least one of u and v , say u . Furthermore, each of u and v is adjacent to at least one vertex of $C(H)$. We consider two subcases according to the number of vertices of $C(H)$ to which u and v are adjacent.

Subcase 2.1. Suppose that each of u and v is adjacent to exactly one vertex of $C(H)$. First, suppose that u and v are adjacent to the same vertex, say w . Since H is strong, every vertex of H is adjacent from at least one vertex. Consequently, x is adjacent from w . Thus far we have the digraph shown in Figure 9.

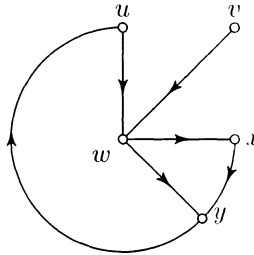


Figure 9. A subdigraph of H

The vertex v is adjacent from at least one vertex as well. Necessarily, at least one of x and y is adjacent to v . In either case, $e(w) = 2$, which implies that $e(u) = e(v) = 2$. However, then, h contains a u - v path of length 2, which is impossible.

Therefore u and v are adjacent to distinct vertices, say u is adjacent to w , and v is adjacent to x . Now either y or w is adjacent to v . If y is adjacent to v , then $e(y) = 2$, which is impossible. Thus, w is adjacent to v , so $e(w) = 2$. Thus, $e(u) = e(v) = 2$ and x is adjacent to u (see Figure 10).

Since $d(x, v) = 2$, the arc (x, w) belongs to H . At present, however, $d(u, x) = 3$, and no further arcs can be added. This contradicts that fact that $e(u) = 2$.

Subcase 2.2. Suppose that at least one of u and v is adjacent to two vertices of $C(H)$. In this case, y is not adjacent to v , for otherwise $e(y) = 2$. This implies that not both u and v are adjacent to both w and x . Since v is adjacent from some vertex, it follows that u is adjacent to w and x ; while v is adjacent to one of w and x , and adjacent from the other. Suppose that v is adjacent to w (see Figure 11).

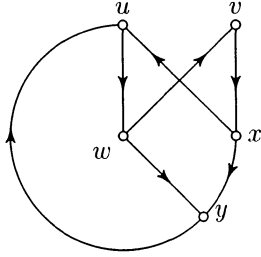


Figure 10. A subdigraph of H

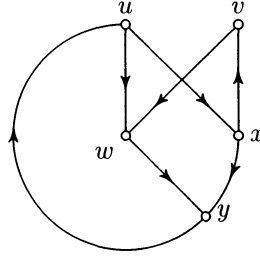


Figure 11. A subdigraph of H

Then $e(x) = 2$ and $e(u) = e(v) = 2$. This, however, implies that $d(v, u) = 2$, which is not the case. If v is adjacent to x , then $e(w) = 2$; so $e(u) = e(v) = 2$. However, then, $d(v, u) = 2$, and again this is not the case. \square

Thus, $ua^*(2K_1) = 4$ while $ua(2K_1) = 3$. We next describe a sufficient condition for a disconnected asymmetric digraph to have ultracentral appendage number 3.

Theorem 10. *Let $D \cong D_1 \cup D_2$, where D_1 and D_2 are strong asymmetric digraphs such that $\text{diam } D_1 \leq 3$, $\text{diam } D_2 \leq 3$, and $D_1 \not\cong K_1$. Then $ua^*(D) = 3$.*

Proof. By Theorem 8, $ua^*(D) \geq 3$. The digraph H of Figure 12 obtained by adding the vertices x, y , and z and all those arcs such that x is adjacent from and y is adjacent to every vertex of D_1 , y is adjacent from and x is adjacent to every vertex of D_2 , and z is adjacent to a single vertex of D_1 . Then each vertex of H has eccentricity 3, except z , in which case $e(z) = 4$. Thus, H has the desired properties and $ua^*(D) \leq 3$. So $ua^*(D) = 3$. \square

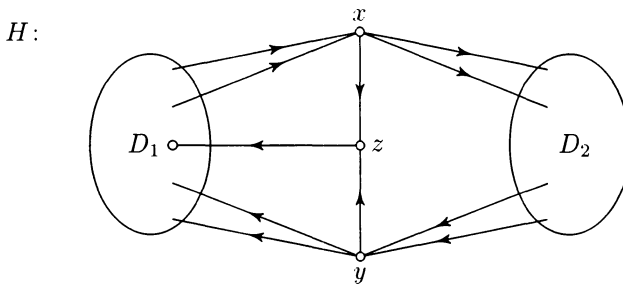


Figure 12

We now turn our attention to connected asymmetric digraphs.

Theorem 11. *If D is a strong asymmetric digraph with $\text{diam } D = 2$, then $ua^*(D) = 3$.*

Proof. We construct the strong digraph H of Figure 13 by adding three vertices x, y and z and all those arcs such that y and z are adjacent to every vertex of D , and x is adjacent from every vertex of D . Since $UC(H) = D$ and $C(H) = \langle V(D) \cup \{x, z\} \rangle$, it follows that $ua^*(D) = 3$. \square

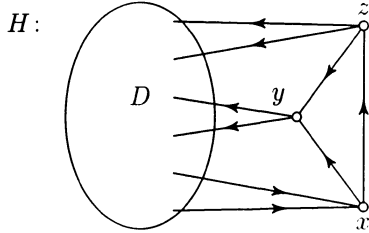


Figure 13

We now show that there is a connected asymmetric digraph having ultracentral appendage number 4.

