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Foundations of Programming (Python)

Recap of Module 08 – Objects and Classes

<https://github.com/nordthomas/IntroToProg-Python-Mod08>

Creating an Inventory Program

# Introduction

For this week’s assignment we needed to take a starter script and update it to illustrate real world use of classes and objects in Python. The goal of the program is to gather user input, in this case a product name and price, that will be stored as an object and then add it to a list of objects. We should be able to write that data to a file and also read the data from that file.

# Reviewing the Starter Script

To begin I reviewed the starter script we were provided. It contains all the pseudo code we need to understand our objective and clearly outlines our separation of concerns. We have a class named Product that will be used to create our objects, a class named FileProcessor to handle reading from and writing to our file, and a class named IO for handing our user interactions such as showing the menu and gathering user input. The Product and FileProcessor classes contain doc strings which will give us a good starting point along with the existing pseudo code.

The first thing I want to do is update my script header to track my work in the script. This will also include updating the changelog in the various class docstrings. The IO class doesn’t contain a docstring so I’ll add one (Figure 1).

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Figure 1: The IO class docstring

I know I’ll need to write some methods but I don’t know what they’ll be yet so I just add a section for them and leave it blank for now.

The last thing I added before digging in to the code was a new variable. We started with:

strFileName = 'products.txt'  
lstOfProductObjects = []

However, when working with files I know we’ll need not only a string for our file name, but also a file handle so I created the objFile variable for that and set it to None.

# The Product Class

## Fields

First on our TODO list is dealing with the contents of the Product class. We do not have any methods to start with so we’ll have to look at what we might need. Our docstring tells us that we need 2 properties:

properties:  
 product\_name: (string) with the product's name  
 product\_price: (float) with the product's price

So, we need to build an object that receives a name and a price. We’ll start by adding 2 fields and setting some default values.

product\_name = ""  
product\_price = 0

## Constructor

Now that we have a couple fields to hold the data we want the object to encapsulate we can start writing our methods. A good place to start is with our initialization constructor, which will automatically run whenever we create our object.

def \_\_init\_\_(self, product\_name = "", product\_price = 0):  
 self.product\_name = product\_name  
 self.product\_price = product\_price

This constructor is a method with 2 underscores before and after the word “init”, followed by our parameters which, in this case, are the keyword self followed by the two fields we set earlier. Because we want to be able to access the fields from within the class we need to use that self parameter at the beginning of our variables within the method. So we set a variable called self.product\_name and assign it our product\_name parameter. Then we do the same for product\_price.

## The \_\_str\_\_() Method

Because we’re going to be working with objects containing string data, it’s a good idea to create a new string method which will replace the built-in one. This will ensure that when we print the object we’ll get something more human-readable and formatted to our needs. Like the constructor, we use the double underscore (“duder”) in the method name:

def \_\_str\_\_(self):  
 return self.product\_name + " | " + self.product\_price

The return statement is set up to give us the name of our product and the price of the product separated by a pipe (|). This will make the data that we inject to our file later easier to read.

## Getters and Setters

The starter script let us know that we would need some properties for this class, one for product\_name and one for product\_price. In Python a getter property starts with a @property decorator while the setter property starts with @name\_of\_method.setter. The getter property is used to add formatting to your code and the setter is used for validation and error handling. In my case I didn’t want to restrict the names users could enter for products so my getter and setter properties are the base methods.

@property  
def product\_name(self):  
 return self.\_\_product\_name  
  
@product\_name.setter  
def product\_name(self, name):  
 self.\_\_product\_name = name

I did try to figure out how to disallow entering a blank product name but because I have a blank string as my default for product\_name the error handling would always fire making my code not work the way I like.

For product\_price I was able to validate that the price could not be below 0 with a simple if-else conditional.

@property  
def product\_price(self):  
 return str(self.\_\_product\_price)  
  
@product\_price.setter  
def product\_price(self, value):  
 if value < 0:  
 print("You must enter a valid price.")  
 else:  
 self.\_\_product\_price = value

## Testing our Class

We can quickly test that our class is working with some simple test code.

objprod = Product()  
objprod.product\_name, objprod.product\_price = "Chair", 9.99  
print(objprod)

Here we’re creating an object instance of the Product class and assigning it to objprod. Then I create a variable for the product name as well as the price using dot notation - doing so will force the variables to use our property logic. I assigned a couple values manually then print the result of objprod (Figure 2).

