Functions and abstraction

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Functions

• In math, you use functions: sine, cosine, ...
• In math, you define functions: $f(x) = x^2 + 2x + 1$

In Python:
• A function packages up and names a computation
• Enables re-use of the computation (generalization)
• Don’t Repeat Yourself (DRY principle)
• Shorter, easier to understand, less error-prone

• Python lets you use and define functions
• We have already seen some Python functions:
  – `len`, `float`, `int`, `str`, `range`
Using ("calling") a function

len("hello")  len(""")
round(2.718)  round(3.14)
pow(2, 3)  range(1, 5)
math.sin(0)  str(17)

• Some need no input: random.random()
• All of the functions above "return" a value
A function is a machine

- You give it input
- It produces a result, “returns” a value

In math: \( \text{func}(x) = 2x + 1 \)
Creating a function

Define the machine, including the input and the result

```python
def dbl_plus(x):
    return 2 * x + 1
```

- **Name of the function.** Like “y = 5” for a variable
- **Keyword that means:** I am defining a function
- **Input variable name, or “formal parameter”**
- **Keyword that means:** This is the result
- **Return expression** (part of the `return` statement)
How Python executes a function call

1. Evaluate the argument at the “call site” – the place where we are calling the function from in our program
2. Assign the actual argument’s value to the formal parameter name – A new variable, not reuse of any existing variable of the same name
3. Evaluate the statements in the body of the function one by one
4. At a return statement:
   – Formal parameter variable disappears – exists only during the call!
   – The call expression evaluates to the “returned” value
def dbl_plus(x):
    return 2 * x + 1

def instructor_name():
    return "Ruth Anderson"

def square(x):
    return x * x

def print_greeting():
    print("Hello, world")

def print_grade(points):
    grade = points * 10
    print("Grade is:", grade)

def calc_grade(points):
    grade = points * 10
    return grade

See in python tutor

Function examples

No return statement
Returns the value None
Executed for side effect

No return statement
Returns the value None
Executed for side effect
More function examples

```python
def square(x):
    return x * x

def fahr_to_cent(fahr):
    return (fahr - 32) / 9.0 * 5

def cent_to_fahr(cent):
    result = cent / 5.0 * 9 + 32
    return result

def abs(x):
    if x < 0:
        return -x
    else:
        return x

def print_hello():
    print("Hello, world")

def print_fahr_to_cent(fahr):
    result = fahr_to_cent(fahr)
    print(result)
```

What is the result of:
```
x = 42
print(square(3) + square(4))
print(x)
boiling = fahr_to_cent(212)
cold = cent_to_fahr(-40)
print(boiling)
print(cold)
```
Digression: Two types of output

• An expression evaluates to a value
  – Which can be used by the containing expression or statement
• A `print` statement writes text to the screen

• The Python `interpreter` (command shell) reads statements and expressions, then executes them
• If the `interpreter` executes an expression, it prints its value
• In a `program`, evaluating an expression does not print it
• In a `program`, printing an expression does not permit it to be used elsewhere
Example of function invocation

def square(x):
    return x * x

Variables:
square(3) + square(4)
return x * x
return 3 * x
return 3 * 3
return 9

9 + square(4)
return x * x
return 4 * x
return 4 * 4
return 16

9 + 16

25
Expression with nested function invocations:
Only one executes at a time

```python
def fahr_to_cent(fahr):
    return (fahr - 32) / 9.0 * 5

def cent_to_fahr(cent):
    return cent / 5.0 * 9 + 32

fahr_to_cent(cent_to_fahr(20))
    return cent / 5.0 * 9 + 32
    return 20 / 5.0 * 9 + 32
    return 68

fahr_to_cent(68)
    return (fahr - 32) / 9.0 * 5
    return (68 - 32) / 9.0 * 5
    return 20
20
```

Variables:
- **fahr**: 68
- **cent**: 20
- **cent**: 20
- **fahr**: 68
- **fahr**: 68
- **fahr**: 68
- **(none)**
- **(none)**
- **(none)**
Expression with nested function invocations: Only one executes at a time

def square(x):
    return x * x

square(square(3))
    return x * x
    return 3 * x
    return 3 * 3
    return 9

square(9)
    return x * x
    return 9 * x
    return 9 * 9
    return 81

81
Function that invokes another function:

Both function invocations are active

```python
def square(z):
    return z * z

def hypotenuse(x, y):
    return math.sqrt(square(x) + square(y))

hypotenuse(3, 4)
    return math.sqrt(square(x) + square(y))  # z: 3  x: 3  y: 4
    return z * z  # z: 3  x: 3  y: 4
    return 3 * 3  # z: 3  x: 3  y: 4
    return 9
    return math.sqrt(9 + square(y))  # z: 4  x: 3  y: 4
    return z * z  # z: 4  x: 3  y: 4
    return 4 * 4  # z: 4  x: 3  y: 4
    return 16
    return math.sqrt(9 + 16)  # x: 3  y: 4
    return math.sqrt(25)  # x: 3  y: 4
    return 5
```

