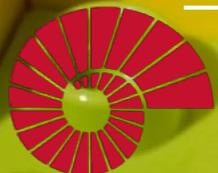


# COMP201

## Computer Systems & Programming

Lecture #12 -const, structs



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Aykut Erdem // Koç University // Fall 2025

# Good news, everyone!

- Review session today at 19:30
- No lab this week.



# Recap

- Generics So Far
- Motivating Example: Bubble Sort
- Function Pointers

# Recap: Generics Overview

- We use **void \*** pointers and memory operations like **memcpy** and **memmove** to make data operations generic.
- We use **function pointers** to make logic/functionality operations generic.

# Recap: Integer Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort_int(int *arr, int n) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            if (arr[i - 1] > arr[i]) {
                swapped = true;
                swap_int(&arr[i - 1], &arr[i]);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

How can we make this function generic, to sort an array of *any type*?

# Recap: Integer Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort_int(int *arr, int n) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            if (arr[i - 1] > arr[i]) {
                swapped = true;
                swap_int(&arr[i - 1], &arr[i]);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

Let's start by making the parameters and swap generic.

# Recap: Generic Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort(void *arr, int n, int elem_size_bytes) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            if (arr[i - 1] > arr[i]) {
                swapped = true;
                swap(&arr[i - 1], &arr[i], elem_size_bytes);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

Let's start by making the parameters and swap generic.

# Recap: Key Idea: Locating i-th Elem

A common generics idiom is getting a pointer to the i-th element of a generic array. From last lecture, we know how to locate the **last** element:

```
void swap_ends(void *arr, size_t nelems, size_t elem_bytes) {  
    swap(arr, (char *)arr + (nelems - 1) * elem_bytes, elem_bytes);  
}
```

How can we generalize this to get the location of the i-th element?

```
void *ith_elem = (char *)arr + i * elem_bytes;
```

# Recap: Generic Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort(void *arr, int n, int elem_size_bytes) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            void *p_prev_elem = (char *)arr + (i - 1) * elem_size_bytes;
            void *p_curr_elem = (char *)arr + i * elem_size_bytes;
            if (*p_prev_elem > *p_curr_elem) {
                swapped = true;
                swap(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem, elem_size_bytes);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

Let's start by making the parameters and swap generic.

# Recap: Generic Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort(void *arr, int n, int elem_size_bytes) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            void *p_prev_elem = (char *)arr + (i - 1) * elem_size_bytes;
            void *p_curr_elem = (char *)arr + i * elem_size_bytes;
            if (*p_prev_elem > *p_curr_elem) {
                swapped = true;
                swap(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem, elem_size_bytes);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

Are we done? Is something not right?



# Recap: Generic Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort(void *arr, int n, int elem_size_bytes) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            void *p_prev_elem = (char *)arr + (i - 1) * elem_size_bytes;
            void *p_curr_elem = (char *)arr + i * elem_size_bytes;
            if (*p_prev_elem > *p_curr_elem) {
                swapped = true;
                swap(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem, elem_size_bytes);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

Wait a minute...this doesn't work! We can't dereference `void *`s OR compare any element with `>`, since they may not be numbers!



# Recap: Generic Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort(void *arr, int n, int elem_size_bytes) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            void *p_prev_elem = (char *)arr + (i - 1) * elem_size_bytes;
            void *p_curr_elem = (char *)arr + i * elem_size_bytes;
            if (*p_prev_elem > *p_curr_elem) {
                swapped = true;
                swap(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem, elem_size_bytes);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

**bubble\_sort (inner voice):** hey,  
you, person who called us. Do  
you know how to compare the  
items at these two addresses?

# Recap: Generic Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort(void *arr, int n, int elem_size_bytes) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            void *p_prev_elem = (char *)arr + (i - 1) * elem_size_bytes;
            void *p_curr_elem = (char *)arr + i * elem_size_bytes;
            if (*p_prev_elem > *p_curr_elem) {
                swapped = true;
                swap(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem, elem_size_bytes);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

**Caller:** yeah, I know how to compare them. You don't know what data type they are, but I do. I have a function that can do the comparison for you and tell you the result.

