CSCD 327: Relational Database Systems

Relational database design

Instructor: Dr. Dan Li

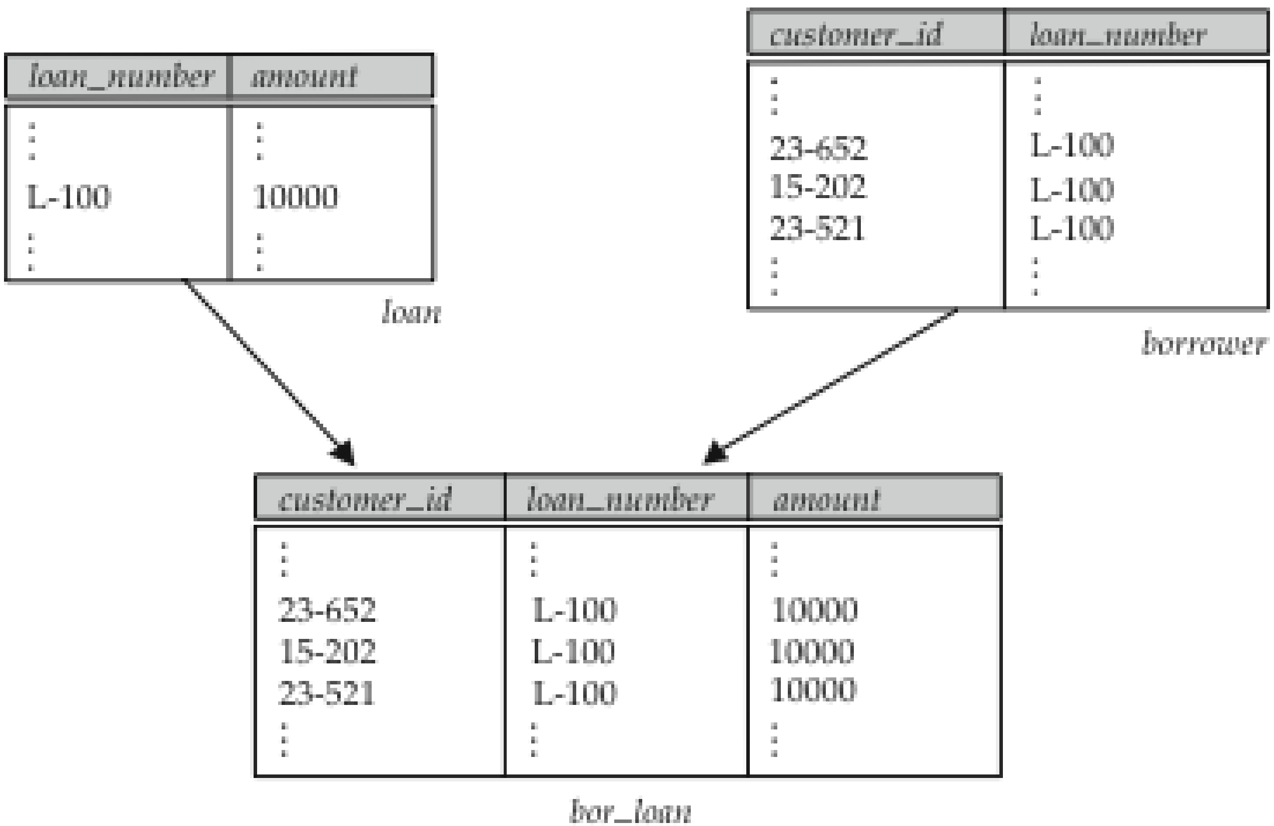
The Banking Schema

- *branch* = (*branch_name*, *branch_city*, *assets*)
- *customer* = (*customer_id*, *customer_name*, *customer_street*, *customer_city*)
- *loan* = (*loan_number*, *amount*)
- *account* = (*account_number*, *balance*)
- *employee* = (*employee_id*. *employee_name*, *telephone_number*, *start_date*)
- *dependent_name* = (*employee_id, dname*)
- *account_branch* = (*account_number*, *branch_name*)
- *loan_branch* = (*loan_number*, *branch_name*)
- *borrower* = (*customer_id, loan_number*)
- *depositor* = (*customer_id, account_number*)
- *cust_banker* = (*customer_id, employee_id*, *type*)
- *works_for* = (*worker_employee_id*, *manager_employee_id*)
- *payment* = (*loan_number, payment_number*, *payment_date*, *payment_amount*)
- *savings_account* = (*account_number*, *interest_rate*)
- *checking_account* = (*account_number*, *overdraft_amount*)

Combine Schemas?

