

Computer Science Principles

Unit 1: Creative Development



LECTURE 1: CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

DR. ERIC CHOU

IEEE SENIOR MEMBER

Welcome to AP Computer Science Principles!



Welcome to AP[®] Computer Science Principles! Designed as an introductory course, AP CSP is a great way to learn about the fundamentals of coding and the world of programming.

(If you've taken this class before, don't be surprised if some of the content covered here looks different. As of the 2020-21 school year, the curriculum is undergoing major changes.)



Why Take AP CSP?

- **AP CSP** is a great way to learn the basics of coding and gain coding experience, all while getting AP credit at the same time. You don't need any prior experience and your school should provide you with all the technology you'll need.
- AP CSP is also very **open-ended**. The class usually focuses on project-based learning, and the requirements for your final Create Project are pretty flexible. This gives you many opportunities to make something you're passionate about.
- Often times, the class will count as a tech credit locally as well.
- Convinced? Without further ado, let's begin.



Unit 1 Overview

Exam Weighing:

- 10-13% of the AP Exam
- Practically, this translates to about 20 questions on the test.



Collaboration

LECTURE 1



Computing Innovations

- Computing innovations, according to the College Board, are innovations that use a program as a key part of their function. Put simply, they wouldn't operate without a computer program making them work. If you can use the word "computer" or "coded" when describing this innovation, it's probably a computing innovation.
- Another way to identify computing innovations is to think about data. Does the innovation you're thinking of collect data and use it when operating? If so, you've probably got a computing innovation on your hands.
- Computing innovations can be both physical and non-physical, and they come in all shapes and sizes.



Examples of Computing Innovations:

Physical

- Self-driving cars
- Smart appliances (fridges/watches/toasters)
- Tablets (Kindles/iPads)
- Smart Phones
- Gaming devices (Nintendo Switch/Xbox)
- Robots (Roombas, for instance)



Examples of Computing Innovations:

Non-Physical

- Picture Editing Software (Photoshop/Adobe Lightroom)
- Word Processors (Word/Pages/Google Docs)
- Communication platforms (email/text messaging/video conferences)
- Digital video games (Dark Souls/Minecraft/Super Mario Kart)
- Applications (iPhone Apps)
- Even some concepts, like e-commerce or social networking, count



Collaboration in Computer Science

- While a lot of code-writing is independent by nature, the computer science field has a lot more collaboration in it than you'd think. Programmers of all sorts have to work with coworkers and bosses when dealing with large projects. They also have to work with their clients to make sure what they're coding meets client needs.



Collaboration in Computer Science

Different people have different backgrounds, perspectives and ways of thinking. Here are some ways **such diversity is helpful** when creating a computing innovation:

- More hands working on a project can sometimes get it done faster than one person can alone, (despite what the results of your last group project might indicate 😊).
- Discoveries can be made thanks to the multiple perspectives on deck.
- Biases can be avoided during the development process, creating a more inclusive innovation.
- Working with users and clients specifically during the development process can ensure that the finished product is one everyone is happy with, saving both time and energy.

Collaboration Between Users and Developers



- During the creation of a computing innovation, users and developers will communicate with each other. For example, video games will have testers that check the product for bugs and report them to the developers. Often, this conversation begins even before the product is made—some companies will conduct market research to determine what features would be best to include in their newest innovations.
- However, communication doesn't stop there! Even after the product is released, developers will often ask for feedback and offer areas for users to report any problems they may have.

Computing Developments that Foster Collaboration

Collaboration between programmers isn't a new concept. The computer science field has several models designed to foster collaboration, such as pair programming.





Pair Programming

Driver/Navigator

- **Pair programming is a programming model where two people share one computer.** *One person codes while the other person oversees the work, and the two often switch places.*
- At the same time, the internet makes collaboration between developers easier. You can see a version of this in your own life: most people today use Google Docs or Slides to work on shared projects.
- [Github](#) and [Bitbucket](#) are famous examples of collaborative development websites.



Ways to be a Good Team Player!

- In the AP CSP class, there are times where you'll have to collaborate with others to work on projects in class. The final Create project also gives you the option to work with another person during the development phases of the project.



Ways to be a Good Team Player!

Here are some tips, AP CSP-style, to make your collaborative team the most successful it can be!

- Communicate kindly and often.
- Practice consensus building within your team by listening to every member within it and taking their perspectives into consideration.
- Create norms such as establishing team roles or policies to help mediate any conflicts that might arise.
- A team project is a team effort, and that means everyone in the group needs to have a say. Sometimes, that might mean compromise.



