



CSCI 241

Lecture 20

Dijkstra's Algorithm:
Implementation, Proof of Correctness

Happenings

Today: AWC-organized panel discussion with recent female alumnae working in the tech industry. AW 210 at 4:00.

Tuesday, 3/12 – AWC Bake Sale – 10 am to 2 pm in the CF 1st Floor Lobby

Wednesday, 3/13 – Peer Lecture Series: Machine Learning – 5 pm in CF 420

Thursday, 3/14 – [CS Study Break: Bingo and Brownies!](#) – 3 pm in the CF 4th Floor Foyer

COMPUTER SCIENCE



STUDY BREAK

Join us for brownies and bingo!

3 - 4 PM

THURSDAY, MARCH 14

CF 4TH FLOOR FOYER

Bingo called by Aran Clauson

For disability resources, contact 360-650-3083

Announcements

- No quiz today.
- Quiz Monday instead.

Goals

- Be able to run Dijkstra's algorithm on paper.
- Know how to implement Dijkstra efficiently (as in A4)
- Know how to augment the algorithm to keep backpointers in order to reconstruct the sequence of nodes in a shortest path.

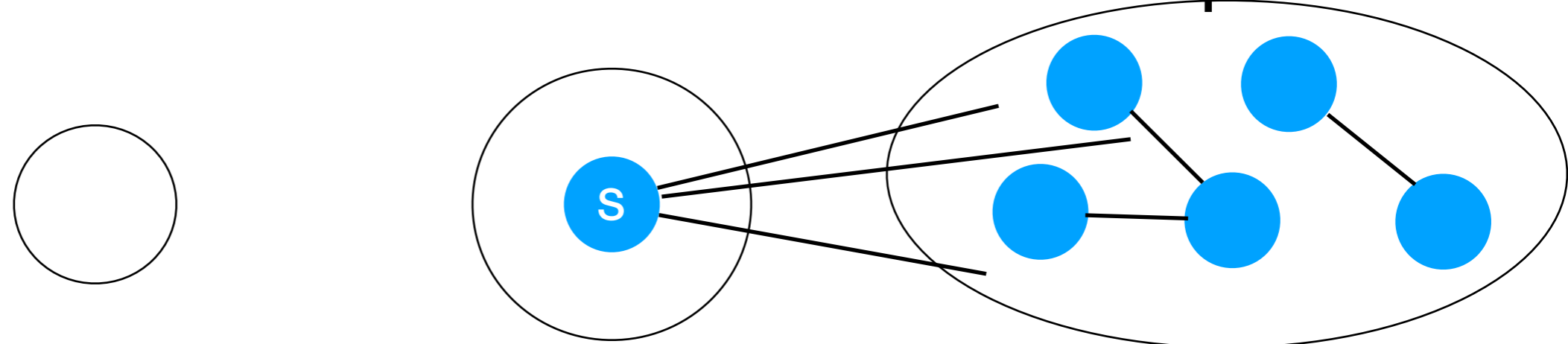
Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Cartoon

settled

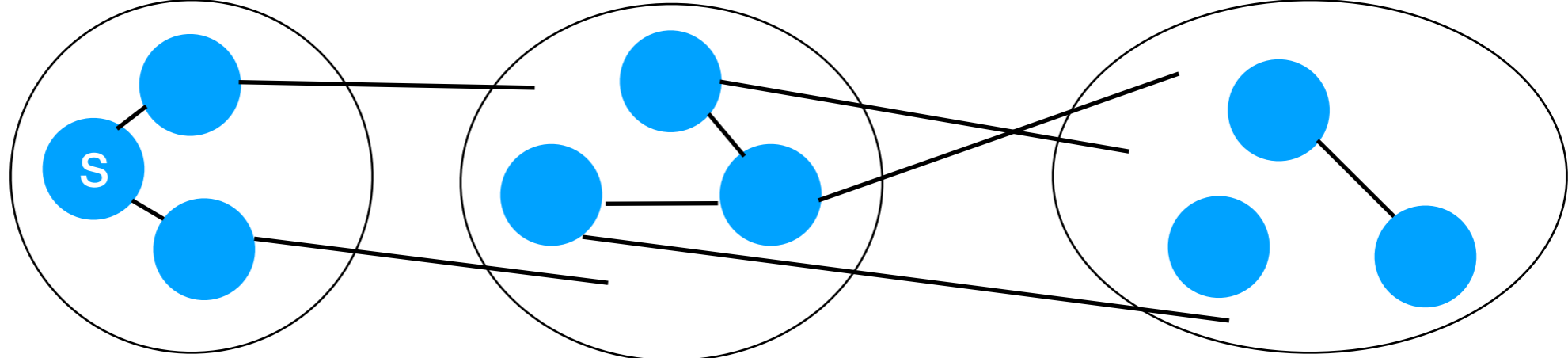
frontier

unexplored

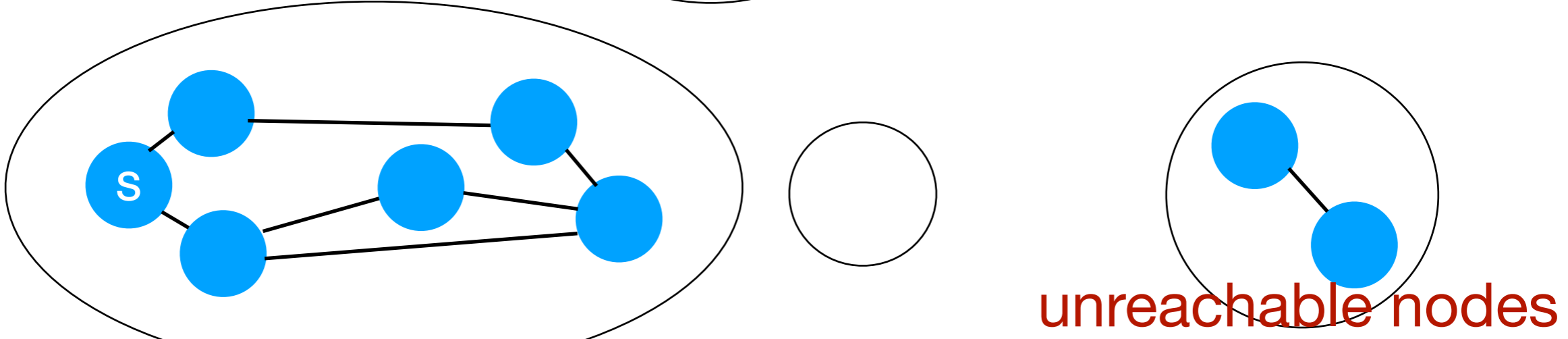
Before:



During:



After:



Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Intuition

- Intuition: explore nodes kinda like BFS.
- There are three kinds of nodes:
 - **Settled** - nodes for which we know the actual shortest path.
 - **Frontier** - nodes that have been visited but we don't necessarily have their actual shortest path
 - Unexplored - all other nodes.
- Each node n keeps track of $n.d$, the length of the shortest known known path from start.
- We may discover a shorter path to a **frontier** node than the one we've found already - if so, update $n.d$.