- Suppose we combine *borrower* and *loan* to get

  bor_loan = (*customer_id*, *loan_number*, *amount*)
- Result is possible repetition of information (L-100 in example below)

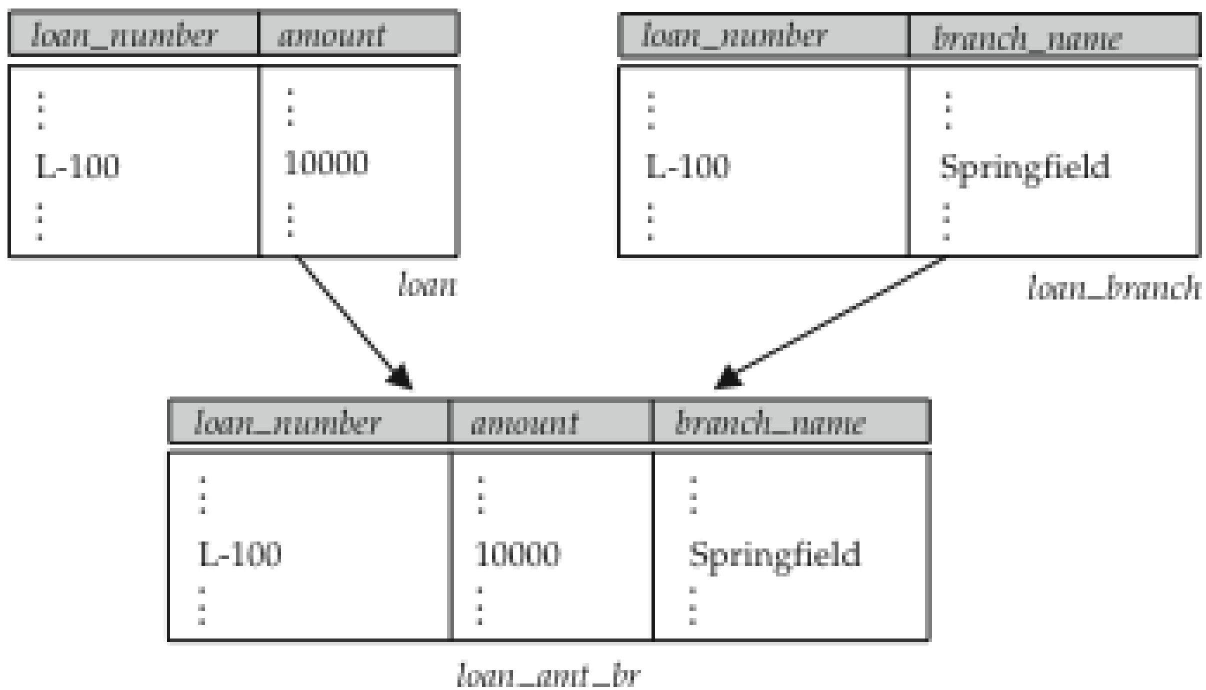


A Combined Schema Without Repetition

- Consider combining *loan_branch* and *loan*

  loan_amt_br = (*loan_number*, *amount*, *branch_name*)

- No repetition (as suggested by example below)



What About Smaller Schemas?

- Suppose we had started with *bor_loan.* How would we know to split up (**decompose**) it into *borrower* and *loan*?
- Write a rule "if there were a schema (*loan_number, amount*), then *loan_number* would be a candidate key"
- Denote as a **functional dependency**:

  $$loan\_number \rightarrow amount$$

- In *bor_loan*, because *loan_number* is not a candidate key, the amount of a loan may have to be repeated. This indicates the need to decompose *bor_loan*.
- Not all decompositions are good. Suppose we decompose *employee* into

  employee1 = (*employee_id*, *employee_name*)

  employee2 = (*employee_name*, *telephone_number*, *start_date*)

- The next slide shows how we lose information -- we cannot reconstruct the original *employee* relation -- and so, this is a lossy decomposition.

