Abstract

We prove that universal second-order rigidity implies universal pre-stress stability and that triangulated convex polytopes in three-space (with holes appropriately positioned) are prestress stable.

Keywords: rigidity, prestress stability, universal rigidity

1 Introduction

A classic result of Cauchy [6] implies that the boundary of any convex polytope in 3-space is rigid, when each of its natural 2-dimensional faces is held rigid, even though they are allowed to rotate along common edges like hinges. In [17], Dehn proved that a polytope with triangular faces is infinitesimally rigid, and therefore rigid, when the edges are regarded as fixed length bars connected to its vertices. A. D. Alexandrov [2] showed that any convex triangulated polytope, where the natural surface may consist of non-triangular faces, is still infinitesimally rigid, as long as the vertices of the triangulation are not in the relative interior of the natural faces. Connelly [7] proved that any convex triangulated polytope in 3-space is second-order rigid, no matter where the vertices of the triangulation are positioned, and second-order rigidity implies rigidity in general. The only trouble with this last result is that

\[ \text{This work was partially supported by NSF grants DMS-1564493 and DMS-1564473.} \]
second-order rigidity is a very weak property. A stronger property, which we will now discuss, is called prestress stability.

When a framework is constructed with physical bars, if it rigid but not infinitesimally rigid, it is often called "shaky" in the engineering literature \cite{16}. For such a rigid, but not infinitesimally rigid, framework, if the each of bars is at its natural rest length, then the framework might deform significantly under external forces \cite{15}. But in some situations, this shakiness can be rectified by placing some of the bars in either tension or compression. When successful, the resulting structure is at a local minimum of an internal energy functional that can be verified using the "second derivative test". Such structures will not deform greatly under external forces, even though they are infinitesimally flexible. Thus, the stiffness of a physical framework ultimately depends not just on the geometry, but also on the physical properties and tensional states of the material.

With this in mind, a (geometric) bar framework is called \textit{prestress stable} if there exists a way to place its bars in tension or compression so that the resulting structure is at a local minimum of an internal energy functional that can be verified using the second derivative test.

In this paper, (Theorem 6.3) we show that any arbitrarily triangulated convex polytope in 3-space, is in fact prestress stable. Indeed, extending the results of \cite{7}, we show that there are many ways of positioning holes in the faces of the polytope so that any triangulation of the remaining surface is prestress stable. Our condition is that for each face $F$ of the polytope, there is another convex polytope $P_F$ projecting orthogonally onto $F$, with $F$ as the bottom face, such that each hole of $F$ is the projection of an upper face of $P_F$, as in Figure 1. Furthermore, for any triangulation of $P$, minus the holes, we assume that the boundary of each face $F$ is infinitesimally rigid in the plane of $F$.

As part of obtaining this result, we first show (Corollary 4.8) that, in general, if any bar framework is universally second-order rigid in the sense that it remains second-order rigid when thought of as a (degenerate) framework in all higher dimensions, then it must be prestress stable in its original and all higher dimensions. This result is also related to the problem of characterizing when a semi-definite feasibility problem has a singularity degree of exactly one \cite{19}.

Some of these ideas were briefly sketched in the survey \cite{9}, but have not previously been given a complete and formal treatment.
2 Definitions and Background

Let \((G, p)\), denote a (bar and joint) framework where \(p = (p_1, \ldots, p_n)\) is a configuration of \(n\) points \(p_i \in \mathbb{R}^d\), and \(G\) is a corresponding graph, with \(n\) vertices and with \(e\) edges connecting some pairs of points of \(p\).

2.1 Local Rigidity

Here we define a sequence of local rigidity properties.

We start with the most basic idea defining a rigid structure. We say that a framework \((G, p)\) is \textit{locally rigid} in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) if, there are no continuous motions in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) of the configuration \(p(t)\), for \(t \geq 0\), that preserve the distance constraints:

\[
|p_i(t) - p_j(t)| = |p_i - p_j|
\]

for all edges, \(\{i, j\}\), of \(G\), where \(p(0) = p\), unless \(p(t)\) is congruent to \(p\) for all \(t\). By a congruence, we mean that \(p(t)\) can be obtained from \(p\) by simply restricting a Euclidean isometry of \(\mathbb{R}^d\) to the vertices.

The simplest way to confirm that a framework is locally rigid is to look at the linearization of the problem.

A \textit{first-order flex} or \textit{infinitesimal flex} of \((G, p)\) in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) is a corresponding assignment of vectors \(p' = (p'_1, \ldots, p'_n), p'_i \in \mathbb{R}^d\) such that for each \(\{i, j\}\), an edge of \(G\), the following holds:

\[
(p_i - p_j) \cdot (p'_i - p'_j) = 0
\]  \hspace{1cm} (1)
The rigidity matrix $R(p)$ is the $nd$-by-$e$ matrix, where

$$R(p)p' = (\ldots, (p_i - p_j) \cdot (p'_i - p'_j), \ldots)^t,$$

for $p' \in \mathbb{R}^n$. Here each row of the matrix is indexed by an edge $\{i, j\}$ of the graph, and $(\cdot)^t$ is the transpose. We write $R(p, q) = R(q, p) = R(p)q$ for any $q \in \mathbb{R}^n$, which we call the rigidity form for the graph $G$ in $\mathbb{R}^d$. With this, Equation (1) can be rewritten as,

$$R(p, p') = 0$$

A first-order flex $p'$ is trivial if it is the restriction to the vertices, of the time-zero derivative of a smooth motion of isometries of $\mathbb{R}^d$. This is equivalent to there being a $d$-by-$d$ skew symmetric matrix $A$ and a vector $b \in \mathbb{R}^d$ such that

$$p'_i = Ap_i + b$$

for all $i = 1, \ldots, n$.

Note that the property of being a trivial infinitesimal flex is independent of the graph $G$.

A framework $(G, p)$ is called infinitesimally rigid in $\mathbb{R}^d$ if it has no infinitesimal flexes in $\mathbb{R}^d$ except for trivial ones.

A classical theorem [15] states:

**Theorem 2.1.** If a framework $(G, p)$ is infinitesimally rigid in $\mathbb{R}^d$, then it is locally rigid in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

The converse of the theorem is false, so there is room for weaker conditions that can be used to certify local rigidity. One such notion is called prestress stability. The rough idea is to look for an energy function on configurations for which $(G, p)$ is a local minimum.

To this end we define an equilibrium stress for a framework $(G, p)$ to be an assignment of a scalar $\omega_{ij} = \omega_{ji}$ to each edge $\{i, j\}$ of the graph $G$, such that for each vertex $i$ of $G$,

$$\sum_j \omega_{ij}(p_i - p_j) = 0,$$

where the non-edges of the stress $\omega = (\ldots, \omega_{ij}, \ldots)$ have zero stress.

