



Database Design

5-3

Resolving Many-to-Many Relationships



Objectives

This lesson covers the following objectives:

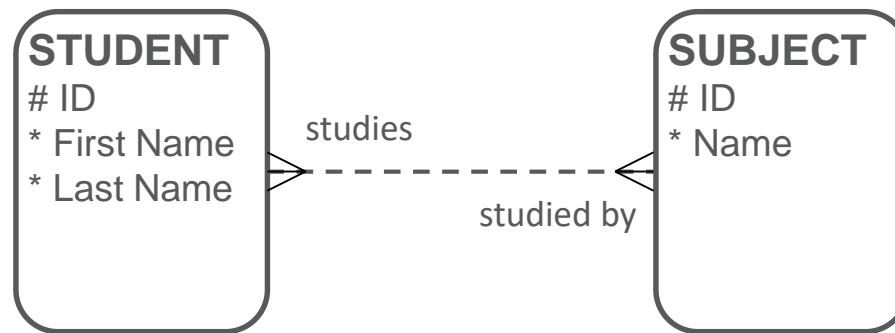
- Identify attributes which belong to many-to-many relationships
- Demonstrate the steps to resolve a many-to-many relationship using an intersection entity
- Identify the UID of an intersection entity and represent it in the entity relationship diagram

Purpose

- This lesson will help you complete your model - you may need to create new entities or new relationships based on the business needs.
- It will also help you define the scope of your data model - you only model what is of importance to the business.

Relationship Hiding an Attribute

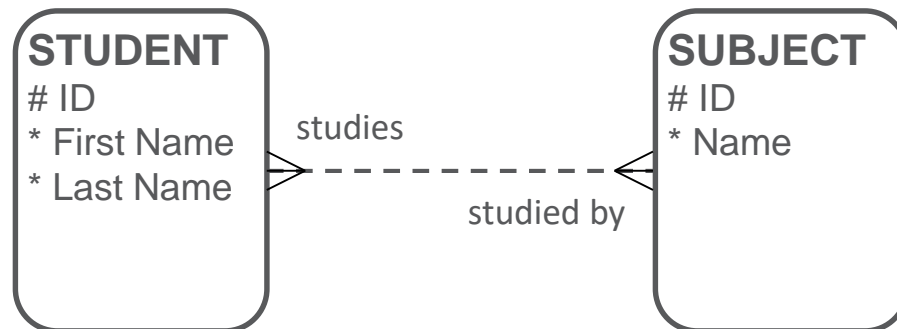
- In a school, a STUDENT may study one or more SUBJECTs.
- Each SUBJECT may be studied by one or more STUDENTs



STUDENT and SUBJECT

Relationship Hiding an Attribute

- When a student enrolls for a subject, we want to be able to record the grade they attain for that subject.
- Which entity would the attribute “Grade” belong to?
- If we put “Grade” in the STUDENT entity, how would we know which SUBJECT it is for?
- If we put “Grade” in the SUBJECT entity, how would we know which STUDENT got that grade?



