



Dear Reader,

About five years ago, I organized a SODA in Kyoto. We had a record number of submissions and the PC had to spend a tremendous amount of time and efforts for selecting papers, which many PC members think exceeds the limit of their abilities. This problem is not only for SODA, but for many good theory conferences. Why so many submissions? One of the reasons is repeated submissions of the same work to several conferences (until it is accepted). Many of you, including myself, have (bad) experiences that the same work was rejected even three, four times. This obviously increases the number of submissions and makes the task of the PC more difficult.

Would there be anything we can do? One simple solution is to combine two or three conferences, say A, B and C, that take place within a certain range of time, and to select papers for them at the same time. More specifically, when submitting your paper, you also submit an order of A, B and C, preferring the conferences in this order. After getting scores of the papers, the PC decides which paper goes to which conference within the capacities of the conferences. This is a typical assignment problem and we have quite a few algorithms for obtaining "good" matchings, where the theory of stable matchings should be useful. Of course there can be many objections to this idea, but I would appreciate a lot if somebody does experiments or simulations to see what happens.

This issue includes a special joint column



of Distributed Computing and Education, "If You're Not Writing a Program, Don't Use a Programming Language," by Leslie Lamport. As suggested in the front page of the column, the title continues as "but use the language of mathematics." I totally agree and understand why this column is not only for DC but also for Education. However, I think there are also two levels for algorithms, the one usually written in a pseudo code and the other a more informal one describing basic ideas. And I want to say "if you are not writing a formal algorithm, don't use mathematics..."

Kyoto is getting hot, but this year, at least up to now, seems much better than usual. The temperature outside is about 20°C now, which is perfect for all kinds of activities both physical and intellectual; I hope this will continue as long as possible. I guess many of you have already entered the vacation season and I hope you have more time to enjoy our Bulletin.

*Kazuo Iwama, Kyoto  
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