In this paper, we will use the following proposition:
Proposition 2.2 ([10, Lemma 2.5]). Any equilibrium stress $\omega \in \mathbb{R}^e$ for $(G, p)$ must be in the cokernel of $R(p)$.

We say that a framework $(G, p)$ is prestress stable in $\mathbb{R}^d$ if there is an equilibrium stress $\omega$ for $(G, p)$ such that for every non-trivial first-order flex $p'$ in $\mathbb{R}^d$ of $(G, p)$, we have $\sum_{i<j} \omega_{ij}(p'_i - p'_j)^2 > 0$. From this definition it is clear that if a framework $(G, p)$ is infinitesimally rigid in $\mathbb{R}^d$, then, using the all-zero stress, it is automatically prestress stable in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

The following is shown in [15].

Theorem 2.3. If a framework $(G, p)$ is prestress stable in $\mathbb{R}^d$, then it is locally rigid in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

It is also shown in [15] that this definition of prestress stability coincides with the motivating property, described above in the introduction. This means that there is an energy for which $(G, p)$ is a minimum that can be verified with the second derivative test. In this correspondence, the coefficients, $\omega_{ij}$, correspond to the first derivative of the energy of the associated bar with respect to changes in its squared-length.

The converse of Theorem 2.3 is again false, so there is room for even weaker conditions that can be used to certify local rigidity. One such notion, used in [7] to study the rigidity of triangulated convex polytopes, is second-order rigidity. The idea is motivated by looking at the first two derivatives of some proposed continuous flex of the framework.

A second-order flex of $(G, p)$ in $\mathbb{R}^d$ is a corresponding assignment of vectors $p' = (p'_1, \ldots, p'_n)$, $p'_i \in \mathbb{R}^d$ and $(p''_1, \ldots, p''_n)$, $p''_i \in \mathbb{R}^d$ such that for each $\{i,j\}$ an edge of $G$ the following hold:

\begin{equation}
(p_i - p_j) \cdot (p'_i - p'_j) = 0 \tag{3}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
(p_i - p_j) \cdot (p''_i - p''_j) + (p'_i - p'_j)^2 = 0. \tag{4}
\end{equation}

Using the rigidity matrix defined above, the Equations (3) and (4) can be rewritten as:

\begin{align*}
R(p, p') &= 0 \tag{5} \\
R(p, p'') + R(p', p') &= 0. \tag{6}
\end{align*}

We say that $(G, p)$ is second-order rigid in $\mathbb{R}^d$ if there is no second-order flex $(p', p'')$ of $(G, p)$ in $\mathbb{R}^d$, with $p'$ non-trivial as a first-order flex.

The following is proven in [7].
**Theorem 2.4.** If a framework \((G, p)\) is second-order rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^d\), then it is locally rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^d\).

Second-order rigidity is a natural property, but it has some practical difficulties, which can be seen with a dual formulation [15].

**Theorem 2.5.** A framework \((G, p)\) is second-order rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) if and only if for every non-trivial first-order flex \(p'\) in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) of \((G, p)\), there is an equilibrium stress \(\omega\) such that \(\sum_{i<j} \omega_{ij}(p'_i - p'_j)^2 > 0\).

From this it is clear that if a framework \((G, p)\) is prestress stable in \(\mathbb{R}^d\), then it is second-order rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^d\). But in second-order rigidity, it can happen that no one stress blocks (has positive energy on) all non-trivial first-order flexes. Rather one can think of there being a “demon” living in the framework that senses any particular non-trivial first-order flex \(p'\) and blocks it.

Putting these together, we can summarize the state of affairs as in [15]:

**Theorem 2.6.** Infinitesimally rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) implies prestress stability in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) which implies second-order rigidity in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) which implies locally rigidity in \(\mathbb{R}^d\). None of these implications are reversible. (See Figure 2.)

![Figure 2: Nested space of d-dimensional local rigidity properties of frameworks. This paper shows that triangulated polytopes are not only second-order rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^3\), but are also prestress stable in \(\mathbb{R}^3\).](image)
Remark 2.7. There are significant difficulties in attempting to define a meaningful notion of third-order rigidity \[14\].

One of the two main results of this paper (Theorem 6.3) is that a triangulated convex polytope in \(\mathbb{R}^3\) is not only second-order rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^3\) (a result of \[7\]) but is in fact prestress stable in \(\mathbb{R}^3\).

Remark 2.8. A framework \((G, p)\) is called globally rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) if, there are no other (even distant) frameworks \((G, q)\) in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) having the same edge lengths as \((G, p)\), other than congruent frameworks. This is a much stronger property than local rigidity, but we will note in the next section that the global/local distinction vanishes in unconstrained dimensions.

2.2 Universal Rigidity

In order to study the prestress stability in \(\mathbb{R}^3\) of triangulated convex polytopes, and indeed for its own sake as well, we look at what happens when we regard our \(d\)-dimensional framework as realized (degenerately) in \(\mathbb{R}^D \supset \mathbb{R}^d\) where \(D > d\) and \(D\) is arbitrarily large. It is easy to see that we do not need to take \(D\) to be any larger than \(n - 1\), where \(n\) is the number of the vertices of \(G\), but we use the symbol \(D\) instead of \(n\) to emphasize that this denotes a number of spatial dimensions. This then brings up the notion of universal rigidity.

Given a framework \((G, p)\) with a \(d\)-dimensional affine span, but realized in \(\mathbb{R}^D\), we define the notions of universal local rigidity, universal second-order rigidity and universal prestress stability as respectively, local rigidity, second-order rigidity and prestress stability in \(\mathbb{R}^D\). (If \(d < n - 1\), then a framework with a \(d\)-dimensional affine span can never be infinitesimally rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^D\), and so there is no need to define universal infinitesimal rigidity).

These three properties naturally inherit the inclusion relations of the previous section: universal prestress stability implies universal second-order rigidity which implies universal local rigidity. Though it is not clear, a-priori, if any of these implications reverse. In this paper we will conclude that in fact universal prestress stability is no different than universal second-order rigidity, (but that these are stronger properties than universal local rigidity).

Remark 2.9. It turns out that there is no need to define a separate notion of universal global rigidity, as it is immediately implied by universal local rigidity \[8, 11\]. Thus we henceforth drop the “local” qualifier from the term
universal rigidity. This makes universal rigidity a very strong property indeed, that, for example implies global rigidity in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

Figure 3: Nested space of local, global, and various universal rigidity properties of frameworks. This paper shows that universal second-order rigidity is the same as universal prestress stability. The relationship between the properties shown here to those of Figure 2 are not obvious, other than the fact that universal prestress stability implies prestress stability in $\mathbb{R}^d$.

The property of universal prestress stability is actually the same as another property called super stability, which we now describe.