Program Function and Purpose

LECTURE 1

Programs and Code Segments... with Cake



- A **program** is a collection of instructions that a computing device executes, or carries out. It's like a recipe that a computer follows. Programs run on **inputs** and **outputs** and exhibit specific behaviors.
- Within a program, you have **code segments**. A code segment is a smaller collection of statements that are part of a program. It's like the part of a cake recipe that tells you how to make the frosting.

Programs and Code Segments... with Cake



- Each code segment is made up of **statements**, or individual instructions. It's like a line in your recipe that says, "Crack three eggs into the bowl."
- So, a computer program is made up of code segments, which are made up of statements.
- Programs are also known as **software** or **applications**.



Describing Programs

- A **program** can be described in a broad sense by what it does.
 - My adding program lets the user add two numbers of their choice.
- You can also go more in depth by describing how the program's statements accomplish this goal.
 - My adding program asks the user to input two numbers, then adds them together and displays the final sum.



Program Inputs

- Programs run on inputs, which are pieces of data that a computer takes in and processes. These inputs can be directly submitted by the user or they can come from other programs.
- Inputs can be...
 - **Auditory**, such as spoken words or music notes
 - **Visual**, such as photos or videos
 - **Tactile**, such as strokes of a keyboard
 - **Text**, such as words or numbers



Program Events

- In order for a program to receive inputs, an **event** needs to happen. An event is simply an action that gives a program data to respond to.
- For example, pressing the left arrow causes a video game's program to make an avatar go left when before this it was running right. Pressing the key is the event in this case.
- Events cause programs to change how they're running. In the previous example, pressing the left key caused a change. If the arrow hadn't been pressed, the avatar would've kept running right.



Examples of common events:

- clicking a button
- moving a mouse
- starting a program
- pressing a key
- running down a timer



Event-Driven Programming

- A lot of modern software is **event-driven**, which means that it's designed to respond to events in order to run. Let's go back to our adding machine example. You start the program, an event, and press the enter key to input numbers into the program, another event. The program is designed to respond based on these events, so it's considered event driven.
- On a larger scale, your phone's software is event-driven as a whole because it responds primarily to your taps, clicks and swipes.



Program Outputs

- If program inputs are data that a computer takes in, **program outputs** are the data that the computer returns. They can be in any of the formats that inputs can be. In the adding machine example, the program output is the final sum that the program returns.

 [CPU, Memory, Input & Output by Khan Academy and Code.org](#)



Program Behavior

- When you run a program, you expect it to perform in a certain way. This is known as a program's **behavior**. Usually, program behaviors are defined by how a program will respond to a user interacting with it.
- It's important to think of what behavior you want your program to have before you code it. In order to figure that out, you'll need to know what the purpose of your program is.



Computing Innovations and Purpose

- The **purpose** of a computing innovation is what it's designed to do.
- **Solving problems** is one of the major purposes of computing innovations. For example, text messaging and video-chat platforms solve the problem of needing to communicate quickly over long distances. A computing innovation can also be a form of **creative expression**, such as making a video game.



Computing Innovations and Purpose

- Having a clear purpose for the computing innovation you want to make is like having a good thesis for an essay. It focuses your work and establishes what your goals are. In short, it strengthens your ability to develop your creation.
- So, how do you develop a clear purpose for your program? The answer to that lies in the development process.



