Graphic Era Hill University
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PROJECT AND TEAM INFORMATION

Project Title

Integrated File Compression and Optimization Tool

Student/Team Information

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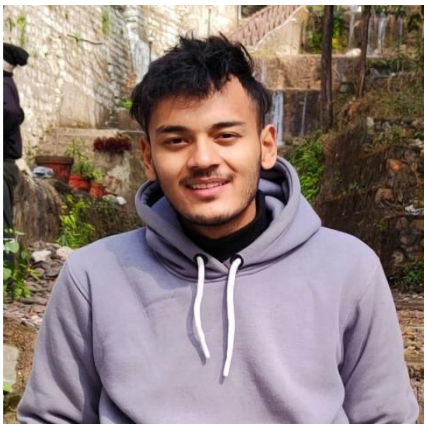

PROJECT PROGRESS DESCRIPTION (35 pts)

Project Abstract (2 pts)

The **Integrated File Compression and Optimization Tool** is a multifunctional software system developed to process and transform text files using various file handling techniques. It provides users with an interactive, web-based interface to apply four distinct operations: **Huffman Compression**, **Huffman Decompression**, **Run-Length Encoding (RLE) Compression**, and **Text Optimization**. The project combines the performance of a C backend—compiled into an executable (`compressor.exe`)—with the accessibility of a Flask-based web frontend, allowing users to upload `.txt` files, select a processing mode, and receive the transformed output file instantly.

Architecture & Components

1. File Upload and Web Interface (Frontend)

- Users interact with styled and responsive **Web-based interface** to upload files and choose processing mode.
- JavaScript dynamically displays the selected file name and provides animated feedback.
- The form submits the file and selected mode to the Flask backend.

2. Flask Backend (Python)

- Handles file uploads securely using Werkzeug.
- Stores uploaded files in a designated folder.
- Executes the C backend using subprocess.run() with the selected mode and file path.
- Delivers the processed output file back to the user using send_file() for download.

3. C Backend Executable (compressor.exe)

- **Mode 1: Huffman Compression**
  Scans character frequencies, builds a Huffman tree, generates binary codes, and writes compressed content along with metadata to a .huff file.
- **Mode 2: Run-Length Encoding (RLE) Compression**
  Performs simple character repetition compression and writes the output to a .modded.txt file.
- **Mode 3: Huffman Decompression**
  Reads the header mapping binary codes back to characters and reconstructs the original file into a .dec file.
- **Mode 4: File Optimization**
  Removes duplicate words and normalizes whitespace, saving the cleaned version as .optimized.txt.

4. Output Handling

- The resulting output file is saved alongside the input file.
- The Flask server checks for file existence and allows immediate download if processing was successful.
- Errors are caught and returned as browser-readable messages.

Tools and Libraries Used

- **C (Standard Library):** File I/O, string processing, memory allocation, and Huffman/RLE logic.
- **Python (Flask):** Backend server for handling requests and managing execution flow.
- **HTML, CSS, JavaScript:** Frontend design with responsive layout and animation.
- **GCC (MinGW for Windows):** To compile the C program into an executable (compressor.exe).

Updated Project Approach and Architecture (2 pts)

Our project, the **Integrated File Compression and Optimization Tool**, follows a modular and user-centric approach designed to perform multiple text file transformations through a web-based interface. The backend is developed in C for efficient file processing, while the frontend leverages HTML/CSS for modern user experience. The architecture supports operations like **Huffman Compression**, **RLE Compression**, **Huffman Decompression**, and **Text File Optimization**, making it practical for basic data compression and cleanup tasks.

Architecture:

1. Web Interface for User Interaction

The project starts with a visually appealing HTML/CSS-based interface that allows users to upload .txt files and select one of four transformation modes:

- Huffman Compression
- Run-Length Encoding (RLE) Compression
- Huffman Decompression
- File Optimization (duplicate word removal and spacing cleanup)

The interface uses modern CSS styling, animations, and responsive design to provide a pleasant user experience across devices.

2. Flask Backend Handling

A Python Flask server receives the uploaded file and the selected mode. It:

- Saves the file securely to a designated directory.
- Calls the C backend executable (compressor.exe) using Python's subprocess module.
- Detects the generated output file and sends it back to the user for download.
- Handles errors gracefully and provides clear console/browser feedback.

3. C-Based Core File Processor

The compressor.exe file handles all file transformation logic in C based on the mode:

- **Huffman Compression (Mode 1):**
  Analyzes character frequency, constructs a Huffman tree, encodes text using binary codes, and saves both the mapping and compressed output to a .huff file.
- **Run-Length Encoding (Mode 2):**
  Compresses the input file by encoding repeated characters as character-count pairs and writes to .modded.txt.
- **Huffman Decompression (Mode 3):**
  Reconstructs the Huffman tree from the code mapping and decodes the binary stream into the original text, saving as .dec.
- **File Optimization (Mode 4):**
  Reads input text, removes duplicate words, and normalizes spacing to improve readability and compactness, saved as .optimized.txt.