Given an equilibrium stress $\omega = (\ldots, \omega_{ij}, \ldots)$ for a framework $(G, p)$ in $\mathbb{R}^D$, we define the stress energy as

$$E_\omega(q) = \sum_{i<j} \omega_{ij} (q_i - q_j)^2,$$

which is a quadratic form on the configuration space $\mathbb{R}^{nD}$. The matrix of $E_\omega$ with respect to the standard basis of $\mathbb{R}^{nD}$ is $I^D \otimes \Omega$. The matrix $\Omega$, called the equilibrium stress matrix corresponding to the equilibrium stress $\omega$, is defined as the symmetric $n \times n$ matrix whose $i, j$ entry is $-\omega_{ij}$, when $i \neq j$, and is such that all row and column sums are zero. The energy $E_\omega$ is positive semidefinite (PSD) over $\mathbb{R}^{nD}$ if and only if $\Omega$ is a PSD matrix.

In this paper, we will use the following proposition:
Proposition 2.10 ([10] Prop. 1.2 and [8] Cor 1]). Suppose that the affine span of \((G, p)\) is \(d\)-dimensional. The kernel of any equilibrium stress matrix \(\Omega\) for \((G, p)\) must be of dimension at least \(d + 1\), and thus the rank of \(\Omega\) can be at most \(n - d - 1\).

When the rank of \(\Omega\) is \(n - d - 1\), if \(\Omega\) is also an equilibrium stress matrix for another framework \((G, q)\) then the configuration \(q\) is an affine image of the configuration \(p\).

When the rank of \(\Omega\) is \(n - d - 1\) and \(\Omega\) is PSD, if \(q\) is another configuration with zero energy under \(E_\omega\), then the configuration \(q\) is an affine image of the configuration \(p\).

Let \(L\) be an affine subspace of some Euclidean space. We say that a set of lines \(\{L_1, \ldots, L_m\} \subset L\), lie on a conic at infinity for \(L\) if, regarding the line directions in \(L\) as points at infinity in a corresponding real projective space, they all lie on a (non-trivial) conic in that space.

Concretely, suppose we have a framework \((G, p)\) in \(\mathbb{R}^D\) with a \(d\)-dimensional span. Then \((G, p)\) has its edge directions on a conic at infinity for \(\langle p \rangle\) iff there exists a non-zero symmetric \(d\)-by-\(d\) matrix, \(Q\), such that for all edges \(\{i, j\}\), we have \((p_i - p_j)^t Q (p_i - p_j) = 0\). From Lemma A.1 the non-zero property for \(Q\) is equivalent to the existence of some non-edge pair \(\{k, l\}\), where \((p_k - p_l)^t Q (p_k - p_l) \neq 0\).

So, for a framework \((G, p)\) in \(\mathbb{R}^D\) with a \(d\)-dimensional span, \((G, p)\) has its edge directions on a conic at infinity for \(\langle p \rangle\) iff there exists a symmetric \(D\)-by-\(D\) matrix, \(Q\), such that for all edges \(\{i, j\}\), we have \((p_i - p_j)^t Q (p_i - p_j) = 0\), but for some non-edge pair \(\{k, l\}\), we have \((p_k - p_l)^t Q (p_k - p_l) \neq 0\).

Conics at infinity are important due to the following proposition:

Proposition 2.11 ([10] Prop. 4.2]). Let \((G, p)\) be a framework in \(\mathbb{R}^D\). There exists a non-congruent framework \((G, q)\) with the same edge lengths as \((G, p)\) and where \(q\) is an affine image of \(p\) iff the edge directions of \((G, p)\) lie on a conic at infinity for \(\langle p \rangle\).

Following [8] we say a framework \((G, p)\) is super stable if there is an equilibrium stress \(\omega\) for \((G, p)\) such that its associated stress matrix \(\Omega\) is PSD, the rank of \(\Omega\) is \(n - d - 1\), where \(d\) is the dimension of the affine span \(\langle p \rangle\) of \(p\), and the edge directions do not lie on a conic at infinity of \(\langle p \rangle\).

It turns out that super stability is equivalent to universal prestress stability.
Theorem 2.12. A framework $(G, p)$ is super stable if and only if it is universally prestress stable.

The proof of this theorem mainly involves unwinding the various definitions with some linear algebra, and we delay it to Appendix A.

In this paper, our first main result (Corollary 4.8) will be that if $(G, p)$ is universally second-order rigid then it is universally prestress stable. Since it is known that there are frameworks that are universally rigid but not super stable [11], this completely describes the relationship between these properties. See Figure 3.

3 Farkas

Our central argument will rely on a basic Farkas-like duality principle for closed convex cones.

Definition 3.1. Let $Y$ be a closed convex cone in $\mathbb{R}^m$, for some $m$. Its dual cone $Y^*$ is defined as $\{\omega \in \mathbb{R}^m \mid \langle \omega, y \rangle \geq 0, \forall y \in Y\}$, where $\langle, \rangle$ is the usual inner product. Note that $\text{int}(Y^*)$ consists of the $\omega$ such that $\langle \omega, y \rangle > 0$ for all non-zero $y$ in $Y$.

Lemma 3.2. Let $Y$ be a closed convex cone in a finite dimensional real space. Let $L$ be a linear space with $Y \cap L = 0$. Then there is an element $\omega \in L^\perp$ such that $\omega \in \text{int}(Y^*)$.

Proof. We prove the contrapositive: Suppose there is no such interior element $\omega$. Then $L^\perp$ is disjoint from the interior of $Y^*$. Thus there is a “supporting” hyperplane $Z^*$ for $Y^*$ such that $Z^* \supset L^\perp$.

To see this we note that $\text{int}(Y^*)$ is convex and is disjoint from $L^\perp$. Thus we can use the weak separation theorem to find a hyperplane $Z^*$ (through the origin), that weakly separates $L^\perp$ from $\text{int}(Y^*)$ and thus from $Y^*$. This $Z^*$ is a supporting hyperplane for $Y^*$. Meanwhile, since $L^\perp$ is linear, it must be contained in $Z^*$.

We can associate with the supporting hyperplane $Z^* =: y^\perp$ a non-zero dual linear functional (ie. a primal vector), $y$, such that $\langle Y^*, y \rangle \geq 0$. Thus by definition of a dual cone, $y \in (Y^*)^* = cl(Y) = Y$. Also we must have $y \in L$. Thus $Y \cap L \neq 0$. □

The above proof is based on [21]; we include it here for completeness.
4 Universal second-order rigidity

We are interested in universal second-order rigidity, but it will be helpful to look at the case where some subset of the vertices are pinned to first-order.

Definition 4.1. Given framework \((G, p)\) in \(\mathbb{R}^D\). Let \(G_0\) be a subset of the vertices of \(G\). We regard \((G, G_0, p)\) as the framework, where the vertices in \(G_0\) are pinned “to first order” as described next.