Program Design and Development

LECTURE 1

Development Process

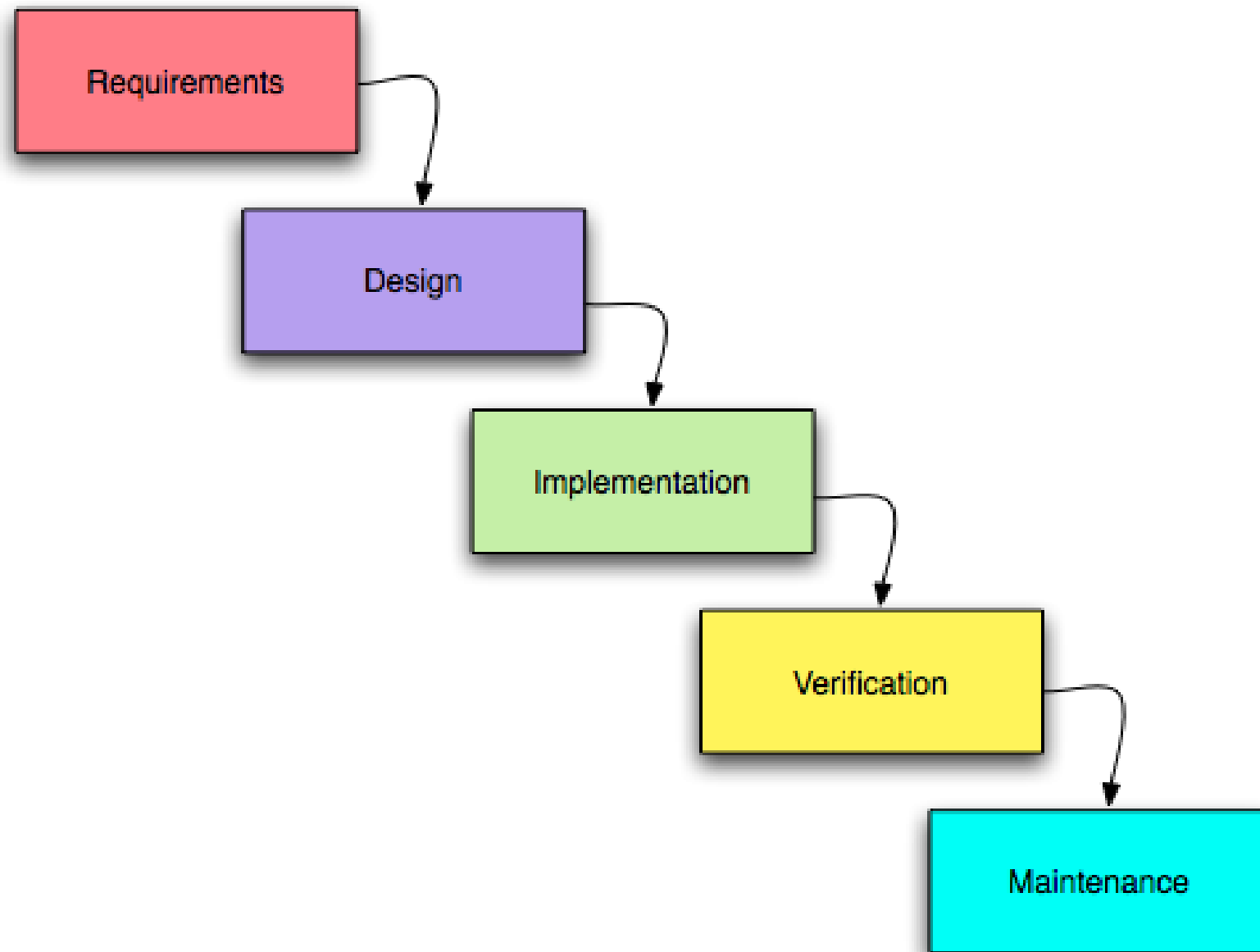
The development process for a program is how it's made. It consists of the steps it takes to go from planning to programming and beyond!



