

COMP220: Graphics & Simulation

2: Shader programs

Learning outcomes

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- ▶ **Explain** the role of shaders in graphics programming
- ▶ **Distinguish** the roles of the vertex shader and the fragment shader
- ▶ **Write** simple shader programs in GLSL

Agenda

- ▶ Lecture / live coding: experimenting with shaders
- ▶ Coffee
- ▶ Portfolio proposals

GLSL



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- ▶ Used for writing **shaders** for OpenGL applications
- ▶ C-like syntax
- ▶ GLSL compiler is part of the **graphics driver** on the **end user's machine**
 - ▶ Yes, you need to ship your shader source code with your game!

Basic vertex shader

```
#version 330 core

layout(location = 0) in vec3 vertexPos;

void main()
{
    gl_Position.xyz = vertexPos;
    gl_Position.w = 1.0;
}
```

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- ▶ Tells the compiler to use OpenGL 3.3 core functionality

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- ▶ Specifies **input values** to the vertex shader
- ▶ Corresponds with layout of **vertex buffers** in C++ program

Basic vertex shader

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- ▶ Every shader program must define a `void main()` function

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- ▶ `gl_Position` is one of many **built-in** variables with special meaning
- ▶ See [https://www.opengl.org/wiki/Built-in_Variable_\(GLSL\)](https://www.opengl.org/wiki/Built-in_Variable_(GLSL))

Basic fragment shader

```
#version 330 core

out vec3 color;

void main()
{
    color = vec3(1, 1, 0);
}
```

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Basic fragment shader

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- ▶ By convention, fragment shader should have **one output**, namely the fragment colour
- ▶ Doesn't have to be named `color` — could be any other non-reserved identifier

Programming in GLSL

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- ▶ No `class`

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- ▶ **Arrays** of constant size e.g. `float myArray[10]`
- ▶ There's no such thing as **pointers** in GLSL (hooray!)

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- ▶ Used to represent **points** or **directions** in n dimensions
- ▶ Also used to represent e.g. colours in RGB(A) space

Constructing vectors in GLSL

```
vec2 a = vec2(1.2, 3.4);  
vec3 b = vec3(1); // same as vec3(1, 1, 1)  
vec3 c = vec3(a, 5.6); // same as vec3(1.2, 3.4, 5.6)
```

Vector maths

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Most operations work **component-wise**:

```
vec2 a = vec2(1, 2);  
vec2 b = vec2(3, 4);  
vec2 c = a + b; // c == vec2(4, 6);  
vec2 d = a * b; // d == vec2(3, 8);
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vec2 d = a * b; // d == vec2(3, 8);
```

Can also multiply a **vector** by a **scalar**:

```
vec2 e = 3.1 * a; // e == vec2(3.1, 6.2)
```

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```
vec4 a = vec4(1, 2, 3, 4);  
float b = a.y; // b == 2  
float c = a.z; // c == 3  
a.x = 5;      // a == vec4(5, 2, 3, 4)  
a.w = a.y;    // a == vec4(5, 2, 3, 2)
```

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a.w = a.y;    // a == vec4(5, 2, 3, 2)
```

Can also use `r g b a` (for colours) and `s t p q` (for texture coordinates)

Swizzling

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```
vec4 a = vec4(1, 2, 3, 4);  
vec2 b = a.xy;           // b == vec2(1, 2)  
vec3 c = a.zyz;          // c == vec3(3, 2, 3)  
a.xw = vec2(5, 6);       // a == vec4(5, 2, 3, 6)  
a.xyzw = a.wzyx;         // a == vec4(6, 3, 2, 5)
```


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- ▶ **Can** use the same component twice in the **right-hand side** of an assignment
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- ▶ Swizzling is generally **faster** than the equivalent code without swizzling

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Can access multiple components in one go:

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vec4 a = vec4(1, 2, 3, 4);  
vec2 b = a.xy;      // b == vec2(1, 2)  
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- ▶ **Can** use the same component twice in the **right-hand side** of an assignment
- ▶ **Cannot** use the same component twice in the **left-hand side** of an assignment
- ▶ Swizzling is generally **faster** than the equivalent code without swizzling
- ▶ Can also use `r g b a` or `s t p q`, but can't mix them (e.g. `.gbr` is valid but `.gzx` is not)

Variables in GLSL



Passing values from the application to the shader

There are two ways:

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- ▶ **Vertex attributes**

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- ▶ More on this later in the module

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- ▶ **Uniform variables**

Passing values from the application to the shader

There are two ways:

- ▶ **Vertex attributes**

- ▶ Different values for each vertex
- ▶ More on this later in the module

- ▶ **Uniform variables**

- ▶ Constant across one `glDraw...` call

Uniform variables

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In GLSL (outside `main()`):

```
uniform vec3 myVariable;
```

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In C++:

```
GLuint location  
= glGetUniformLocation(programID, "myVariable");
```

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```
uniform vec3 myVariable;
```

In C++:

```
GLuint location  
    = glGetUniformLocation(programID, "myVariable");
```

and then:

```
glUniform3f(location, 1, 2, 3);
```

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- ▶ `glGetUniformLocation` is expensive — do it on initialisation, not in the main loop

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Uniform variables

- ▶ `glGetUniformLocation` is expensive — do it on initialisation, not in the main loop
- ▶ Uniforms can be any GLSL type...
- ▶ ... but you must use the `glUniform...` function that matches the type

Passing values from the vertex shader to the fragment shader

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Define an **out** variable in the vertex shader:

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```
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Define an **in** variable **of the same name** in the fragment shader:

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Interpolation

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- ▶ The vertex shader sets a value for each vertex

Interpolation

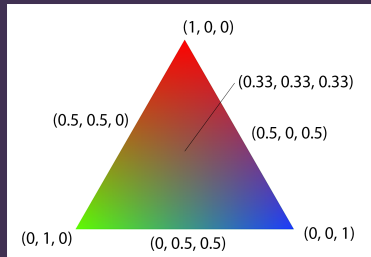
- ▶ The vertex shader sets a value for each vertex
- ▶ So what is the value in the middle of the triangle?

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Portfolio task proposals

