

Chapter 14

Inheritance

Learning Objectives

- Inheritance Basics
 - Derived classes, with constructors
 - protected: qualifier
 - Redefining member functions
 - Non-inherited functions
- Programming with Inheritance
 - Assignment operators and copy constructors
 - Destructors in derived classes
 - Multiple inheritance

Introduction to Inheritance

- Object-oriented programming
 - Powerful programming technique
 - Provides abstraction dimension called *inheritance*
- General form of class is defined
 - Specialized versions then inherit properties of general class
 - And add to it/modify it's functionality for it's appropriate use

Inheritance Basics

- New class inherited from another class
- Base class
 - "General" class from which others derive
- Derived class
 - New class
 - Automatically has base class's:
 - Member variables
 - Member functions
 - Can then add additional member functions and variables

Derived Classes

- Consider example:
Class of "Employees"
- Composed of:
 - Salaried employees
 - Hourly employees
- Each is "subset" of employees
 - Another might be those paid fixed wage each month or week

Derived Classes

- Don't "need" type of generic "employee"
 - Since no one's just an "employee"
- General concept of employee helpful!
 - All have names
 - All have social security numbers
 - Associated functions for these "basics" are same among all employees
- So "general" class can contain all these "things" about employees

Employee Class

- Many members of "employee" class apply to all types of employees
 - Accessor functions
 - Mutator functions
 - Most data items:
 - SSN
 - Name
 - Pay
- We won't have "objects" of this class, however

Employee Class

- Consider printCheck() function:
 - Will always be "redefined" in derived classes
 - So different employee types can have different checks
 - Makes no sense really for "undifferentiated" employee
 - So function printCheck() in Employee class says just that
 - Error message stating "printCheck called for undifferentiated employee!! Aborting..."

Deriving from Employee Class

- Derived classes from Employee class:
 - Automatically have all member variables
 - Automatically have all member functions
- Derived class said to "inherit" members from base class
- Can then redefine existing members and/or add new members

Display 14.3 Interface for the Derived Class HourlyEmployee (1 of 2)

Display 14.3 Interface for the Derived Class HourlyEmployee

```
1
2 //This is the header file hourlyemployee.h.
3 //This is the interface for the class HourlyEmployee.
4 #ifndef HOURLYEMPLOYEE_H
5 #define HOURLYEMPLOYEE_H

6 #include <string>
7 #include "employee.h"

8 using std::string;

9 namespace SavitchEmployees
10 {
```

Display 14.3 Interface for the Derived Class HourlyEmployee (2 of 2)

```
11  class HourlyEmployee : public Employee
12  {
13  public:
14      HourlyEmployee( );
15      HourlyEmployee(string theName, string theSsn,
16                      double theWageRate, double theHours);
17      void setRate(double newWageRate);
18      double getRate( ) const;
19      void setHours(double hoursWorked);
20      double getHours( ) const;
21      void printCheck( ) ;
22  private:
23      double wageRate;
24      double hours;
25  };

26  } //SavitchEmployees

27  #endif //HOURLYEMPLOYEE_H
```

You only list the declaration of an inherited member function if you want to change the definition of the function.

HourlyEmployee Class Interface

- Note definition begins same as any other
 - #ifndef structure
 - Includes required libraries
 - Also includes employee.h!
- And, the heading:
class HourlyEmployee : public Employee
{ ...
 - Specifies "publicly inherited" from Employee class

HourlyEmployee Class Additions

- Derived class interface only lists new or "to be redefined" members
 - Since all others inherited are already defined
 - i.e.: "all" employees have ssn, name, etc.
- HourlyEmployee adds:
 - Constructors
 - wageRate, hours member variables
 - setRate(), getRate(), setHours(), getHours() member functions

HourlyEmployee Class Redefinitions

- HourlyEmployee redefines:
 - printCheck() member function
 - This "overrides" the printCheck() function implementation from Employee class
- It's definition must be in HourlyEmployee class's implementation
 - As do other member functions declared in HourlyEmployee's interface
 - New and "to be redefined"

Inheritance Terminology

- Common to simulate family relationships
- Parent class
 - Refers to base class
- Child class
 - Refers to derived class
- Ancestor class
 - Class that's a parent of a parent ...
- Descendant class
 - Opposite of ancestor

Constructors in Derived Classes

- Base class constructors are **NOT inherited** in derived classes!
 - But they can be invoked within derived class constructor
 - Which is all we need!
- Base class constructor must initialize all base class member variables
 - Those inherited by derived class
 - So derived class constructor simply calls it
 - "First" thing derived class constructor does

Derived Class Constructor Example

- Consider syntax for HourlyEmployee constructor:

```
HourlyEmployee::HourlyEmployee(string theName,  
                                string theNumber, double theWageRate,  
                                double theHours)  
    : Employee(theName, theNumber),  
      wageRate(theWageRate), hours(theHours)  
{  
    //Deliberately empty  
}
```

- Portion after : is "initialization section"
 - Includes invocation of Employee constructor

Another HourlyEmployee Constructor

- A second constructor:
HourlyEmployee::HourlyEmployee()
 : Employee(), wageRate(0),
 hours(0)

{
 //Deliberately empty
}
- Default version of base class constructor is called (no arguments)
- Should always invoke one of the base class's constructors

Constructor: No Base Class Call

- Derived class constructor should always invoke one of the base class's constructors
- If you do not:
 - Default base class constructor automatically called
- Equivalent constructor definition:

```
HourlyEmployee::HourlyEmployee()  
    : wageRate(0), hours(0)  
{ }
```

Pitfall: Base Class Private Data

- Derived class "inherits" private member variables
 - But still cannot directly access them
 - Not even through derived class member functions!
- Private member variables can ONLY be accessed "by name" in member functions of the class they're defined in.

