

Métodos Matemáticos de Bioingeniería  
Grado en Ingeniería Biomédica  
**Chapter 2: Differentiation in Several Variables**  
Lecture 5

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# Outline

- 1 Functions of Several Variables; Graphing Surfaces
  - Functions and applications
  - Graphing functions: contour and level curves
  - Conic sections curves



# Outline

- 1 Functions of Several Variables; Graphing Surfaces
  - Functions and applications
  - Graphing functions: contour and level curves
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### Definition 1.1: Range of a function

- The **range** or **image** of a function  $f : X \rightarrow Y$  is the set of those elements of  $Y$  that are actual values of  $f$ .
- The range of  $f$  consists of those  $y$  in  $Y$  such that  $y = f(x)$  for some  $x$  in  $X$ .
- Using set notation,

$$\text{Range } f = \text{Image } f = \{y \in Y \mid y = f(x) \text{ for some } x \in X\}$$

### Example 1a

- Recall the social security function of [Example 1a](#).
- The range consists of those nine-digit numbers **actually** used as social security numbers.
- For example, is the number 000 – 00 – 0000 in the range?

No one is actually  
assigned this number

## Single-Variable Real functions

- For single-variable calculus, the functions of interest are those whose domains and codomains are subsets of  $\mathbb{R}$ .

Usually only the rule of assignment  
is made explicit

- It is generally assumed that the domain is the largest possible subset of  $\mathbb{R}$  for which the function makes sense.
- The codomain is generally taken to be all of  $\mathbb{R}$ .

### Example 3

- Suppose  $g$  is a function such that  $g(x) = \sqrt{x-1}$ .
- If we take the codomain to be all of  $\mathbb{R}$ , the domain cannot be any larger than  $[1, \infty)$ .
- If the domain included any values less than one, the radicand would be negative and, hence,  $g$  would not be real-valued.

## Multiple-Variable Real functions

- **Multiple-variable real functions** are the functions whose
  - Domains are subsets  $X$  of  $\mathbb{R}^n$ , and
  - Codomains are subsets of  $\mathbb{R}^m$ , for some  $n, m \in \mathbb{Z}^+$
- For simplicity of notation, we will take the codomains to be all of  $\mathbb{R}^m$  (except when specified otherwise)
- Such a function is a mapping  $\mathbf{f} : X \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^m$

It associates to a vector (or point)  $\mathbf{x}$  in  $X$   
a unique vector (point)  $\mathbf{f}(\mathbf{x})$  in  $\mathbb{R}^m$



### Example 5

- Let  $L : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be given by

$$L(\mathbf{x}) = \|\mathbf{x}\|$$

- This is a “length function”.
- It computes the length of any vector  $\mathbf{x}$  in  $\mathbb{R}^n$ .
- It is **one-one**?  **$L$  is not**, since,

$$L(\mathbf{e}_i) = L(\mathbf{e}_j) = 1,$$

with  $\mathbf{e}_i$  and  $\mathbf{e}_j$  any two of the standard basis vectors for  $\mathbb{R}^n$ .

- Is  $L$  **onto**?  $L$  also fails to be onto, since the length of a vector is always non-negative.









## Example 7

Air Temp (deg F)	Windspeed (mph)											
	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27	26	26	25	25
35	31	27	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	19	18	17
30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13	12	12	11	10
25	19	15	13	11	9	8	7	6	5	4	4	3
20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-3	-4
15	7	3	0	-2	-4	-5	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11	-11
10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15	-16	-17	-18	-19
5	-5	-10	-13	-15	-17	-19	-21	-22	-23	-24	-25	-26
0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29	-30	-31	-32	-33
-5	-16	-22	-26	-29	-31	-33	-34	-36	-37	-38	-39	-40
-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43	-44	-45	-46	-48
-15	-28	-35	-39	-42	-44	-46	-48	-50	-51	-52	-54	-55
-20	-34	-41	-45	-48	-51	-53	-55	-57	-58	-60	-61	-62
-25	-40	-47	-51	-55	-58	-60	-62	-64	-65	-67	-68	-69
-30	-46	-53	-58	-61	-64	-67	-69	-71	-72	-74	-75	-76
-35	-52	-59	-64	-68	-71	-73	-76	-78	-79	-81	-82	-84
-40	-57	-66	-71	-74	-78	-80	-82	-84	-86	-88	-89	-91
-45	-63	-72	-77	-81	-84	-87	-89	-91	-93	-95	-97	-98