A Lossy Decomposition

employee_id	*employee_name*	*telephone_number*	*start_date*
⋮			
123-45-6789	Kim	882-0000	1984-03-29
987-65-4321	Kim	869-9999	1981-01-16
⋮			

employee

employee_id	*employee_name*
⋮	
123-45-6789	Kim
987-65-4321	Kim
⋮	

employee_name	*telephone_number*	*start_date*
⋮		
Kim	882-0000	1984-03-29
Kim	869-9999	1981-01-16
⋮		

$\bowtie$

employee_id	*employee_name*	*telephone_number*	*start_date*
⋮			
123-45-6789	Kim	882-0000	1984-03-29
123-45-6789	Kim	869-9999	1981-01-16
987-65-4321	Kim	882-0000	1984-03-29
987-65-4321	Kim	869-9999	1981-01-16
⋮			

First Normal Form

- Domain is atomic if its elements are considered to be indivisible units
  - Examples of non-atomic domains:
    - Set of names, composite attributes
    - Identification numbers like CS101 that can be broken up into parts
- A relational schema R is in first normal form if the domains of all attributes of R are atomic
- Non-atomic values complicate storage and encourage redundant (repeated) storage of data
  - Example: Set of accounts stored with each customer, and set of owners stored with each account
  - We assume all relations are in first normal form.

Goal — Devise a Theory for the Following

- Decide whether a particular relation *R* is in "good" form.
- In the case that a relation *R* is not in "good" form, decompose it into a set of relations $\{R_1, R_2, ..., R_n\}$ such that
  - each relation is in good form
  - the decomposition is a lossless-join decomposition
- Our theory is based on:
  - **functional dependencies**

Functional Dependencies

- Constraints on the set of legal relations.
- Let *R* be a relation schema

$$\alpha \subseteq R \ \text{and} \ \beta \subseteq R$$

- The functional dependency

$$\alpha \rightarrow \beta$$

holds on *R* if and only if for any legal relations *r*(R), whenever any two tuples t_1 and t_2 of *r* agree on the attributes α, they also agree on the attributes β. That is,

$$t_1[\alpha] = t_2[\alpha] \Rightarrow t_1[\beta] = t_2[\beta]$$

- Example: Consider *r*(A,*B*) with the following instance of *r.*

1	4
1	5
3	7

On this instance, $A \rightarrow B$ does **NOT** hold, but $B \rightarrow A$ does hold.

Functional Dependencies (Cont.)

- K is a superkey for relation schema R if and only if $K \rightarrow R$
- K is a candidate key for R if and only if
  - $K \rightarrow R$, and
  - for no $\alpha \subset K$, $\alpha \rightarrow R$
- Functional dependencies allow us to express constraints that cannot be expressed using superkeys. Consider the schema:

  bor_loan = (*<u>customer_id, loan_number</u>, amount*).

  We expect this functional dependency to hold:

  $$loan\_number \rightarrow amount$$

  but loan_number is not the super key

Functional Dependencies (Cont.)

- *A* functional dependency is trivial if it is satisfied by all instances of a relation
  - Example*:*
    - *customer_name, loan_number* $\rightarrow$ *customer_name*
    - *customer_name* $\rightarrow$ *customer_name*
  - In general, $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ is trivial if $\beta \subseteq \alpha$

Boyce-Codd Normal Form

A relation schema *R* is in BCNF with respect to a set *F* of functional dependencies if for all functional dependencies in F^+ of the form

$$\alpha \rightarrow \beta$$

where $\alpha \subseteq R$ and $\beta \subseteq R$, at least one of the following holds:

- $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ is trivial (i.e., $\beta \subseteq \alpha$)
- α is a superkey for *R*

Example schema *not* in BCNF:

bor_loan = (*customer_id, loan_number, amount*)

because *loan_number* $\rightarrow$ *amount* holds on *bor_loan* but *loan_number* is not a superkey

Closure of a Set of Functional Dependencies

- Given a set *F* of functional dependencies, there are certain other functional dependencies that are logically implied by *F*.
  - For example: If $A \rightarrow B$ and $B \rightarrow C$, then we can infer that $A \rightarrow C$
- The set of **all** functional dependencies logically implied by *F* is the *closure* of *F*.
- We denote the *closure* of *F* by F^+.
- F^+ is a superset of *F*.

Closure of a Set of Functional Dependencies (cont.)

