

**University of Rome Tor Vergata**  
**Bachelor's Degree in**  
**ENGINEERING SCIENCES**

The Finite Element Method

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Supervisor: Giuseppe Tomassetti

## REFERENCES:

Claes Johnson, Numerical solution of PDE

Mark s. Gockenbach , Understanding and implementig the  
Finite Element Method

# Numerical solutions of partial differential equations by the finite element method

Claes Johnson



- 0. Introduction
- 0.1 Background
- 0.2 Difference methods-finite element methods
- 0.3 Scope of the book

- 1. Introduction to FEM for elliptic problems
  - 1.1 Variational formulation of a one-dimensional model problem
  - 1.2 An error estimate for FEM for the model problem
  - 1.3 FEM for the Poisson equation
  - 1.5 Hilbert spaces
  - 1.6 A geometric interpretation of FEM
  - 1.7 A Neumann problem. Natural and essential boundary conditions
  - 1.8 Remarks on programming

# The Finite Element Method

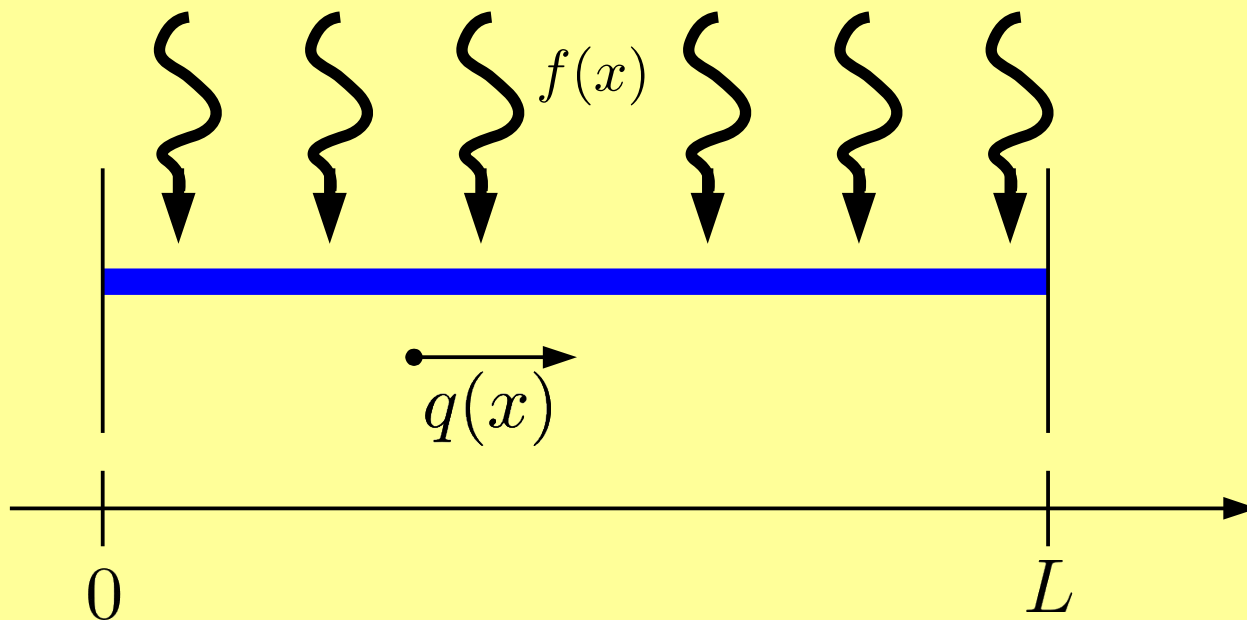
A numerical technique for finding approximate solutions to boundary-value problems from Science and Engineering

