

CSC 343

Introduction to Databases

Summer 2019

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Our first hour or so

- Some key concepts
- Examples to motivate the course
- Admin info

Databases and DBMSs

- Databases are everywhere, often behind the scenes.
- **DBMS** (Database Management System):
 - *“A powerful tool for creating and managing large amounts of data efficiently and allowing it to persist over long periods of time, safely.”*
[Ullman and Widom, FCDB]
- **Database:**
a collection of data managed by a DBMS.

DBMS vs {file system, www}

- Each of these offer some of what we want.
E.g.,:
 - file system...
 - www offers queries
- But they fall far short.

Doing it all with files

- You can manage a large collection of data with files.
- In fact, the first commercial databases evolved in this way.
- How would this work? What problems would arise?

Data models

- Every DBMS is based on some data model:
a notation for describing data, including
 - the structure of the data
 - constraints on the content of the data
 - operations on the data
- Some specific data models:
 - relational data model
 - semistructured data model
 - unstructured data — (key, value) pairs
 - value could be anything: a full document, a video, etc.
 - graph data model

The relational data model

- Main concept is a “relation.”
Based on the concept of relations in math.
- Can think of as tables of rows and columns.

Teams	Name	Home Field	Coach
	Rangers	Runnymede CI	Tarvo Sinervo
	Ducks	Humber Public	Tracy Zheng
	Choppers	High Park	Ammar Jalali

Games	Home team	Away team	Home goals	Away goals
	Rangers	Ducks	3	0
	Ducks	Choppers	1	1
	Rangers	Choppers	4	2
	Choppers	Ducks	0	5

What a **DBMS** provides

- Ability to specify the logical structure of the data
 - explicitly
 - and have it enforced
- Ability to query or modify the data.
- Good performance under heavy loads (huge data, many queries).
- Durability of the data.
- Concurrent access by multiple users/processes.

Overall architecture of a DBMS

- The DBMS sits between the data and the users or between the data and an application program
- Within the DBMS are layers of software for:
 - parsing “queries”
 - implementing the fundamental operations
 - optimizing queries
 - maintaining indices on the data
 - accessing the files that store the data and indices
 - management of buffers
 - management of disk space

How best to find all Vic students with over 80 in csc2

Students:

Student #	Name	College
1234	Fred Flintstone	Vic
2345	Wilman Flintstone	UC
3456	Betty Rubble	Vic
etc.	etc.	etc.

Grades:

Student #	Course	Grade
9876	aps105	78
3456	csc207	85
2345	csc207	92
etc.	etc.	etc.

What this course is about

- **csc343** is about *using* DBMSs:
 - defining schemas and instances
 - writing queries
 - connecting to code written in a general-purpose language
 - rigorous underlying principles
- **csc443** is about implementation of the DBMS itself

Why study databases?

- Interesting concepts and techniques.
- Spans computer science, including OS, languages, theory, AI, multimedia, logic.
- Databases have become increasingly important
 - shift from a focus on computation to information
 - data increases in volume and diversity.
- Jobs: In demand and well paid.
- Research: Many open problems.