Variables:

```
(x: 3  y: 4)
```

5

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Shadowing of formal variable names

```python
def square(x):
    return x * x

def hypotenuse(x, y):
    return math.sqrt(square(x) + square(y))

hypotenuse(3, 4)
    return math.sqrt(square(x) + square(y))
    return x * x
    return 3 * 3
    return 9
return math.sqrt(9 + square(y))
return math.sqrt(9 + square(4))
    return x * x
    return 4 * 4
    return 16
return math.sqrt(9 + 16)
return math.sqrt(25)
return 5
```

Variables:

(half)

x: 3  y:4
x: 3  y:4
x: 3  x: 3  y:4
x: 3  x: 3  y:4
x: 3  x: 3  y:4
x: 3  y:4
x: 3  y:4
x: 4  x: 3  y:4
x: 4  x: 3  y:4
x: 4  x: 3  y:4
x: 3  y:4
x: 3  y:4

Formal parameter is a new variable

Same formal parameter name, but two completely different variables

def square(x):
    return x * x

def hypotenuse(x, y):
    return math.sqrt(square(x) + square(y))

hypotenuse(3, 4)
    return math.sqrt(square(x) + square(y))
    return math.sqrt(square(3) + square(y))
        return x * x
    return 3 * 3
    return 9
return math.sqrt(9 + square(y))
return math.sqrt(9 + square(4))
    return x * x
    return 4 * 4
    return 16
return math.sqrt(9 + 16)
return math.sqrt(25)
return 5
In a function body, assignment creates a temporary variable (like the formal parameter)

```python
stored = 0
def store_it(arg):
    stored = arg
    return stored

y = store_it(22)
print(y)
print(stored)
```

See in python tutor
How to look up a variable

Idea: find the nearest variable of the given name

1. Check whether the variable is defined in the local scope
2. ... check any intermediate scopes (none in CSE 160!) ...
3. Check whether the variable is defined in the global scope

If a local and a global variable have the same name, the global variable is inaccessible ("shadowed")

This is confusing; try to avoid such shadowing

```python
def lookup():
    x = 42
    return stored + x
val = lookup()
x = 5
stored = 200
val = lookup()
```

```python
x = 22
stored = 100
def lookup():
    x = 42
    return stored + x
val = lookup()
x = 5
stored = 200
val = lookup()
```

What happens if we define stored after lookup?
Local variables exist only while the function is executing

def cent_to_fahr(cent):
    result = cent / 5.0 * 9 + 32
    return result

tempf = cent_to_fahr(15)
print(result)
Use only the local and the global scope!

```python
myvar = 1

def outer():
    myvar = 1000
    temp = inner()
    return temp

def inner():
    return myvar

print(outer())
```

See in python tutor

Aside: The Evaluation Rules have a more precise rule, which applies when you define a function inside another function (which we will not be doing in this class!!!).
Abstraction

- Abstraction = ignore some details
- Generalization = become usable in more contexts
- Abstraction over *computations*:  
  - functional abstraction, a.k.a. procedural abstraction
- As long as you know what the function *means*, you don’t care *how* it computes that value
  - You don’t care about the *implementation* (the function body)
Defining absolute value

def abs(x):
    if x < 0:
        return -1 * x
    else:
        return 1 * x

def abs(x):
    if x < 0:
        result = -x
    else:
        result = x
    return result

def abs(x):
    return math.sqrt(x * x)

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Defining round
(for positive numbers)

def round(x):
    return int(x + 0.5)

def round(x):
    fraction = x - int(x)
    if fraction >= 0.5:
        return int(x) + 1
    else:
        return int(x)
Two types of documentation

1. Documentation for users/clients/callers
   – Document the *purpose* or *meaning* or *abstraction* that the function represents
   – Often called the “docstring”
   – Tells what the function does
   – Should be written for every function

2. Documentation for programmers who are reading the code
   – Document the *implementation* – specific code choices
   – Tells how the function does it
   – Only necessary for tricky or interesting bits of the code

```python
def square(x):
    """Returns the square of its argument."""
    # Uses "x*x" instead of "x**2"
    return x * x
```

For users: a string as the first element of the function body
For programmers: arbitrary text after #
Multi-line strings

• Ways to write strings:
  – "hello"
  – 'hello'
  – """hello""
  – ' ' 'hello' ' 

• Triple-quote version:
  – can include newlines (carriage returns), so the string can span multiple lines
  – can include quotation marks
  – Use """hello""" version for docstrings
Don’t write useless comments

• Comments should give information that is not apparent from the code
• Here is a counter-productive comment that merely clutters the code, which makes the code *harder* to read:

```python
# increment the value of x
x = x + 1
```

DO NOT write comments like this.
Where to write comments

• By convention, write a comment \textit{above} the code that it describes (or, more rarely, on the same line)
  – First, a reader sees the English intuition or explanation, then the possibly-confusing code

\begin{verbatim}
# The following code is adapted from
# “Introduction to Algorithms”, by Cormen et al.,
# section 14.22.
while (n > i):
    ... 
\end{verbatim}