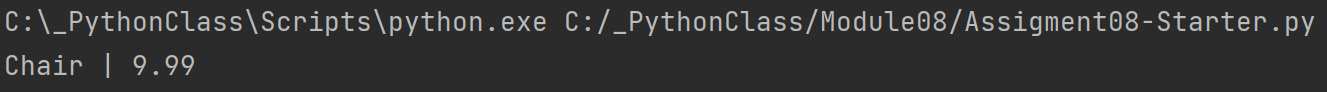


Figure 2: The result of our test code

# Writing to the File

The FileProcessor method docstring tells us we have at least 2 methods to write but I have added a third. Over the course of this class I have been using a function to check if the file we want to write to exists and if it doesn’t then I create it.

@staticmethod  
def create\_file(file, file\_name):  
 """ Create empty file on disk  
  
 **:param** file: (object) file handle:  
 **:param** file\_name: (string) name of file on disk:  
 **:return**: nothing  
 """  
 if file == None:  
 file = open(file\_name, "a")  
 file.close()

Now, I no longer need to create the file manually which is a huge timesaver when testing. And don’t forget to also add this method to your docstring!

The next method we need is one to read data from the file on disk (read\_data\_from\_file). This basically like any other function we’ve used to read data from a file so I used the code from Assignment 6 and updated the parameter names.

@staticmethod  
def read\_data\_from\_file(file\_name, list\_of\_rows):  
 """ Reads data from a file into a list  
  
 **:param** file\_name: (string) with name of file:  
 **:param** list\_of\_rows: (list) you want filled with file data:  
 **:return**: (list) of rows  
 """  
 list\_of\_rows.clear() # clear current data  
 file = open(file\_name, "r")  
 for row in file:  
 list\_of\_rows.append(row)  
 file.close()  
 return list\_of\_rows

The method to write the data to our file is also very similar to the one used in Assignment 6 but with one important change. When we write the data, by default it will use the built-in \_\_str\_\_ method for our class and that would result in an error since the write method requires a string (Figure 3).

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Figure 3: Error writing Product to file

To solve this we need to convert the data to a string which will then invoke our custom \_\_str\_\_ method and provide the user with human readable data.

@staticmethod  
def save\_data\_to\_file(file\_name, list\_of\_rows):  
 """ Writes data from a list of object rows to a File  
  
 **:param** file\_name: (string) with name of file:  
 **:param** list\_of\_rows: (list) containing your data:  
 **:return**: (list) of objects  
 """  
 file = open(file\_name, "w")  
 for row in list\_of\_rows:  
 file.write(str(row).strip() + "\n") # calls \_\_str\_\_()  
 file.close()  
 print("Data saved to file!")  
 return list\_of\_rows

# The IO Class

The IO class is going to look very familiar as we did something very similar in Assignment 6 a couple weeks ago. I started by copying the functions for generating our menu and capturing the user’s choice and updating them with the information relevant to this assignment.

@staticmethod  
def output\_menu\_tasks():  
 *""" Display a menu of choices to the user* ***:return****: nothing  
 """* print('''  
 Menu of Options  
 1) Show Current Products  
 2) Add New Product  
 3) Save Data to File   
 4) Exit Program  
 ''')  
 print() # Add an extra line for looks

@staticmethod  
def input\_menu\_choice():  
 *""" Gets the menu choice from a user* ***:return****: (string) of user's menu choice  
 """* choice = str(input("Which option would you like to perform? [1 to 4]: ")).strip()  
 print() # Add an extra line for looks  
 return choice

The next method we needed according to the list of TODOs in the start script was something that presented the user with a list of the current data. This would include any data from the existing file that we read and any new data entered by the user. As our script will capture all of that data in to a single list which we have already declared (lstOfProductObjects) we just need to pass in that single argument and use a for loop to print out the data. I also added a little formatting to make the list look a little nicer.

@staticmethod  
def show\_current\_data(list\_of\_rows):  
 *""" Shows current list of products* ***:param*** *list\_of\_rows: (list) of current products:* ***:return****: nothing  
 """* print("\*\*\*\*\*\*\* The current Products are: \*\*\*\*\*\*\*")  
 for row in list\_of\_rows:  
 print(str(row).strip())  
 print("\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*")

You’ll note that again, we converted our list of objects to a list of strings for the purposes of readability.

