

Topic 1

Data Structure in Programming

***Why is data structure
(implementation) so important?***

資料結構與程式設計
Data Structure and Programming

09/16/2015

What is Data Structure?

- ◆ In programming, the term *data structure* refers to a scheme for organizing related pieces of information.
- ◆ The basic types of data structures include:
 - files
 - lists
 - arrays
 - records
 - trees
 - tables
- ◆ Each of these basic structures has many variations and allows different operations to be performed on the data.
<http://www.webopedia.com>

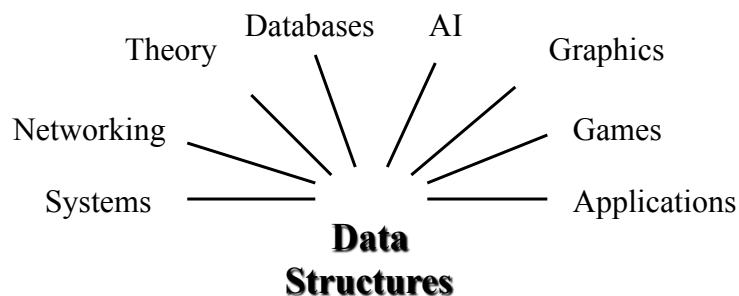
What is Data Structure?

- ◆ A data structure is a specialized format for organizing and storing data
 - General data structure types include the array, the file, the record, the table, the tree, and so on.
- ◆ Any data structure is designed to organize data to suit a specific purpose so that it can be accessed and worked with in appropriate ways.
- ◆ In computer programming, a data structure may be selected or designed to store data for the purpose of working on it with various algorithms.

<http://www.whatis.com>

Why study data structures?

Clever ways to organize information in order to enable efficient computation



Prof. Yen, "Data Structure", class slide

Why do YOU study Data Structure?

- ◆ Any application not related to programming?
- ◆ When you designed a program, did you keep the concept of data structure in mind?
 - Or just thinking about “if...else...”, “for...”, “while...”, “switch...”, etc
 - Or the program you wrote was just another “write-it-once-and-never-see-it-again” piece of #@\$^...? (you think: why should I care?)

Structure-less Programs

[A C++/C example code]

- ◆ What are the problems you see?
 1. Deep pointer's access
 - “a->b->c->d[i]->e = kkk;”
 2. Function with many arguments
 - “void f(int a, char* b, int *c, bool d, int& f, vector<int>& g, ...);”
 3. Complicated “if()” condition
 - “if (a && b || c && d || e...)”
 - ➡
 - Difficult to write and understand
 - Prone to err

Structure-less Programs

- ◆ What are the problems you see?
 4. Global variables
 - Data contamination (unexpected bug)
 - Memory bugs/leaks
 5. Fixed size array
 - Not flexible and extensible
 - May have unexpected exception (very difficult to debug)
 6. Duplicated similar codes
 - Tend to have unexpected bugs
 - Difficult to maintain
 7. Very long “switch”
 - Slow in compilation; Performance degradation
 - Difficult to read

Do these sound familiar?

(Do you have the similar problems?)

Everybody is talking about
Object Oriented Programming
(OOP)

but

What is an object in a program?

Why do we need
“class” (encapsulation)?

The Object in an Object Oriented Program

- ◆ An Object is:
 - ➔ structure (or container) to
 - hold the value fields, and
 - define the operations of the data
 - ➔
- ◆ A “class” is to:
 - ➔ define the same type of objects in order to share the same:
 - Data organization ➔ data members
 - Data operations ➔ member functions

Program Design without Structured Objects

1. Idea, spec, flowchart
2. Focus on the control flow
 - If this, else that...
 - What if...
3. Create variables to implement the control flow
4. Oops, some variables must be seen across different functions
 - Too much work to pass as function arguments
 - Create global variables
5. Revise the control flow → need to add more branches
 - Change "else" to "else if...else"
 - More and more complex conditions
 - Similar codes get duplicated
6. Ah, bugs... fix one piece of code
 - But forget to fix some similar parts of the program
 - Bugs get transformed into different bugs
7. Create workaround, hack, whatsoever...

An Object Oriented Program Should be...

1. Idea, spec, flowchart
2. Architect the program as a connection of objects
 - Server - client
 - Manager - manager
 - Node - node
 - Stage - stage, etc→ You are the BOSS, who are your employees/managers?
3. What are the data structures of these objects
 - Define class and class data fields (share / reuse)
4. What are the possible operations of the class objects to their neighboring objects
 - Define class member functions (clear interface)
5. Implement the main functions to connect the program flow
 - Declare class objects and utilize their member functions
 - Create more member functions if necessary