# Example: heat conduction in one dimension (stationary problem)

$$q'(x) = f(x) \quad (\text{conservation of energy})$$

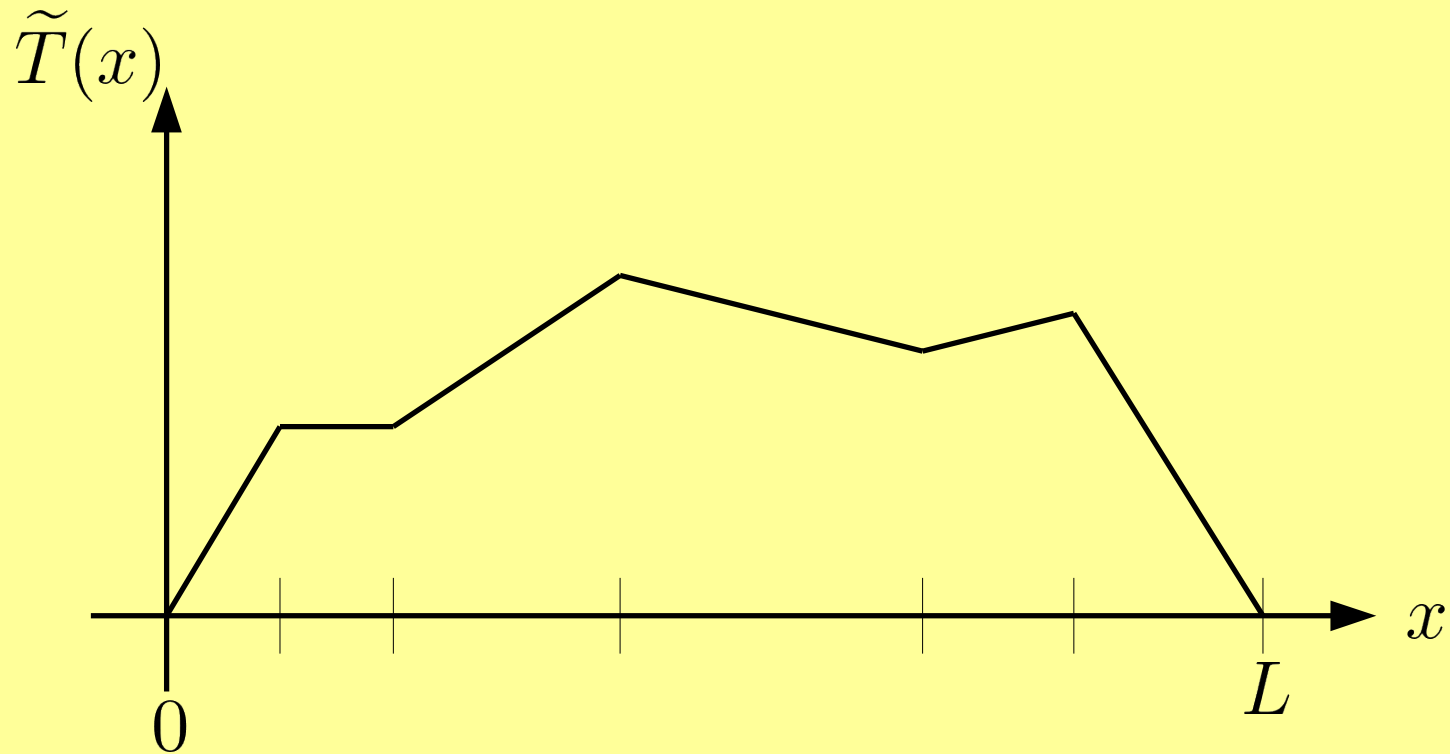
$$-q(x) = kT'(x) \quad (\text{Fourier's law})$$