Now that we have all our methods, don’t forget to update that docstring.

""" Performs Input and Output tasks  
  
 methods:  
 output\_menu\_tasks():  
 input\_menu\_choice(): -> (string)  
 show\_current\_data(list\_of\_rows):  
 get\_data\_from\_user(): -> (string),(float)  
  
 changelog: (When,Who,What)  
 TNord,8.30.2022,Modified code to complete assignment 8  
"""

# The Body of the Script

Now that we have all of our classes written and functional it is time to start building the main body of our script. Because we spent our time putting all of our logic in to classes and functions this part of the process will pretty quick.

The first thing I want to do when the program loads is to create a file on disk if there isn’t one already. Creating the file now ensures that we have a file early enough in the logic that any calls we make to the file will not result in errors. As I made a function for creating the file I just need to call it with two arguments, one for the file’s handle and one for the file’s name:

FileProcessor.create\_file(file=objFile, file\_name=strFileName)

The next thing we need to do is present the user with a menu and then set a variable to capture their menu choice. We already have functions for both of these so all we need to do is place them inside of a while loop to get us started.

while (True):  
 IO.output\_menu\_tasks()  
 strchoice = IO.input\_menu\_choice()

With the menu in place we set up we need to add the logic for the different menu choices. Our first menu option allows the user to see the currently available data. This will be our list of objects (lstOfProductObjects) which includes the data from the file on disk and any new objects the user may have added during this session. Once that has been displayed, we return the user to the main menu.

if strchoice.strip() == '1': # Show Current Data (Product Objects)  
 IO.show\_current\_data(list\_of\_rows=lstOfProductObjects)  
 continue

The second menu option allows the user to add a new product and its price to the current list of objects (lstOfProductObjects). In order to do that we need to first create the object which we do by invoking the Product class and assigning it to our variable (objprod). While this creates the object instance it doesn’t create the data we want. We need the user to give us the data, so we set some variables and call our IO.get\_data\_from\_user() function to gather the data to assign to them. Once we have an object with a product name and price the last piece is to append it to our existing list (lstOfProductObjects) and return the user to the main menu.

elif strchoice == '2': # Add New Product to List of Product Objects  
 objprod = Product()  
 objprod.product\_name, objprod.product\_price = IO.get\_data\_from\_user()  
 lstOfProductObjects.append(objprod)  
 continue # to show the menu

The third menu option saves the current list of objects (lstOfProductObjects) to our file on disk. It takes 2 arguments: the name of the file we want to save to (strFileName) and the list of objects that we want to read our data from (lstOfProductObjects).

elif strchoice == '3': # Save Current Data to File  
 FileProcessor.save\_data\_to\_file(file\_name=strFileName, list\_of\_rows=lstOfProductObjects)  
 continue

Our 4th menu choice needs to exit the program so we print a goodbye statement and break the loop and exiting the program.

elif strchoice == '4': # Exit Program  
 print("Goodbye!")  
 break

The final part of our script captures any invalid input from the user and reminds them to enter a valid number.

else:  
 print("Please enter a valid choice.")  
 continue

# Testing

With the script complete we need to test it one last time to make sure everything is working as expected.

When I start the program the menu is displayed (Figures 4.1 & 4.2).

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Figures 4.1 & 4.2: Menu in shell and PyCharm, respectively

I have no data yet, so I jump to option 2 to input some data (Figures 5.1 & 5.2).

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Figures 5.1 & 5.2: Entering product and price in shell and PyCharm, respectively

Now that we have some data we can perform option 1 and show the data (Figures 6.1 & 6.2).

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**Figures 6.1 & 6.2: The data we entered in shell and PyCharm, respectively**

With the data confirmed we’re ready to save it to a file with option 3 (Figures 7.1 & 7.2).

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Figures 7.1 & 7.2: Save confirmed in shell and PyCharm, respectively

Looking at the file on disk we can see that the data is indeed there (Figure 8).

Graphical user interface, text, application, chat or text message

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Figure 8: The data in our file

Lastly, when entering option “4” we exit the program (Figures 9.1 & 9.2).

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Figures 9.1 & 9.2: Goodbye!

# Summary

In this assignment we took our starter script and its pseudo code and created a working program that captures inventory data from the user and stores it as a list of objects. We also demonstrated saving it to a file and reading the data from that file.