
CSE 331

Software Design & Implementation

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Spring 2021
HW9, JSON, Fetch

Administrivia

- HW8 due today (Thur. 5/27 @ 11:00pm)
- HW9 due a week later (Fri. 6/4 @ 11:00pm)
 - Spec released soon. 😊
 - Plan ahead - this assignment can take a little longer than others.
 - Get creative! Lots of cool opportunities.
- Any questions?

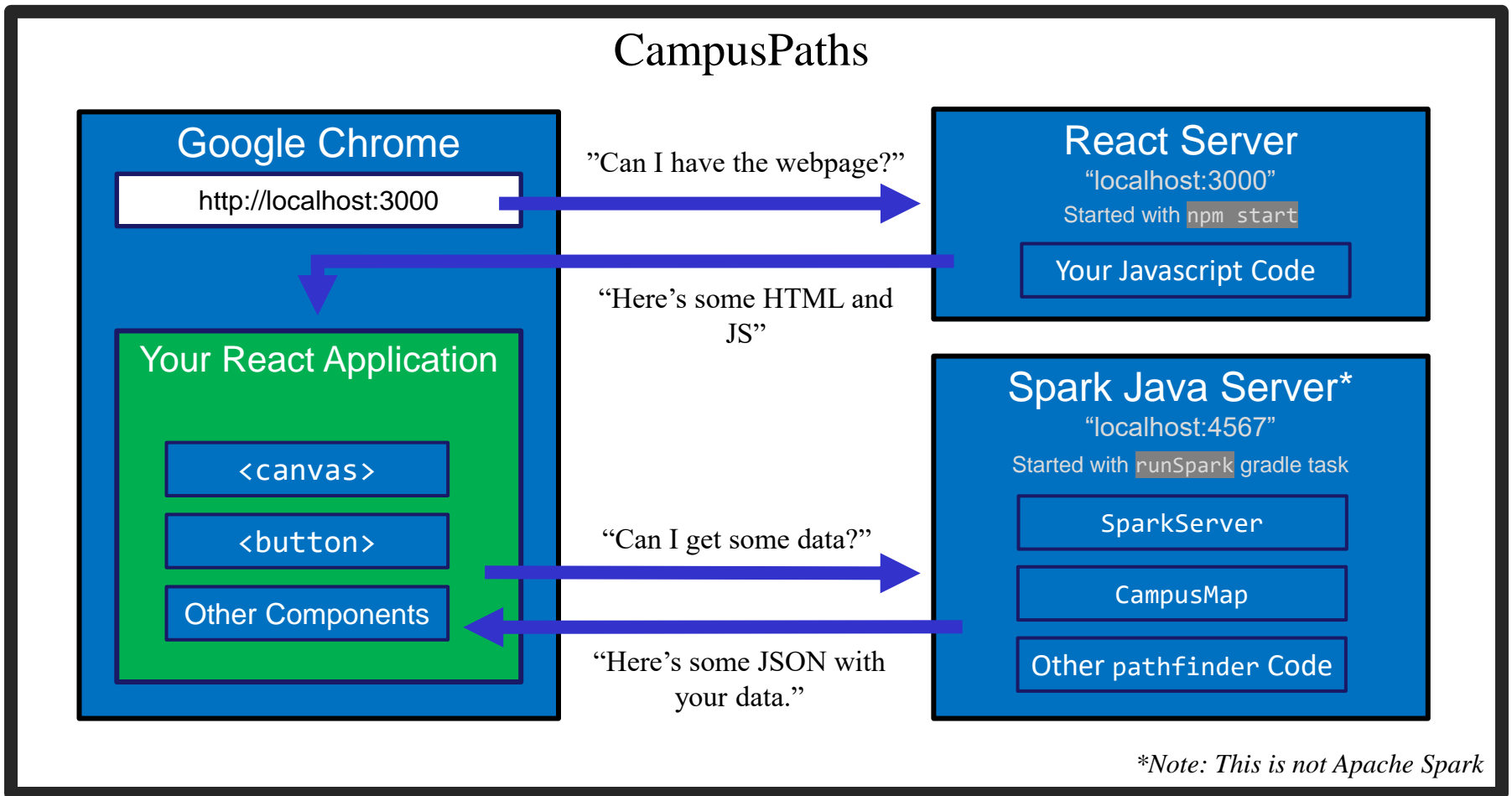
Agenda

- HW9 Overview
- JSON
 - Brief overview
 - Helps share data between Java and JS.
- Fetch
 - How your JS sends requests to the Java server.