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: High-Level Algorithm

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

 move the node f with smallest d from F to S

 For each neighbor w of f :

 if we've never seen w before:

 set its path length

 add it to frontier

 else if the path to w via f is shorter:

 update w 's shortest path length

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: High-Level Algorithm

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

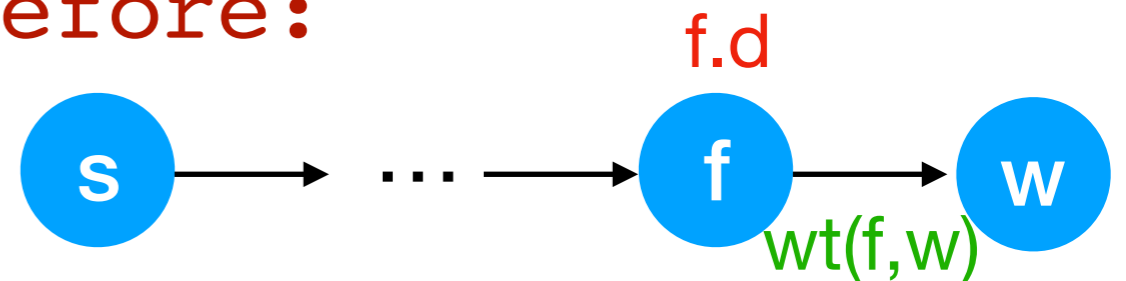
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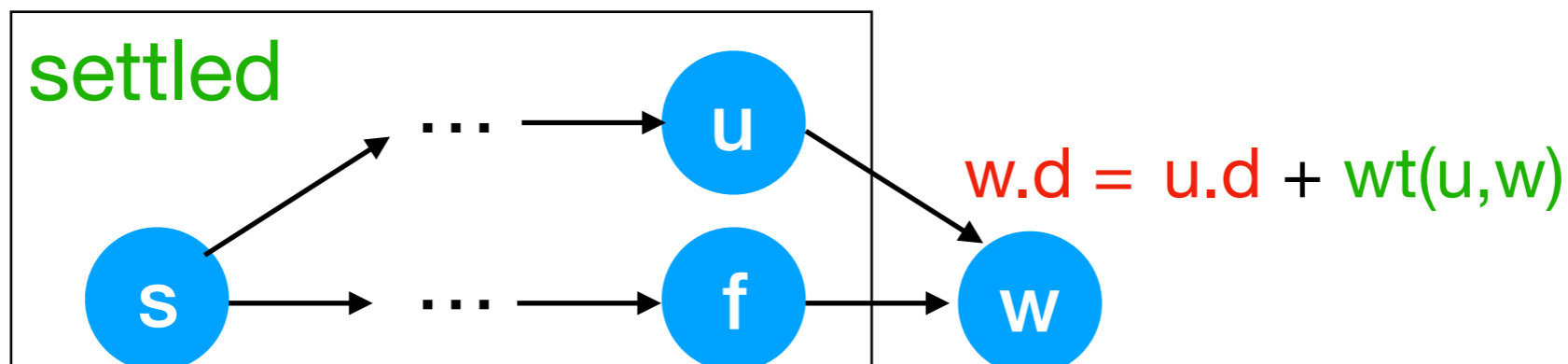
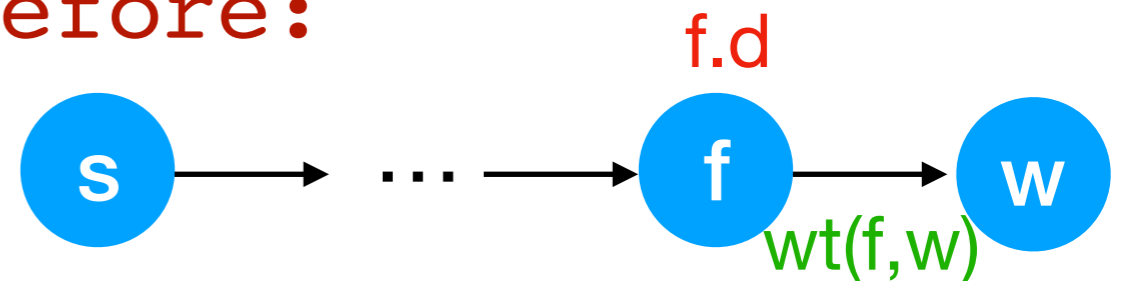
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Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: High-Level Algorithm

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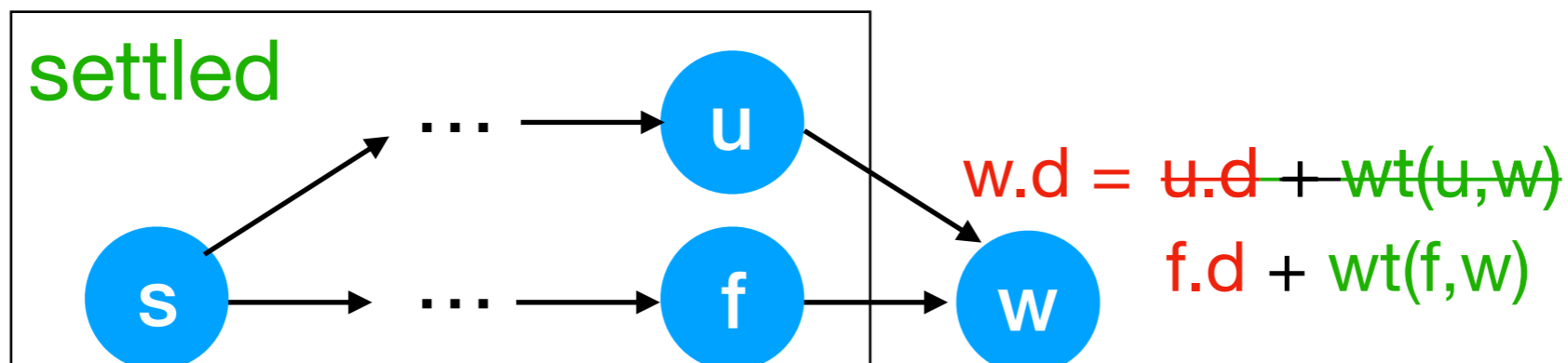
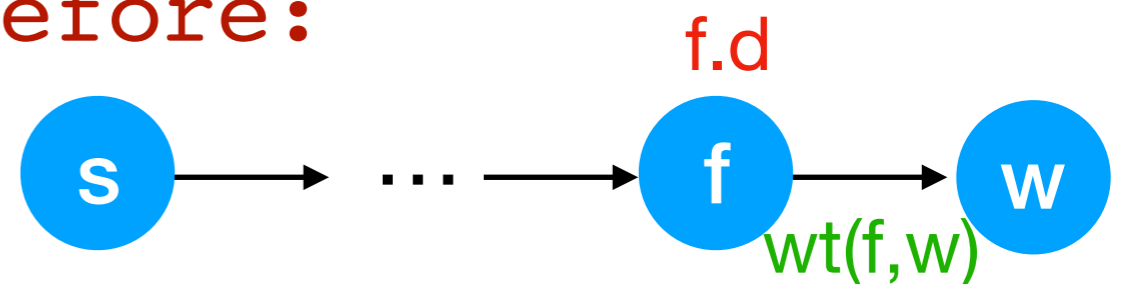
if we've never seen w before:

set its path length

add it to frontier

else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length



Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	?
1	?
2	?
3	?
4	?

Settled set:

Frontier set:

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

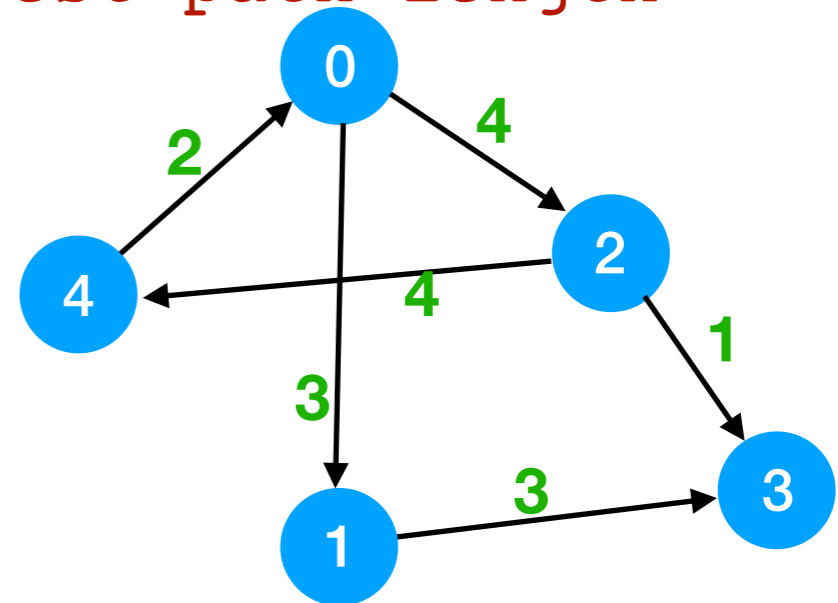
if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f,w)$

add w to the frontier

else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	?
1	?
2	?
3	?
4	0

Settled set: {}

Frontier set: {4}

```
Initialize Settled to empty
```

```
Initialize Frontier to the start node
```

```
While the frontier isn't empty:
```

```
  move the node f with smallest d from F to S
```

```
  For each neighbor w of f:
```

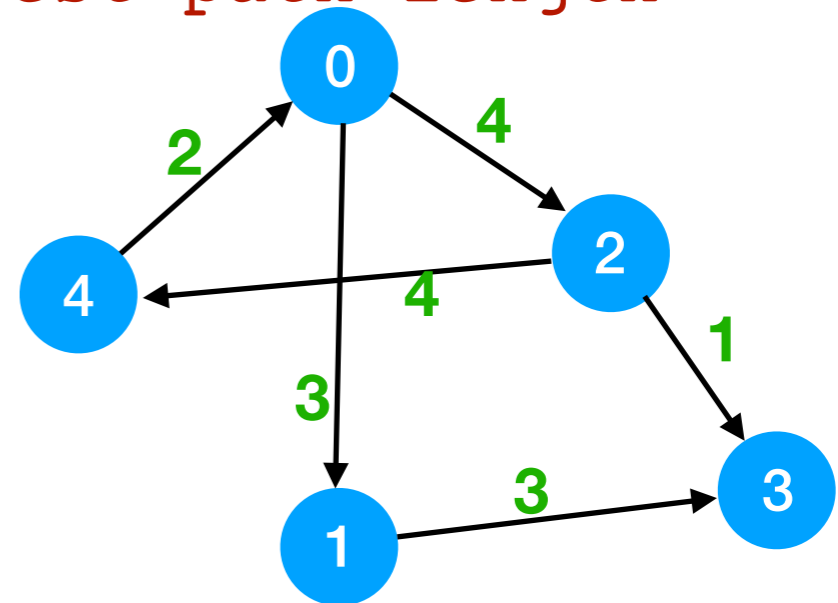
```
    if we've never seen w before:
```

```
      set its path length to  $f.d + wt(f,w)$ 
```

```
      add w to the frontier
```

```
    else if the path to w via f is shorter:
```

```
      update w's shortest path length
```



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	?
1	?
2	?
3	?
4	0

Settled set: {4}

Frontier set: {}

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

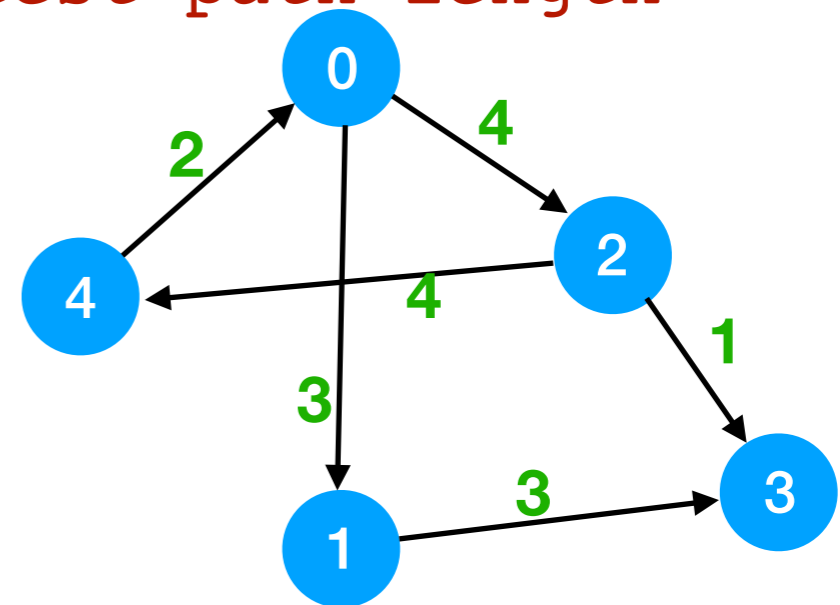
set its path length to $f.d + wt(f,w)$

add w to the frontier

else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length

f: 4



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	?
2	?
3	?
4	0

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f,w)$

add w to the frontier

else if the path to w via f is shorter:

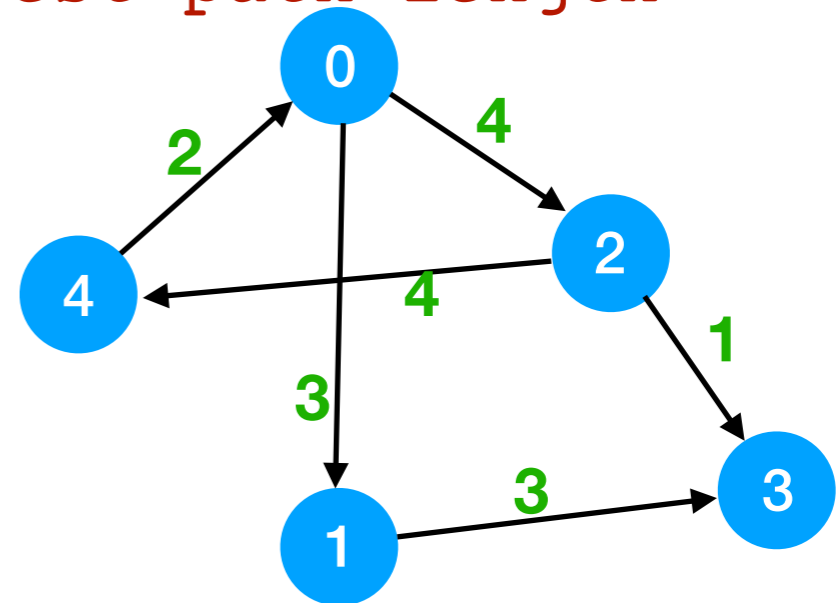
update w 's shortest path length

$f: 4$

$w: 0$

Settled set: {4}

Frontier set: {0}



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	?
2	?
3	?
4	0

Settled set: {4, 0}

Frontier set: {}

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

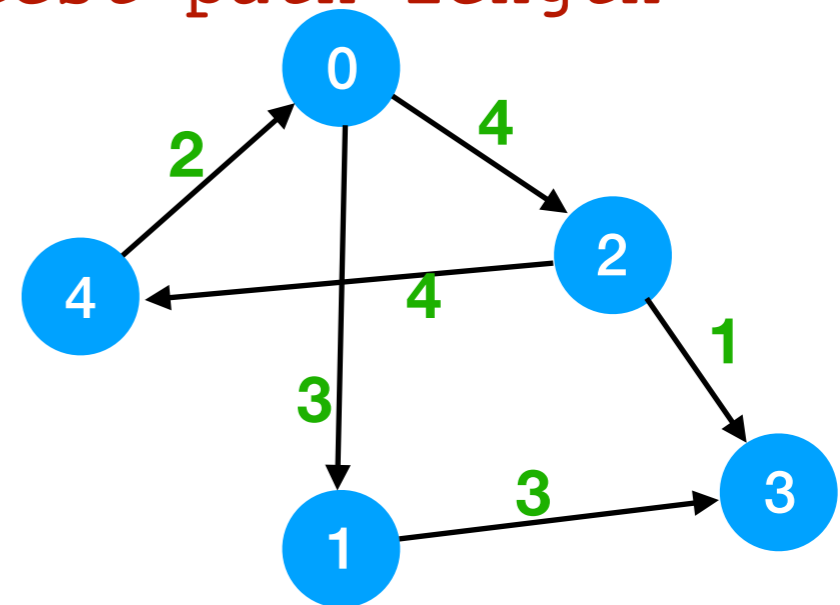
set its path length to $f.d + wt(f, w)$

add w to the frontier

else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length

$f: 0$



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	5
2	?
3	?
4	0

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f,w)$

add w to the frontier

else if the path to w via f is shorter:

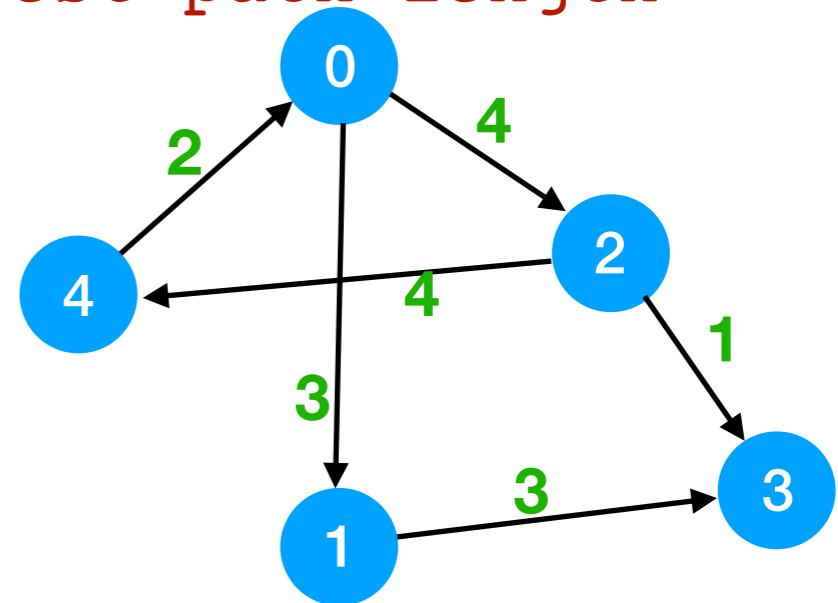
update w 's shortest path length

$f: 0$

$w: 1$

Settled set: {4, 0}

Frontier set: {1}



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	5
2	6
3	?
4	0

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f, w)$

add w to the frontier

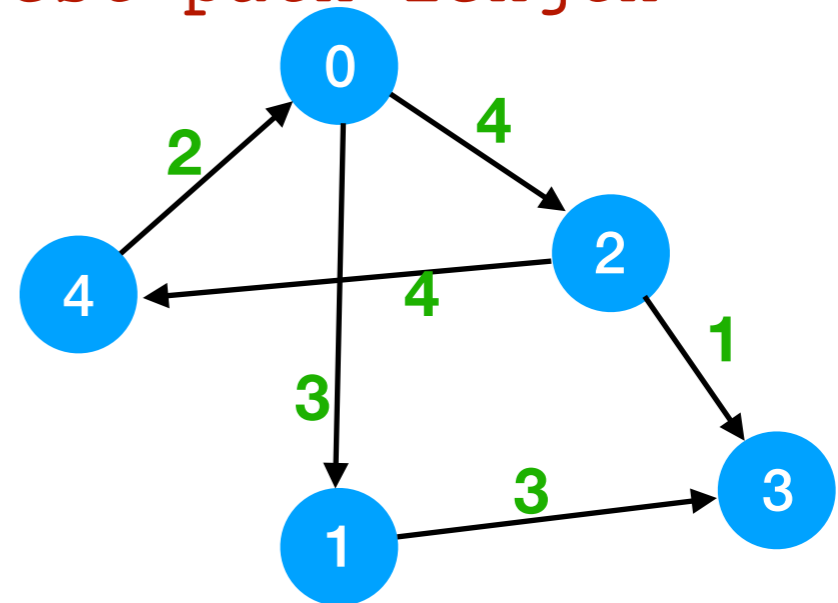
else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length

$f: 0$
 $w: 2$

Settled set: {4, 0}

Frontier set: {1, 2}



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	5
2	6
3	8
4	0

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f,w)$

add w to the frontier

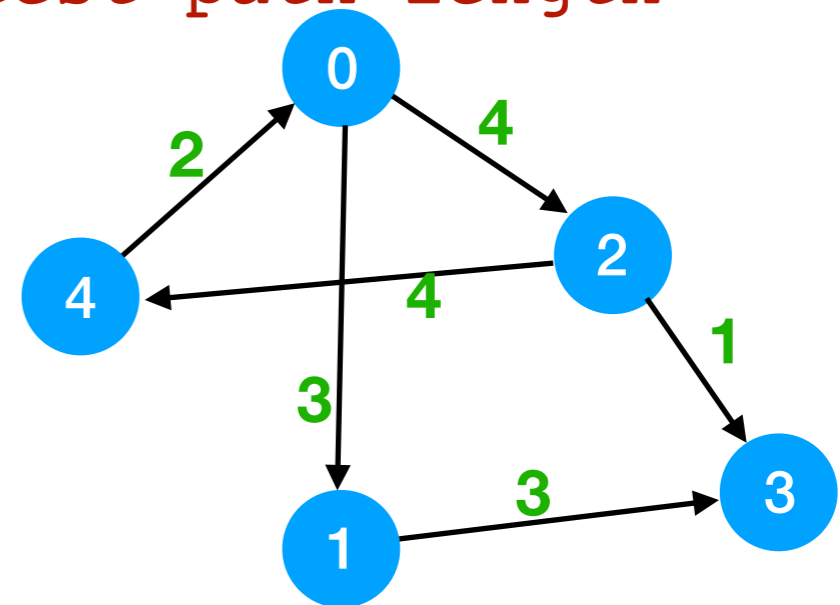
else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length

$f: 1$

Settled set: {4, 0, 1}

Frontier set: {2}



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	5
2	6
3	8
4	0

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f,w)$

add w to the frontier

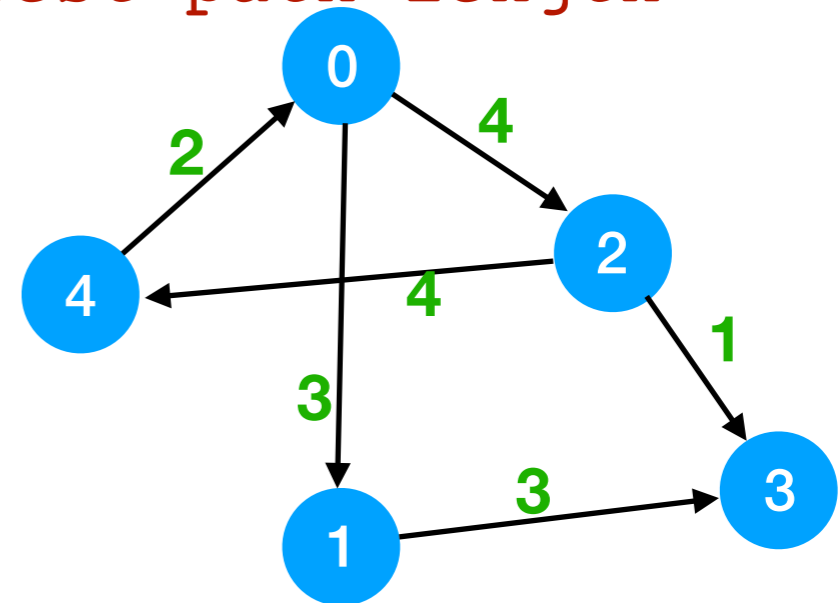
else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length