- If the air temperature is 20°F and the windspeed is 25 mph, the windchill temperature (“how cold it feels”) is 3°F

## Example 7

Air Temp (deg F)	Windspeed (mph)											
	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27	26	26	25	25
35	31	27	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	19	18	17
30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13	12	12	11	10
25	19	15	13	11	9	8	7	6	5	4	4	3
20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1	-2	-3	-3	-4
15	7	3	0	-2	-4	-5	-7	-8	-9	-10	-11	-11
10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15	-16	-17	-18	-19
5	-5	-10	-13	-15	-17	-19	-21	-22	-23	-24	-25	-26
0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29	-30	-31	-32	-33
-5	-16	-22	-26	-29	-31	-33	-34	-36	-37	-38	-39	-40
-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43	-44	-45	-46	-48
-15	-28	-35	-39	-42	-44	-46	-48	-50	-51	-52	-54	-55
-20	-34	-41	-45	-48	-51	-53	-55	-57	-58	-60	-61	-62
-25	-40	-47	-51	-55	-58	-60	-62	-64	-65	-67	-68	-69
-30	-46	-53	-58	-61	-64	-67	-69	-71	-72	-74	-75	-76
-35	-52	-59	-64	-68	-71	-73	-76	-78	-79	-81	-82	-84
-40	-57	-66	-71	-74	-78	-80	-82	-84	-86	-88	-89	-91
-45	-63	-72	-77	-81	-84	-87	-89	-91	-93	-95	-97	-98

- If  $s$  denotes **windspeed** and  $t$  **air temperature**, then the windchill is a function

$$W(s, t)$$

## Scalar-valued functions

- The functions described in **Examples 4, 5, and 7** are **scalar-valued** functions

Functions whose codomains are  
 $\mathbb{R}$  or subsets of  $\mathbb{R}$

- Scalar-valued functions are our main concern for this chapter.
- Nonetheless, let's look at a few examples of functions whose codomains are  $\mathbb{R}^m$  where  $m > 1$ . They are usually called

**Vector-valued functions**

**Example 8**

- Define  $\mathbf{f} : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^3$  by

$$\mathbf{f}(t) = (\cos t, \sin t, t)$$

- The range of  $\mathbf{f}$  is the curve in  $\mathbb{R}^3$  with parametric equations

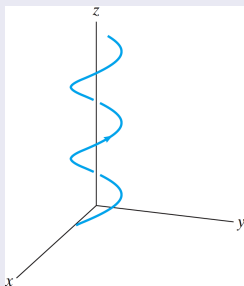
$$\begin{cases} x = \cos t \\ y = \sin t \\ z = t \end{cases} \quad t \in \mathbb{R}$$

## Example 8

- Define  $\mathbf{f} : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^3$  by

$$\mathbf{f}(t) = (\cos t, \sin t, t)$$

- If we think of  $t$  as a time parameter, then this function traces out the corkscrew curve.



- This curve is called a **helix**.

## Example 9

- We can think on the **velocity of a fluid** as a vector in  $\mathbb{R}^3$
- This vector depends on (at least)
  - The point at which one measures the velocity , and
  - The time at which one makes the measurement
- Velocity may be considered to be a function

$$\mathbf{v} : X \subseteq \mathbb{R}^4 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^3$$

- The domain  $X$  is a subset of  $\mathbb{R}^4$ :
  - Three variables  $x, y, z$  are required to describe a point in the fluid.
  - A fourth variable  $t$  is needed to keep track of time.