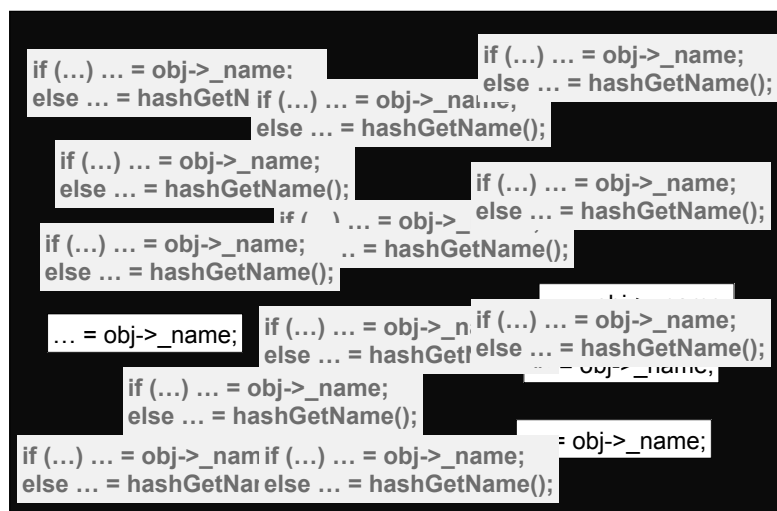
When you first learned C++, did you ever think that method like ---

```
class MyClass
{
    const string& getName() const
    { return _name; }
};
```

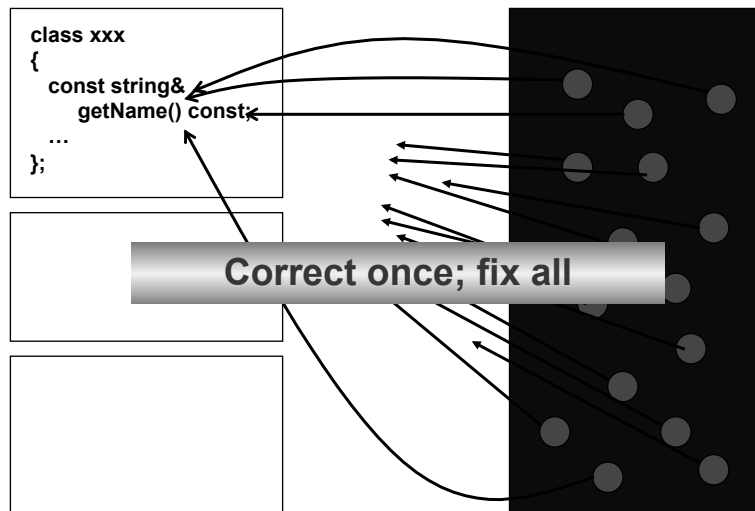
is too trivial and even sounds stupid?

(Why not use “obj->_name” directly?)

If you use “obj->_name” directly...



But if you use “obj->getName()”...



Member Functions in a Class

- ◆ Therefore, create member functions for data manipulation
 - Maximize the sharing between different objects
- ◆ Use “private/protected” to ensure the encapsulation
- ◆ Use “const” to make sure some methods are “read only”

(More to cover later...)

Container Classes

- ◆ A class that hold objects of the same data type (class) in some particular way
- 1. Linear (sequence)
 - List, array
- 2. Look-up (associative)
 - Set, map, hash
- 3. Topological
 - Tree, diagram, graph, BDD

Standard Template Library (STL)

- ◆ First drafted by Alexander Stepanov and Meng Lee of HP in 1992
 - Became IEEE standard in 1994
- ◆ A C++ library of container classes, algorithms, and iterators
 - Provides many of the basic algorithms and data structures of computer science
- ◆ The STL is a *generic* library
 - Platform independent
 - Its components are heavily parameterized
 - Almost every component in the STL is a template.
- ◆ An useful reference: <http://www.sgi.com/tech/stl/>
- ◆ More to cover in lecture #4

Since STL is pretty good,
why do we implement
our own DS classes here?

Using STL or implement on your own?

- ◆ For program prototyping, using STL is a good choice.
- ◆ For production tools, you may consider implementing container classes on your own.
 - Customized classes
 - Special functions for better efficiency
 - (Sometimes) Portability issue

Conclusions

- ◆ A structured (object oriented) program must have a well architected data structure
- ◆ The knowledge of data structure is practically useful when applied in programming
- ◆ Standard Template Library (STL) provides an exemplar implementation of various container, algorithm, and functional object classes

Coming up next...

- ◆ Programming on Linux workstations
 - Please try to install Linux on your computer or find a machine that runs linux (e.g. PC Room)
 - Mac's terminal naturally works too!

Coming up next...

◆ C++ advanced features review

- Please pick up the C++ basics before the meeting

◆ References

- “C++ How to Program 9th edition”, by Deitel and Deitel (or any earlier version)
- MSDN C++ library
- <http://www.cplusplus.com/doc/tutorial/>
- <http://www.cppreference.com/>
- SGI STL guide: <http://www.sgi.com/tech/stl/>

One Last Thing...

◆ Please pay attention to the Ceiba website and FB for class announcements...

- You can also look up BBS board for information from previous years

◆ Your comments and questions are very welcome!!