$f: 1$
 $w: 3$

Settled set: {4, 0, 1}

Frontier set: {2, 3}



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	5
2	6
3	8
4	0

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

$f: 2$

if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f, w)$

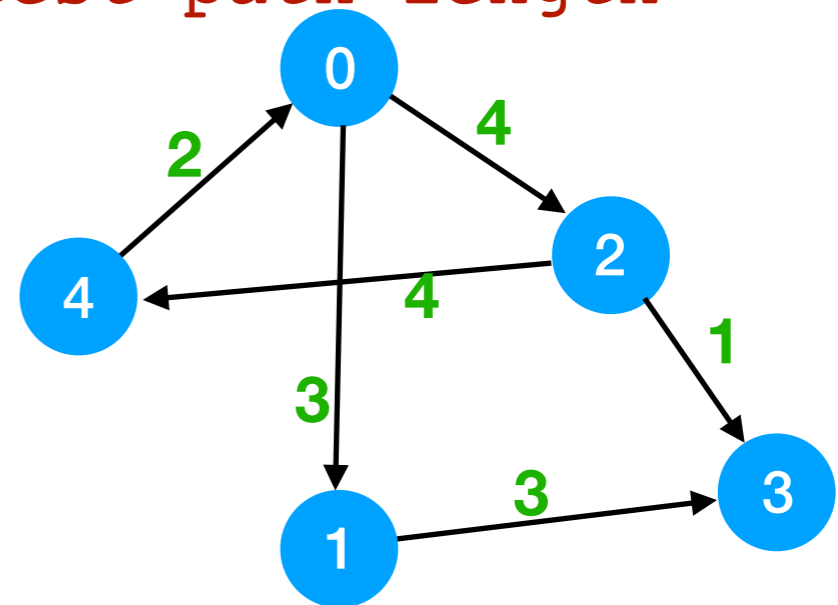
add w to the frontier

else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length

Settled set: {4, 0, 1, 2}

Frontier set: {3}



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	5
2	6
3	7
4	0

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f,w)$

add w to the frontier

else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length

$f: 2$

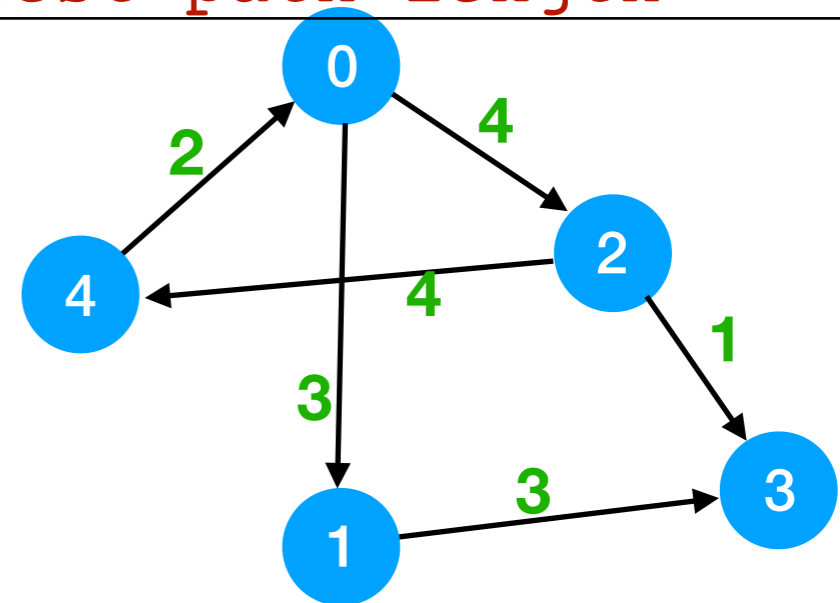
$w: 3$

$$2.d + wt(2,3) < 3.d$$

$$7 < 8$$

Settled set: {4, 0, 1, 2}

Frontier set: {3}



shortest-paths (4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Execution

Best
known
distances:

Node	d
0	2
1	5
2	6
3	7
4	0

Initialize Settled to empty

Initialize Frontier to the start node

While the frontier isn't empty:

move the node f with smallest d from F to S

For each neighbor w of f :

if we've never seen w before:

set its path length to $f.d + wt(f,w)$

add w to the frontier

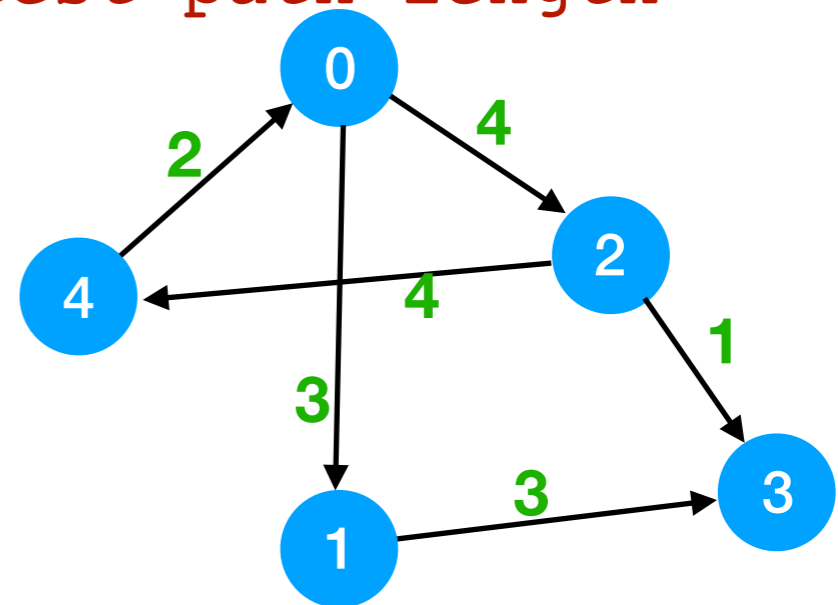
else if the path to w via f is shorter:

update w 's shortest path length

$f: 3$

Settled set: {4, 0, 1, 2, 3}

Frontier set: {} Empty => done!



shortest-paths(4)

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Pseudocode

```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0;           Initialize Settled to empty
while (F ≠ { }) {                   Initialize Frontier to the start node
    f = node in F with min d value;
    Remove f from F, add it to S;
    for each neighbor w of f {
        if (w not in S or F) {
            w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
            add w to F;
        } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
            w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
        }
    }
}
```


Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Pseudocode

```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0;           Initialize Settled to empty
while (F ≠ { }) {                   Initialize Frontier to the start node
    f = node in F with min d value;  While the frontier isn't empty:
    Remove f from F, add it to S;     move node f with smallest d
    for each neighbor w of f {       from F to S
        if (w not in S or F) {
            w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
            add w to F;
        } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
            w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
        }
    }
}
```

Dijkstra's Shortest Paths: Pseudocode

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    f = node in F with min d value;  While the frontier isn't empty:
    Remove f from F, add it to S;     move node f with smallest d
    for each neighbor w of f {       from F to S
        if (w not in S or F) {       For each neighbor w of f:
            w.d = f.d + weight(f, w); if we've never seen w before:
            add w to F;               set its path length
        }                             add it to frontier
    } else if (f.d+weight(f,w) < w.d) {
        w.d = f.d+weight(f,w);
    }
}
}
```


What if we want to know the shortest path?