$$T(0) = T(L) = 0;$$

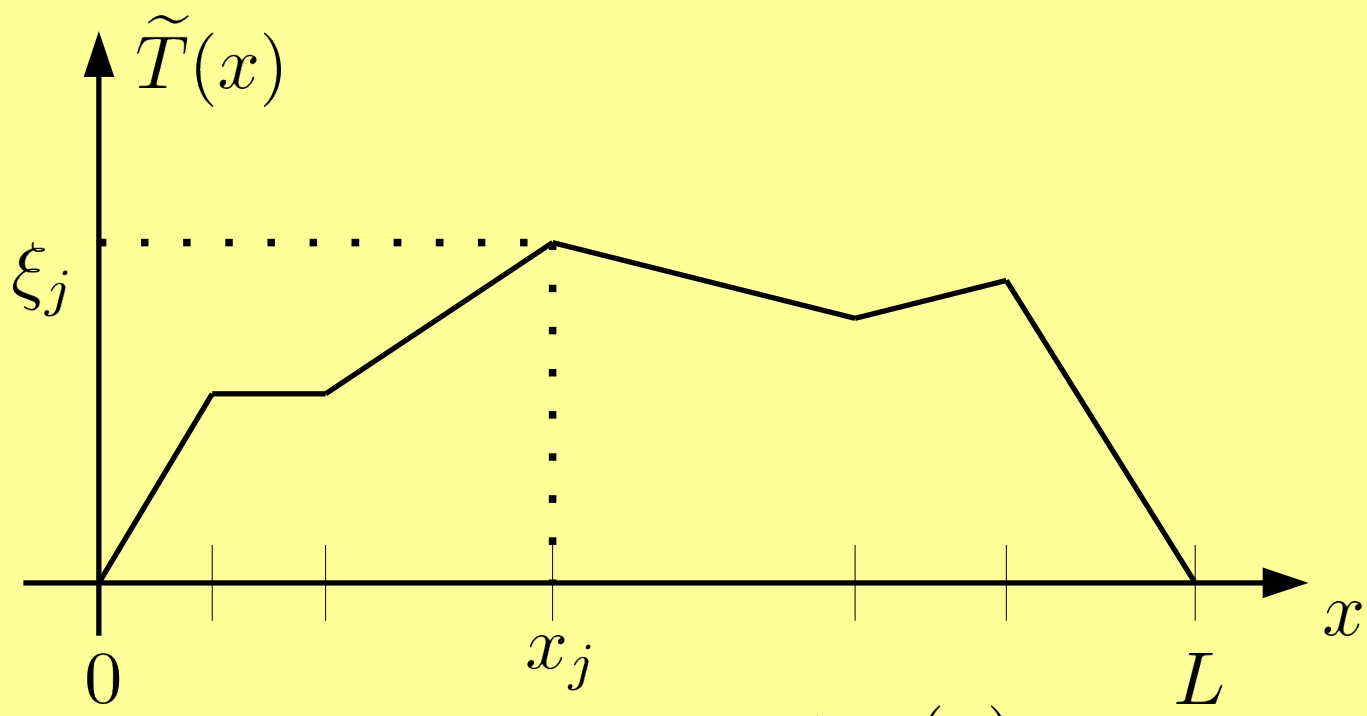


$$\begin{cases} kT'' + f = 0 \\ T(0) = T(L) = 0 \end{cases}$$

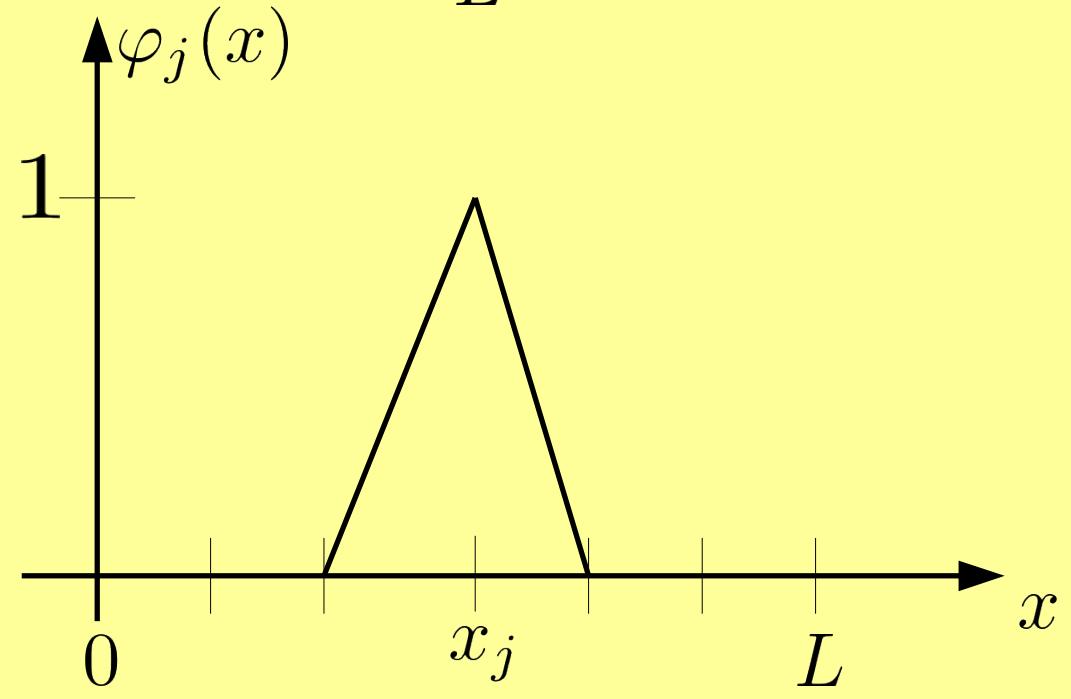
# Approximation



$$\begin{cases} kT'' + f = 0 \\ T(0) = T(L) = 0 \end{cases}$$



$$\tilde{T}(x) = \sum_{j=1}^N \xi_j \varphi_j(x)$$

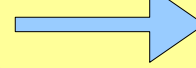


# ***REFORMULATION***

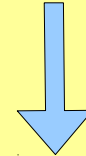


**STRONG FORM**

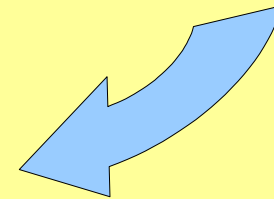
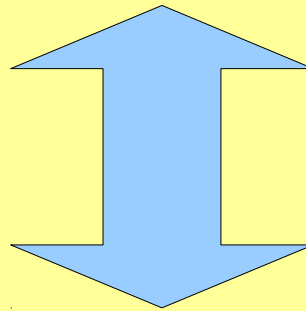
$$\begin{cases} kT'' + f = 0 \\ T(0) = T(L) = 0 \end{cases}$$



$$\begin{cases} (kT'' + f)v = 0 \\ T(0) = T(L) = 0 \end{cases}$$



$$\begin{cases} -\int_0^L kT'' v dx = \int_0^L f v dx \\ T(0) = T(L) = 0 \end{cases}$$