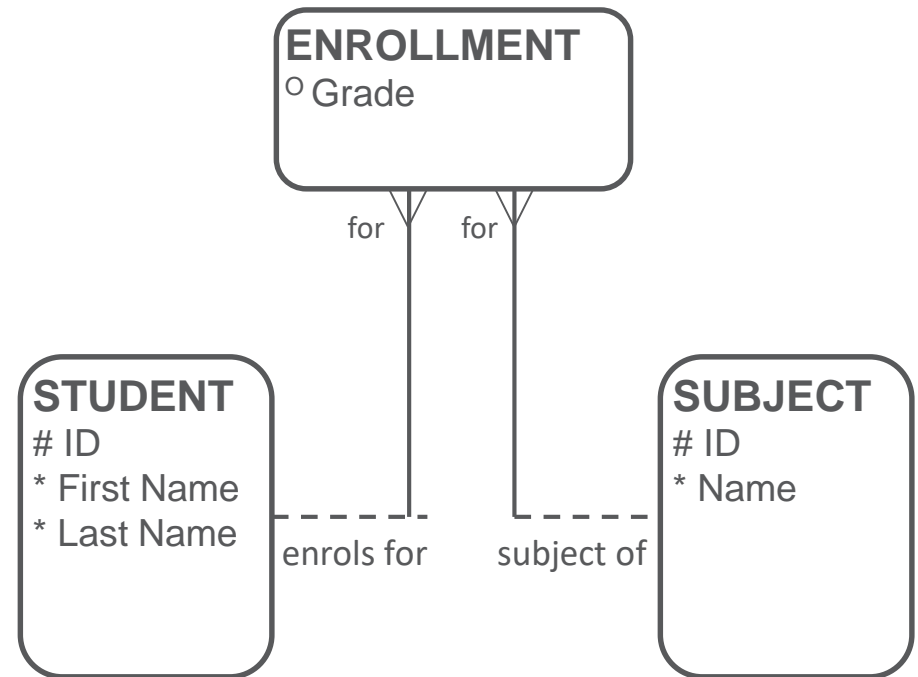
Resolution of a M:M Relationship

- A third entity is needed to resolve the M:M relationship. This is called an "intersection" entity.



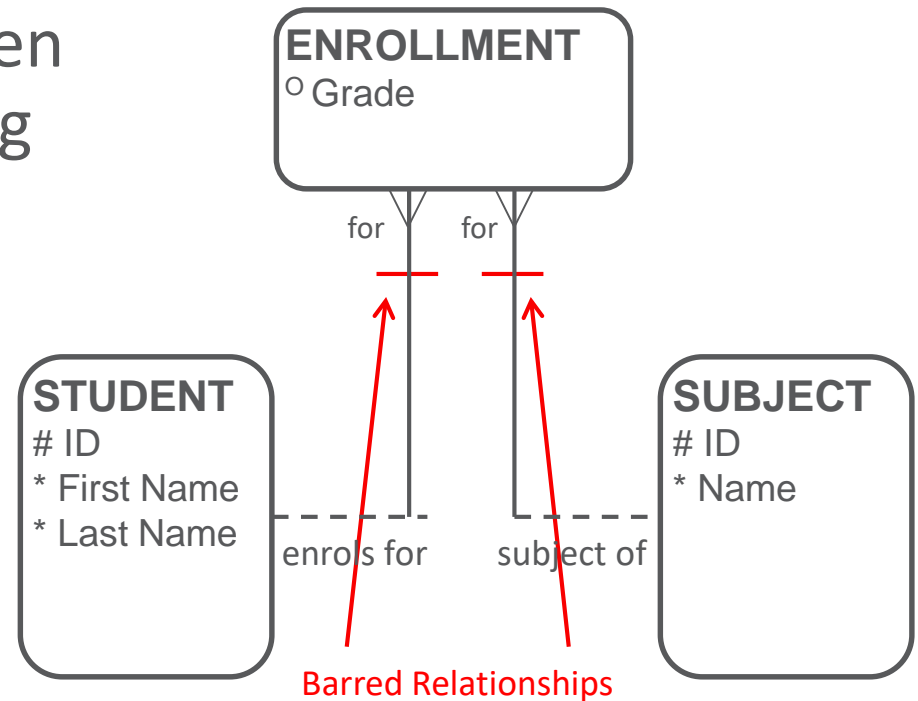
Intersection Entity

- An intersection entity – ENROLLMENT – has been added, including the “Grade” attribute.
- The original M:M relationship has become two 1:M relationships.
- What would be the UID of the intersection entity?



Barred Relationships

- The unique identifier (UID) of the intersection entity often comes from the originating relationships and is represented by the bars.
- In this case, the relationships from the originating entities to the intersection entity are called "barred" relationships.