```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0;
while (F ≠ { }) {
  f = node in F with min d value;
  Remove f from F, add it to S;
  for each neighbor w of f {
    if (w not in S or F) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
      add w to F;
    } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
    }
  }
}
```

- At termination: for each reachable node n , $n.d$ stores the **length** of the shortest path from v to n .
- We didn't keep track of **how** to get from v to n !

What if we want to know the shortest path?

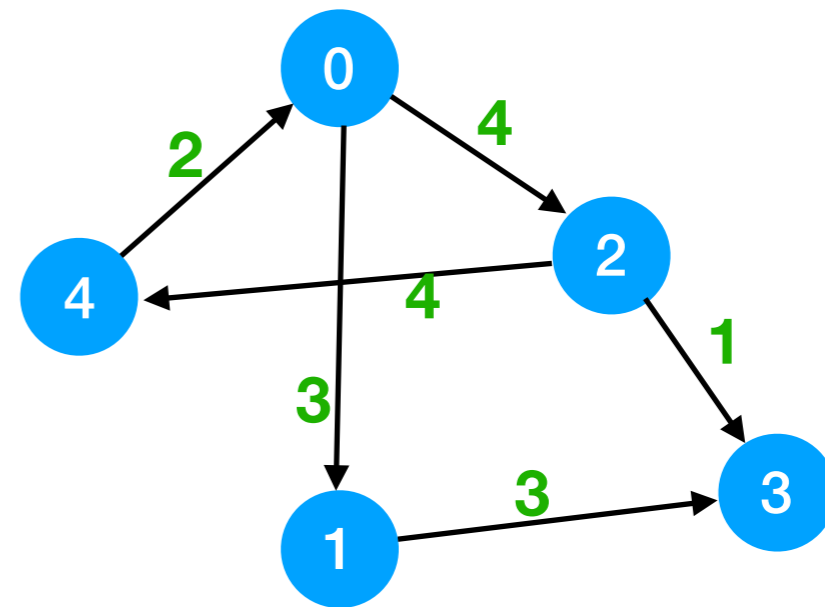
```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0; v.bp = null;
while (F ≠ { }) {
  f = node in F with min d value;
  Remove f from F, add it to S;
  for each neighbor w of f {
    if (w not in S or F) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
      w.bp = f;
      add w to F;
    } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
      w.bp = f;
    }
  }
}
```

Each node could store the full path, but that would be expensive to keep updated.

Strategy: maintain a **backpointer** at each node pointing to the previous node in the shortest path.

What if we want to know the shortest path? Example

```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0; v.bp = null;
while (F ≠ { }) {
  f = node in F with min d value;
  Remove f from F, add it to S;
  for each neighbor w of f {
    if (w not in S or F) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
      w.bp = f;
      add w to F;
    } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
      w.bp = f;
    }
  }
}
```



shortest-paths (4)

Strategy: maintain a **backpointer** at each node pointing to the previous node in the shortest path.

Let's Dijkstra

- Half get the algorithm, half get the graphs. Pair up with someone with the other thing.
- Run the algorithm on each graph:
 - (first) 5-node graph: start at node S
 - (second) Other graph: start at node D

The next slide is really
important.



Implementing Dijkstra Efficiently (A4)

- ```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0; v.bp = null;
while (F ≠ { }) {
 f = node in F with min d value;
 Remove f from F, add it to S;
 for each neighbor w of f {
 if (w not in S or F) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 w.bp = f;
 add w to F;
 } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 w.bp = f;
 }
 }
}
```
1. Store Frontier in a min-heap priority queue with d-values as priorities.
  2. To efficiently iterate over neighbors, use an adjacency list graph representation.
  3. Could store w.d and w.bp in Node class; in A4, we use a `HashMap<Node, PathData>`
  4. No need to explicitly store Settled or Unexplored sets: a node is in S or F iff it is in the map.

# Implementing Dijkstra Efficiently (A4)

- ```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0; v.bp = null;
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      w.bp = f;
      add w to F;
    } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
      w.bp = f;
    }
  }
}
```
1. **Store Frontier in a min-heap priority queue with d-values as priorities.**
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Implementing Dijkstra Efficiently (A4)

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 add w to F;
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 w.bp = f;
 }
 }
}
```
1. Store Frontier in a min-heap priority queue with d-values as priorities.
  2. **To efficiently iterate over neighbors, use an adjacency list graph representation.**
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# Implementing Dijkstra Efficiently (A4)

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    if (w not in S or F) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
      w.bp = f;
      add w to F;
    } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
      w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
      w.bp = f;
    }
  }
}
```
1. Store Frontier in a min-heap priority queue with d-values as priorities.
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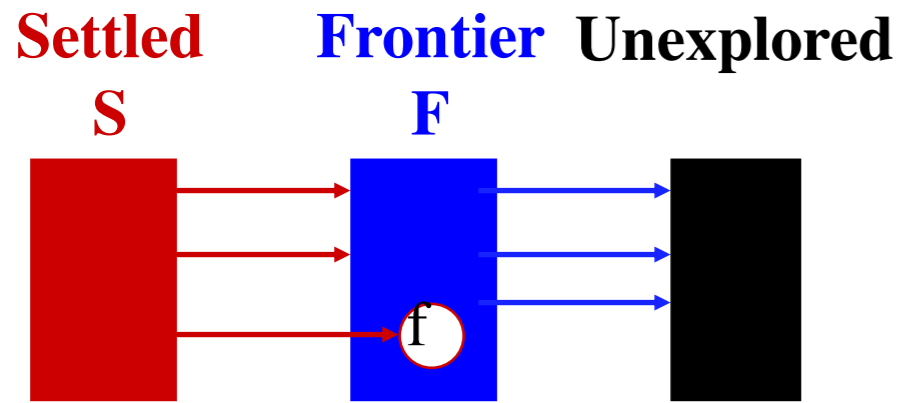
Implementing Dijkstra Efficiently (A4)

- ```
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 for each neighbor w of f {
 if (w not in S or F) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 w.bp = f;
 add w to F;
 } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 w.bp = f;
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 }
}
```
1. Store Frontier in a min-heap priority queue with d-values as priorities.
  2. To efficiently iterate over neighbors, use an adjacency list graph representation.
  3. Could store w.d and w.bp in Node class; in A4, we use a `HashMap<Node, PathData>`
  4. **No need to explicitly store Settled or Unexplored sets:**  
a node is in S or F iff it is in the map.

# Proof of Correctness

- Dijkstra's algorithm is **greedy**: it makes a sequence of *locally* optimal moves, which results in the *globally* optimal solution.
  - Most algorithms don't work like this - need to prove that it results in the global optimum.
- Specifically: It is not obvious that there cannot still be a shorter path to the Frontier node with smallest d-value.

# Proof of Correctness: Invariant



The while loop in Dijkstra's algorithm maintains a 3-part invariant:

1. For a Settled node  $s$ , a shortest path from  $v$  to  $s$  contains only settled nodes and  $s.d$  is length of shortest  $v \rightarrow s$  path.



2. For a Frontier node  $f$ , at least one  $v \rightarrow f$  path contains only settled nodes (except perhaps for  $f$ ) and  $f.d$  is the length of the shortest such path
3. All edges leaving  $S$  go to  $F$  (or: no edges from  $S$  to Unexplored)

# Proof of Correctness:

## Theorem

```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0;
while (F ≠ { }) {
 f = node in F with min d value;
 Remove f from F, add it to S;
 for each neighbor w of f {
 if (w not in S or F) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 add w to F;
 } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 }
 }
 Case 1: if v is in F, then S is empty and v.d = 0, which is trivially the
 shortest distance from v to v.
}
```

**Theorem:** For a node  $f$  in the Frontier with minimum  $d$  value (over all nodes in the Frontier),  $f.d$  is the shortest-path distance from  $v$  to  $f$ .

**Proof:** Show that any other path from  $v$  to  $f$  has length  $\geq f.d$



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 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 }
 }
 Case 2: v is in S. Part 2 of the invariant says:
 • f.d is the length of the shortest path from v to f containing all
 settled nodes except f, and f.d is the length of such a path.
}
```

**Theorem:** For a node  $f$  in the Frontier with minimum  $d$  value (over all nodes in the Frontier),  $f.d$  is the shortest-path distance from  $v$  to  $f$ .