$$\int_0^L kT' v' dx = \int_0^L f v dx$$

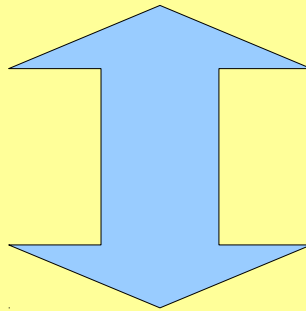
$$\forall v : v(0) = v(L) = 0$$

$$T(0) = T(L) = 0$$

**WEAK FORM**

**STRONG FORM**

$$\begin{cases} kT'' + f = 0 \\ T(0) = T(L) = 0 \end{cases}$$



$$\int_0^L kT'v' dx = \int_0^L f v dx$$

$$\forall v : v(0) = v(L) = 0$$

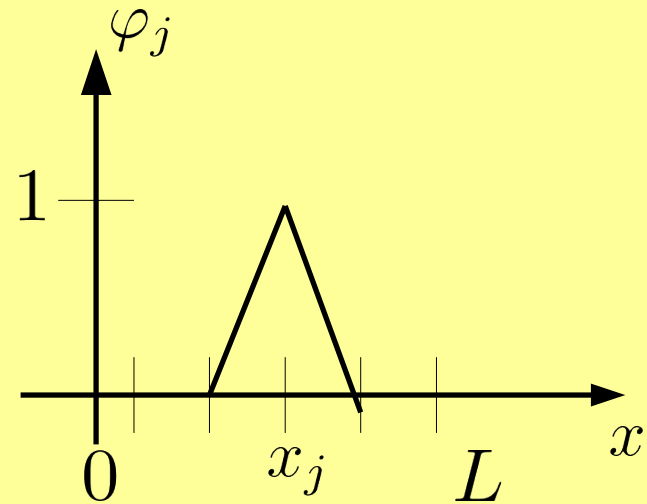
$$T(0) = T(L) = 0$$

**WEAK FORM**

# IMPLEMENTING THE FEM

$$\tilde{T}(x) = \sum_{i=1}^M \xi_i \varphi_i(x)$$

$$v(x) = \sum_{j=1}^M \eta_j \varphi_j(x)$$



$$\int_0^L \tilde{T}' v' dx = \int_0^L f v dx \quad \forall v \in V_h$$

$$\sum_{i,j=1}^M \xi_i \eta_j \int_0^L \varphi_i' \varphi_j' dx = \sum_{j=1}^M \eta_j \int_0^L f \varphi_j dx$$

$$a_{ij} = \int_0^L \varphi_i' \varphi_j' dx \quad \text{and} \quad b_i = \int_0^L f \varphi_i dx$$

# IMPLEMENTING THE FEM

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & \cdots & a_{1M} \\ \vdots & & \vdots \\ a_{M1} & \cdots & a_{MM} \end{bmatrix} \quad \eta = \begin{bmatrix} \eta_1 \\ \vdots \\ \eta_M \end{bmatrix} \quad \xi = \begin{bmatrix} \xi_1 \\ \vdots \\ \xi_M \end{bmatrix} \quad b = \begin{bmatrix} b_1 \\ \vdots \\ b_M \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\eta^T A \xi = \eta^T b$$

$$\sum_{i,j=1}^M \xi_i \eta_j \int_0^L \varphi'_i \varphi'_j = \sum_{j=1}^M \eta_j \int_0^L f \varphi_j$$

$$a_{ij} = \int_0^L \varphi'_i \varphi'_j \quad \text{and} \quad b_i = \int_0^L f \varphi_i$$

# IMPLEMENTING THE FEM

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & \cdots & a_{1M} \\ \vdots & & \vdots \\ a_{M1} & \cdots & a_{MM} \end{bmatrix} \quad \eta = \begin{bmatrix} \eta_1 \\ \vdots \\ \eta_M \end{bmatrix} \quad \xi = \begin{bmatrix} \xi_1 \\ \vdots \\ \xi_M \end{bmatrix} \quad b = \begin{bmatrix} b_1 \\ \vdots \\ b_M \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\eta^T A \xi = \eta^T b$$

$$A \xi = b$$

$$a_{ij} = \int_0^L \varphi_i' \varphi_j' \quad \text{and} \quad b_i = \int_0^L f \varphi_i$$