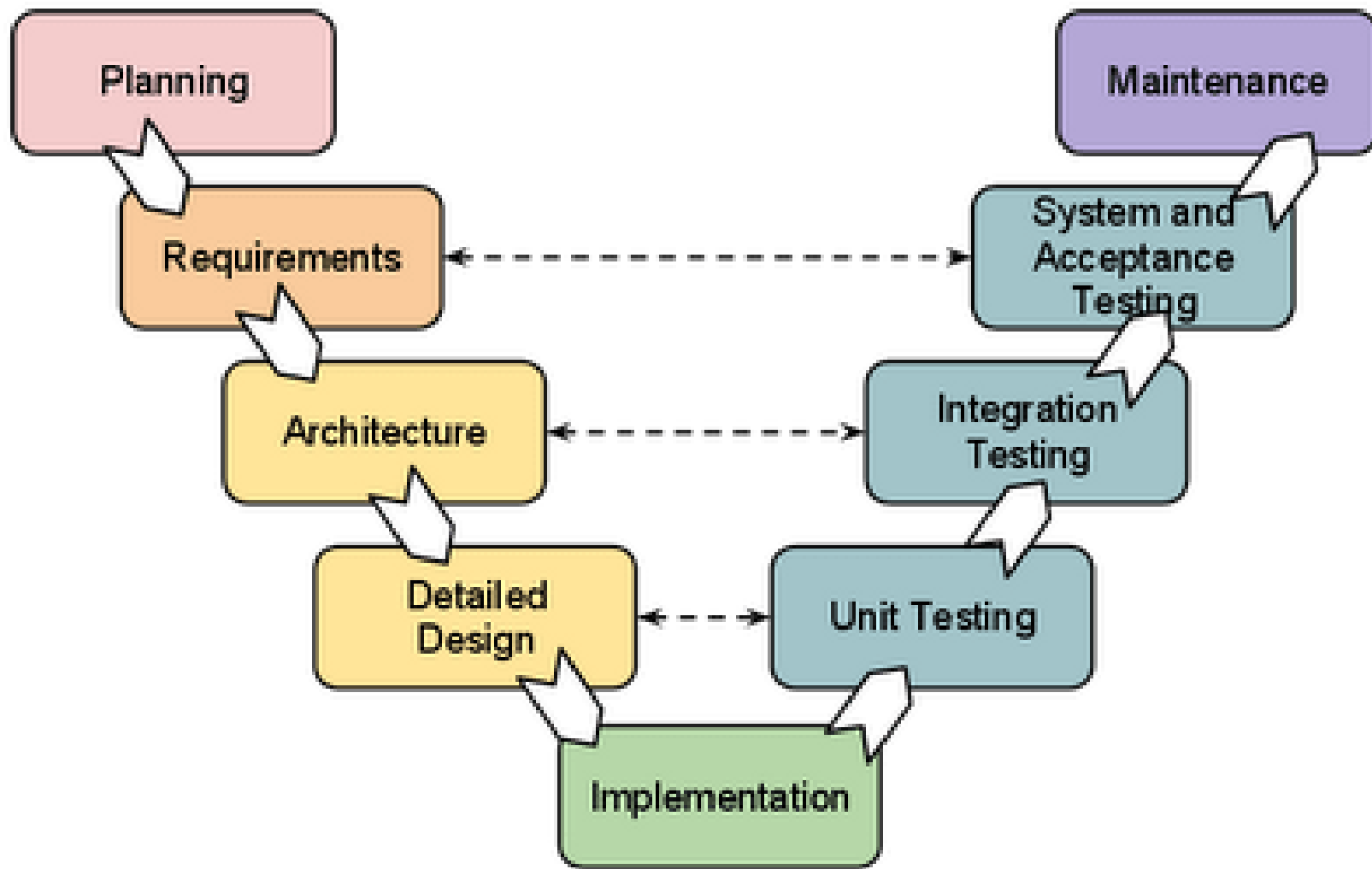


Types of Development Processes

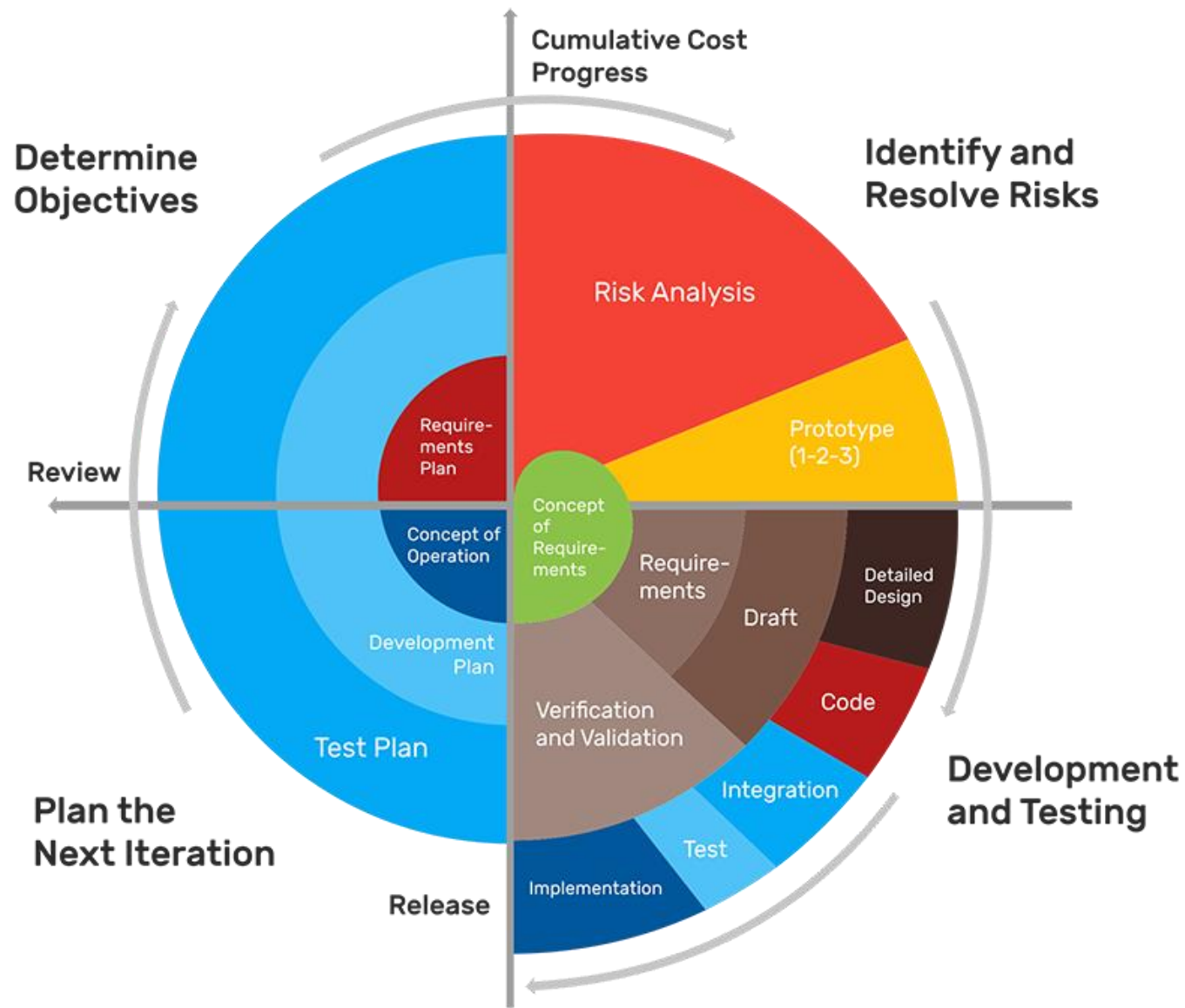
- Traditionally, program development follows a set path. It is orderly and intentional. One of the most well-known frameworks for developing software is known as the **waterfall** development model. It's characterized by a step-by-step process, where one step flows naturally into another.



Waterfall model



V model



Spiral model



Types of Development Processes

- Over the years, new methods of creating programs were created, such as the Agile and DevOps development methodologies. These methods can offer a more flexible approach to development, and help foster collaboration between developers and users. There can also be variations within methods. For example, programmers have created variations, or modifications, on the waterfall development model over the years.
- Some development processes aren't intentional. They're exploratory in nature, and the programmer experiments as they go along. This can happen when a program doesn't have specific guidelines behind it or when developers are under time constraints.

Iterative and Incremental Development Processes



- When you think of "iteration," think of repetition. In an **iterative development process**, programmers develop working prototypes of their program and go back through the stages of their development method to make their programs better.
- In an **incremental development process**, programmers will break the program they're working on into smaller pieces and make sure that each piece works before adding it to the whole.

Iterative and Incremental Development Processes



- Programs can be developed using both of these models, or any combination of the two. For example, you can take a code segment of a larger program and revise it until you finish developing it completely, then move on to another part of the program.
- You're using an iterative process by revising that code segment to completion, but an incremental one for the program at large.



The Drawing Board

- The beginning steps for most development processes are the planning phases. Lots of work goes into a program even before anyone opens a code editor.



Investigation and Reflection

- This is the game-plan stage of the development process. The goal of this investigation is to make the goal of the programmers as clear as possible.
- In this stage, programmers establish what their purpose is and the problem they're trying to solve. They figure out what their program will need to do, and also what their program will need in order to function properly.



Investigation and Reflection

- They'll often have program specifications to help them with this task. **Program specifications** are descriptions of the goals of the program agreed on by both the programmers and the clients.
- In order to get a clear picture during this stage, programmers have to consult with many sources. If their program is for a client, the client will be consulted to determine what they want. If they're working in a group, they may have to consult each other to make sure all parts of their program will work together. They may also have to do external research to discover what sorts of programs are similar to the one they're trying to make.



Ways Programmers Investigate:

- collecting data through communication channels, such as surveys
- user testing
- conducting interviews with clients to assess what their needs are
- direct observation of the project in action if the project has already been through one or two loops

In an iterative process, this stage can also include a reflection aspect on ways the project could improve or why something isn't working. With every repetition, the questions to investigate and reflect on change, becoming more specific over time.



