

ON THE APPROXIMATION  
OF UNSTABLE PARAMETRIC  
MINIMAL SURFACES

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**Abstract** We prove optimal convergence results for discrete approximations to (possibly unstable) minimal surfaces. This appears to be the first class of results of this type for geometric objects solving a highly non-linear geometric variational problem. We introduce a number of new techniques which we expect will be of use in other geometric problems. The theoretical approximation results are confirmed by numerical test computations.