• A comment may appear anywhere in your program, including at the end of a line:

\begin{verbatim}
x = y + x  # a comment about this line
\end{verbatim}

• For a line that starts with #, indentation should be consistent with surrounding code
Each variable should represent one thing

```python
def atm_to_mbar(pressure):
    return pressure * 1013.25

def mbar_to_mmHg(pressure):
    return pressure * 0.75006

# Confusing
pressure = 1.2  # in atmospheres
pressure = atm_to_mbar(pressure)
pressure = mbar_to_mmHg(pressure)
print(pressure)

# Better
in_atm = 1.2
in_mbar = atm_to_mbar(in_atm)
in_mmHg = mbar_to_mmHg(in_mbar)
print(in_mmHg)

# Best
def atm_to_mmHg(pressure):
    in_mbar = atm_to_mbar(pressure)
in_mmHg = mbar_to_mmHg(in_mbar)
    return in_mmHg
print(atm_to_mmHg(1.2))
```

Corollary: Each variable should contain values of only one type

```python
# Legal, but confusing: don’t do this!
x = 3
...
x = "hello"
...
x = [3, 1, 4, 1, 5]
...
```

If you use a descriptive variable name, you are unlikely to make these mistakes
**Exercises**

```python
def cent_to_fahr(cent):
    print(cent / 5.0 * 9 + 32)

print(cent_to_fahr(20))

def c_to_f(c):
    print("c_to_f")
    return c / 5.0 * 9 + 32

def make_message(temp):
    print("make_message")
    return "The temperature is " + str(temp)

for tempc in [-40, 0, 37]:
    tempf = c_to_f(tempc)
    message = make_message(tempf)
    print(message)

def myfunc(n):
    total = 0
    for i in range(n):
        total = total + i
    return total

print(myfunc(4))
```

**Use the Python Tutor:**
http://pythontutor.com/
What does this print?

```python
def cent_to_fahr(cent):
    print(cent / 5.0 * 9 + 32)

print(cent_to_fahr(20))
```

See in python tutor
What does this print?

```python
def myfunc(n):
    total = 0
    for i in range(n):
        total = total + i
    return total

print(myfunc(4))
```

See in python tutor
def c_to_f(c):
    print("c_to_f")
    return c / 5.0 * 9 + 32

def make_message(temp):
    print("make_message")
    return "The temperature is " + str(temp)

for tempc in [-40, 0, 37]:
    tempf = c_to_f(tempc)
    message = make_message(tempf)
    print(message)
def c_to_f(c):
    print("c_to_f")
    return c / 5.0 * 9 + 32

def make_message(temp):
    print("make_message")
    return "The temperature is " + str(temp)

for tempc in [-40, 0, 37]:
    tempf = c_to_f(tempc)
    message = make_message(tempf)
    print(message)
Decomposing a problem

• Breaking down a program into functions is *the fundamental activity* of programming!

• How do you decide when to use a function?
  – One rule: DRY (Don’t Repeat Yourself)
  – Whenever you are tempted to copy and paste code, don’t!

• Now, how do you design a function?
How to design a function

1. Wishful thinking:
Write the program as if the function already exists

2. Write a specification:
Describe the inputs and output, including their types
   - No implementation yet!

3. Write tests: Example inputs and outputs

4. Write the function body (the implementation)
   First, write your plan in English, then translate to Python

```python
def fahr_to_cent(fahr):
    """Input: a number representing degrees Farenheit
    Return value: a number representing degrees centigrade
    """
    result = (fahr - 32) / 9.0 * 5
    return result

assert fahr_to_cent(32) == 0
assert fahr_to_cent(212) == 100
assert fahr_to_cent(98.6) == 37
assert fahr_to_cent(-40) == -40

# Main program
tempf = 32
print("Temperature in Farenheit:", tempf)
tempc = fahr_to_cent(tempf)
print("Temperature in Celsius:", tempc)
```
Review: how to evaluate a function call

1. Evaluate the function and its arguments to values
   – If the function value is not a function, execution terminates with an error
2. Create a new stack frame
   – The parent frame is the one where the function is defined
     • In CSE 160, this is always the global frame
   – A frame has bindings from variables to values
   – Looking up a variable starts in the local frame
     • Proceeds to its parent frame (the global frame) if no match in local frame
     • All the frames together are called the “environment”
3. Assign the actual argument values to the formal parameter variable
   – Add these as bindings in the new stack frame
4. Evaluate the body
   – Execute the statements in the function body
   – At a return statement, return the value and exit the function
   – If reach the end of the body of the function without encountering a return statement, then return the value `None`
     (It is also fine to explicitly have a statement: `return None`)
5. Remove the stack frame
6. The call evaluates to the returned value
Aside: Functions are values
The function can be an expression

def double(x):
    return 2 * x
def doubler():
    return double

print(double)
myfns = [math.sqrt, int, double, math.cos]
print(myfns[1](3.14))
print(myfns[2](3.14))
print(myfns[3](3.14))
print(doubler()(2.718))

See in python tutor