Designing Code

The design phase of the development phase details how to accomplish the goals of the program.

This design phase may include:

- brainstorming
- planning and story-boarding
- organizing the program into modules and functional components
- creating diagrams that represent the layouts of the user interface
- developing a testing strategy for the program



Program Requirements and Specifications

- Through investigation, programmers are able to discover their program's requirements. Program requirements describe how a program works. What should a user be able to do? What does a user need to provide for the program to work?
- Program requirements also include what's needed on the programmer's end (ex: the program must be compatible with multiple browsers) as well as what tests need to be run to confirm that all these requirements are in place.



Program Requirements and Specifications

- From here, programmers are free to start building, prototyping, and testing their programs to their hearts' contents.
- While they're writing their programs, they'll need to record what they're doing. They'll do this through the process of writing **program documentation**.



Program Documentation

- **Program documentation**, at its simplest, is a description of how something in your program works. Sometimes, this description can include how your program was developed, such as why you chose one method of coding over another. The documentation could describe a code segment, event, procedure, or even the whole program itself.



Program Documentation

- Why is documentation used? Programmers document a program in order to break it down and explain it. They need to do this for a variety of reasons. Programs are complex things, and when you're dealing with pages and pages of code, documentation helps you keep things straight. They also foster collaboration. Someone other than the original programmer may someday need to work with this code, and documentation helps explain what's going on.
- Think of documentation as notes for your code in the same way you'd take notes for a textbook.
- With this in mind, let's turn to a common form of program documentation: comments.



Comments

- One of the most common forms of program documentation is known as comments. Comments are documentation written directly into the program itself.

```

177         default="Y",
178     )
179
180     global_scale_setting = FloatProperty(
181         name="Scale",
182         min=0.01, max=1000.0,
183         default=1.0,
184     )
185
186     def execute(self, context):
187
188         # get the folder
189         folder_path = (os.path.dirname(self.filepath))
190
191         # get objects selected in the viewport
192         viewport_selection = bpy.context.selected_objects
193
194         # get export objects
195         obj_export_list = viewport_selection
196         if self.use_selection_setting == False:
197             obj_export_list = [i for i in bpy.context.scene.objects]
198
199         # deselect all objects
200         bpy.ops.object.select_all(action='DESELECT')
201
202         for item in obj_export_list:
203             item.select = True
204             if item.type == 'MESH':
205                 file_path = os.path.join(folder_path, "{}.obj".format(item.name))
206                 bpy.ops.export_scene.obj(
207                     filepath=file_path, use_selection=True,
208                     axis_forward=self.axis_forward_setting,
209                     axis_up=self.axis_up_setting,
210                     use_animation=self.use_animation_setting,
211                     use_mesh_modifiers=self.use_mesh_modifiers_setting,
212                     use_edges=self.use_edges_setting,
213                     use_smooth_groups=self.use_smooth_groups_setting,
214                     use_smooth_groups_bitflags=self.use_smooth_groups_bitflags_setting,
215                     use_normals=self.use_normals_setting,
216                     use_uv=self.use_uv_setting,
217                     use_materials=self.use_materials_setting,

```



Comments

- In the above image, the **grey portions of text** with the number symbol (#) in front of the words are comments. Each comment describes what the code below it is intended to do.
 - Comments are often marked by some sort of symbol, like the number symbol, that tells the computer to disregard the text when running the program.
- ¶ While most of the programming languages you'll be working with in this class will support comments, there are some that won't. In this case, you'll need other documentation methods.



Sourcing Your Work

- As you travel further and further on the path of computer science study, you may come across a situation where you're using code that someone else helped make. Maybe you and a friend were working together on the Create project. Maybe you had a group project. Maybe you found this really nice code segment that does exactly what you need...
- Not so fast, buster! There are some things you need to do before using code that other people helped create.
- **First**, check with your teacher: are you allowed to use this code?
- **Next**, you need to get the user's permission, if possible.



Sourcing Your Work

- If not, code is often licensed in a way that will tell you what your usage permissions are. Verify that you have permission to use this code.
- **Finally**, you need to cite your sources. Just like when writing an essay or making a PowerPoint, it's important to cite your sources and acknowledge any work that you didn't make. Fortunately, this can be done within your program's documentation.
- Overall, your citation should include who originally wrote the code and where the code came from.
- There are plenty of online guides about how to cite code, and you're in good hands! [Here's a comprehensive one to get you started.](#)



Identifying and Correcting Errors

LECTURE 1



Common Errors

Logic Errors: A mistake in a program that causes unexpected behavior. For example, a program outputs a result different from the expected value, like saying that three times three equals thirty-three.