## EXAMPLE:

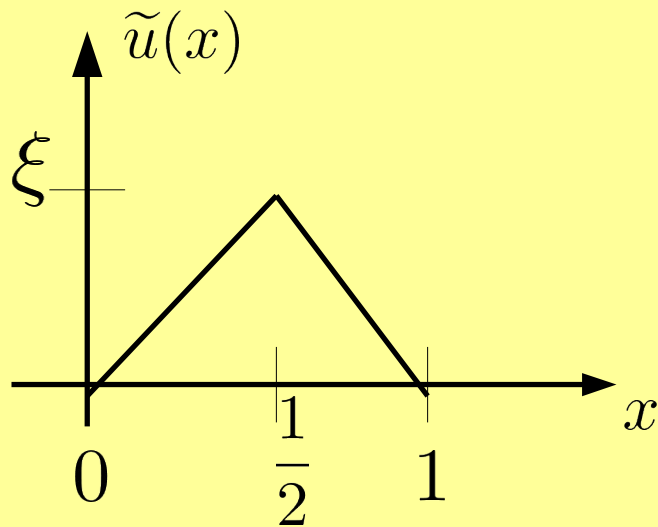
$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= f_0 \\ u(x)'' - f_0 &= 0, \\ u(0) &= u(1) = 0 \end{aligned}$$



$$u(x) = \frac{1}{2} f_0 x(1 - x)$$

## FEM :

M=1:



the WEAK FORM is :

$$\int_0^1 u'(x)v'(x)dx = \int_0^1 f_0 v(x)dx;$$

$$\tilde{u}(x) = \xi \varphi(x),$$

$$v(x) = \eta \varphi(x),$$

$$\int_0^1 \tilde{u}'(x)v'(x)dx = \int_0^1 f_0 v(x)dx$$

$$\Rightarrow \int_0^1 \xi \eta \varphi'(x)^2 dx = \int_0^1 f_0 \eta \varphi dx$$

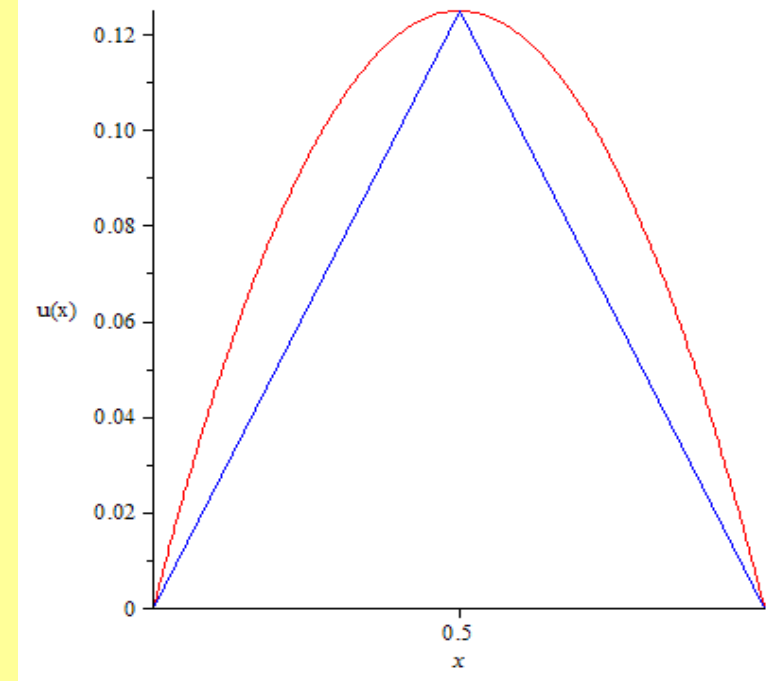
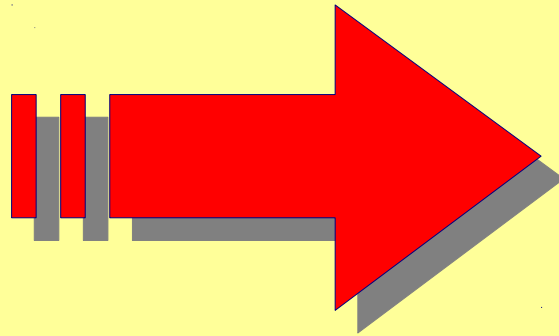
$$\xi \eta \int_0^1 \varphi'(x)^2 dx = \int_0^1 f \varphi(x) dx;$$

