Minimum vertex disjoint path on a DAG

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1 Idea

Given a directed acyclic graph $G = (V, E)$, we are to find the minimum number of vertex-disjoint paths to cover each vertex in V.

We can construct a bipartite graph $G' = (Vout \cup Vin, E')$ from G, where :

$$Vout = \{v \in V : v \ has \ positive \ out - degree\}$$
$$Vin = \{v \in V : v \ has \ positive \ in - degree\}$$
$$E' = \{(u, v) \in Vout \times Vin : (u, v) \in E\}$$

Then it can be shown, via König's theorem, that G' has a matching of size m if and only if there exists $n - m$ vertex-disjoint paths that cover each vertex in G, where n is the number of vertices in G and m is the maximum cardinality bipartite mathching in G'.

Therefore, the problem can be solved by finding the maximum cardinality matching in G' instead.

NOTE: If the paths are note necesarily disjoints, find the transitive closure and solve the problem for disjoint paths.