Homework 9 Overview

- Creating a new web GUI using React
 - Display a map and draw paths between two points on the map.
 - Works just like your React app in HW8 – but you get to design it!
 - Send requests to your Java server (new) to request building and path info.
- Creating a Java server as part of your previous HW5-7 code
 - Receives requests from the React app to calculate paths/send data.
 - Not much code to write here thanks to MVC.
 - Reuse your CampusMap class from HW7.

The Campus Paths Stack



Any Questions?

- Done:
 - HW9 Basic Overview
- Up Next:
 - JSON
 - Fetch

JSON

- We have a whole application written in Java so far:
 - Reads CSV data, manages a Graph data structure, manages building information, does Dijkstra’s algorithm.
- We’re writing a whole application in Javascript:
 - React web app to create a GUI for your users to interact with.
- Even if we get them to communicate (discussed later), we need to make sure they “speak the same language”.
 - Javascript and Java store data *very* differently.
- JSON = JavaScript Object Notation
 - Can convert JS Object → String, and String → JS Object
 - Bonus: Strings are easy to send inside server requests/responses.

JSON ↔ JS

Javascript Object

```
let schoolInfo = {  
  
  name: "U of Washington",  
  location: "Seattle",  
  founded: 1861,  
  mascot: "Dubs II",  
  isRainy: true,  
  website: "www.uw.edu",  
  colors: ["Purple", "Gold"]  
  
}
```

JSON String

```
{"name":"U of  
Washington","location":"Seattle","foun  
ded":1861,"mascot":"Dubs  
II","isRainy":true,"website":"www.uw.e  
du","colors":["Purple","Gold"]}
```




- Can convert between the two easily (we'll see how later)
- This means: if the server sent back a JSON String, it'd be easy to use the data inside of it – just turn it into a JS Object and read the fields out of the object.

JSON ↔ JS

Java Object

```
public class SchoolInfo {  
  
    String name = "U of Washington";  
    String location = "Seattle";  
    int founded = 1861;  
    String mascot = "Dubs II";  
    boolean isRainy = true;  
    String website = "www.uw.edu";  
    String[] colors = new String[]  
        {"Purple", "Gold"};  
  
}
```

JSON String



```
{"name":"U of  
Washington","location":"Seattle","foun  
ded":1861,"mascot":"Dubs  
II","isRainy":true,"website":"www.uw.e  
du","colors":["Purple","Gold"]}
```

- Use Gson (a library from Google) to convert between them.
 - Tricky (but possible) to go from JSON String to Java Object, but we don't need that for this assignment.

```
Gson gson = new Gson();  
SchoolInfo sInfo = new SchoolInfo();  
String json = gson.toJson(sInfo);
```

JSON – Key Ideas

- Use Gson to turn Java objects containing the data into JSON before we send it back.
 - The Java objects don't have to be simple, like in the example, Gson can handle complicated structures.
- Easy to turn a JSON string into a Javascript object so we can use the data (node-fetch can help us with that).

Any Questions?

- Done:
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Fetch

- Used by JS to send requests to servers to ask for info.
 - alternative to `XMLHttpRequest`
- Uses Promises:
 - Promises capture the idea of “it’ll be finished later.”
 - Asking a server for a response can be *slow*, so Promises allow the browser to keep working instead of stopping to wait.
 - Getting the data out is a little more complicated.
- Can use `async/await` syntax to deal with promises.