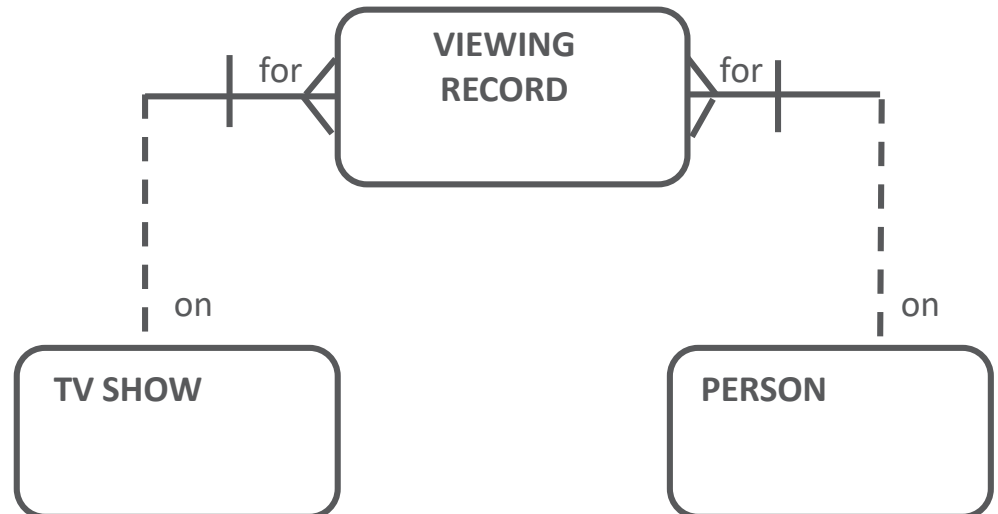


M:M Resolution Example TV Shows

- Each TV show may be watched by one or more persons.
- Each person may watch one or more TV shows.

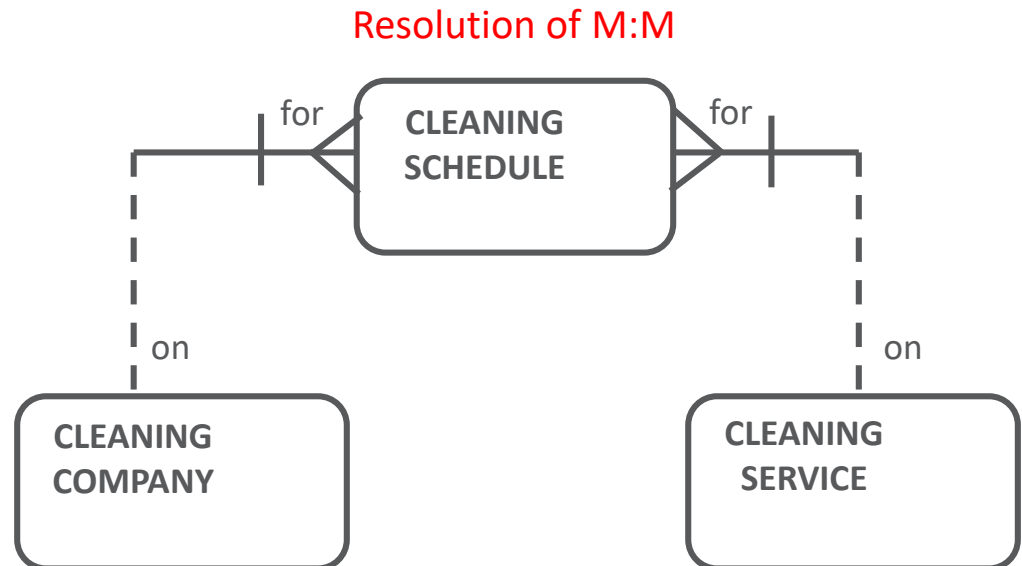


Resolution of M:M



M:M Resolution Example Cleaning Services

- Each company may provide one or more cleaning services.
- Each cleaning service may be provided by one or more companies.



Terminology

Key terms used in this lesson included:

- Barred relationship
- Intersection entity

Summary

In this lesson, you should have learned how to:

- Identify attributes which belong to many-to-many relationships
- Demonstrate the steps to resolve a many-to-many relationship using an intersection entity
- Identify the UID of an intersection entity and represent it in the entity relationship diagram

