**Design for “Word Clouds in Python” Project**

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Fall 2013

**Project Description:**

This project is in under the direction of Dr. Joseph Smith, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Alabama. We aim to build a piece of software, written in Python, that will perform automated content analysis on a collection of legal documents and create a statistical word cloud illustrating the terms that characterize the collection.

We are approaching the research objective with a highly object-oriented design that can be built incrementally. Final delivery of the software is scheduled for early December 2013. The GitHub repository for the project is viewable at <https://github.com/dmarklein/WordCloud>.

**Document Class**

**Description:** This class represents a document object (such as a single Supreme Court opinion). A typical object will consist of the document’s text and a metadata object consisting of various fields relevant to the document. We will subclass this class for each type of document we will use.

**Init params:**

**Data members:**

* doc\_text
* doc\_metadata (Metadata object)
* word\_count (how many words are in the text of the document)

**Methods:**

* count\_words(text) (performs basic wordcount on text)
* write\_to\_file() (basically, pickle; write the Document, properly formatted, to file)
* print\_doc() (display the Document with its metadata)
* print\_metadata() (display the Document’s metadata)
* \_\_str\_\_() (overloaded method)

**Metadata**

**Description:** A metadata object will be a collection of fields (pieces of metadata) that accompany of piece of data (in our case, the text of a document). We will subclass this class for each type of document we use.

**Init params:**

**Data members:**

* various fields – will be different for different Metadata subclasses

**Methods:**

* print\_fields() (print the fields within the Metadata class)
* \_\_str\_\_() (overloaded method)

**SuperDoc Class**

**Description:** A SuperDoc object will consist of a piece of text that represents the concatenation of the text fields from 1+ documents, along with a list of metadata objects – each item in this list will be the metadata from one of the documents that make of the SuperDoc.

**Init params:**

**Data members:**

* component\_metadata (list of Metadata objects) [this is a bad var name]
* superdoc\_text
* word\_count

**Methods:**

* count\_words(text) (performs basic wordcount on text)
* write\_to\_file() (basically, pickle; write the SuperDoc, properly formatted, to a file)
* print\_superdoc() (display the SuperDoc, formatted)
* print\_component\_metadata() (display the component metadata, formatted)
* \_\_str\_\_() (overloaded method)

**SuperDocGenerator**

**Description:** Given a list of Document objects, this class will combine the text of the documents into one text and the respective Metadata objects into a list of Metadata objects.

**Init params:**

* doc\_list

**Data members:**

* doc\_list (list of docs to combine into SuperDoc)
* output\_superdoc
* output\_superdoc\_filename

**Methods:**

* create\_superdoc() (creates a SuperDoc from the given Document objects)
* print\_superdoc() (display the created SuperDoc)

**DocumentSorter**

**Description:** Given a collection of document objects and a sort key (which is a field of the appropriate metadata object), this will yield subsets of document objects, each subset having the same value for the sort field (subsets will be returned as a dictionary?).

**Init params:**

* list of documents to sort
* field\_to\_group

**Data members:**

* doc\_list (input list of documents to sort)
* sort\_field (field of Metadata on which to group)
* output\_subsets (dict containing key:value “subset name”:[list of documents] pairs)

**Methods:**

* sort\_docs(sort\_field) (performs sorting – this is the most important method in the class)
* print\_subsets() (prints out the subsets generated by sorting)
* add\_doc(doc\_to\_add) (add a Document to the list of docs to sort)

**DocumentConverter**

**Description:** Given a file containing one and only one document (along with fields/labels/metadata), this class will parse the file and create a Document object from the file.

**Init params:**

* file to parse
* format template?

**Data members:**

* input\_filename
* output\_filename
* output\_doc (the Document object output by the converter)
* format file? (a file defining the format of the file to parse)

**Methods:**

* convert\_file() (the primary method of the class – converts a file to a Document)
* print\_doc(output\_doc) (displays the Document yields by the conversion)

**AnalysisEngine**

**Description:** Given 1+ SuperDoc objects (and perhaps analysis parameters TBD), this class will perform natural language text processing on the collection of documents and return a weighted list of the “most important” terms in the collection. This will likely utilize term frequency-inverse document frequency analysis as its basis for weighting terms (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tf%E2%80%93idf>).

**Init params:**

* 1+ SuperDoc objects
* Analysis parameters TBD

**Data members:**

* term\_dict (this is the output dictionary that feeds into WordCloudGenerator)
* num\_docs (how many SuperDocs we’re analyzing)
* other analysis parameters TBD?

**Methods:**

* analyze\_docs() (the primary method of the class – performs the analysis)
* print\_docs() (displays the identifiers of the SuperDocs to be analyzed – this is a bad method name)

**WordCloudGenerator**

**Description:** This class and its functionality are really quite simple – given a weighted list of terms (in a dict) (and probably a parameter specifying the number of terms to illustrate), this will return a word cloud that visualizes the most important terms and how important they are relative to each other.

**Init params:**

* term\_dict
* num\_terms\_to\_visualize
* other visual parameters TBD

**Data members:**

* term\_dict (dict of key:value term:weight pairs)
* num\_terms\_to\_visualize [this is a long name]
* other visual parameters?

**Methods:**

* generate\_word\_cloud() (the primary method of the class – creates a word cloud from the weighted term list)
* print\_term\_list() (displays the list of terms with their weights)