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# Proof of Correctness:

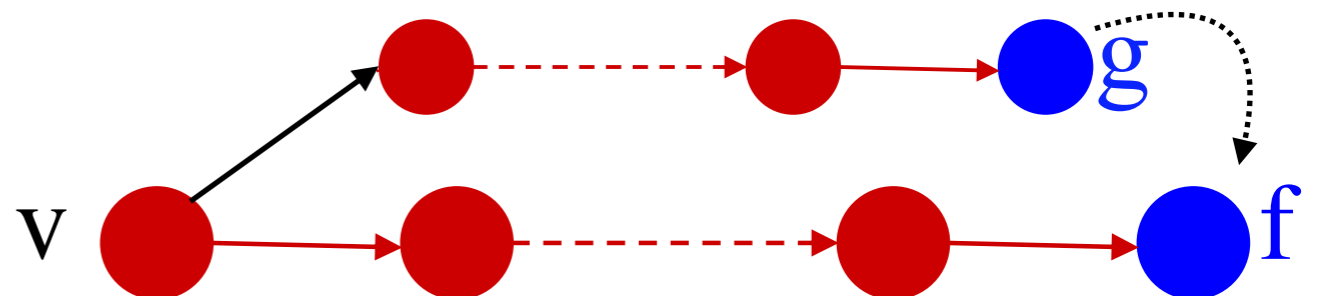
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**Proof:** Show that any other path from  $v$  to  $f$  has length  $\geq f.d$

Any other  $v$ - $f$  path must either be longer or go through another frontier node  $g$  then arrive at  $f$ :



# Proof of Correctness:

## Theorem

$S = \{ \}; F = \{v\}; v.d = 0;$

**while** ( $F \neq \{ \}$ ) {

$f = \text{node in } F \text{ with min } d \text{ value};$

  Remove  $f$  from  $F$ , add it to  $S$ ;

**for** each neighbor  $w$  of  $f$  {

**if** ( $w$  not in  $S$  or  $F$ ) {

$w.d = f.d + \text{weight}(f, w);$

      add  $w$  to  $F$ ;

**else if** ( $f.d + \text{weight}(f, w) < w.d$ ) {

$w.d = f.d + \text{weight}(f, w);$

**Case 2:**  $v$  is in  $S$ . Part 2 of the invariant says:

- $f.d$  is the length of the shortest path from  $v$  to  $f$  containing all settled nodes except  $f$ , and  $f.d$  is the length of such a path.

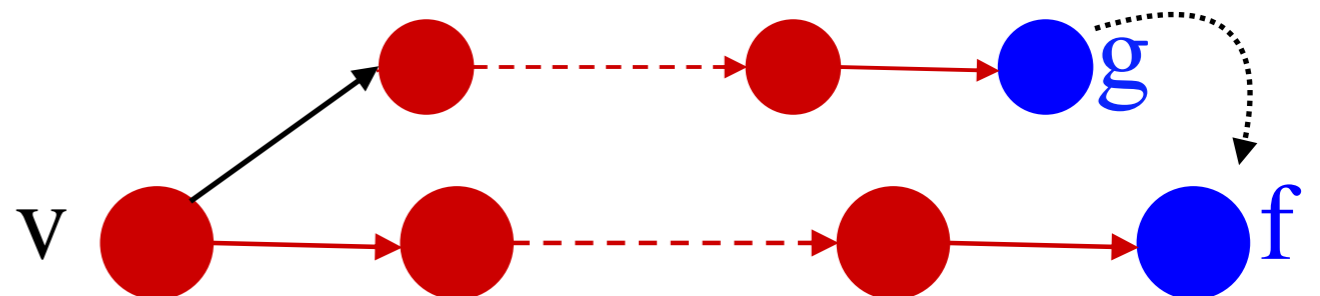
Any other  $v$ - $f$  path must either be longer or go through another frontier node  $g$  then arrive at  $f$ :

$d.f \leq d.g,$

so that path cannot be shorter

**Theorem:** For a node  $f$  in the Frontier with minimum  $d$  value (over all nodes in the Frontier),  $f.d$  is the shortest-path distance from  $v$  to  $f$ .

**Proof:** Show that any other path from  $v$  to  $f$  has length  $\geq f.d$



# Proof of Correctness: Invariant Maintenance

```
S = { }; F = {v}; v.d = 0;
while (F ≠ { }) {
 f = node in F with min d value;
 Remove f from F, add it to S;
 for each neighbor w of f {
 if (w not in S or F) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 add w to F;
 } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 }
 }
}
```

1. For a Settled node  $s$ , a shortest path from  $v$  to  $s$  contains only settled nodes and  $s.d$  is length of shortest  $v \rightarrow s$  path.
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3. All edges leaving  $S$  go to  $F$  (or: no edges from  $S$  to Unexplored)

At initialization:

1.  $S$  is empty; trivially true.
2.  $v.d = 0$ , which is the shortest path.
3.  $S$  is empty, so no edges leave it.

# Proof of Correctness: Invariant Maintenance

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 Remove f from F, add it to S;
 for each neighbor w of f {
 if (w not in S or F) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 add w to F;
 } else if (f.d + weight(f, w) < w.d) {
 w.d = f.d + weight(f, w);
 }
 }
 At each iteration:
 1. Theorem says f.d is the shortest path, so it can safely move to S
 2. Updating w.d maintains Part 2 of the invariant.
 3. Each neighbor is either already in F or gets moved there.
```

1. For a Settled node  $s$ , a shortest path from  $v$  to  $s$  contains only settled nodes and  $s.d$  is length of shortest  $v \rightarrow s$  path.
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