- Given a set *F* set of functional dependencies, there are certain other functional dependencies that are logically implied by *F*.
  - For example: If $A \rightarrow B$ and $B \rightarrow C$, then we can infer that $A \rightarrow C$
- The set of all functional dependencies logically implied by *F* is the *closure* of *F*.
- We denote the *closure* of *F* by F^+.
- We can find all of F^+ by applying Armstrong's Axioms:
  - if $\beta \subseteq \alpha$, then $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ **(reflexivity)**
  - if $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$, then $\gamma \alpha \rightarrow \gamma \beta$ **(augmentation)**
  - if $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$, and $\beta \rightarrow \gamma$, then $\alpha \rightarrow \gamma$ **(transitivity)**
- These rules are
  - sound (generate only functional dependencies that actually hold) and
  - complete (generate all functional dependencies that hold).

Example

- $R = (A, B, C, G, H, I)$
  $F = \{ A \rightarrow B$
  $A \rightarrow C$
  $CG \rightarrow H$
  $CG \rightarrow I$
  $B \rightarrow H\}$
- some members of F^+
  - $A \rightarrow H$
    - by transitivity from $A \rightarrow B$ *and* $B \rightarrow H$
  - $AG \rightarrow I$
    - by augmenting $A \rightarrow C$ with G, to get $AG \rightarrow CG$
      and then transitivity with $CG \rightarrow I$
  - $CG \rightarrow HI$
    - by augmenting $CG \rightarrow I$ to infer $CG \rightarrow CGI$,
      and augmenting of $CG \rightarrow H$ to infer $CGI \rightarrow HI$,
      and then transitivity

Procedure for Computing F^+

- To compute the closure of a set of functional dependencies F:

$F^+ = F$
repeat
  for each functional dependency f in F^+
    apply reflexivity and augmentation rules on f
    add the resulting functional dependencies to F^+
  for each pair of functional dependencies f_1 and f_2 in F^+
    if f_1 and f_2 can be combined using transitivity
      then add the resulting functional dependency to F^+
until F^+ does not change any further

NOTE: We shall see an alternative procedure for this task later

Closure of Functional Dependencies (Cont.)

- We can further simplify manual computation of F^+ by using the following additional rules.
  - If $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ holds *a*nd $\alpha \rightarrow \gamma$ holds, then $\alpha \rightarrow \beta\gamma$ holds **(union)**
  - If $\alpha \rightarrow \beta\gamma$ holds, then $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ holds and $\alpha \rightarrow \gamma$ holds **(decomposition)**
  - If $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ holds *a*nd $\gamma\,\beta \rightarrow \delta$ holds, then $\alpha\,\gamma \rightarrow \delta$ holds **(pseudotransitivity)**

  The above rules can be inferred from Armstrong's axioms.

Closure of Attribute Sets

- Given a set of attributes α, define the *closure* of α under F (denoted by α^+) as the set of attributes that are functionally determined by α under F

- Algorithm to compute α^+, the closure of α under F

result := α;
while (changes to *result*) **do**
    for each $\beta \rightarrow \gamma$ **in** *F* **do**
      begin
        if $\beta \subseteq$ *result* **then** *result* := *result* $\cup\ \gamma$
      end

Example of Attribute Set Closure

- $R = (A, B, C, G, H, I)$
- $F = \{A \rightarrow B$
  $A \rightarrow C$
  $CG \rightarrow H$
  $CG \rightarrow I$
  $B \rightarrow H\}$
- $(AG)^+$
  1. $result = AG$
  2. $result = ABCG$ $(A \rightarrow C$ and $A \rightarrow B)$
  3. $result = ABCGH$ $(CG \rightarrow H$ and $CG \subseteq AGBC)$
  4. $result = ABCGHI$ $(CG \rightarrow I$ and $CG \subseteq AGBCH)$
- Is AG a candidate key?
  1. Is AG a super key?
     1. Does $AG \rightarrow R$? == Is $(AG)^+ \supseteq R$
  2. Is any subset of AG a superkey?
     1. Does $A \rightarrow R$? == Is $(A)^+ \supseteq R$
     2. Does $G \rightarrow R$? == Is $(G)^+ \supseteq R$

Uses of Attribute Closure

There are several uses of the attribute closure algorithm:

- Testing for superkey:
  - To test if α is a superkey, we compute $\alpha^{+,}$ and check if α^{+} contains all attributes of *R*.
- Testing functional dependencies
  - To check if a functional dependency $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ holds (or, in other words, is in F^{+}), just check if $\beta \subseteq \alpha^{+}$.
  - That is, we compute α^{+} by using attribute closure, and then check if it contains β.
  - Is a simple and cheap test, and very useful
- Computing closure of F
  - For each $\gamma \subseteq R$, we find the closure γ^{+}, and for each $S \subseteq \gamma^{+}$, we output a functional dependency $\gamma \rightarrow S$.