# Recap: Generic Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort(void *arr, int n, int elem_size_bytes,
                  function compare_fn) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            void *p_prev_elem = (char *)arr + (i - 1) * elem_size_bytes;
            void *p_curr_elem = (char *)arr + i * elem_size_bytes;
            if (compare_fn(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem)) {
                swapped = true;
                swap(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem, elem_size_bytes);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

How can we compare these elements?  
They can pass us this **function as a parameter**. The function's job is to tell us how two elements compare.

# Recap: Generic Bubble Sort

```
void bubble_sort(void *arr, int n, int elem_size_bytes,
                 int (*compare_fn)(void *a, void *b)) {
    while (true) {
        bool swapped = false;
        for (int i = 1; i < n; i++) {
            void *p_prev_elem = (char *)arr + (i - 1) * elem_size_bytes;
            void *p_curr_elem = (char *)arr + i * elem_size_bytes;
            if (compare_fn(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem) > 0) {
                swapped = true;
                swap(p_prev_elem, p_curr_elem, elem_size_bytes);
            }
        }
        if (!swapped) {
            return;
        }
    }
}
```

# Recap: Function Pointers

```
int integer_compare(void *ptr1, void *ptr2) {  
    ...  
}  
  
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {  
    int nums[] = {4, 2, -5, 1, 12, 56};  
    int nums_count = sizeof(nums) / sizeof(nums[0]);  
    bubble_sort(nums, nums_count, sizeof(nums[0]), integer_compare);  
    ...  
}
```

bubble\_sort is generic and works for any type. But the **caller** knows the specific type of data being sorted and provides a comparison function specifically for that data type.

# Recap: Function Pointers

```
int string_compare(void *ptr1, void *ptr2) {  
    ...  
}  
  
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {  
    char *classes[] = {"COMP100", "COMP132", "COMP201", "COMP202"};  
    int arr_count = sizeof(classes) / sizeof(classes[0]);  
    bubble_sort(classes, arr_count, sizeof(classes[0]), string_compare);  
    ...  
}
```

bubble\_sort is generic and works for any type. But the **caller** knows the specific type of data being sorted and provides a comparison function specifically for that data type.

# Recap: Comparison Functions

- Function pointers are used often in cases like this to compare two values of the same type. These are called **comparison functions**.
- The standard comparison function in many C functions provides even more information. It should return:
  - < 0 if first value should come before second value
  - > 0 if first value should come after second value
  - 0 if first value and second value are equivalent
- This is the same return value format as **strcmp!**

```
int (*compare_fn)(void *a, void *b)
```

# Recap: integer\_compare

```
int integer_compare(void *ptr1, void *ptr2) {
    return *(int *)ptr1 - *(int *)ptr2;
}

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    int nums[] = {4, 2, -5, 1, 12, 56};
    int nums_count = sizeof(nums) / sizeof(nums[0]);
    bubble_sort(nums, nums_count, sizeof(nums[0]), integer_compare);
    ...
}
```

bubble\_sort is generic and works for any type. But the **caller** knows the specific type of data being sorted and provides a comparison function specifically for that data type.

# Recap: string\_compare

```
int string_compare(void *ptr1, void *ptr2) {
    return strcmp(*(char **)ptr1, *(char **)ptr2);
}

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    char *classes[] = {"COMP100", "COMP132", "COMP201", "COMP202"};
    int arr_count = sizeof(classes) / sizeof(classes[0]);
    bubble_sort(classes, arr_count, sizeof(classes[0]), string_compare);
    ...
}
```

bubble\_sort is generic and works for any type. But the **caller** knows the specific type of data being sorted and provides a comparison function specifically for that data type.