## Vector-valued functions explicit form

- In general, if we have a function  $\mathbf{f} : X \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^m$ , then
  - $\mathbf{x} \in X$  can be written as,

$$\mathbf{x} = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$$

- and  $\mathbf{f}$  can be written in terms of its **component functions**,

$$f_1, f_2, \dots, f_m$$

- The **component** functions are **scalar-valued** functions of  $\mathbf{x} \in X$ .
- So, **Vector functions** can be written as the Cartesian product of scalar-valued functions. In general, is enough to study the properties of the scalar-valued function, and then apply those properties in each component.

## Vector-valued functions explicit form

$$\mathbf{f}(\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{f}(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$$

(emphasizing the variables)

$$= (f_1(\mathbf{x}), f_2(\mathbf{x}), \dots, f_m(\mathbf{x}))$$

(emphasizing the component functions)

$$= (f_1(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n), f_2(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n), \dots, f_m(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n))$$

(writing out all components)

**Example 5**

- Let  $L : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be given by

$$L(\mathbf{x}) = \|\mathbf{x}\|$$

- The function  $L$ , when expanded, becomes

$$L(\mathbf{x}) = L(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) = \sqrt{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + \cdots + x_n^2}$$

## Example 6

- Consider the function given by

$$\mathbf{N}(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{\mathbf{x}}{\|\mathbf{x}\|}$$

where  $\mathbf{x}$  is a vector in  $\mathbb{R}^3$ .

- The function  $\mathbf{N}$  becomes

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{N}(\mathbf{x}) &= \frac{\mathbf{x}}{\|\mathbf{x}\|} = \frac{(x_1, x_2, x_3)}{\sqrt{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2}} \\ &= \left( \frac{x_1}{\sqrt{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2}}, \frac{x_2}{\sqrt{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2}}, \frac{x_3}{\sqrt{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2}} \right) \end{aligned}$$

### Example 6

- Hence, the three component functions of **N** are

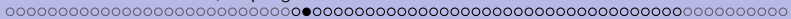
$$N_1(x_1, x_2, x_3) = \frac{x_1}{\sqrt{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2}}$$

$$N_2(x_1, x_2, x_3) = \frac{x_2}{\sqrt{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2}}$$

$$N_3(x_1, x_2, x_3) = \frac{x_3}{\sqrt{x_1^2 + x_2^2 + x_3^2}}$$

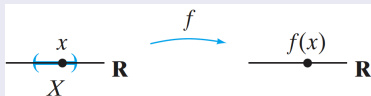
# Outline

- ① Functions of Several Variables; Graphing Surfaces
  - Functions and applications
  - Graphing functions: contour and level curves
  - Conic sections curves

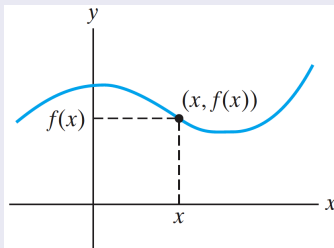


## Graphing Scalar-Valued Functions

- A function  $f : X \subseteq \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  takes a real number and returns another real number



- The **graph** of  $f$  is something that “lives” in  $\mathbb{R}^2$







## Graphing a Function of Two Variables

- Suppose we have a function  $f : X \subseteq \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$
- We make essentially the same definition for the graph

$$\text{Graph } f = \{(\mathbf{x}, f(\mathbf{x})) \mid \mathbf{x} \in X\}$$

$\mathbf{x} = (x, y)$  is a point of  $\mathbb{R}^2$

- Thus,  $\{(\mathbf{x}, f(\mathbf{x}))\}$  may also be written as

$$\{(x, y, f(x, y))\} \quad \text{or} \quad \{(x, y, z) \mid (x, y) \in X, z = f(x, y)\}$$

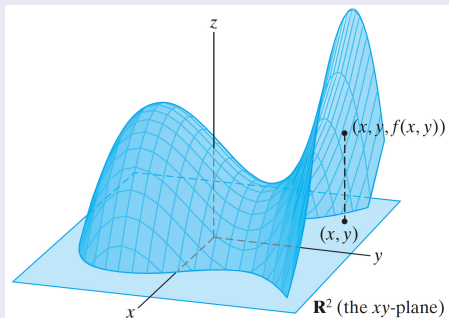
- Hence, the graph of a scalar-valued function of two variables is something that sits in  $\mathbb{R}^3$