We say that \((G, G_0, p)\) is pinned universally second-order rigid if there is no second-order flex \((p', p'')\) of \((G, p)\) in \(\mathbb{R}^D\), with \(p'\) non-trivial as a first-order flex in \(\mathbb{R}^D\) and with \(p'_j = 0\) when \(p_j\) corresponds to a vertex in \(G_0\). Note that there is no pinning constraint imposed on \(p''\).

We should be careful to realize that we assume the “pinned” vertices are only pinned to the first-order. For example, Figure 4 is not pinned universally second-order rigid, when the indicated vertices are pinned only to the first-order. In this example, there is a \(p'\) moving the central vertex orthogonal to the plane in three-space, and there is a corresponding \(p''\) of the pinned vertices pointing towards the central vertex. When bars are inserted between the first-order pinned vertices, then the framework becomes pinned universally second-order rigid. These inserted bars can even be subdivided as long as the subdividing vertices are also pinned to first order.

Figure 4: This framework is not universally second-order rigid when the outer three vertices are only pinned to first order.

Although this in not, on its own, the most natural concept, pinned universal second-order rigidity will be exactly what we need, using duality, to establish the existence of of an equilibrium stress matrix that is positive definite when acting on an appropriate subspace. When this construction is
applied to frameworks with appropriately chosen pins, we will be able to reason about prestress stability.

Definition 4.2. Given a graph $G$, a dimension $d$, and a chosen subset of "pinned" vertices $G_0$ we define

$$C'(d,G_0) := \{ p' \in \mathbb{R}^{nd} | p'_j = 0, \forall p_j \text{ corresponding to vertices in } G_0 \}. $$

Definition 4.3. Given a framework $(G,p)$. Let

$$Y := \{ R(p',p) | p' \in C'(D,G_0) \} \subset \mathbb{R}^e$$

where $R(\cdot,\cdot)$ is the rigidity form for the graph $G$, and $D$ is sufficiently large.

Let $L$ be the linear space defined as the linear span of the columns of $R(p)$, the rigidity matrix.

Lemma 4.4. $Y$ is a closed convex cone.

Proof. Let $Y^+$ be the set $\{ R(p',p') | p' \in \mathbb{R}^{nD} \}$. This set is isomorphic to the projection of the convex cone of Euclidean distance matrices on to the coordinates corresponding to the edges of the graph. From [19, Theorem 3.2], the set $Y^+$ is a closed convex cone. Our set $Y$ is obtained by intersecting $Y^+$ with the linear subspace where the edge lengths between the vertices in $G_0$ are all 0. This too must be a closed convex cone. $\square$

Lemma 4.5. Suppose that the vertices of $G_0$ in $p$ have an affine span that agrees with the affine span of $p$. Let $(G,G_0,p)$ be pinned universally second-order rigid. Then there is no non-trivial intersection of $L$ and $Y$.

Proof. Suppose that $y$ was some non-trivial intersection point. Since $y \in L$, then we have $y = -R(p,p'')$ for some $p''$. Since $y \in Y$, then we have $y = R(p',p')$ for some non-zero $p' \in C'(D,G_0)$. Since $D$ is a sufficiently large dimension, we can, without loss of generality, assume that $p'$ is orthogonal to the $d$-dimensional affine span of $p$. Thus $p'$ is a first-order flex for $(G,p)$. Since $p'$ is non-zero, but is zero on a set of vertices with a full affine span, then this flex is non-trivial in $\mathbb{R}^D$. Thus $(p',p'')$ is a non-trivial second-order flex. This contradicts the assumed pinned universal second-order rigidity. $\square$

Lemma 4.6. Any $\omega \in L^\perp$ is an equilibrium stress vector for $(G,p)$. Any $\omega \in \text{int}(Y^*)$ must correspond to an $\Omega$ that is positive definite on $C'(1,G_0) \subset \mathbb{R}^n$. 

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Proof. The vector $\omega$ must be in the cokernel of $R(p)$ and thus must be an equilibrium stress vector for $(G, p)$ (Proposition 2.2). Any $\omega \in \text{int}(Y^*)$ has the property that for any non-zero $p' \in C'(D, G_0)$ we have

$$\sum_{i<j} \omega_{ij}(p'_i - p'_j)^2 > 0$$

Theorem 4.7. Let $(G, G_0, p)$ be pinned universally second-order rigid. Then it must have an equilibrium stress $\Omega$ that is positive definite on $C'(1, G_0)$.

Proof. This follows immediately using Lemmas 4.5, 4.4, 3.2, and 4.6. \square

We can now obtain our first main result about (unpinned) universal second-order rigidity.

Corollary 4.8. If $(G, p)$ is universally second-order rigid and has a $d$-dimensional affine span, then it must have an equilibrium stress matrix $\Omega$ that is positive semidefinite (acting on $\mathbb{R}^n$) and of rank $n - d - 1$. Thus it must be super stable/universally prestress stable.

Proof. Pick any subset of $d + 1$ vertices with a full $d$-dimensional affine span in the configuration $p$ to be the subset $G_0$. If $(G, p)$ is universally second-order rigid, then $(G, G_0, p)$ must be pinned universally second-order rigid. From Theorem 4.7, it must have an equilibrium stress $\Omega$ that is positive definite on $C'(1, G_0)$. Since $G_0$ is of size $d + 1$, then $\Omega$ must have rank at least $n - d - 1$, and as this is maximal (Proposition 2.10), it must have rank equal to $n - d - 1$, and also must be positive semidefinite.

Since it is universally second-order rigid it is universally (globally) rigid. Thus it cannot have any non-congruent frameworks with the same edge lengths, let alone one that arises through an affine transform. So from Proposition 2.11, it cannot have its edge directions on a conic at infinity. Thus it is super stable and, from Theorem 2.12, also universally prestress stable. \square

4.1 Generalizations

There are a few directions for generalizing Corollary 4.8.

A framework $(G, p)$ with a $d$-dimensional affine span is called dimensionally rigid if there is no other framework that has the same edge lengths and
has an affine span of dimension greater than \(d\). If a framework is dimensionally but not universally rigid, then it is not locally rigid in \(\mathbb{R}^d\), but all other equivalent frameworks can be obtained from \(p\), through the restrictions of an affine transform acting on \(\mathbb{R}^d\). (The edge directions of \((G, p)\) lie on a conic at infinity.) Like universal rigidity, dimensional rigidity can often be certified by a single PSD equilibrium stress matrix \(\Omega\) of rank \(n - d - 1\) but such a single-matrix certification does not always exist [11].

It is easy to see that Corollary 4.8 also provides a characterization when such a single certification of dimensional rigidity exists. Suppose that in all dimensions, there are no second-order flexes other than those where \(p'\) arises from an affine transform of \(p\). Then following the proof of the corollary, we pick any subset of \(d + 1\) vertices with a full \(d\) dimensional affine span in the configuration \(p\) to be a subset \(G_0\). Then \((G, G_0, p)\) will be pinned universally second-order rigid, and duality will give us our desired \(\Omega\).