# Recap: Count Matches

- Let's write a generic function `count_matches` that can count the number of a certain type of element in a generic array.
- It should take in as parameters information about the generic array, and a function parameter that can take in a pointer to a single array element and tell us if it's a match.

```
int count_matches(void *base, int nelems,  
                  int elem_size_bytes, bool (*match_fn)(void *));
```

# Recap: Count Matches

```
int count_matches(void *base, int nelems, int elem_size_bytes,
                  bool (*match_fn)(void *)) {

    int match_count = 0;

    for (int i = 0; i < nelems; i++) {
        void *curr_p = (char *)base + i * elem_size_bytes;
        if (match_fn(curr_p)) {
            match_count++;
        }
    }

    return match_count;
}
```

# Recap: Function Pointers As Variables

In addition to parameters, you can make normal variables that are functions.

```
int do_something(char *str) {  
    ...  
}  
  
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {  
    ...  
    int (*func_var)(char *) = do_something;  
    ...  
    func_var("testing");  
    return 0;  
}
```

# Plan for Today

- const
- struct
- Generic stack

**Disclaimer:** Slides for this lecture were borrowed from  
—Nick Troccoli's Stanford CS107 class

# Lecture Plan

- `const`
- `struct`
- Generic stack

# const

- Use **const** to declare global constants in your program. This indicates the variable cannot change after being created.

```
const double PI = 3.1415;
const int DAYS_IN_WEEK = 7;

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    ...
    if (x == DAYS_IN_WEEK) {
        ...
    }
    ...
}
```

# const

- Use **const** with pointers to indicate that the data that is pointed to cannot change.

```
char str[6];
strcpy(str, "Hello");
const char *s = str;
```

```
// Cannot use s to change characters it points to
s[0] = 'h';
```

# const

Sometimes we use **const** with pointer parameters to indicate that the function will not / should not change what it points to. The actual pointer can be changed, however.

```
// This function promises to not change str's characters
int countUppercase(const char *str) {
    int count = 0;
    for (int i = 0; i < strlen(str); i++) {
        if (isupper(str[i])) {
            count++;
        }
    }
    return count;
}
```

# **memcpy** Revisited

**memcpy** is a function that copies a specified amount of bytes at one address to another address.

```
void *memcpy(void *dest, const void *src, size_t n);
```

It copies the next n bytes that src points to to the location contained in dest. (It also returns dest). It does not support regions of memory that overlap.

```
int x = 5;  
int y = 4;  
memcpy(&x, &y, sizeof(x)); // like x = y
```

# const

By definition, C gets upset when you set a **non-const** pointer equal to a **const** pointer. You need to be consistent with **const** to reflect what you cannot modify.

```
// This function promises to not change str's characters
int countUppercase(const char *str) {
    // compiler warning and error
    char *strToModify = str;
    strToModify[0] = ...
}
```

# const

By definition, C gets upset when you set a **non-const** pointer equal to a **const** pointer. You need to be consistent with **const** to reflect what you cannot modify. **Think of const as part of the variable type.**

```
// This function promises to not change str's characters
int countUppercase(const char *str) {
    const char *strToModify = str;
    strToModify[0] = ...
}
```

# const

**const** can be confusing to interpret in some variable types.

```
// cannot modify this char
```

```
const char c = 'h';
```

```
// cannot modify chars pointed to by str
```

```
const char *str = ...
```

```
// cannot modify chars pointed to by *strPtr
```

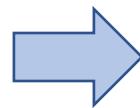
```
const char **strPtr = ...
```

# const

```
1  char buf[6];
2  strcpy(buf, "Hello");
3  const char *str = buf;
4  str[0] = 'M';
5  str = "Mello";
6  buf[0] = 'M';
```

Which lines (if any) above will cause an error due to violating **const**?  
Remember that **const char \*** means that the characters at the location it stores cannot be changed.

# const



1       char buf[6];  
2       strcpy(buf, "Hello");  
3       const char \*str = buf;  
4       str[0] = 'M';  
5       str = "Mello";  
6       buf[0] = 'M';

**Line 1** makes a typical modifiable character array of 6 characters.

Which lines (if any) above will cause an error due to violating **const**? Remember that **const char \*** means that the characters at the location it stores cannot be changed.

# const



1

```
char buf[6];
strcpy(buf, "Hello");
const char *str = buf;
str[0] = 'M';
str = "Mello";
buf[0] = 'M';
```



2

3

4

5

6

**Line 2** copies characters into this modifiable character array.

Which lines (if any) above will cause an error due to violating `const`? Remember that `const char *` means that the characters at the location it stores cannot be changed.

# const



1



2



3

4

5

6

```
char buf[6];
strcpy(buf, "Hello");
const char *str = buf;
str[0] = 'M';
str = "Mello";
buf[0] = 'M';
```

**Line 3** makes a `const` pointer that points to the first element of `buf`. We cannot use `str` to change the characters it points to because it is `const`.

