Final Exam

As also indicated in class-list email:
• Next Thursday, 8:30-10:20AM
• Intention is to focus primarily on material since the midterm
  – Including topics on homeworks and not on homeworks
  – May also have a little ML, just like the course has had
• You will need to write code and English

Victory Lap

A victory lap is an extra trip around the track
  – By the exhausted victors (us)
Review course goals
  – Slides from Introduction and Course-Motivation
Some big themes and perspectives
  – Stuff for five years from now more than for the final
Time for open Q&A
Do your course evaluations!!!

Thank you!

• Huge thank-you to your TAs
  – Great team effort
  – Really invested in a successful course

Thank you!

• And a huge thank you to all of you
  – Great attitude about a very different view of software
  – Good class attendance and questions
  – Occasionally laughed at stuff
• Computer science ought to be challenging and fun!

[From Lecture 1]

• Many essential concepts relevant in any programming language
  – And how these pieces fit together
• Use ML, Racket, and Ruby languages:
  – They let many of the concepts “shine”
  – Using multiple languages shows how the same concept can “look different” or actually be slightly different
  – In many ways simpler than Java
• Big focus on functional programming
  – Not using mutation (assignment statements) (!)
  – Using first-class functions (can’t explain that yet)
  – But many other topics too
[From Lecture 1]

Learning to think about software in this "PL" way will make you a better programmer even if/when you go back to old ways.

It will also give you the mental tools and experience you need for a lifetime of confidently picking up new languages and ideas.

[Somewhat in the style of The Karate Kid movies (1984, 2010)]

[From Course Motivation]

- No such thing as a "best" PL
- Fundamental concepts easier to teach in some (multiple) PLs
- A good PL is a relevant, elegant interface for writing software
  - There is no substitute for precise understanding of PL semantics
- Functional languages have been on the leading edge for decades
  - Ideas have been absorbed by the mainstream, but very slowly
  - First-class functions and avoiding mutation increasingly essential
  - Meanwhile, use the ideas to be a better C/Java/PHP hacker
- Many great alternatives to ML, Racket, and Ruby, but each was chosen for a reason and for how they complement each other

Benefits of No Mutation

[An incomplete list]

1. Can freely alias or copy values/objects: Unit 1
2. More functions/modules are equivalent: Unit 4
3. No need to make local copies of data: Unit 5
4. Depth subtyping is sound: Unit 8

State updates are appropriate when you are modeling a phenomenon that is inherently state-based
  - A fold over a collection (e.g., summing a list) is not!

Some other highlights

- Function closures are really powerful and convenient…
  - … and implementing them is not magic
- Datatypes and pattern-matching are really convenient…
  - … and exactly the opposite of OOP decomposition
- Sound static typing prevents certain errors…
  - … and is inherently approximate
- Subtyping and generics allow different kinds of code reuse…
  - … and combine synergistically
- Modularity is really important; languages can help

From the syllabus

Successful course participants will:

- Internalize an accurate understanding of what functional and object-oriented programs mean
- Develop the skills necessary to learn new programming languages quickly
- Master specific language concepts such that they can recognize them in strange guises
- Learn to evaluate the power and elegance of programming languages and their constructs
- Attain reasonable proficiency in the ML, Racket, and Ruby languages and, as a by-product, become more proficient in languages they already know
What now?

- Use what you learned whenever you reason about software!
- CSE 401
- CSE 402

Does PL research (cf. uwplse.org) design new general-purpose languages? *Not really; it does cool stuff with same intellectual tools!*

Some current UW projects
- 3D-printing tools
- Checker framework
- Rosette
- Language for microfluidics
- Verified software written in Coq (which is quite SML-like)

The End

This really is my favorite course and it probably always will be

😊

Don’t be a stranger!

*Time for ask-me-anything questions?*