

CS2030 Programming Methodology
Semester 1 2019/2020

8 November 2019

Problem Set #10

Asynchronous Programming

This problem set aims to let students explore the different methods provided by the `CompletableFuture` class in Java 8 or later.

1. Study the given class A below, which uses the methods `incr` and `decr` to imitate slow computations.

```
class A {
    private final int x;

    A() {
        this(0);
    }

    private A(int x) {
        this.x = x;
    }

    void sleep() {
        System.out.println(Thread.currentThread().getName() + " " + x + " start");
        try {
            Thread.sleep(1000);
        } catch (InterruptedException e) {
            System.out.println("interrupted");
        }
        System.out.println(Thread.currentThread().getName() + " " + x + " end");
    }

    A incr() {
        sleep();
        return new A(this.x + 1);
    }

    A decr() {
        sleep();
        if (x < 0) {
            throw new IllegalStateException();
        }
        return new A(this.x - 1);
    }
}
```

- (a) Suppose we have a method

```
static A foo(A a) {  
    return a.incr().decr();  
}
```

Convert the method `foo` above to a method that returns a `CompletableFuture` so that the body of the method is executed asynchronously. Try different variations by using

- i. `supplyAsync` only;
- ii. `supplyAsync` and `thenApply`;
- iii. `supplyAsync` and `thenApplyAsync`

Demonstrate how you would retrieve the result of the computation.

See also: `thenRun`, `thenAccept`, `runAsync`

- (b) Suppose now we have another method

```
static A bar(A a) {  
    return a.incr().decr();  
}
```

which we would like to invoke using `bar(foo(new A()))`. Convert the computation within `bar` to run asynchronously as well. `bar` should now return a `CompletableFuture`. In addition, show the equivalent of calling `bar(foo(new A()))` in an asynchronous fashion, using the method `thenCompose`.

See also: `thenCombine`

- (c) Suppose now we have yet another method

```
static A baz(A a, int x) {  
    if (x == 0) {  
        return new A(0);  
    } else {  
        return a.incr().decr();  
    }  
}
```

Convert the computation within `baz` in the `else` clause to run asynchronously. `baz` should now return a `CompletableFuture`. You may find the method `completedFuture` useful.

- (d) Let's now call `foo`, `bar`, `baz` asynchronously. We would like to output the string "done!" when *all* three method calls complete. Show how you can use the `allOf()` method to achieve this behavior.

See also: `anyOf`, `runAfterBoth`, `runAfterEither`.

- (e) Calling `new A().decr()` would cause an exception to be thrown, even when it is done asynchronously. Show how you would use the `handle()` method to gracefully handle exceptions thrown (such as printing them out) within a chain of `CompletableFuture` calls.

See also: `whenComplete` and `exceptionally`

2. Modify the following sequences of code such that `f`, `g`, `h` and `i` are now invoked asynchronously, via `CompletableFuture`. Assume that `a` has been initialized as

```
A a = new A();
```

```
(a) B b = f(a);  
    C c = g(b);  
    D d = h(c);
```

```
(b) B b = f(a);  
    C c = g(b);  
    h(c); // no return value
```

```
(c) B b = f(a);  
    C c = g(b);  
    D d = h(b);  
    E e = i(c, d);
```