Testing for BCNF

- To check if a non-trivial dependency $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ causes a violation of BCNF
  1. compute α^+ (the attribute closure of α), and
  2. verify that it includes all attributes of *R*, that is, it is a superkey of *R*.
- Simplified test: To check if a relation schema *R* is in BCNF, it suffices to check only the dependencies in the given set *F* for violation of BCNF, rather than checking all dependencies in F^+.
  - If none of the dependencies in *F* causes a violation of BCNF, then none of the dependencies in F^+ will cause a violation of BCNF either.

Decomposing a Schema into BCNF

- Suppose we have a schema *R* and a non-trivial dependency $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ causes a violation of BCNF.

  We decompose *R* into:

  (1) $(\alpha \cup \beta)$

  (2) $(R - (\beta - \alpha))$

- In our example,
  - α = *loan_number*
  - β = *amount*

  and *bor_loan* is replaced by

  (1) $(\alpha \cup \beta)$ = (*loan_number, amount*)

  (2) $(R - (\beta - \alpha))$ = (*customer_id, loan_number*)

Lossless-join Decomposition

- For the case of $R = (R_1, R_2)$, we require that for all possible relations r on schema R

$$r = \prod_{R1}(r) \bowtie \prod_{R2}(r)$$

- A decomposition of R into R_1 and R_2 is lossless join if and only if at least one of the following dependencies is in F^+:
  - $R_1 \cap R_2 \rightarrow R_1$
  - $R_1 \cap R_2 \rightarrow R_2$

Example of BCNF Decomposition

- Original relation R and functional dependency F

  R = (*branch_name, branch_city, assets,*
  customer_name, loan_number, amount)

  F = {*branch_name* $\rightarrow$ *assets, branch_city*
  loan_number $\rightarrow$ *amount, branch_name* }

  Key = {*loan_number, customer_name*}
- Decomposition
  - R_1 = (*branch_name, branch_city, assets*)
  - R_2 = (*branch_name, customer_name, loan_number, amount*)
  - R_{21} = (*branch_name, loan_number, amount*)
  - R_{22} = (*customer_name, loan_number*)
- Final decomposition

  R_1, R_{21}, R_{22}

Dependency Preserving

- Constraints including functional dependencies are costly to check in practice unless they pertain to only one relation.
- If it is sufficient to test only those dependencies on each individual relation of a decomposition in order to ensure that ALL functional dependencies hold, then that decomposition ***is dependency preserving***.

Dependency Preservation (cont.)

- Let F_i be the set of dependencies F^+ that include only attributes in R_i.
  - A decomposition is dependency preserving, if

    $$(F_1 \cup F_2 \cup \ldots \cup F_n)^+ = F^+$$

  - If it is not, then checking updates for violation of functional dependencies may require computing joins, which is expensive.

BCNF and Dependency Preservation

It is not always possible to get a BCNF decomposition that is dependency preserving

- $R = (J, K, L)$
  $F = \{JK \rightarrow L$
  $\quad L \rightarrow K\}$
  Two candidate keys = JK and JL
- R is not in BCNF
- Any decomposition of R will fail to preserve

$$JK \rightarrow L$$

This implies that testing for $JK \rightarrow L$ requires a join

Example

- $R = (A, B, C)$
  $F = \{A \rightarrow B$
  $\quad B \rightarrow C\}$
  Key = $\{A\}$
- R is not in BCNF
- Decomposition $R_1 = (A, B)$, $R_2 = (B, C)$
  - R_1 and R_2 in BCNF
  - Lossless-join decomposition
  - Dependency preserving

Goals of Normalization

- Let R be a relation scheme with a set F of functional dependencies.
- Decide whether a relation scheme R is in "good" form.
- In the case that a relation scheme R is not in "good" form, decompose it into a set of relation scheme $\{R_1, R_2, ..., R_n\}$ such that
  - each relation scheme is in good form
  - the decomposition is a lossless-join decomposition
  - **Preferably, the decomposition should be dependency preserving.**

Third Normal Form: Motivation

- There are some situations where
  - BCNF is not dependency preserving, and
  - efficient checking for FD violation on updates is important
- Solution: define a weaker normal form, called Third Normal Form (3NF)
  - Allows some redundancy (with resultant problems; we will see examples later)
  - But functional dependencies can be checked on individual relations without computing a join.
  - There is always a lossless-join, dependency-preserving decomposition into 3NF.