The graph will be a surface

## Example 10

- Consider the graph of the function

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad f(x, y) = \frac{1}{12}y^3 - y - \frac{1}{4}x^2 + \frac{7}{2}$$





## Contour Curves and Level Curves

- Graphing functions of two variables is a much more difficult task than graphing functions of one variable

One method is  
to let a computer do the work

- Nonetheless, to get a feeling, a sketch of a rough graph is still a valuable skill

The trick is to find a way  
to cut down on the dimensions involved

- One way is to draw certain special curves that lie on the surface

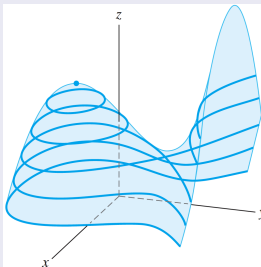
$$z = f(x, y)$$

## Contour Curves and Level Curves

- These special curves that lie on the surface  $z = f(x, y)$  are called **contour curves**.
- **Contour curves** are obtained by intersecting the surface with horizontal planes  $z = c$ , for various values of the constant  $c$ .

### Example 10

- Some contour curves drawn on the surface of **Example 10**



## Contour Curves and Level Curves

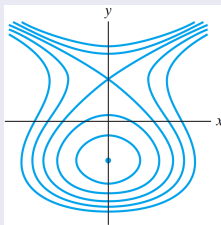
- Let us compress all the contour curves onto the  $xy$ -plane

Look down  
along the positive  $z$ -axis

- Then we create a “**topographic map**” of the surface called **level curves** of the original function  $f$

## Example 10

- Some level curves drawn for the **Example 10**







## Contour Curves and Level Curves

We can reverse the process in order to sketch systematically the graph of a function  $f$  of two variables

1. We first construct a topographic map in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  by finding the **level curves** of  $f$ .
2. Then situate these curves in  $\mathbb{R}^3$  as **contour curves** at the appropriate heights.
3. Finally, complete the graph of the function.



### Definition 1.4: Level Curve

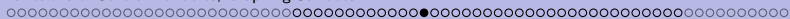
- Let  $f : X \subseteq \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a scalar-valued function of two variables.
- The **level curve at height  $c$  of  $f$**  is the curve in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  defined by the equation

$$f(x, y) = c$$

where  $c$  is a constant.

- In mathematical notation,

$$L_c = \{(x, y) \in \mathbb{R}^2 \mid f(x, y) = c\}$$



### Definition 1.4: Contour Curve

- Let  $f : X \subseteq \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a scalar-valued function of two variables
- The **contour curve at height  $c$**  of  $f$  is the level curve drawn in  $\mathbb{R}^3$ .
- In mathematical notation,

$$C_c = \{(x, y, z) \in \mathbb{R}^3 \mid f(x, y) = c\}$$

## Example 11

Use level and contour curves to construct the graph of the function

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad f(x, y) = 4 - x^2 - y^2$$

- By [Definition 1.4](#), the level curve at height  $c$  is

$$\{(x, y) \in \mathbb{R}^2 \mid 4 - x^2 - y^2 = c\} = \{(x, y) \mid x^2 + y^2 = 4 - c\}$$

- The level curves for  $c < 4$  are circles centered at the origin of radius  $\sqrt{4 - c}$
- The level “curve” at height  $c = 4$  is not a curve but just a single point (the origin)
- There are no level curves at heights larger than 4, since the equation  $x^2 + y^2 = 4 - c$  has no real solutions in  $x$  and  $y$

## Example 11

Use level and contour curves to construct the graph of the function

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad f(x, y) = 4 - x^2 - y^2$$

$c$	level curve $x^2 + y^2 = 4 - c$
-5	$x^2 + y^2 = 9$
-1	$x^2 + y^2 = 5$
0	$x^2 + y^2 = 4$
1	$x^2 + y^2 = 3$
3	$x^2 + y^2 = 1$
4	$x^2 + y^2 = 0 \iff x = y = 0$
$c, \text{ where } c > 4$	empty