Which lines (if any) above will cause an error due to violating `const`? Remember that `const char *` means that the characters at the location it stores cannot be changed.

# const



1

```
char buf[6];
strcpy(buf, "Hello");
const char *str = buf;
str[0] = 'M';
str = "Mello";
buf[0] = 'M';
```



2



3



4



5

6

**Line 4** is not allowed – it attempts to use a const pointer to characters to modify those characters.

Which lines (if any) above will cause an error due to violating `const`?  
Remember that `const char *` means that the characters at the location it stores cannot be changed.

# const



1

```
char buf[6];
strcpy(buf, "Hello");
const char *str = buf;
str[0] = 'M';
str = "Mello";
buf[0] = 'M';
```



2



3



4



5

6

**Line 5** is ok – str's type means that while you cannot change the characters at which it points, you can change str itself to point somewhere else. str is not const – its characters are.

Which lines (if any) above will cause an error due to violating `const`? Remember that `const char *` means that the characters at the location it stores cannot be changed.

# const



1

```
char buf[6];
strcpy(buf, "Hello");
const char *str = buf;
str[0] = 'M';
str = "Mello";
buf[0] = 'M';
```



2



3



4

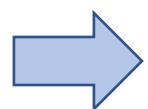


5



6

**Line 6** is ok – `buf` is a modifiable `char` array, and we can use it to change its characters. Declaring `str` as `const` doesn't mean that place in memory is not modifiable at all – it just means that you cannot modify it using `str`.



Which lines (if any) above will cause an error due to violating `const`? Remember that `const char *` means that the characters at the location it stores cannot be changed.

# Lecture Plan

- const
- struct
- Generic stack

# Structs

A **struct** is a way to define a new variable type that is a group of other variables.

```
struct date {          // declaring a struct type
    int month;
    int day;           // members of each date structure
};

...
struct date today;      // construct structure instances
today.month = 1;
today.day = 28;

struct date new_years_eve = {12, 31}; // shorter initializer syntax
```

# Structs

Wrap the struct definition in a **typedef** to avoid having to include the word **struct** every time you make a new variable of that type.

```
typedef struct date {  
    int month;  
    int day;  
} date;  
  
...  
  
date today;  
today.month = 1;  
today.day = 28;  
  
date new_years_eve = {12, 31};
```

# Structs

If you pass a struct as a parameter, like for other parameters, C passes a **copy** of the entire struct.

```
void advance_day(date d) {  
    d.day++;  
}  
  
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {  
    date my_date = {1, 28};  
    advance_day(my_date);  
    printf("%d", my_date.day); // 28  
    return 0;  
}
```

# Structs

If you pass a struct as a parameter, like for other parameters, C passes a **copy** of the entire struct. **Use a pointer to modify a specific instance.**

```
void advance_day(date *d) {  
    (*d).day++;  
}  
  
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {  
    date my_date = {1, 28};  
    advance_day(&my_date);  
    printf("%d", my_date.day); // 29  
    return 0;  
}
```

# Structs

The **arrow** operator lets you access the field of a struct pointed to by a pointer.

```
void advance_day(date *d) {  
    d->day++; // equivalent to (*d).day++;  
}  
  
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {  
    date my_date = {1, 28};  
    advance_day(&my_date);  
    printf("%d", my_date.day); // 29  
    return 0;  
}
```

# Structs

C allows you to return structs from functions as well. It returns whatever is contained within the struct.

```
date create_new_years_date() {
    date d = {1, 1};
    return d;           // or return (date){1, 1};
}

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    date my_date = create_new_years_date();
    printf("%d", my_date.day); // 1
    return 0;
}
```

# Structs

**sizeof** gives you the entire size of a struct, which is the sum of the sizes of all its contents.

```
typedef struct date {  
    int month;  
    int day;  
} date;  
  
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {  
    int size = sizeof(date);    // 8  
    return 0;  
}
```

# Arrays of Structs

You can create arrays of structs just like any other variable type.

```
typedef struct my_struct {
    int x;
    char c;
} my_struct;
```

