Functional Programming

Introduction

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Coordinates

- **Course hours:** We 14-16
- **Course room:** SR 051-00-031
- **Staff:** Prof. Dr. Peter Thiemann

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- **Homepage:**
  https://github.com/proglang/FunctionalProgramming
  https://proglang.informatik.uni-freiburg.de/teaching/functional-programming/2022/

Administrivia

Lecture ~90 minutes/week

- lecture videos will be made available on the webpage
- presence with live recording (zoom)

Exercise ~90 minutes exercise/week

- mostly online
- exercise questions available on Thursdays
  - discussed in next available exercise session
  - no need to hand in exercises during the semester

Final exam

- written exam
- comprising theory questions and small programming tasks

Contents

- Basics of functional programming using Haskell
- Theoretical background
- Writing Haskell programs
- Using Haskell libraries and development tools
- Your first Haskell project

What is Haskell?

In September of 1987 a meeting was held at the conference on Functional Programming Languages and Computer Architecture in Portland, Oregon, to discuss an unfortunate situation in the functional programming community: there had come into being more than a dozen non-strict, purely functional programming languages, all similar in expressive power and semantic underpinnings. There was a strong consensus at this meeting that more widespread use of this class of functional languages was being hampered by the lack of a common language. It was decided that a committee should be formed to design such a language, providing faster communication of new ideas, a stable foundation for real applications development, and a vehicle through which others would be encouraged to use functional languages.

From "History of Haskell"

What is Functional Programming?

A different approach to programming

Functions and values

rather than

Assignments and pointers

What is Functional Programming?

A different approach to programming

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rather than

Assignments and pointers

It will make you a better programmer

Why Haskell?

- Haskell is a very high-level language
  (many details taken care of automatically).
- Haskell is expressive and concise
  (can achieve a lot with a little effort).
- Haskell is good at handling complex data and combining components.
- Haskell is a high-productivity language
  (prioritize programmer-time over computer-time)

Functional vs Imperative Programming: Variables

Functional (Haskell)

```
x :: Int
x = 5
```

Variable `x` has value `5` forever

Functional vs Imperative Programming: Variables

Functional (Haskell)

```
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x = 5
```

Variable `x` has value `5` forever

Imperative (Java / C)

```
int x = 5;
...
x = x+1;
```

Variable `x` can change its content over time

Functional vs Imperative Programming: Functions

Functional (Haskell)

```
f :: Int -> Int -> Int
f x y = 2*x + y

f 42 16 // always 100
```

Return value of a function **only** depends on its inputs

Functional vs Imperative Programming: Functions

Functional (Haskell)

```
f :: Int -> Int -> Int
f x y = 2*x + y

f 42 16 // always 100
```

Return value of a function **only** depends on its inputs

Imperative (Java)

```
boolean flag;
static int f (int x, int y) {
  return flag ? 2*x + y , 2*x - y;
}

int z = f (42, 16); // who knows?
```

Return value depends on non-local variable `flag`

Functional vs Imperative Programming: Laziness

Haskell

```
x = expensiveComputation
g anotherExpensiveComputation
```

- The expensive computation will only happen if `x` is ever used.
- Another expensive computation will only happen if `g` uses its argument.

Functional vs Imperative Programming: Laziness

Haskell

```
x = expensiveComputation
g anotherExpensiveComputation
```

- The expensive computation will only happen if `x` is ever used.
- Another expensive computation will only happen if `g` uses its argument.

Java

```
int x = expensiveComputation;
g (anotherExpensiveComputation)
```

- Both expensive computations will happen anyway.
- Laziness can be simulated, but it's complex!

Many more features that make programs more concise

- Algebraic datatypes
- Polymorphic types
- Parametric overloading
- Type inference
- Monads & friends (for IO, concurrency, . . .)
- Comprehensions
- Metaprogramming
- Domain specific languages
- . . .

References

- Paper by the original developers of Haskell in the conference on History of Programming Languages (HOPL III): http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?id=1238856
- The Haskell home page: `http://www.haskell.org`
- Haskell libraries repository: `https://hackage.haskell.org/`
- Haskell Tool Stack: `https://docs.haskellstack.org/en/stable/README/`