We can also consider a general PSD feasibility problem [19]:

\[
F := \{X \in S_n^+: \mathcal{M}(X) = b\}
\]

where \(S_n^+\) is the cone of positive semidefinite \(n\)-by-\(n\) matrices and \(\mathcal{M}\) is a linear mapping from \(S^n\) to \(\mathbb{R}^e\), for some \(e\), and \(b \in \mathbb{R}^e\). Let \(r\) be the highest rank among the solution set \(F\), obtained, say, by some solution \(X_0\). If \(r = n\), this problem has a positive definite feasible solution, and we say that the problem has a singularity degree of zero.

Suppose that \(r < n\), then (due to a Farkas duality) it must have a (dual) PSD matrix \(\Omega\) such that \(\langle \Omega, X \rangle = 0\) for all \(\{X : \mathcal{M}(X) = b\}\). If we can find such an \(\Omega\) of rank \(n - r\), then we say that the problem has a singularity degree of one. The pair, \((X_0, \Omega)\), forms a certificate that the maximal rank for this problem is indeed \(r\).

Otherwise, the singularity degree is higher, and can be found by appropriately iterating the above process, called facial reduction [5, 11]. Higher singularity degrees can result in numerical instability.

Corollary 4.8 gives a characterization for singularity degree one, when \(\mathcal{M}\) corresponds to computing the squared edge length measurement over the edges of a graph \(G\), given the Gram matrix of a configuration \(p\). (Here \(r\) would correspond with \(d + 1\)). Can we generalize this to get a characterization for a general SDP feasibility problem to have singularity degree one?

Indeed, most of the ideas generalize very naturally. Let us begin with the appropriate generalization to Equation (6). Suppose we can factor \(X_0 = P^tP\), where \(P\) is a rank \(r\), \(n\)-by-\(n\) matrix.
The analogue of the linear space $R(p,p'')$, where $p''$ is allowed to be any configuration, is then $\mathcal{M}(P'^t P'' + (P'')^t P)$. Where $P''$ is allowed to be any n-by-n matrix. Interestingly, the space spanned by $P'^t P'' + (P'')^t P$ is, in fact, $\tan(X_0, S^n_+)$, the tangent to $S^n_+$ at $X_0$ (see [23] for definitions). And thus our analogous linear space is $\mathcal{M}(\tan(X_0, S^n_+))$. The analogue to an equilibrium stress vector is a vector $\omega \in \mathbb{R}^e$ such that $\mathcal{M}^*(\omega)P^t = 0$, where $\mathcal{M}^*$ is the adjoint mapping back up into $S^n$.

Let $F_0$ be the face of $X_0$ in $S^n_+$. Let us define a “complement face”, $\bar{F}_0$, to be any face of $S^n_+$ that includes some matrix of rank $n - r$, and has no non-trivial intersection with $F_0$. With these defined, the general analogue to our cone $R(p',p'')$ is $\mathcal{M}(\bar{F}_0)$.

Let us assume that $\mathcal{M}(\bar{F}_0)$ happens to be closed. Then the main ideas of this section allow us to conclude that if the constructed linear space has only the trivial intersection with the constructed cone, then our PSD feasibility problem has singularity degree one.

Unfortunately, in the case that $\mathcal{M}(\bar{F}_0)$ is not closed, then the Farkas Lemma 3.2 can not be applied and so it less clear if we can reason about singularity degree one.

5 Triangulated convex polygons with holes

We have two goals for this section and the next. One goal is to prove that arbitrary triangulations of certain polyhedral spaces are universally rigid, with some of the vertices pinned to first order. Another goal is to prove that arbitrary triangulations of certain polyhedral spaces are prestress stable in $\mathbb{R}^3$. These two goals are closely related.

A motivating example for the first goal is when the polyhedral space is the underlying space of an embedded simplicial complex where some of its vertices are pinned to the first-order. But we will require that the space satisfies certain geometric conditions. For example, a two-dimensional convex planar polygon with its boundary vertices pinned to first order, and some “holes” removed from its interior, will be universally second-order rigid under any triangulation, if the holes are placed correctly. Figure 5(a) is a case when the holes are properly placed, whereas in Figure 5(b) the holes are not properly placed.

Definition 5.1. Following [20] a polyhedron $X = |K|$ is the underlying space of a simplicial complex $K$ in some Euclidean space and $K$ is called a
Figure 5: When the corner vertices of Figure (a) are pinned, and any triangulation of the blue two dimensional polyhedron is taken, the framework is super stable. For Figure (b) there is a triangulation that is a finite mechanism in 3-space.

triangulation of \( X \). If \( X \) is a polyhedron, with a subpolyhedron \( X_0 \subset X \), we say that \( (X,X_0) \) is a spider set if for every point \( \mathbf{x} \in X - X_0 \), there is a framework \( (G_{sp}, \mathbf{q}) \) with \( \mathbf{x} \) a vertex of \( \mathbf{q} \), whose edges lie in \( X \), and there is an equilibrium stress that is positive on all the edges that have at least one vertex in \( X - X_0 \) (and no zero length edges). We call \( (G_{sp}, \mathbf{q}) \) a spider tensegrity corresponding to \( \mathbf{x} \) and the spider set \( (X,X_0) \)

Note that a polyhedron is allowed to be of “mixed dimension”.

The definition of a spider set does not depend on a particular triangulation. For example, when a polyhedral set \( X \) is a subset of a convex planar polygon \( F \), with \( X_0 \) the boundary of the polygon, the question as to whether it is a spider set can be determined by considering the infamous Maxwell-Cremona correspondence as discussed in [9] and shown in Figure 1. Suppose that \( P_F \), a convex polytope, projects, orthogonally by the projection \( \pi \), onto the polygon \( F \) which coincides with the “bottom” two dimensional face of \( P_F \). Let \( P_F^{(1)} \) be the one-skeleton of \( P_F \). Let \( X \) consist of the projection \( \pi(P_F^{(1)}) \) and the projection of any chosen subset of the two-dimensional top faces of \( P_F \). Then such an \( (X,X_0) \) must be a spider set. To see this, if \( \mathbf{x} \) is the projection of a vertex of \( P_F \), then the projection of the one-skeleton serves as the spider tensegrity for \( X \). If \( \mathbf{x} \) is the projection of a point in the relative interior of one of the faces of \( P_F \), it is easy to lift that point slightly above the convex hull of the other vertices, adjusting the polytope \( P_F \). If \( \mathbf{x} \) is the projection of a point in the relative interior of an edge of \( P_F \), it is easy
to adjust the stress to accommodate the subdivided edge.