...

```
my_struct array_of_structs[5];
```

# Arrays of Structs

To initialize an entry of the array, you must use this special syntax to confirm the type to C.

```
typedef struct my_struct {  
    int x;  
    char c;  
} my_struct;
```

...

```
my_struct array_of_structs[5];  
array_of_structs[0] = (my_struct){0, 'A'};
```

# Arrays of Structs

You can also set each field individually.

```
typedef struct my_struct {  
    int x;  
    char c;  
} my_struct;
```

```
...  
my_struct array_of_structs[5];  
array_of_structs[0].x = 2;  
array_of_structs[0].c = 'A';
```

# Lecture Plan

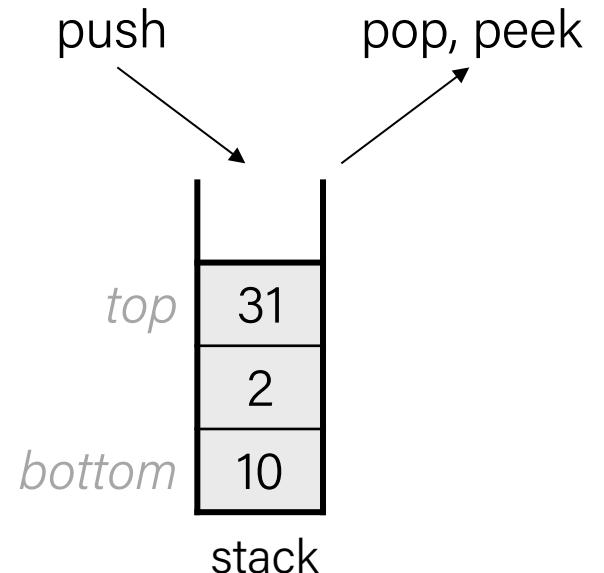
- const
- struct
- Generic stack

# Stacks

- C generics are particularly powerful in helping us create generic data structures.
- Let's see how we might go about making a Stack in C.

# Stacks

- A **Stack** is a data structure representing a stack of things.
- Objects can be **pushed** on top of or **popped** from the top of the stack.
- Only the top of the stack can be accessed; no other objects in the stack are visible.
- Main operations:
  - **push(value)**: add an element to the top of the stack
  - **pop()**: remove and return the top element in the stack
  - **peek()**: return (but do not remove) the top element in the stack

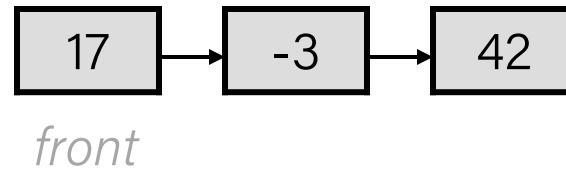


# Stacks

A stack is often implemented using a **linked list** internally.

- "bottom" = tail of linked list
- "top" = head of linked list (*why not the other way around?*)

```
Stack<int> s;  
s.push(42);  
s.push(-3);  
s.push(17);
```



**Problem:** C is not object-oriented! We can't call methods on variables.

# Demo: Int Stack



int\_stack.c

# Int Stack Structs

```
typedef struct int_node {  
    struct int_node *next;  
    int data;  
} int_node;
```

```
typedef struct int_stack {  
    int nelems;  
    int_node *top;  
} int_stack;
```

# Int Stack Functions

- **int\_stack\_create()**: creates a new stack on the heap and returns a pointer to it
- **int\_stack\_push(int\_stack \*s, int data)**: pushes data onto the stack
- **int\_stack\_pop(int\_stack \*s)**: pops and returns topmost stack element

# **int\_stack\_create**

```
int_stack *int_stack_create() {  
    int_stack *s = malloc(sizeof(int_stack));  
    s->nelems = 0;  
    s->top = NULL;  
    return s;  
}
```

From previous slide:

```
typedef struct int_stack {  
    int nelems;  
    int_node *top;  
} int_stack;
```

# int\_stack\_push

```
void int_stack_push(int_stack *s, int data) {
    int_node *new_node = malloc(sizeof(int_node));
    new_node->data = data;

    new_node->next = s->top;
    s->top = new_node;
    s->nelems++;
}
```