4. Output Delivery and User Feedback

After processing:

- The Flask backend checks for the existence of the output file.
- The file is returned as a downloadable response.
- If any error occurs (e.g., missing file, invalid input), an informative error message is shown in the browser.

Technologies and Tools Used

- **Programming Language:** C
- **Execution Method:** Compiled into compressor.exe using GCC (MinGW on Windows)
- **Web Framework:** Python Flask
- **Frontend:** HTML, CSS, JavaScript
- **Libraries:** stdio.h, stdlib.h, string.h, ctype.h (for all file operations and transformations).

Tasks Completed (7 pts)

Task Completed	Team Member
Run-Length Encoding (RLE) Module	Akash Mall

- Developed a character-level run-length encoder to compress repeated characters into count pairs. - Ensured correct formatting and edge case handling in `.modded.txt` output file. - Validated RLE correctness using sample files.	
Huffman Compression Module - Implemented character frequency analysis and Huffman tree construction using a min-heap. - Encoded input text using generated binary codes and saved compressed output with code mappings. - Handled special characters and binary-safe writing to output `.huff` file.	Asmita Joshi
Huffman Decompression Module - Parsed code mappings from `.huff` file header and rebuilt the Huffman decoding tree. - Decoded binary sequence into the original text. - Generated accurate `.dec` output and verified byte integrity	Aayush
File Optimization Module - Developed logic to remove duplicate words and normalize spacing within input files. - Ensured that repeated words (consecutively placed) were filtered and cleaned efficiently. - Output optimized text into `.optimized.txt`.	*Kashish Agarwal*
Frontend Development (Web UI) - Designed a responsive and user-friendly web interface using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. - Applied modern UI elements including animations, gradient backgrounds, shadows, transitions, and font enhancements using Google Fonts. - Integrated the frontend with Flask backend for form submission, file upload, and displaying compilation and execution results dynamically. - Ensured mobile responsiveness and visual consistency for cross-platform usability.	*Aayush & Asmita*
Flask Backend Integration (app.py)	Akash Mall & Kashish Agarwal

- Developed Flask app to handle file uploads, form data processing, and execution routing. - Used `subprocess.run()` to call the compiled `compressor.exe` with appropriate mode and filepath. - Returned transformed file as a downloadable attachment based on selected mode. - Ensured error handling for failed subprocesses or invalid operations.	

Challenges/Roadblocks (7 pts)

During the development of the **Integrated File Compression and Optimization Tool**, we encountered a range of technical and architectural challenges involving compression logic, file handling, web interface integration, and cross-format support. Below are the key roadblocks and how we addressed them:

1. **Huffman Tree Building and Code Mapping**
    a. **Issue**: Ensuring correct construction of the Huffman tree and generation of accurate binary codes was challenging, especially when handling non-printable or special characters like newline (`\n`), tab (`\t`), etc.
    b. **Resolution**: We implemented string-safe formatting (e.g., `\xHEX`) for all characters and validated mappings by round-tripping compressed and decompressed data.
2. **Run-Length Encoding Formatting Errors**
    a. **Issue**: Initial RLE logic produced ambiguous outputs when characters repeated single times or the counts exceeded one digit.
    b. **Resolution**: We structured RLE output using clear `<char><count>` formatting and tested edge cases like alternating character sequences and long runs.
3. **Huffman Decompression Tree Reconstruction**
    a. **Issue**: Rebuilding the Huffman tree from stored mappings was error-prone due to inconsistent key formatting and corrupted headers.
    b. **Resolution**: Introduced a structured parsing mechanism to interpret encoded lines, normalize escape sequences, and rebuild the tree reliably.
4. **File Optimization Misbehaviors**
    a. **Issue**: Optimizing text files to remove duplicate words and extra spaces led to word omissions or extra spacing in certain cases (e.g., trailing whitespace or case-sensitive matches).
    b. **Resolution**: We developed logic that tracked previous words and maintained consistent formatting with preserved order and word boundaries.
5. **Subprocess Integration in Flask Backend**
    a. **Issue**: Running the `compressor.exe` from Flask using `subprocess.run()` led to path resolution issues, especially on Windows with spaces in filenames or missing permissions.
    b. **Resolution**: Used sanitized, underscore-replaced filenames and absolute paths to ensure consistent execution and compatibility across environments.
6. **Output File Detection and Delivery**
    a. **Issue**: There were scenarios where output files weren't generated (due to incorrect mode or failed internal logic), leading to user confusion or crashes.
    b. **Resolution**: We added robust output file checks and displayed meaningful feedback on the browser using Flask's error capture and HTML rendering.
7. **Web UI Responsiveness and Styling Conflicts**

a. **Issue**: Designing a responsive UI with real-time file display, dropdown animations, and accessibility across screen sizes introduced layout instability.
b. **Resolution**: We iteratively refined the CSS using media queries, animation delays, and user-focused layout improvements (e.g., progress indicators, file name previews).