Third Normal Form

- A relation schema R is in third normal form (3NF) if for all:

$$\alpha \rightarrow \beta \text{ in } F^+$$

  at least one of the following holds:
  - $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$ is trivial (i.e., $\beta \in \alpha$)
  - α is a superkey for R
  - Each attribute A in $\beta - \alpha$ is contained in a candidate key for R.

    (**NOTE**: each attribute may be in a different candidate key)
- If a relation is in BCNF it is in 3NF (since in BCNF one of the first two conditions above must hold).
- Third condition is a minimal relaxation of BCNF to ensure dependency preservation (will see why later).

3NF Example

- Relation R:
  - $R = (J, K, L)$
    $F = \{JK \rightarrow L, L \rightarrow K\}$
  - Two candidate keys: JK and JL
  - R is in 3NF

    $JK \rightarrow L$ JK is a superkey
    $L \rightarrow K$ K is contained in a candidate key

Redundancy in 3NF

- There is some redundancy in this schema
- Example of problems due to redundancy in 3NF
  - $R = (J, K, L)$
    $F = \{JK \rightarrow L, L \rightarrow K\}$

J	L	K
j_1	l_1	k_1
j_2	l_1	k_1
j_3	l_1	k_1
null	l_2	k_2

- repetition of information (e.g., the relationship l_1, k_1)
- need to use null values (e.g., to represent the relationship l_2, k_2 where there is no corresponding value for J).

Testing for 3NF

- Use attribute closure to check for each dependency $\alpha \rightarrow \beta$, if α is a superkey.
- If α is not a superkey, we have to verify if each attribute in β is contained in a candidate key of *R*
  - this test is rather more expensive, since it involve finding candidate keys
  - testing for 3NF has been shown to be NP-hard

Comparison of BCNF and 3NF

- It is always possible to decompose a relation into a set of relations that are in 3NF such that:
  - the decomposition is lossless
  - the dependencies are preserved
- It is always possible to decompose a relation into a set of relations that are in BCNF such that:
  - the decomposition is lossless
  - it may not be possible to preserve dependencies.

Design Goals

- Goal for a relational database design is:
  - BCNF.
  - Lossless join.
  - Dependency preservation.
- If we cannot achieve this, we accept one of
  - Lack of dependency preservation
  - Redundancy due to use of 3NF
- Interestingly, SQL does not provide a direct way of specifying functional dependencies other than superkeys.

How good is BCNF?

- There are database schemas in BCNF that do not seem to be sufficiently normalized
- Consider a database

  classes (*course, teacher, book*)

  such that (*c, t, b*) $\in$ *classes* means that *t* is qualified to teach *c,* and *b* is a required textbook for *c*
- The database is supposed to list for each course the set of teachers any one of which can be the course's instructor, and the set of books, all of which are required for the course (no matter who teaches it).

How good is BCNF? (Cont.)

course	*teacher*	*book*
database	Avi	DB Concepts
database	Avi	Ullman
database	Hank	DB Concepts
database	Hank	Ullman
database	Sudarshan	DB Concepts
database	Sudarshan	Ullman
operating systems	Avi	OS Concepts
operating systems	Avi	Stallings
operating systems	Pete	OS Concepts
operating systems	Pete	Stallings

classes

- There are no non-trivial functional dependencies and therefore the relation is in BCNF
- Insertion anomalies – i.e., if Marilyn is a new teacher that can teach database, two tuples need to be inserted

  (database, Marilyn, DB Concepts)
  (database, Marilyn, Ullman)

How good is BCNF? (Cont.)

- Therefore, it is better to decompose *classes* into:

course	*teacher*
database	Avi
database	Hank
database	Sudarshan
operating systems	Avi
operating systems	Jim

teaches

course	*book*
database	DB Concepts
database	Ullman
operating systems	OS Concepts
operating systems	Shaw

text

This suggests the need for higher normal forms, such as Fourth Normal Form (4NF), which we will not cover in this course..