# int\_stack\_pop

```
int int_stack_pop(int_stack *s) {
    if (s->nelems == 0) {
        error(1, 0, "Cannot pop from empty stack");
    }
    int_node *n = s->top;
    int value = n->data;

    s->top = n->next;

    free(n);
    s->nelems--;
}

return value;
```

From previous slide:

```
typedef struct int_stack {
    int nelems;
    node *top;
} int_stack;
```

# Pushing Elements to Int Stack

```
int_stack *intstack = int_stack_create();
for (int i = 0; i < TEST_STACK_SIZE; i++) {
    int_stack_push(intstack, i);
}
```

# Popping Elements from Int Stack

```
// Pop off all elements
while (intstack->nelems > 0) {
    printf("%d\n", int_stack_pop(intstack));
}
```

What modifications are  
necessary to make a generic  
stack?

# Stack Structs

```
typedef struct int_node {  
    struct int_node *next;  
    int data;  
} int_node;
```

```
typedef struct int_stack {  
    int nelems;  
    int_node *top;  
} int_stack;
```

How might we modify the Stack data representation itself to be generic?

# Stack Structs

```
typedef struct int_node {  
    struct int_node *next;  
    int data;  
} int_node;
```

```
typedef struct int_stack {  
    int nelems;  
    int_node *top;  
} int_stack;
```

**Problem:** each node can no longer store the data itself, because it could be any size!

# Generic Stack Structs

```
typedef struct int_node {  
    struct int_node *next;  
    void *data;  
} int_node;
```

```
typedef struct stack {  
    int nelems;  
    int elem_size_bytes;  
    node *top;  
} stack;
```

**Solution:** each node stores a pointer, which is always 8 bytes, to the data somewhere else. We must also store the data size in the Stack struct.

# Stack Functions

- **int\_stack\_create()**: creates a new stack on the heap and returns a pointer to it
- **int\_stack\_push(int\_stack \*s, int data)**: pushes data onto the stack
- **int\_stack\_pop(int\_stack \*s)**: pops and returns topmost stack element

# **int\_stack\_create**

```
int_stack *int_stack_create() {  
    int_stack *s = malloc(sizeof(int_stack));  
    s->nelems = 0;  
    s->top = NULL;  
    return s;  
}
```

How might we modify this function to be generic?

From previous slide:

```
typedef struct stack {  
    int nelems;  
    int elem_size_bytes;  
    node *top;  
} stack;
```

# Generic stack\_create

```
stack *stack_create(int elem_size_bytes) {  
    stack *s = malloc(sizeof(stack));  
    s->nelems = 0;  
    s->top = NULL;  
    s->elem_size_bytes = elem_size_bytes;  
    return s;  
}
```

# `int_stack_push`

```
void int_stack_push(int_stack *s, int data) {
    int_node *new_node = malloc(sizeof(int_node));
    new_node->data = data;

    new_node->next = s->top;
    s->top = new_node;
    s->nelems++;

}
```

How might we modify this function to be generic?

From previous slide:

```
typedef struct stack {
    int nelems;
    int elem_size_bytes;
    node *top;
} stack;
```

```
typedef struct node {
    struct node *next;
    void *data;
} node;
```

# Generic stack\_push

```
void int_stack_push(int_stack *s, int data) {  
    int_node *new_node = malloc(sizeof(int_node));  
    new_node->data = data;  
  
    new_node->next = s->top;  
    s->top = new_node;  
    s->nelems++;  
}
```

**Problem 1:** we can no longer pass the data itself as a parameter, because it could be any size!

# Generic stack\_push

```
void int_stack_push(int_stack *s, const void *data) {  
    int_node *new_node = malloc(sizeof(int_node));  
    new_node->data = data;  
  
    new_node->next = s->top;  
    s->top = new_node;  
    s->nelems++;  
}
```

**Solution 1:** pass a pointer to the data as a parameter instead.

# Generic stack\_push

```
void int_stack_push(int_stack *s, const void *data) {  
    int_node *new_node = malloc(sizeof(int_node));  
    new_node->data = data;  
  
    new_node->next = s->top;  
    s->top = new_node;  
    s->nelems++;  
}
```

**Problem 2:** we cannot copy the existing data pointer into `new_node`. The data structure must manage its own copy that exists for its entire lifetime. The provided copy may go away!