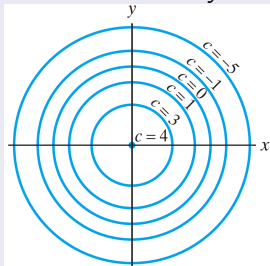
### Example 11

Use level and contour curves to construct the graph of the function

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad f(x, y) = 4 - x^2 - y^2$$

- “Topographic map” or family of level curves of the surface

$$z = 4 - x^2 - y^2$$

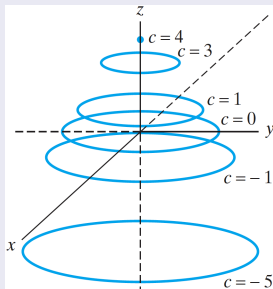


## Example 11

Use level and contour curves to construct the graph of the function

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad f(x, y) = 4 - x^2 - y^2$$

- Some contour curves, which sit in  $\mathbb{R}^3$ :

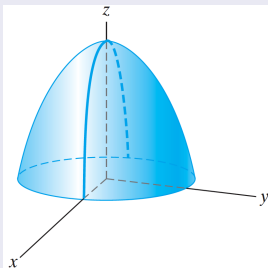


## Example 11

Use level and contour curves to construct the graph of the function

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad f(x, y) = 4 - x^2 - y^2$$

- Complete graph of surface



- It looks like an inverted antenna and is called a **paraboloid**

## Example 11 - Sections of the surface

If you want to get even a better feeling about the shape of the surface, is also useful to “chop” the surface with (vertical) planes of the form  $x = c$  or  $y = c$ :

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad f(x, y) = 4 - x^2 - y^2$$

- Section of the surface  $z = 4 - x^2 - y^2$  by the plane  $x = 0$

$$\{(x, y, z) \in \mathbb{R}^3 \mid z = 4 - x^2 - y^2, x = 0\} = \{(0, y, z) \mid z = 4 - y^2\}$$

- Section of the surface  $z = 4 - x^2 - y^2$  by the plane  $y = 0$

$$\{(x, y, z) \in \mathbb{R}^3 \mid z = 4 - x^2 - y^2, y = 0\} = \{(x, 0, z) \mid z = 4 - x^2\}$$

All these sections are parabolas





## Example 12

Graph the function

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad f(x, y) = y^2 - x^2$$

$c$	level curve $y^2 - x^2 = c$
-4	$x^2 - y^2 = 4$
-1	$x^2 - y^2 = 1$
0	$y^2 - x^2 = 0 \iff (y - x)(y + x) = 0 \iff y = \pm x$
1	$y^2 - x^2 = 1$
4	$y^2 - x^2 = 4$















## Example 13

Graph the function:

$$h : \mathbb{R}^2 - \{(0, 0)\} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad h(x, y) = \ln(x^2 + y^2)$$

- Section of the graph by the plane  $x = 0$

$$\begin{aligned} & \{(x, y, z) \in \mathbb{R}^3 \mid z = \ln(x^2 + y^2), x = 0\} \\ & = \{(0, y, z) \mid z = \ln(y^2) = 2 \ln |y|\} \end{aligned}$$

- Section of the graph by the plane  $y = 0$

$$\begin{aligned} & \{(x, y, z) \in \mathbb{R}^3 \mid z = \ln(x^2 + y^2), y = 0\} \\ & = \{(x, 0, z) \mid z = \ln(x^2) = 2 \ln |x|\} \end{aligned}$$







## The Unit Circle Example

- The analogous situation occurs with surfaces in  $\mathbb{R}^3$ .
- Frequently a surface is determined by an equation of the form

$$F(x, y, z) = c$$

As a level set of  
a function of three variables

- It is not necessarily one of the form

$$z = f(x, y)$$

If it is not possible to state a variable as function of the other ones then is called a **implicit formula**. All functions can be expressed as implicit formula doing,  $z - f(x, y) = c$ ,  $c = 0$ .