# FEM :

$$u(x)'' - f_0 = 0, \\ u(0) = u(1) = 0$$

$$4 \xi \eta = \frac{1}{2} f_0 \eta,$$

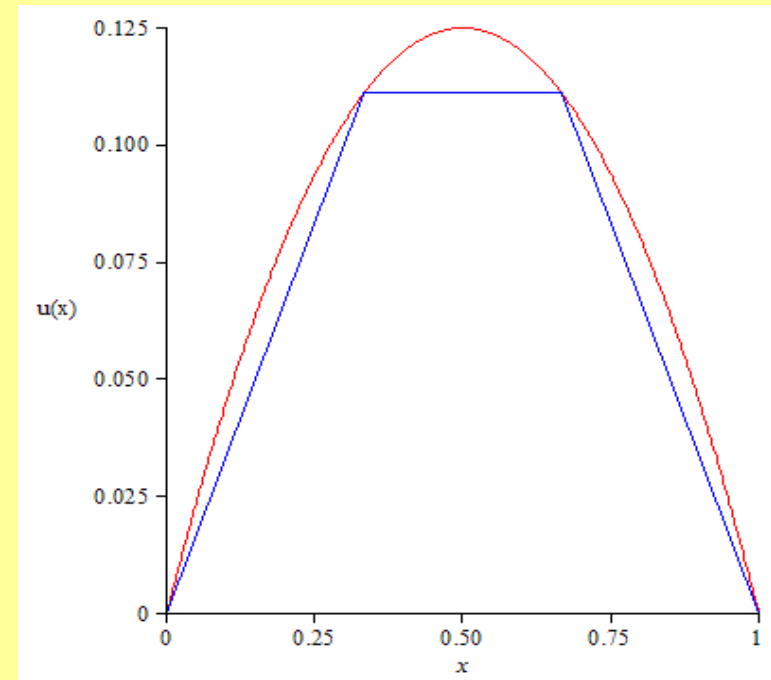
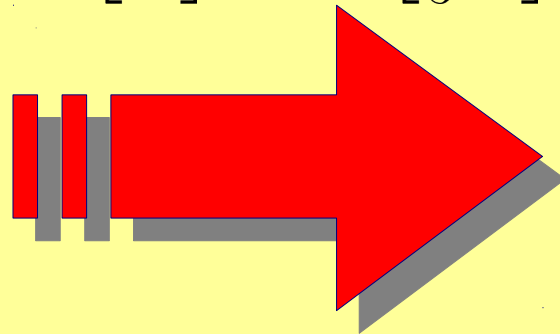
$$\xi = \frac{f_0}{8}$$



