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Finding a stable matching under type-specific minimum quotas. (English summary)

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This paper considers a discrete college-student matching problem. Each student can be matched to at most one college. Each college has a maximum number of students to which it can be matched. Each student has a preference ranking over colleges. Each college has a priority ranking over students. Each student has a type (e.g., yellow, green, blue, etc.). For each type, each college has a minimum and a maximum number of students of that type to which it can be matched. It is assumed that there exists a nonempty set of matchings that satisfies these type constraints. Attention is then restricted to this set.

A *fair* matching satisfies a notion of pairwise stability. Specifically, at a fair matching there do not exist students s , s' , and college c' such that student s' is matched to college c' but (i) student s would rather be matched to c' than to his current college; (ii) college c' gives higher priority to s than it gives to s' ; and (iii) it is possible to match s to c' and s' to some other college (leaving all other students at the same colleges) so that the type constraints are still satisfied.

A fair matching may fail to exist due to the following logic. Let there be two students s , s' of a given type, say red, both of which have college \underline{c} as their least preferred college. Let there be one other student, say \underline{s} . Let college \underline{c} have a minimum quota of one red student. Let there be two other colleges, c which gives highest priority to student s' , then s , then \underline{s} , and c' which gives highest priority to student s , then s' , then \underline{s} . Let c be the most preferred college of s and c' be the most preferred college of s' . Let every college have a capacity of at most one student.

One student must attend college \underline{c} . Without loss of generality, let this student be s . Then there are two possibilities for s' . Either s' attends his most preferred college c' , in which case a pairwise deviation exists for s and c' , following which s' can be matched to \underline{c} so that the type constraints are not violated. Or s' attends college c (and \underline{s} must attend college c'), in which case a pairwise deviation exists for s' and c' , following which \underline{s} attends college c and type constraints are not violated. Hence a fair matching does not exist.

This argument relies on c and c' having different priority rankings. If all colleges have a *common priority* ranking, for example, ranking s' ahead of s ahead of \underline{s} , then the lower-ranked red student, s , can be matched to \underline{c} , the higher-ranked red student, s' , to his favourite college c' , and \underline{s} to c . Then there exists no pairwise deviation that does not lead to a violation of the type constraints. That is, the matching is fair.

The immediately preceding paragraph is essentially the main theorem of the paper (Theorem 2), which shows that a fair matching exists under a slight weakening of the common priority ranking assumption described above.

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Note: This list reflects references listed in the original paper as accurately as possible with no attempt to correct errors.