**Theorem 5.2.** Let \((K, K_0)\) be any triangulation of a spider set \((X, X_0)\) and \((G, G_0, p)\) the corresponding framework of the one-skeleton of \((K, K_0)\), where \(G_0\) corresponds to those vertices of \(G\) that are in \(X_0\). Then \((G, G_0, p)\) is universally second-order rigid when the vertices of \(G_0\) are pinned to the first-order.

**Proof.** Let \(p_1\) be any vertex of \((G, G_0, p)\), not in \(G_0\). By the definition of a spider set, there is a spider tensegrity \((G_{sp}, q)\) of \((X, X_0)\), where \(q_1 = p_1\) is a vertex in that tensegrity and \((G_{sp}, q)\) has an equilibrium stress \(\omega\), positive on all the edges with at least one vertex in \(X - X_0\). Let \((p', p'')\) be a second-order flex of \((G, G_0, p)\), where \(p'_j = 0\) for vertices in \(G_0\). We will show that \(p'_1 = 0\). Applying this to all the vertices of \(G\) not in \(G_0\) will show our result.

For any simplex \(\sigma\) of \(K\) and edge \(\tau\) of the tensegrity \((G_{sp}, q)\), the sets \(\sigma \cap \tau\), that are non-empty, provide a subdivision of the edges of \((G_{sp}, q)\) say \((\overline{G_{sp}}, \overline{r})\). The second-order flex of \((G, G_0, p)\) extends naturally to a corresponding second-order flex of each of the simplices of \(K\), and in particular to the segments \(\sigma \cap \tau\). Thus there is a corresponding second-order flex \((r', r'')\) of \((\overline{G_{sp}}, \overline{r})\), where \(p'_1 = q'_1 = r'_1\), say and \(r'_j = 0\) for \(r_j \in X_0\). Similarly there is a corresponding equilibrium stress \(\overline{\omega}\) for \((\overline{G_{sp}}, \overline{r})\), that is positive on all the edges in \(X - X_0\). Then for the rigidity matrix \(R(r)\) for \((\overline{G_{sp}}, \overline{r})\), we have \(\overline{\omega}^t R(r) = 0\), by Proposition 2.2. This gives us the contradiction:

\[
0 = R(r)r'' + R(r')r' = \overline{\omega}^t R(r)r'' + \overline{\omega}^t R(r')r' = \overline{\omega}^t R(r')r' = \sum_{i<j} \overline{\omega}_{ij} (r'_i - r'_j)^2 > 0,
\]

unless \(p'_1 = q'_1 = r'_1 = 0\).

Note that even when the spider set is a triangle with its vertices pinned, there are triangulations of the interior that are not “spiderwebs” as shown in the classic twisted example in Figure 6a from [12]. This means that any equilibrium stress must be negative on some of the internal edges. Figure 6b shows how the spider construction in the proof of Theorem 5.2 would work for the center vertex of Figure 6a.

Together with Theorem 4.7, this gives us the following:
Figure 6: (a) The set $X$ is a single triangle and $X_0$ is its boundary. The framework $(G, G_0, p)$ is the one skeleton of a triangulation $(K, K_0)$ of $(X, X_0)$. (b) The outer three edges and the subdivided dashed edges form a subdivided spider tensegrity $(G_{sp}, r)$ of $(X, X_0)$ corresponding the center vertex.

Corollary 5.3. Let $(K, K_0)$ be any triangulation of a spider set $(X, X_0)$ and $(G, G_0, p)$ the corresponding framework of its one-skeleton, where $G_0$ corresponds to those vertices of $G$ that are in $X_0$. Then $(G, G_0, p)$ must have an equilibrium stress $\omega$ such that the energy, $E_\omega$, is positive definite on $C'(1, G_0)$. (see Definition 4.2).

The existence result of Corollary 5.3 is somewhat related to the notion of a discrete Laplacian operator [26]. In that setting, given a triangulation of a polygon $F$ in $\mathbb{R}^2$ (which need not even be convex), one looks for a vector $\omega \in \mathbb{R}^e$ with the property that $E_\omega$ is positive away from the boundary vertices, and that for all internal vertices (not on the polygon boundary) we have $\sum_{j \in N(i)} \omega_{ij} (p_i - p_j) = 0$. Such an $\omega$ acts as an equilibrium stress for $(G, p)$ under the added assumption that all of the boundary vertices are fully pinned to all orders. Under these weaker requirements, there exist well known constructive approaches for generating such an $\omega$.

One such construction uses the so called “cotangent” weights [24], which assigns $\omega_{ij} := \cot(\theta_{ij}) + \cot(\theta_{ji})$ to each internal edge (see Figure 7). Depending on the geometry of the triangulation, some of these weights may be negative. They derive this energy in the context of a Dirichlet energy computation. There is also another derivation for the cotangent weights that
uses Heron’s formula for the area of a triangle, the law of sines and the law of cosines. See [18], for example. But when the polygon $F$ has more than three vertices, this construction cannot be used to generate an $\omega$ that is in equilibrium at the boundary vertices.

Figure 7: The cotangent construction assigns $\omega_{ij} := \cot(\theta_{ij}) + \cot(\theta_{ji})$ to each internal edge.

A related question is if a “random” set of holes is put in a membrane with its boundary clamped, is there a critical threshold with a “phase change” where the membrane becomes not rigid in $\mathbb{R}^3$? It turns out for the continuous case [13] and the triangulated case [22], the answer is no. With high probability the membrane will have some flexible parts.

6 Triangulated convex polytopes with holes

We now wish to consider a convex polytope $P$ in $\mathbb{R}^3$ and a bar framework $(G, p)$, where all the vertices and bars are contained in the two-dimensional boundary surface of $P$.

Definition 6.1. Let $P$ be a convex polytope in $\mathbb{R}^3$. Let $P^{(1)}$ be the underlying point set of the one-skeleton of $P$. Let $H$ be a polyhedral subset of the boundary surface of $P$. We say that $H$ is holeyhedron if the following properties hold for every (two-dimensional) face $F$ of $P$:

(a) The one-skeleton $P^{(1)} \subset H$.

(b) Any infinitesimal flex in the plane of $F$ of any triangulation of $H \cap F$ is trivial on vertices that are in $P^{(1)} \cap F$. 

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(c) The polyhedron \((H \cap F, P^{(1)} \cap F)\) is a spider set.

Note that the complete boundary surface of a convex polytope (without any holes) is always a holeyhedron.

The following is a slight generalization of [7] Theorem 5.2 using Definition [6.1(b)]. This relies deeply on Alexandrov’s theorem about the infinitesimal rigidity of certain triangulated convex polytopes.

**Lemma 6.2.** Let \((G, p)\) be the bar framework of a triangulation of a holeyhedron. Let \(p'\) be a first order flex in \(\mathbb{R}^3\). Then \(p'\), when restricted to vertices in \(P^{(1)}\), is a trivial first-order flex.

We now state our second main result of this paper.