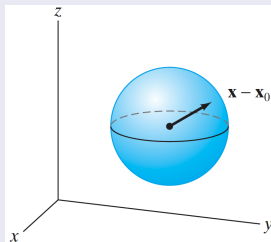


## Example 15

A sphere is a surface in  $\mathbb{R}^3$   
whose points are all equidistant from a fixed point

- If the center of the sphere is at the point  $\mathbf{x}_0 = (x, y, z)$  then equation should be modified to

$$\|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_0\| = a$$







## Example 15

A sphere is a surface in  $\mathbb{R}^3$   
whose points are all equidistant from a fixed point

$$x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = a^2$$

- In the equation for a sphere, there is no way to solve for  $z$  uniquely in terms of  $x$  and  $y$
- If we try to isolate  $z$ , then

$$z^2 = a^2 - x^2 - y^2$$

- So we are forced to make a choice of positive or negative square roots in order to solve for  $z$

$$z = \sqrt{a^2 - x^2 - y^2} \quad \text{or} \quad z = -\sqrt{a^2 - x^2 - y^2}$$

## Example 15

A sphere is a surface in  $\mathbb{R}^3$   
whose points are all equidistant from a fixed point

$$z = \sqrt{a^2 - x^2 - y^2} \quad \text{or} \quad z = -\sqrt{a^2 - x^2 - y^2}$$

- The positive square root corresponds to the upper hemisphere.
- The negative square root corresponds to the lower hemisphere.

In any case, the entire sphere cannot be the graph of  
a single function of two variables

# Outline

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# Quadratic Surfaces

## Conic sections

- **Conic sections** are curves obtained from the intersection of a cone with various planes.
- They are among the simplest, yet also the most interesting, of plane curves:
  - The circle.
  - The ellipse.
  - The parabola.
  - The hyperbola.
- They have an elegant algebraic connection:

Every conic section is described analytically by a polynomial equation of degree two in two variables

## Conic sections

Every conic section is described analytically by  
a polynomial equation of degree two in two variables

- That is, every conic can be described by an equation that looks like

$$Ax^2 + Bxy + Cy^2 + Dx + Ey + F = 0$$

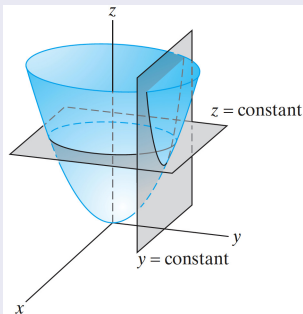
for suitable constants  $A, \dots, F$ .





## Elliptic paraboloid

$$\frac{z}{c} = \frac{x^2}{a^2} + \frac{y^2}{b^2}$$

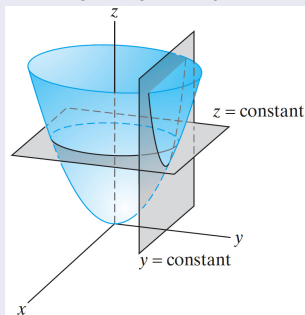


- The paraboloid has:
  - Elliptical (or single-point or empty) sections by the planes “ $z = \text{constant}$ ”, and
  - Parabolic sections by “ $x = \text{constant}$ ” or “ $y = \text{constant}$ ” planes



## Elliptic paraboloid

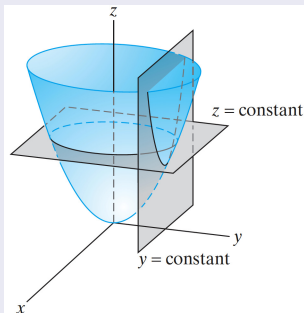
$$\frac{z}{c} = \frac{x^2}{a^2} + \frac{y^2}{b^2}$$



- The constants  $a$  and  $b$  affect the aspect ratio of the elliptical cross sections

## Elliptic paraboloid

$$\frac{z}{c} = \frac{x^2}{a^2} + \frac{y^2}{b^2}$$



- The constant  $c$  affects the steepness of the dish

Larger values of  $c$   
produce steeper paraboloids