Pitfall: Base Class Private Member Functions

- Same holds for base class private member functions
 - Cannot be accessed outside interface and implementation of base class
 - Not even in derived class member function definitions

Pitfall: Base Class Private Member Functions Impact

- Larger impact here vs. member variables
 - Member variables can be accessed indirectly via accessor or mutator member functions
 - Member functions simply not available
- This is "reasonable"
 - Private member functions should be simply "helper" functions
 - Should be used only in class they're defined

The protected: Qualifier

- New classification of class members
- Allows private data of base class access "by name" in derived class
 - But nowhere else
 - Still no access "by name" in other classes
- In class it's defined → acts like private
- Considered "protected" in derived class
 - To allow future derivations
- Many feel this "violates" information hiding

Redefinition of Member Functions

- Recall interface of derived class:
 - Contains declarations for new member functions
 - Also contains declarations for inherited member functions **to be changed**
 - Inherited member functions NOT declared:
 - Automatically inherited unchanged
- Implementation of derived class will:
 - Define new member functions
 - Redefine inherited functions as declared

Redefining vs. Overloading

- Very different!
- Redefining in derived class:
 - SAME parameter list
 - Essentially "re-writes" same function
- Overloading:
 - Different parameter list
 - Defined "new" function that takes different parameters
 - Overloaded functions **must have different signatures**

A Function's Signature

- Recall definition of a "signature":
 - Function's name
 - Sequence of types in parameter list
 - Including order, number, types
- Signature does NOT include:
 - Return type
 - const keyword
 - &

Accessing Redefined Base Function

- When redefined in derived class, base class's definition not "lost"
- Can specify it's use:
Employee JaneE;
HourlyEmployee SallyH;
JaneE.printCheck(); → calls Employee's
printCheck function
SallyH.printCheck(); → calls HourlyEmployee
printCheck function
`SallyH.Employee::printCheck();` → Calls Employee's
printCheck function!
- Not typical here, but useful sometimes

Functions Not Inherited

- All "normal" functions in base class are inherited in derived class
- Exceptions:
 - Constructors (we've seen)
 - Destructors
 - Copy constructor
 - But if not defined, generates "default" one
 - Recall need to define one for pointers!
 - Assignment operator
 - If not defined → default

Assignment Operators and Copy Constructors

- Recall: overloaded assignment operators and copy constructors
NOT inherited
 - But can be used in derived class definitions
 - Typically MUST be used!
 - Similar to how derived class constructor invokes base class constructor

Assignment Operator Example

- Given "Derived" is derived from "Base":
Derived& Derived::operator =(const Derived & rightSide)
{
 Base::operator =(rightSide);
 ...
}
- Notice code line
 - Calls assignment operator from base class
 - This takes care of all inherited member variables
 - Would then set new variables from derived class...

Copy Constructor Example

- Consider:
Derived::Derived(const Derived& Object)
 : Base(Object), ...
{...}
- After : is invocation of base copy constructor
 - Sets inherited member variables of derived class object being created
 - Note Object is of type Derived; but it's also of type Base, so argument is valid

Destructors in Derived Classes

- If base class destructor functions correctly
 - Easy to write derived class destructor
- When derived class destructor is invoked:
 - Automatically calls base class destructor!
 - So no need for explicit call
- So derived class destructors need only be concerned with derived class variables
 - And any data they "point" to
 - Base class destructor handles inherited data automatically

Destructor Calling Order

- Consider:
class B derives from class A
class C derives from class B
 $A \leftarrow B \leftarrow C$
- When object of class C goes out of scope:
 - Class C destructor called 1st
 - Then class B destructor called
 - Finally class A destructor is called
- Opposite of how constructors are called

"Is a" vs. "Has a" Relationships

- Inheritance
 - Considered an "Is a" class relationship
 - e.g., An HourlyEmployee "is a" Employee
 - A Convertible "is a" Automobile
- A class contains objects of another class as it's member data
 - Considered a "Has a" class relationship
 - e.g., One class "has a" object of another class as it's data

Protected and Private Inheritance

- New inheritance "forms"
 - Both are rarely used
- Protected inheritance:
class SalariedEmployee : protected Employee
{...}
 - Public members in base class become protected in derived class
- Private inheritance:
class SalariedEmployee : private Employee
{...}
 - All members in base class become private in derived class

Multiple Inheritance

- Derived class can have more than one base class!
 - Syntax just includes all base classes separated by commas:
class derivedMulti : public base1, base2
{...}
- Possibilities for ambiguity are endless!
- Dangerous undertaking!
 - Some believe should never be used
 - Certainly should only be used by experienced programmers!

Summary 1

- Inheritance provides code reuse
 - Allows one class to "derive" from another, adding features
- Derived class objects inherit members of base class
 - And may add members
- Private member variables in base class cannot be accessed "by name" in derived
- Private member functions are not inherited

Summary 2

- Can redefine inherited member functions
 - To perform differently in derived class
- Protected members in base class:
 - Can be accessed "by name" in derived class member functions
- Overloaded assignment operator not inherited
 - But can be invoked from derived class
- Constructors are not inherited
 - Are invoked from derived class's constructor