**Theorem 6.3.** Any triangulation \((G, p)\) of a holeyhedron, \(H\), is prestress stable in \(\mathbb{R}^3\).

**Proof.** From Corollary [5.3] we have for each triangulated \(F \cap H\) of our face an \(\omega_F\) such that \(E_{\omega_F}\) is positive definite on all vectors that vanish on \(P^{(1)} \cap F\). By simply adding together all of these \(\omega_F\), we obtain an \(\omega\) that is an equilibrium stress for \((G, p)\) with an associated stress matrix \(\Omega\) that must be positive definite on any vector \(p' = (p'_1, \ldots, p'_{n})\) that vanishes on \(P^{(1)}\).

Meanwhile, from Lemma [6.2] all first-order flexes \(p'\) in \(\mathbb{R}^3\) for \((G, p)\) have \(p'\) trivial on \(P^{(1)}\). By adding an appropriate trivial flex to \(p'\) we can make \(p'\) vanish on \(P^{(1)}\). In light of Equation (2), this addition will not change \(E_{\omega}(p')\), as \(\omega\) is an equilibrium stress for \(p\). Thus, if \(p'\) is any non-trivial first-order flex of the triangulation, we have \(E_{\omega}(p') > 0\), making the triangulation \((G, p)\) of \(H\) prestress stable in \(\mathbb{R}^3\).

### 7 Extensions and related results

If one considers only polyhedral subsets \(H\) of the boundary of a convex polytope \(P\) in three-space, where one is allowed to triangulate \(H\) at will, then it is important, for each face, \(F\), that no hole have a vertex on the interior of any of the natural edges of \(P\), (although there can be holes that touch the natural vertices). For example, Figure 24 of [7] is a tetrahedron with a small slit on one face touching the relative interior of one edge that can be subdivided and flexed as a finite mechanism to be flat in the plane. See also [1] for methods for decreasing the size of the slit.
In more detail, suppose one vertex $x$ of one of the holes of $H$ lies on a natural edge of the polytope. And suppose the interval $[x, y]$ is part of the boundary of that hole, interior to its face in $P$, as in Figure 8. Then any vertex, say $z$, on the interior interval $[x, y]$ cannot be part of a spider tensegrity, because of the positivity requirement on the equilibrium stress for all interior edges of a spider tensegrity. For example, one cannot obtain equilibrium at $z$ if there is positive stress on an edge, say, from $z$ towards $w$. And one cannot obtain equilibrium at $x$ if there is positive stress on an edge from $x$ towards $z$. This positivity is required by Definition 6.1c.

![Figure 8](image)

**Figure 8:** Any vertex $z$ of a subdivision of face on the interval between the points $x$ and $y$, as shown, cannot be part of a spider tensegrity. All the edges adjacent to $z$ must have zero stress.

Alternatively, suppose the surface $H$ has a hole with an edge that coincides completely with a natural edge of the polytope. Then when that edge is subdivided (which is allowed in a triangulation of $H$), then this triangulation of the set $H \cap F$ will not have the first-order rigidity property of Definition 6.1b.

With the above comments in mind it seems that if an arbitrary triangulation of a polyhedral subset of the surface of a convex polytope $P$ is prestress stable, each natural edge $e$ of $P$ must have at least a small “flange” that lies in each side of $e$ in each of the two adjacent faces so that the relative interior of $e$ is in the topological interior relative to the two dimensional surface, as in Figure 5(a).
7.1 Prestressed fixed frameworks

We can extend the notion of a spider tensegrity as in Definition 5.1 to say that a framework \((G, G_0, p)\) is a spider tensegrity if there is an equilibrium stress for \((G, p)\) that is positive on all the edges with at least one vertex in \(G - G_0\).

If one is given a fixed bar (or tensegrity) framework, we can use some of the techniques described previously to generate prestress stable structures as follows:

**Corollary 7.1.** Suppose a bar framework \((G, p)\) in \(\mathbb{R}^d\) is such that there are vertices \(G_0\) of \(G\) such that \((G, G_0, p)\) is a spider tensegrity, and \(G_0\) is contained in a subgraph \(G_1\) of \(G\) such that \((G_1, q)\) is first-order rigid, with \(q\) corresponding to the vertices of \(G_1\). Then \((G, p)\) is prestress stable in \(\mathbb{R}^d\).

Note that the framework \((G, p)\) above may not be first-order rigid as is the case for Figure 9b, but the boundary is part of the framework in Figure 9a, which is first-order rigid in the plane.

---

**Corollary 7.2.** If each face \(F\) of a convex polytope in \(\mathbb{R}^3\) contains a spider tensegrity such that the vertices on each boundary of \(F\) are first-order rigid in the plane of \(F\), as in Corollary 7.1, then the union of these spider tensegrities is prestress stable in \(\mathbb{R}^3\).

One may apply the Roth-Whiteley criterion [25] for the first-order rigidity of tensegrity frameworks to the framework in Figure 9a. Namely that the
underlying bar framework is first-order rigid, and there is an equilibrium stress, positive on all the cables, and negative on all the struts.

A  Super stability

In this section we provide a proof of Theorem 2.12.

To prove that super stability implies universal prestress stability, we will use the fact that a PSD equilibrium stress matrix $\Omega$ of rank $n - d - 1$ must block all non-trivial infinitesimal flexes except for ones arising from affine transforms of $p$. Then we will argue, using the assumption of no conic at infinity, that any affine infinitesimal flex must be trivial.

As a warm up, we start with the following lemma which we mentioned in Section 2.2

Lemma A.1. Let $(G, p)$ be a framework with a $d$-dimensional span in $\mathbb{R}^d$. Suppose $Q$ is a $d$-by-$d$ symmetric matrix such that for all pairs, $\{k, l\}$, we have $(p_k - p_l)^t Q (p_k - p_l) = 0$. Then $Q$ must be the zero matrix.

Proof. Let us pick a subset $S$, of $d + 1$ points in affine general position. Next, we perform an affine change of coordinates so that one of the vertices of $S$ is at the origin and each other vertex is along a unique coordinate axis. Then we can use the conditions $(p_k - p_l)^t Q (p_k - p_l) = 0$ to see that $Q$ is skew-symmetric. Since $Q$ is also assumed to be symmetric, it must be zero. \(\Box\)

Definition A.2. We say that an infinitesimal flex $p'$ of $(G, p)$ is effective if there is some non-edge pair $\{k, l\}$, with $(p_k - p_l) \cdot (p'_k - p'_l) \neq 0$.

Lemma A.3. Suppose a framework $(G, p)$ with a $d$-dimensional span in $\mathbb{R}^d$ has an infinitesimal flex $p'$, such that each $p'_i$ lies in $\langle p \rangle$, if $p'$ is non-effective then it is trivial.

