

# Software Architecture

CSSE6400

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Question

What is *Software Architecture*?

*Software Architecture* is design.

*Design* is not software architecture.

But...

*Software Architecture* is hard to define.

Let's hear from an expert



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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DngAZyWMGR0>

Okay so...

## Definition 1. Software Architecture

The important stuff; whatever that is.

Question

What do *you* want from this course?

Maybe...

## Definition 2. Software Architecture: The Course

A set of tools, processes, and design patterns which enable me to deliver high quality software.



# High Quality Software?<sup>1</sup>

**Functional Requirements** – Functional features to be delivered.

**Constraints** – Real world constraints on development.

**Principles** – Ideas adopted to encourage design consistency.

**Quality Attributes** – Quality of service and cross-cutting concerns.

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<sup>1</sup>Yes, “high quality” is intentionally vague.

# Functional Requirements

- Architecture must enable delivery of functionality.
- Support interaction model.
  - A mobile dating app may be difficult to deliver using *Pipe and Filter*.
- Don't over architect.
  - A mobile dating app doesn't need a six-layer *PCBMER* architecture.

# Constraints

- Externally determined restrictions
- Time and budget
- Technology
  - Interoperability with existing systems
  - Deployment platform
  - Vendor relationships
- People
- Organisation
  - Strategic or tactical system?
  - Politics may limit choices

# Principles

- Standards developers are expected to follow
  - Avoid unintentionally breaking the architecture
- e.g. Architectural structure
  - Layering strategy
  - Location of business logic
  - Stateless components

Question

What are *Quality Attributes*?

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Answer

Non-functional requirements for the success of software.

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- Extensibility** Features or extensions can be *easily added* to the base software.
- Testability** The software is designed so that *automated tests* can be easily deployed.

Problem

Software cannot meet all quality attributes.

“Solution”

Software architects prioritise the important attributes.

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### Definition 3. The First Law of Software Architecture [1]

Everything in software architecture is a trade-off.

## Definition 4. Wicked Architecture [2]

There are often *no clear problem descriptions*, *no clear solutions*, good or bad solutions, *no clear rules* when to “stop” architecting and mostly team rather than individual work.



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Don't expect “clean” solutions.

Why now?

Architecture is more important today thanks to *expectations* and *infrastructure*.

Big design up front is dumb.  
Doing no design up front is even dumber.

- Dave Thomas

## References

- [1] Mark Richards and Neal Ford.  
*Fundamentals of Software Architecture: An Engineering Approach.*  
O'Reilly Media, Inc., January 2020.
- [2] Matthias Galster and Samuil Angelov.  
*What makes teaching software architecture difficult?*  
In *Proceedings of the 38th International Conference on Software Engineering Companion*, ICSE '16, pages 356–359. Association for Computing Machinery, 2016.