for  $M=2$

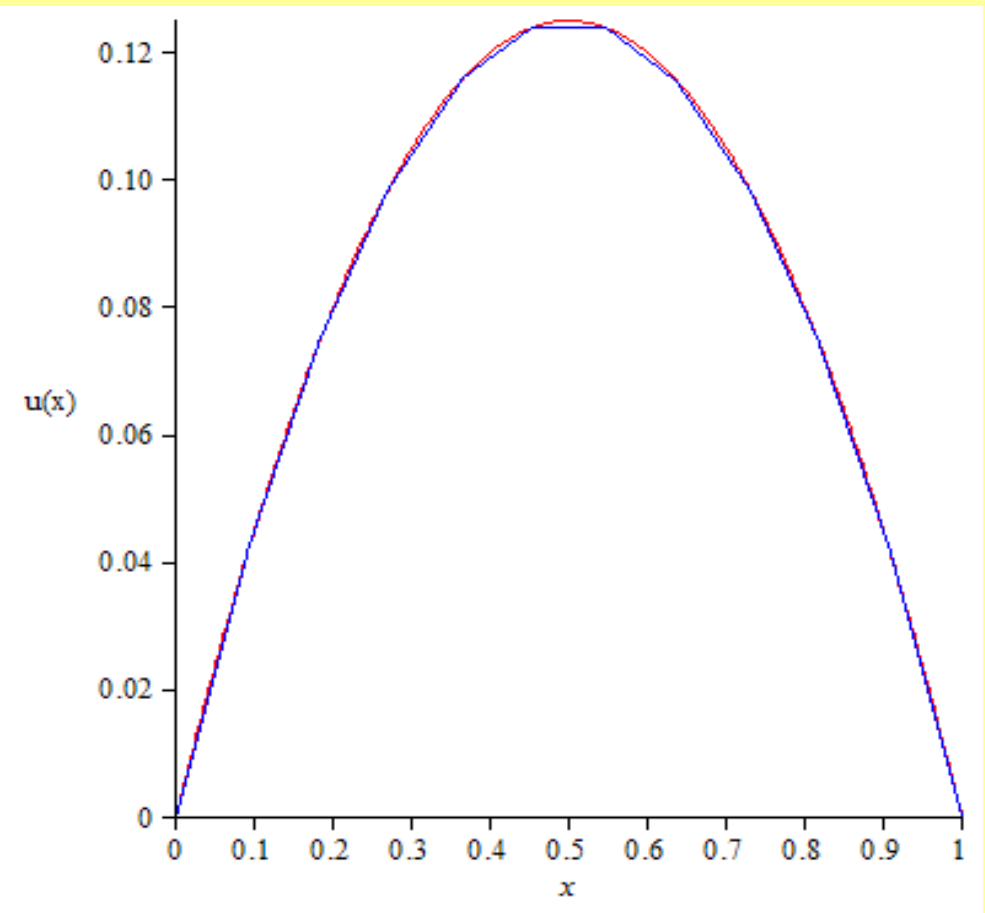
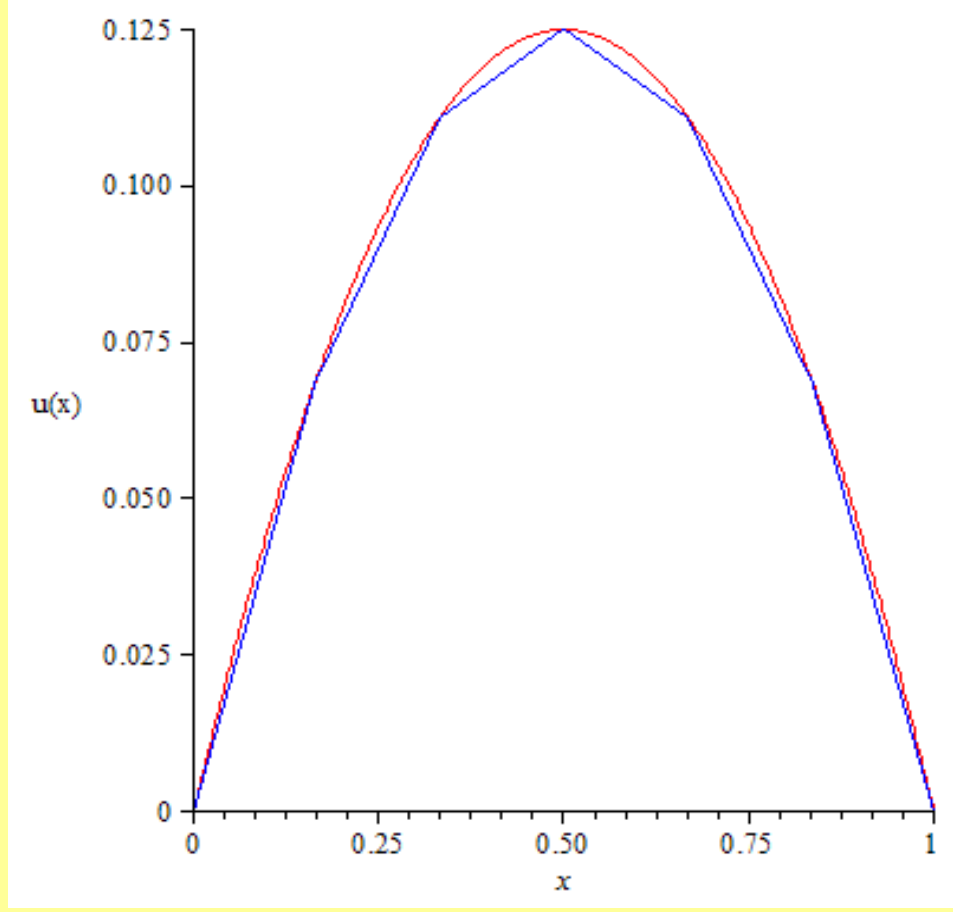
$$A = 3 \begin{bmatrix} 2 & -1 \\ -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \quad \xi = \begin{bmatrix} \xi_1 \\ \xi_2 \end{bmatrix} \quad b = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{1}{3} f_0 \\ \frac{1}{3} f_0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\xi_1 = \xi_2 = \frac{1}{9} f_0$$



for  $M=5...$

$$A = 6 \begin{bmatrix} 2 & -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ -1 & 2 & -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 2 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & 2 & -1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$



for  $M=10...$



$$A \xi = b$$

$$h_j = h = \frac{1}{M + 1}$$

$$A = \frac{1}{h} \begin{bmatrix} 2 & -1 & 0 & \cdots & \cdots & 0 \\ -1 & 2 & -1 & 0 & \cdots & \vdots \\ 0 & -1 & 2 & \ddots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \vdots & 0 & \ddots & \ddots & \ddots & 0 \\ \vdots & & \ddots & \ddots & 2 & -1 \\ 0 & \cdots & \cdots & 0 & -1 & 2 \end{bmatrix} \quad \xi = \begin{bmatrix} \xi_1 \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \xi_M \end{bmatrix} \quad b = \begin{bmatrix} b_1 \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ \vdots \\ b_M \end{bmatrix}$$

# *Other topics*

- An error estimate for FEM
- FEM for the Poisson equation
- Hilbert spaces
- Geometric interpretation of FEM

# An error estimate for FEM

$$\|w\| = (w, w)^{\frac{1}{2}} = \left( \int_0^1 w^2 dx \right)^{\frac{1}{2}} \quad \int_0^1 k u' v' dx = \int_0^1 f v dx$$

$\forall v : v(0) = v(1) = 0$

$$\|(u - \tilde{u})'\| \leq \|(u - v)'\| \quad \& \quad |u(x)' - \hat{u}(x)'| \leq h \max_{0 \leq y \leq 1} |u''(y)|$$

$$\|(u - \tilde{u})'\| \leq h \max_{0 \leq y \leq 1} |u''(y)|$$

$$|u(x) - \tilde{u}(x)| \leq h \max_{0 \leq y \leq 1} |u''(y)| \quad \text{for } 0 \leq x \leq 1$$