Creating a Request

- Recall from lecture:
 - When you type a URL into your browser, it makes a GET request to that URL, the response to that request is the website itself (HTML, JS, etc..).
 - A "GET" request says "Hey server, can I get some info about _____?"
 - We're going to make a request from inside Javascript to ask for data about paths on campus.
 - There are other kinds of requests, but we're just using GET. (It's the default for fetch).
- Each "place" that a request can be sent is called an "endpoint."
 - Your Java server will provide multiple endpoints – one for each kind of request that your React app might want to make.
 - Find a path, get building info, etc...

Fetch Demo

- Let's see how a request is handled in action.

Creating a Request

Server Address: `http://localhost:4567`

- Basic request with no extra data: “`http://localhost:4567/getSomeData`”
 - A request to the “`/getSomeData`” endpoint in the server at “`localhost:4567`”
 - “`localhost`” just means “on this same computer”
 - “`:4567`” specifies a port number – every computer has multiple ports so multiple things can be running at a given time.
- Sending extra information in a request is done with a query string:
 - Add a “`?`”, then a list of “`key=value`” pairs. Each pair is separated by “`&`”.
 - Query string might look like: “`?start=CSE&end=KNE`”
- Complete request looks like:
`http://localhost:4567/findPath?start=CSE&end=KNE`
- Sends a “`/findPath`” request to the server at “`localhost:4567`”, and includes two pieces of extra information, named “`start`” and “`end`”.
- You don’t need to name your endpoints or query string parameters anything specific, the above is just an example.

Sending the Request

```
let responsePromise = fetch("http://localhost:4567/findPath?start=CSE&end=KNE");
```

- The URL you pass to `fetch()` can include a query string if you need to send extra data.
- `responsePromise` is a Promise object
 - Once the Promise “resolves,” it’ll hold whatever is sent back from the server.
- How do we get the data out of the Promise?
 - We can `await` the promise’s resolution.
 - `await` tells the browser that it can pause the currently-executing function and go do other things. Once the promise resolves, it’ll resume where we left off.
 - Prevents the browser from freezing while the request is happening

Getting Useful Data

“This function is
pause-able”

Will eventually
resolve to an
actual JS object
based on the
JSON string.

Once we have
the data, store it
in a useful place.

```
async sendRequest() {  
  let responsePromise = fetch("...");  
  let response = await responsePromise;  
  let parsingPromise = response.json();  
  let parsedObject = await parsingPromise;  
  this.setState({  
    importantData: parsedObject  
  });  
}
```

Error Checking

Every response has a 'status code' (404 = Not Found). This checks for 200 = OK

On a complete failure (i.e. server isn't running) an error is thrown.

```
async sendRequest() {
  try {
    let response = await fetch("...");
    if (!response.ok) {
      alert("Error!");
      return;
    }
    let parsed = await response.json();
    this.setState({
      importantData: parsed
    });
  } catch (e) {
    alert("Error!");
  }
}
```

Things to Know

- Can only use the `await` keyword inside a function declared with the `async` keyword.
 - `async` keyword means that a function can be “paused” while `await`-ing
- `async` functions automatically return a `Promise` that (will eventually) contain(s) their return value.
 - This means that if you need a return value from the function you declared as `async`, you’ll need to `await` the function call.
 - But that means that the caller also needs to be `async`.
 - Therefore: generally best to not have useful return values from `async` functions (in 331, there are lots of use cases outside of this course, but can get complicated fast).
 - Instead of returning, consider calling `setState` to store the result and trigger an update.

More Things to Know

- Error checking is important.
 - If you forget, the error most likely will disappear without actually causing your program to explode.
 - This is BAD! Silent errors can cause tricky bugs.
 - Happens because errors don't bubble outside of promises, and the async function you're inside is effectively "inside" a promise.
 - Means that if you don't catch an exception, it'll just disappear as soon as your function ends.

Any Questions?

- Done:
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Wrap-Up

- Don't forget:
 - HW8 due today (Thur. 5/27 @ 11:00pm)
 - HW9 due a week later (Fri. 6/4 @ 11:00pm)
- Use your resources!
 - Office Hours
 - Links from HW specs
 - React Tips & Tricks Handout (See “Resources” page on web)
 - Other students (remember academic honesty policies: can't share/show/copy code, but discussion is great!)
 - Google (carefully, always fully understand code you use)