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Stable maps and a universal Hitchin component

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Let X be a pinched Cartan-Hadamard manifold, and Y a symmetric space of non-compact type. We define a notion of stability for coarse Lipschitz maps $f : X \rightarrow Y$, and show that every stable map from X to Y is at bounded distance from a unique harmonic map. As an application, we extend any positive quasi-symmetric map from \mathbb{RP}^1 to the flag variety of $\mathrm{SL}_n(\mathbb{R})$ to a harmonic map from \mathbb{H}^2 to the symmetric space of $\mathrm{SL}_n(\mathbb{R})$. This allows us to define a universal Hitchin component in the style suggested by Labourie and Fock-Goncharov. This is all joint work with Max Riestenberg.

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