

# Introduction to Programming for Public Policy

## Week 3 (Lists, Strings, and Dictionaries)

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# Lists

# List operations: +

Can concatenate lists just like strings:

```
>>> [1, 2, 3] + ['a', 'b', 'c']  
[1, 2, 3, 'a', 'b', 'c']
```

# List operations: \*

Can also repeat a list with \*:

```
>>> [0] * 5  
[0, 0, 0, 0, 0]  
>>> [1,2,3] * 2  
[1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3]
```

# List operator: in

You can check whether a value is in a list using the `in` operator:

```
>>> ls = [1,3,5,7]
>>> 3 in ls
True
>>> 4 in ls
False
```

# List slices

As with strings we can slice lists. Note that, as with strings, we can omit either end: the slice will then start at the beginning or end at the end of the list.

```
>>> a = ['a', 'b', 'c', 'd', 'e', 'f']  
>>> a[2:]  
['c', 'd', 'e', 'f']  
>>> a[:3]  
['a', 'b', 'c']
```

# List append

```
>>> a = ['a', 'b', 'c']  
>>> a.append('d')  
>>> a  
['a', 'b', 'c', 'd']
```

# List extend

```
>>> a = ['a', 'b', 'c']  
>>> a.extend(['d', 'e', 'f'])  
>>> a  
['a', 'b', 'c', 'd', 'e', 'f']
```



# List sort

The sort function sorts the list:

```
>>> a = [15, 11, 2, 23, 13]
>>> a.sort()
>>> a
[2, 11, 13, 15, 23]
```

# Inplace

Note that the above list functions (`append`, `extend`, `sort`) modify the functions *inplace* and return `None`.

# Removing elements

Two ways to remove elements from a list:

- Remove by value:

```
>>> a = ['a', 'b', 'c', 'd']  
>>> a.remove('d')  
>>> a  
['a', 'b', 'c']
```

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>>> a.remove('d')  
>>> a  
['a', 'b', 'c']
```

- Remove by index and return value:

```
>>> a.pop(1)  
'b'  
>>> a  
['a', 'c']
```

# Median

We can use sorting to find the median in a list. Sort and take the middle value:

```
>>> a = [15, 11, 2, 23, 13]
>>> b = sorted(a)
>>> b[round(len(b)/2)-1]
15
```

# Percentile

More generally, we can find an arbitrary percentile  $p$ :

```
>>> b = sorted(a)
>>> b[round(len(b)*p)-1]
```

Note that this is a crude version of percentile— in practice we use interpolation to refine.

## Example: Reading a CSV file

# What is parsing?

The process of reading through a string to break it down or interpret it is called *parsing*.

- Command line programs do this in order to interpret options and arguments
- Python does this to execute your code
- Google does it to execute a search query
- Etc.



## String parsing example

On the next slide we'll write a script that runs like this:

- ```
$ python city_state.py  
Enter City, State: Chicago IL  
  
City: Chicago  
State: IL
```

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```
City: Chicago  
State: IL
```

- ```
$ python city_state.py  
Enter City, State: New York City  
Traceback (most recent call last):  
  File "parse_city.py", line 4, in <module>  
    raise ValueError('no comma')  
ValueError: no comma
```

# Errors

- We've seen Python “throw” errors before:

```
NameError: name 'Pi' not found
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- We can throw our own errors:

```
raise ValueError("Invalid value")
```

## String parsing example code

```
# parse_city.py
city_state = input('City, State: ')
if ',' not in city_state: # substring
    raise ValueError('no comma')

comma_index = city_state.find(',')
city = city_state[:comma_index]
state = city_state[comma_index+2:]

if len(state) != 2:
    raise ValueError('invalid state abbrev: ' + state)

print('\nCity:', city)
print('State:', state)
```

## More string functions

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- `string.startswith(beginning)`: does string start with beginning?
- `substring in string`: does string contain substring?
- `string.find(substring)`: what is the (first!) index of substring in string? (or -1 if substring not in string)

# Command Line Arguments

A python script can use command line arguments through the argv list in the sys module:

```
# cmd_args.py
import sys
print(sys.argv)
```

```
$ python cmd_args.py -o -h arguments
['cmd_args.py', '-o', '-h', 'arguments']
```

## Opening a file

Open a file using the open function:

```
>>> file = open('salaries.csv')  
>>> print(file)  
<_io.TextIOWrapper name='salaries.csv' mode='r' encoding='UTF-8'
```

This TextIOWrapper object facilitates I/O (input/output).

## Reading a line

- Read a line from the file:

```
>>> file = open('salaries.csv')
>>> line = file.readline()
>>> line
'Name,Job Titles,Department,Full or Part-Time,
Salary or Hourly,Typical Hours,Annual Salary,
Hourly Rate\n'
```

- `\n` is the *line feed* character. It is a single character. One way to remove it in this example:

```
>>> line[:-1]
'Name,Job Titles,Department,Full or Part-Time,
Salary or Hourly,Typical Hours,Annual Salary,
Hourly Rate'
```

# Reading many lines

You can iterate over the lines in a file similarly to a list:

```
>>> file = open('salaries.csv')
>>> lines = []
>>> for line in file:
...     lines.append(line[:-1])

['Name,Job Titles,Department,Full or Part-Time,Salary or Ho
 "AARON,  JEFFERY M",SERGEANT,POLICE,F,Salary,, $101442.00,
 "AARON,  KARINA ",POLICE OFFICER (ASSIGNED AS DETECTIVE),
 ...]
```

# Splitting fields

This list of lines is not very useful for analysis. The first step is to break up the lines into fields.

```
>>> file = open('salaries.csv')
>>> line = file.readline()[:-1]
>>> line.split(',')
['Name',
 'Job Titles',
 'Department',
 'Full or Part-Time',
 'Salary or Hourly',
 'Typical Hours',
 'Annual Salary',
 'Hourly Rate']
```

## 2d list

```
>>> file = open('salaries.csv')
>>> lines = []
>>> for line in file:
...     fields = line[:-1].split(',')
...     lines.append(fields)
>>> lines
[['Name',
  'Job Titles',
  'Department',
  'Full or Part-Time',
  'Salary or Hourly',
  'Typical Hours',
  'Annual Salary',
  'Hourly Rate'],
 ['AARON',
  'JEFFERY M']]
```

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- `lines` above is a two dimensional (2d) list
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- We can subset rows `lines[2]` or a group of columns with a slice `lines[2:4]`
- `lines[1:]` will return everything except the header

# Aggregating

We can aggregate the number of full time employees:

```
count = 0
for line in lines:
    if line[4] == 'F':
        count = count + 1
```

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- Extra characters (double quotes in the names)
- Numbers like salaries are still strings
- You'll do this in your assignment this week
- In the future we'll use existing python modules to parse CSVs

# Dictionaries

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- Another python data structure is a *dictionary* (called a hashmap in some languages).
- In a list, indices are integers.
- In a dictionary, indices can take almost any type.

## More on dictionaries

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- A dictionary can also be thought of as a mapping between *keys* (indices) and *values*.
- Each key maps to a value. The keys are unique but the values need not be.
- The combination of a key and a value is called a *key-value pair* or an *item*.



## dict construction

- Can construct a list using the `dict` function (so don't call your dictionaries `dict`):

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>>> d = dict()  
>>> d  
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- `{}` is an empty dictionary.
- Curly braces are the analogue for dicts of the square braces `[]` for lists.

## Adding items to a dictionary

Add items to a dictionary using square brackets:

```
>>> eng2esp = dict()  
>>> eng2esp['one'] = 'uno'  
>>> eng2esp  
{'one': 'uno'}
```

Now `eng2esp` maps `'one'` to `'uno'`.

## Alternative dictionary constructor

You can also create a dict with curly brace syntax:

```
>>> eng2esp = {'one': 'uno', 'two': 'dos', 'three': 'tres'}
```

## Dictionaries are unordered

- Dictionaries are *unordered* meaning their items do not have a sequence:

```
>>> eng2esp = {'one': 'uno', 'two': 'dos', 'three': 'tres'}  
>>> eng2esp  
{'one': 'uno', 'three': 'tres', 'two': 'dos'}
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>>> eng2esp  
{'one': 'uno', 'three': 'tres', 'two': 'dos'}
```

- So you cannot rely on the order of elements in a dictionary. But it's okay because we index the elements using their keys, not their order:

```
>>> eng2esp['two']  
'dos'
```

# KeyError

If you try to get a value for a non-existent key you'll get a  
KeyError:

```
>>> eng2esp['four']  
KeyError: 'four'
```



# in operator

To determine whether a key is in a dictionary you can use the `in` operator:

```
>>> 'one' in eng2esp
True
>>> 'uno' in eng2esp
False
```

## Accessing keys and values

A dictionary has three useful “lists” associated with it:

- `keys()` is like a list of the keys:

```
>>> eng2esp.keys()  
dict_keys(['three', 'one', 'two'])
```

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- `values()` is like a list of the values:

```
>>> eng2esp.values()
dict_values(['tres', 'uno', 'dos'])
```

- `items()` is like list of lists, each of which is the pair (length 2) [key, value]:

```
>>> eng2esp.items()          # items is like a two dimensional
dict_items([('three', 'tres'), ('one', 'uno'), ('two', 'dos')])
```