# FEM for the Poisson equation

$$-\Delta u = f \text{ in } \Omega$$

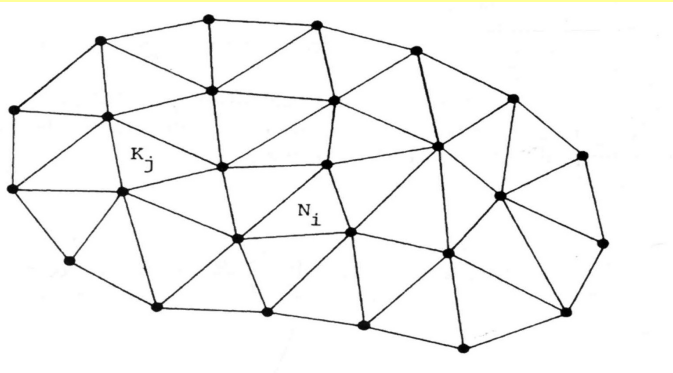
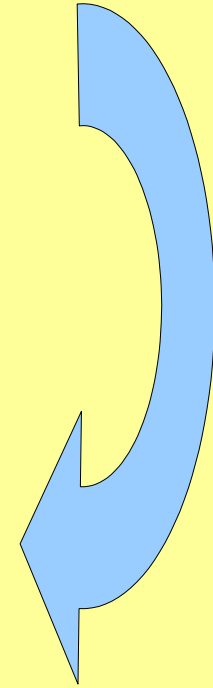
$$u=0 \text{ on } \Gamma$$

$$-\int_{\Omega} \Delta u v dx = \int_{\Omega} f v dx$$

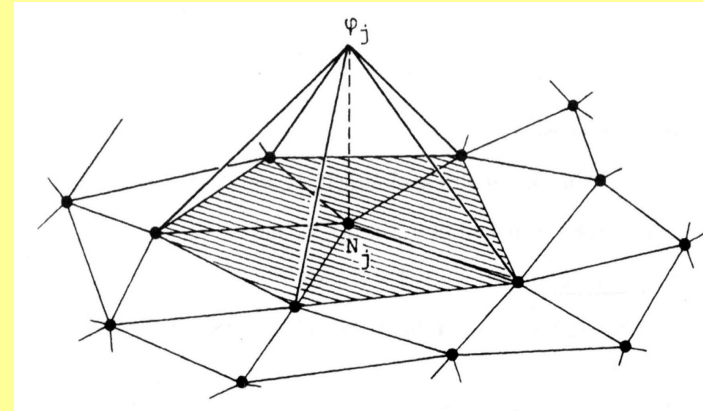
$$-\int_{\Gamma} \frac{\partial u}{\partial n} v dx + \int_{\Omega} \nabla u \bullet \nabla v dx = \int_{\Omega} \nabla u \bullet \nabla v dx$$

**WEAK FORM**

$$\int_{\Omega} \nabla u \bullet \nabla v dx = \int_{\Omega} f v dx$$



$$\varphi_j(N_i) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } i = j, \\ 0 & \text{if } i \neq j. \end{cases}$$



# Hilbert Spaces

DEF: a complete inner product space is called a Hilbert space.

$$H^1(I) = \{v : v \text{ and } v' \text{ belong to } L_2(I)\}$$

$$(v, w)_{H^1(I)} = \int_I (vw + v'w') dx$$

$$\|v\|_{H^1(I)} = \int_I (v^2 + v'^2) dx$$

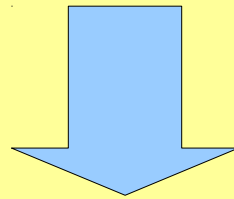
$\forall \epsilon > 0 \exists$  a natural number  $N$  such that  $\|v_i - v_j\| < \epsilon$  if  $i, j > N$

$v_i$  converges to  $v$  if  $\|v - v_i\| \rightarrow 0$  as  $i \rightarrow \infty$

find  $u \in H_0^1(I)$  such that  $\int_I u'v' dx = \int_I f v dx \forall v \in H_0^1(I)$

# Geometric interpretation of FEM

$$\int T(x)'v(x)' = \int f(x)v(x) \quad \forall v(x) \in H_0^1(I)$$
$$\int \tilde{T}(x)'v(x)' dx = \int f(x)v(x) dx \quad \forall v(x) \in V \quad \forall v(x) \in V_h$$



$$V_h \subset H_0^1(\Omega)$$

$$\int T(x)' - \tilde{T}(x)'v(x)' dx = ((T(x) - \tilde{T}(x), v(x)')) = 0 \quad \forall v(x) \in V_h$$