Theorem 12. *There exists a connected asymmetric digraph D with $ua^*(D) = 4$.*

Proof. Let D be the digraph shown in Figure 14. We show that $ua^*(D) = 4$. We now construct the asymmetric digraph F of Figure 14 by adding the vertices $t, x, y,$ and z to D together with the indicated arcs. Then the central vertices of F are $u, v, w, x,$ and y , and the ultracentral vertices are $u, v,$ and w . Thus $UC(F) = D$; so $ua^*(D) \leq 4$. Consequently, it remains only to show that $ua^*(D) \neq 3$.

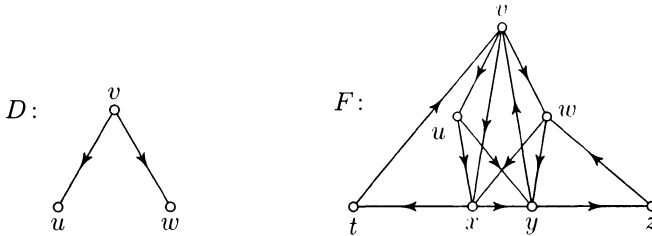


Figure 14

Assume, to the contrary, that $ua^*(D) = 3$. Let H be a minimum ultracentral superdigraph for D with $V(H) = \{u, v, w, x, y, z\}$. We consider three cases.

Case 1. Assume that there are exactly two vertices not in the center of H , say y and z . Thus, all vertices of D are adjacent to x and, without loss of generality, $(x, y) \in E(H)$ (see Figure 15). Since u is in $UC(H)$ and y and z are not central

vertices, neither (u, y) nor (u, z) is present in H . Thus, $d_H(u, w) > 2$ and $\text{rad } H > 2$. Since v is adjacent to u, w , and x and $e(v) > 2$, it follows that $(x, z) \notin E(H)$. Since H is strong, $(y, z) \in E(H)$ and at least one of (y, v) and (z, v) is an arc of H . If $(y, v) \in E(H)$, then $e(y) = 2$, producing a contradiction; while if $(z, v) \in E(H)$, then $e(z) = 3$ and z is a central vertex of H , also producing a contradiction.

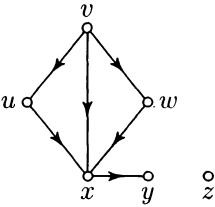


Figure 15

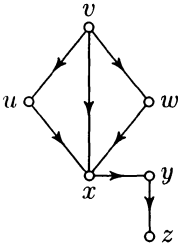


Figure 16

Case 2. Assume that there is exactly one vertex, say z , not in the center of H and $\text{urad } H = 2$. Then there is a vertex, say y , such that $c(y) = 0$ and a vertex, say x , with $c(x) = 1$. Therefore, all vertices of D are adjacent to x and (x, y) and (y, z) are present in H (see Figure 16), while (u, y) , (u, z) , and (x, z) cannot be present in H . Thus, $\text{rad } H > 2$ because $d(u, w) > 2$. Since H is strong, at least one of (y, v) and (z, v) is in H . If $(y, v) \in E(H)$, then $e(y) = 2$, producing a contradiction. If $(z, v) \in E(H)$, then $e(z) = 3$ and z is a central vertex of H , again producing a contradiction.

Case 3. Assume that $\text{urad } H = 1$ and that there is exactly one vertex, say z , not in the center of H . Consequently, (x, z) and (y, z) are in H . Suppose that $\text{rad } H = 2$. Then $d(u, w) = 2$. Thus, without loss of generality, the arcs (u, x) and (x, w) are present in H . Similarly, (w, y) and (y, u) are present in H , giving $d(w, u) = 2$. Also, since $d(u, v) = 2$, it follows that $(x, v) \in E(H)$. Similarly, $(y, v) \in E(H)$ since $d(w, v) = 2$. This produces the subdigraph in Figure 17. Now there are no arcs that can be added to allow $d(v, z)$ to be less than 3, producing a contradiction. Thus, $\text{rad } H \geq 3$. Since each of u, v , and w must be adjacent to one of x and y , it follows that x or y , say x , must be adjacent from at least two of u, v , and w . We consider three subcases.

Subcase 3.1. Assume that all three vertices u, v , and w are adjacent to x . Since $\text{rad } H \geq 3$, it follows that $e(v) \geq 3$. Thus, $d(v, y) = 3$ (see Figure 18). However, this is impossible.

Subcase 3.2. Assume that only u and v are adjacent to x . Since H is strong, w is adjacent to y . Thus, $e(v) = 2$, producing a contradiction.

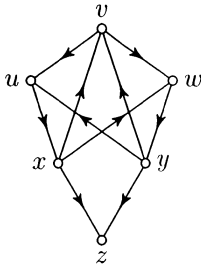


Figure 17

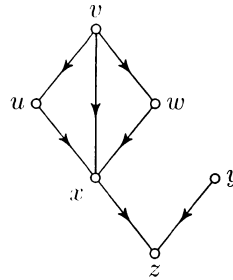


Figure 18

Subcase 3.3. Assume that only u and w are adjacent to x . Since H is strong $(v, y) \in E(H)$. Thus, $e(v) = 2$, again producing a contradiction. \square

We close with one lingering question: Does there exist an asymmetric digraph D with $ua^*(D) = 5$? If such a digraph D exists, it must surely be connected. Indeed, if D is strong, then $\text{diam } D \geq 3$.

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