Syntax Errors: A syntax error occurs when the rules of the programming language aren't followed. Any typos in your code, such as forgetting to close a parentheses or spelling a variable wrong, will cause an error. Fortunately, many code editors will point out syntax errors, making them one of the easier errors to solve.

Run-Time Errors: An error that occurs when the program is running. You'll be able to start your program if you have a run-time error, but something will go wrong when you're trying to use it. Logic errors are examples of run-time errors.

Overflow Errors: An error that occurs when a computer tries to handle a number that's outside of its defined range of values. Usually, this means that your computer's trying to handle a number too big for it.



Error Fixes

Here are some effective ways to identify, find and correct errors.

- Testing different inputs, and testing at different points in your program's runtime.
 - Good testing procedures include testing with valid and invalid data. You want to make sure your program works with valid data and knows what to do if invalid data is imputed.
 - You should also test **boundary cases**, or values on the edge of program limits. This is where errors are likely to happen. For example, if your program only accepts values less than 9, you would check 8 and 10 as boundary cases.
- Hand tracing, or manually tracking what values your variables have as your program goes along. Many hand tracing methods use charts to organize these values.



Error Fixes

- Using visualizations, or visual representations of your code. Try plugging in some code into [this visualization tool](#) to see how it works!
 - Although they're helpful, you won't need to know how to use visualization tools for the AP test or to write your Create program.
- Using debuggers, or programs designed specially to test for bugs
- Adding extra print statements to your code to make sure that the "invisible" steps (the ones that aren't shown as output) are working properly.

```
What is the first number you would like to sum?5
5
What is the second number you would like to sum?7
7
Your number is 12
>>> |
```

Adding extra print statements is also a common way to test code. In this example, the numbers 5 and 7 are printed in order to make sure that the input system is working properly.

Error-Hunting Example

Give this problem a try!

`val` appears in the list `myList`. The procedure does not work as intended.

```
Line 1: PROCEDURE countNumOccurrences(myList, val)
Line 2: {
Line 3:   FOR EACH item IN myList
Line 4:   {
Line 5:     count ← 0
Line 6:     IF(item = val)
Line 7:     {
Line 8:       count ← count + 1
Line 9:     }
Line 10:  }
Line 11:  RETURN(count)
Line 12:}
```

Which of the following changes can be made so that the procedure will work as intended?

- (A) Changing line 6 to `IF(item = count)`
- (B) Changing line 6 to `IF(myList[item] = val)`
- (C) Moving the statement in line 5 so that it appears between lines 2 and 3
- (D) Moving the statement in line 11 so that it appears between lines 9 and 10



Answer

- The answer is C: **Moving the statement in line 5 so that it appears between lines 2 and 3.**
- First, let's take a look at the program's purpose: returning the number of times the value `val` appears in a list. For example, if `val` equaled 5 and 5 showed up twice in the list imputed, the program would return 2.
- If you're having trouble on a code question, try rewriting the code to the side. This can help you see the code lines in a different light. Just make sure to pay attention to details such as spacing when you rewrite.



Answer

- Rewritten without the brackets, the code looks like this:

```
PROCEDURE countNumOccurrences(myList, val) FOR EACH item IN  
myList count  $\leftarrow$  0 IF(item = val) count  $\leftarrow$  count + 1 RETURN(count)
```

- Let's make a test list [5, 2, 3, 5] and set val equal to 5 to see what the error might be. The program should return a value of 2.
- Starting from the beginning, we set the count to 0. The first number in the list equals the value of val, so count now equals 1.



Answer

- Because we're in a loop (which we'll talk more about in Big Idea 3), you're going to go back through the loop for the second item in the list, which is 2. We set count to zero again, and...
- Wait, that isn't supposed to happen! The error in this code is that every time the loop resets, count also resets to zero.
- How would we fix that? By taking $\text{count} \leftarrow 0$ outside of the loop. We need it to be before the loop starts, so we have the count variable to work with, but it can't be inside the loop itself.
- The loop begins in line 3, so putting $\text{count} \leftarrow 0$ between lines 2 and 3 works perfectly.