Resolution Strategy

We adopted an iterative development model with regular testing after each feature addition. Tasks were modularized (one function per mode), and integration between frontend and backend was continuously verified. Platform compatibility, file safety, and user experience were prioritized to ensure a seamless compression pipeline from input to downloadable result.

Tasks Pending (7 pts)

Task Pending	Team Member (to complete the task)
Detailed Progress Feedback: Implement a progress bar or real-time status updates in the UI during file processing (especially for large files) to enhance user experience. **Drag-and-Drop Upload UI:** Add drag-and-drop file support to enhance user interactivity and ease of use on the frontend	Aayush & Asmita
Cross-Browser & Device Testing: Ensure full compatibility across major browsers and mobile responsiveness for better accessibility. **Performance Benchmarking & Analytics:** Implement tools to analyze compression ratio, file size before/after, and processing time for each method, and display this data to the user.	*Kashish Agarwal & Akash Mall*

Project Outcome/Deliverables (2 pts)

The primary deliverable is a fully functional File Compression and Optimization Tool that supports multiple modes of file transformation — including **Huffman Compression**, **Run-Length Encoding (RLE)**, **Huffman Decompression**, and **Text File Optimization**. The tool accepts user-uploaded `.txt` files via a modern web interface and processes them using a backend C program compiled as an executable.

Each operation produces an output file based on the selected mode, which is then made available for immediate download. The system also handles edge cases such as duplicate word removal and space normalization during optimization, making files cleaner and more efficient.

Additional deliverables include:

- A dynamic and animated **Web UI** built with HTML, CSS, and JavaScript for enhanced user experience.
- A backend integration using **Flask (Python)** that handles uploads, mode selection, and secure execution of the C executable.
- Informative console and browser feedback for success or failure of each operation.

This project provides a practical and efficient solution for handling basic file compression needs, with potential for future expansion such as support for more formats, performance benchmarking, and error diagnostics.

Progress Overview (2 pts)

Completed (~85%)

- Huffman compression and decompression modules are fully implemented and tested.
- Run-Length Encoding (RLE) and file optimization logic are complete and produce correct output files.
- Web-based user interface with animation and responsiveness is built and integrated.
- Flask-based backend (Python) successfully handles file uploads, mode selection, execution of C program, and result delivery.
- Improved error feedback in the frontend and backend, especially for edge cases like malformed inputs or missing output files.
- Refactoring C code for performance and maintainability.

In Progress (~10%)

- Additional UI enhancements to display logs or transformation previews.
- Automated unit testing for file transformation logic.

Pending (~5%)

- Extended format support (.csv, .log) and binary compression analysis.

Schedule Status:
All core features and integrations are completed on time. Error handling improvements and extended functionalities are scheduled for the final phase. Testing automation and minor feature additions are deferred to post-submission updates.

Codebase Information (2 pts)

- **Main Branch:**
  `main` — Latest stable version containing all core features including Huffman compression, Huffman decompression, Run-Length Encoding (RLE), file optimization, and complete Flask-based backend integration with HTML/CSS frontend.

Feature Branches:

- `frontend-ui-upgrade` — Enhanced web interface with modern animated styling, file name preview, gradient backgrounds, and improved responsiveness for mobile and desktop views.
- `error-handling-enhancements` — Backend improvements for better handling of file-related errors, invalid inputs, missing outputs, and malformed requests.
- `format-support-extension` — Work in progress for supporting additional formats like `.csv` and `.log` and exploring binary-safe compression.

Important Commits:

- `a1b2c3d` — Initial implementation of Huffman compression and character frequency analysis logic.
- `d4e5f6g` — Integrated Huffman decompression with tree reconstruction and support for special characters.
- `h7i8j9k` — Completed RLE module and added formatted output for repeated character sequences.
- `l0m1n2o` — Added file optimization logic for duplicate word removal and spacing normalization.
- `p3q4r5s` — Integrated Flask backend with all modes and linked it to a styled HTML form; added safe filename handling and subprocess execution of `compressor.exe`.

Testing and Validation Status (2 pts)

Test Type	Status (Pass/Fail)	Notes
Huffman Compression	Pass	Accurately compresses text files; tested with multiple content patterns.
Huffman Decompression	Pass	Correctly reconstructs original files; supports special and escaped chars.
RLE Compression	Pass	Produces compact output; verified with repetitive character sequences.
File Optimization	Pass	Removes duplicate words and normalizes spacing effectively.
Web UI Functionality	Pass	File upload, mode selection, and result download work as expected.

Deliverables Progress (2 pts)

Deliverable	Status	Notes
Huffman Compression Module	Completed	Fully implemented and tested with varied text inputs
Huffman Decompression Module	Completed	Successfully reconstructs original file contents
RLE Compression Module	Completed	Compresses repetitive characters accurately
File Optimization Logic	Completed	Removes duplicate words and extra spaces effectively
Web UI (HTML/CSS/JS)	Completed	Responsive, animated interface designed and tested
Flask Backend Integration	Completed	Handles uploads, mode selection, and file execution seamlessly
File Handling and Output Delivery	Completed	Generates appropriate output files and triggers download