# Generic stack\_push

```
int main() {
    stack *int_stack = stack_create(sizeof(int));
    add_one(int_stack);
    // now stack stores pointer to invalid memory for 7!
}

void add_one(stack *s) {
    int num = 7;
    stack_push(s, &num);
}
```

# Generic stack\_push

```
void stack_push(stack *s, const void *data) {  
    node *new_node = malloc(sizeof(node));  
    new_node->data = malloc(s->elem_size_bytes);  
    memcpy(new_node->data, data, s->elem_size_bytes);  
  
    new_node->next = s->top;  
    s->top = new_node;  
    s->nelems++;  
}
```

**Solution 2:** make a heap-allocated copy  
of the data that the node points to.

# int\_stack\_pop

```
int int_stack_pop(int_stack *s) {
    if (s->nelems == 0) {
        error(1, 0, "Cannot pop from empty stack");
    }
    int_node *n = s->top;
    int value = n->data;

    s->top = n->next;

    free(n);
    s->nelems--;
}

return value;
```

How might we modify this function to be generic?

From previous slide:

```
typedef struct stack {
    int nelems;
    int elem_size_bytes;
    node *top;
} stack;
```

```
typedef struct node {
    struct node *next;
    void *data;
} node;
```

# Generic stack\_pop

```
int int_stack_pop(int_stack *s) {
    if (s->nelems == 0) {
        error(1, 0, "Cannot pop from empty stack");
    }
    int_node *n = s->top;
    int value = n->data;

    s->top = n->next;

    free(n);
    s->nelems--;
}

return value;
```

**Problem:** we can no longer return the data itself, because it could be any size!

# Generic stack\_pop

```
void *int_stack_pop(int_stack *s) {
    if (s->nelems == 0) {
        error(1, 0, "Cannot pop from empty stack");
    }
    int_node *n = s->top;
    void *value = n->data;

    s->top = n->next;
    free(n);
    s->nelems--;
}

return value;
```

While it's possible to return the heap address of the element, this means the client would be responsible for freeing it. Ideally, the data structure should manage its own memory here.

# Generic stack\_pop

```
void stack_pop(stack *s, void *addr) {
    if (s->nelems == 0) {
        error(1, 0, "Cannot pop from empty stack");
    }
    node *n = s->top;
    memcpy(addr, n->data, s->elem_size_bytes);
    s->top = n->next;

    free(n->data);
    free(n);
    s->nelems--;
}
```

**Solution:** have the caller pass a memory location as a parameter and copy the data to that location.

# Using Generic Stack

```
int_stack *intstack = int_stack_create();
for (int i = 0; i < TEST_STACK_SIZE; i++) {
    int_stack_push(intstack, i);
}
```

We must now pass the *address* of an element to push onto the stack, rather than the element itself.

# Using Generic Stack

```
stack *intstack = stack_create(sizeof(int));  
for (int i = 0; i < TEST_STACK_SIZE; i++) {  
    stack_push(intstack, &i);  
}
```

We must now pass the *address* of an element to push onto the stack, rather than the element itself.

# Using Generic Stack

```
int_stack *intstack = int_stack_create();
int_stack_push(intstack, 7);
```

We must now pass the *address* of an element to push onto the stack, rather than the element itself.

# Using Generic Stack

```
stack *intstack = stack_create(sizeof(int));  
int num = 7;  
stack_push(intstack, &num);
```

We must now pass the *address* of an element to push onto the stack, rather than the element itself.

# Using Generic Stack

```
// Pop off all elements
while (intstack->nelems > 0) {
    printf("%d\n", int_stack_pop(intstack));
}
```

We must now pass the *address* of where we would like to store the popped element, rather than getting it directly as a return value.

# Using Generic Stack

```
// Pop off all elements
int popped_int;
while (intstack->nelems > 0) {
    stack_pop(intstack, &popped_int);
    printf("%d\n", popped_int);
}
```

We must now pass the *address* of where we would like to store the popped element, rather than getting it directly as a return value.

# Demo: Generic Stack



generic\_stack.c

# Recap

- const
- struct
- Generic stack

**Next Time:** *Compiling C programs*