Proof. Without loss of generality we can place both $p$ and $p'$ in $\mathbb{R}^d$. For any subset $S$ of $d + 1$ points in affine general position, the restriction of $p'$ and $p$ to $S$ must satisfy $p'_i = A_S p_i + t_S$ for some unique $d$-by-$d$ matrix $A_S$ and $d$-vector $t_S$.

By assumption, for all pairs of vertices $\{k, l\}$ in $S$ we have

$$0 = (p_k - p_l) \cdot (p'_k - p'_l)$$

$$= (p_k - p_l)^t A_S (p_k - p_l)$$
As in the proof of Lemma [A.1], this forces $A_S$ to be skew symmetric.

Let $T$ be another such subset that shares $d$ vertices with $S$, where we have $p'_i = A_T p_i + t_T$. Since $T$ and $S$ share $d$ vertices in general affine position, this means $A_T = A_S$ and $t_T = t_S$. (One way to see this is to note that a skew symmetric matrix is fully determined by any $d - 1$ of its columns).

This process can be reapplied as needed to show that all of $p'$ represents a trivial infinitesimal flex.

**Definition A.4.** We say that an infinitesimal flex $p'$ of $(G, p)$ is affine if $p'_i = M p_i + t$ for some $D$-by-$D$ matrix $M$ and some $D$-vector $t$.

**Lemma A.5.** Suppose a framework $(G, p)$ with a $d$-dimensional span in $\mathbb{R}^D$ has an affine infinitesimal flex $p'$, where each $p'_i$ is orthogonal to $(p)$, then $p'$ is a trivial infinitesimal flex.

**Proof.** Without loss of generality, using a orthonormal change of coordinates in $\mathbb{R}^D$, we can assume that the affine span of this framework $(G, p)$ agrees with the the first $d$ dimensions of $\mathbb{R}^D$, thus for each $p_i$, its last $D - d$ coordinates are zero, and for $p'_i$, its first $d$ coordinates are zero.

Thus $M$ must have the block form

$$M = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & X \\ Y^t & Z \end{bmatrix}$$

where $X$ is $d$-by-$D$, $Y^t$ is $D$-by-$d$ and $Z$ is $D$-by-$D$. Since the last $D - d$ coordinates of each $p_i$ are zero, we can replace $M$ with

$$A := \begin{bmatrix} 0 & -Y^t \\ Y^t & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

and still obtain the same flex, $p'_i = Ap_i$. As $A$ is skew, this proves that $p'$ is trivial. $\square$

**Lemma A.6.** If a framework $(G, p)$ has a non-trivial affine infinitesimal flex $p'$ then the framework it has its edge directions at a conic at infinity for $(p)$.

**Proof.** We have $p' = Mp + t$, where $M$ is some $D$-by-$D$ matrix. From Lemma [A.5] the component of $p'$ that is orthogonal to $(p)$ is trivial, and thus can be subtracted from $p'$ without changing its non-triviality or effectiveness. From Lemma [A.3] this remaining flex must be effective, thus so too must $p'$. 24
We can write \( M = A + Q \) where \( A \) is skew symmetric and \( Q \) is symmetric. By removing the trivial infinitesimal flex generated by \( Ap_i + t \), the remaining infinitesimal flex generated by \( Qp_i \) must still be effective.

As an infinitesimal flex, for all edges \( \{i, j\} \), we have \((p_i - p_j) \cdot (Qp_i - Qp_j) = 0\) which gives us \((p_i - p_j)^t Q(p_i - p_j) = 0\). Since the flex generated by \( Qp_i \) is effective, we have some non-edge pair \( \{k, l\} \), with \((p_k - p_l)^t Q(p_k - p_l) \neq 0\). This gives us our desired conic at infinity.

This gives us one direction of Theorem 2.12. If \((G, p)\) is super stable, it must have a PSD equilibrium stress matrix \( \Omega \) of rank \( n - d - 1 \). From Proposition [2.10], the corresponding stress energy must be positive on any non-trivial infinitesimal flex unless it is an affine infinitesimal flex. From Lemma [A,6] such a non-trivial affine infinitesimal flex can only exist if the edge directions of \((G, p)\) are on a conic at infinity for \( \langle p \rangle \). But our assumption of super stability also rules this out. Thus \((G, p)\) must be universally prestress stable.

To prove that universal prestress stability implies super stability, our main step is to show that, in unconstrained dimensions, all one-dimensional configurations that are not affine images of \( p \) can be used to generate non-trivial infinitesimal flexes for \((G, p)\). Thus the assumed blocking equilibrium stress must be PSD and of rank \( n - d - 1 \).

**Lemma A.7.** If \((G, p)\), a framework with a \( d \)-dimensional affine span in \( \mathbb{R}^D \), is universally prestress stable, then it must have a PSD equilibrium stress matrix of rank \( n - d - 1 \).

**Proof.** Let \( p' \in \mathbb{R}^{nD} \) be any “configuration”, such that each \( p'_i \) has zero values for all but its \( d + 1 \)st coordinate. Since \( p_i \) has zero values in its last \( D - d \) coordinates, then \( p' \) must always be an infinitesimal flex for \((G, p)\). Let \( v_i \) be the \( d + 1 \)st coordinate of \( p'_i \), with \( v \) is a vector in \( \mathbb{R}^n \). This infinitesimal flex, \( p' \), will be non-trivial unless \( v \) arises as a skew-symmetric affine image of \( p \) and thus can be written as \( v_i = a^t \tilde{p}_i + t \) for a fixed \( d \)-vector \( a \) and scalar \( t \).

From universal prestress stability, \((G, p)\) must have an equilibrium stress matrix \( \Omega \) with \( v^t \Omega v > 0 \) when \( p' \) is non-trivial. Thus \( \Omega \) must have positive energy on a linear space of dimension \( n - d - 1 \). As this is the maximum possible rank for an equilibrium stress matrix (Proposition 2.10), it must in fact be PSD and of rank \( n - d - 1 \). \( \square \)
Lemma A.8. If \((G, p)\), a framework with a \(d\) dimensional affine span, is universally prestress stable, then cannot have its edge directions on a conic at infinity of \(\langle p \rangle\).

Proof. Since \((G, p)\) is universally prestress stable, it is universally (globally) rigid. So it cannot have any non-congruent frameworks with the same edge lengths, let alone one that arises through an affine transform. So from Proposition 2.11 it cannot have its edge directions on a conic at infinity. □

This gives us the other direction of Theorem 2.12. If \((G, p)\) is universally prestress stable, we simply combine Lemmas A.7 and A.8 to conclude that \((G, p)\) is super stable. □

Remark A.9. In the proof of Lemma A.7, we only needed to use \(d + 1\) dimensions. Thus in this direction, what we have really shown in the following stronger statement: if \((G, p)\) has a \(d\)-dimensional span in \(\mathbb{R}^{d+1}\), and it is prestress stable in \(\mathbb{R}^{d+1}\), then it must be super stable.

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