20.5
MST algorithm for negative weights, and non-distinct costs

When edge costs are not distinct

Heuristic argument: Make edge costs distinct by adding a small tiny and different cost to each edge

Formal argument: Order edges lexicographically to break ties

1. $e_i \prec e_j$ if either $c(e_i) < c(e_j)$ or $(c(e_i) = c(e_j)$ and $i < j)$
2. Lexicographic ordering extends to sets of edges. If $A, B \subseteq E$, $A \neq B$ then $A \prec B$ if either $c(A) < c(B)$ or $(c(A) = c(B)$ and $A \setminus B$ has a lower indexed edge than $B \setminus A)$
3. Can order all spanning trees according to lexicographic order of their edge sets. Hence there is a unique MST.

Prim's, Kruskal, and Reverse Delete Algorithms are optimal with respect to lexicographic ordering.

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Edge Costs: Positive and Negative

1. Algorithms and proofs don't assume that edge costs are non-negative! MST algorithms work for arbitrary edge costs.
2. Another way to see this: make edge costs non-negative by adding to each edge a large enough positive number. Why does this work for MSTs but not for shortest paths?
3. Can compute maximum weight spanning tree by negating edge costs and then computing an MST.

   Question: Why does this not work for shortest paths?

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THE END

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(for now)