
MAHARISHI UNIVERSITY of MANAGEMENT
Engaging the Managing Intelligence of Nature
Computer Science Department
CS401 Modern Programming Practices (MPP)
Professor Paul Corazza

Lecture 3: Inheritance and Composition

Reflecting the Whole in the Part

Wholeness of the Lesson

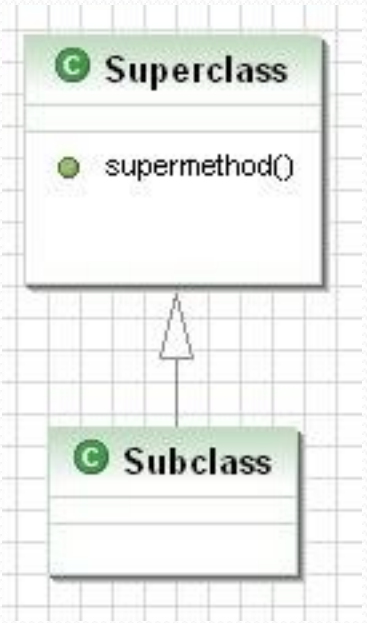
Inheritance and Composition are types of relationships between classes that support reuse of code. Inheritance makes polymorphism possible, but can lock classes into a structure that may not be flexible enough in the face of change. Composition is more flexible but does not support polymorphism. Composition and inheritance are techniques based on the principle of preserving sameness in diversity, silence in dynamism

Outline of Topics

- Review of inheritance concepts and implementation in Java
- Wrong uses of inheritance
- Benefits of inheritance
- Problems with inheritance
  - Fragility
    - Rectangle-Square Problem
  - Violates encapsulation: Ripple effect
    - Enhancing HashSet
- Best Practice (J. Bloch): Design for inheritance or else prevent it
- Using Composition
  - Instead of inheritance – Example: a Stack class
  - In combination with inheritance – Example: Inheriting from a Role

Review of Inheritance

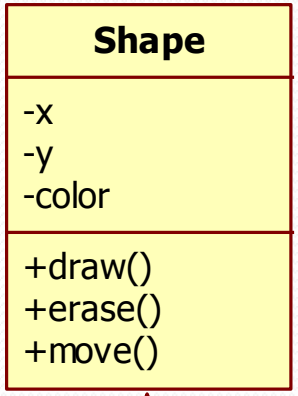
```
class Superclass {
    protected void supermethod() {
        int x = 0;
    }
}
class Subclass extends Superclass {
}
class Main {
    public static void main(String[] args) {
        Superclass sub = new Subclass();
        //subclass has access to data and
        // non-private methods of superclass
        sub.supermethod();
    }
}
```



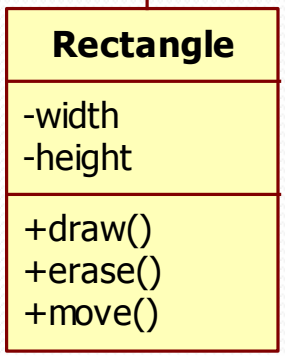
Example

- Relationship between a general and a specific class
  - IS-A relationship
  - no multiplicity

(more general, abstract)
superclass



(more specific, concrete)
subclass



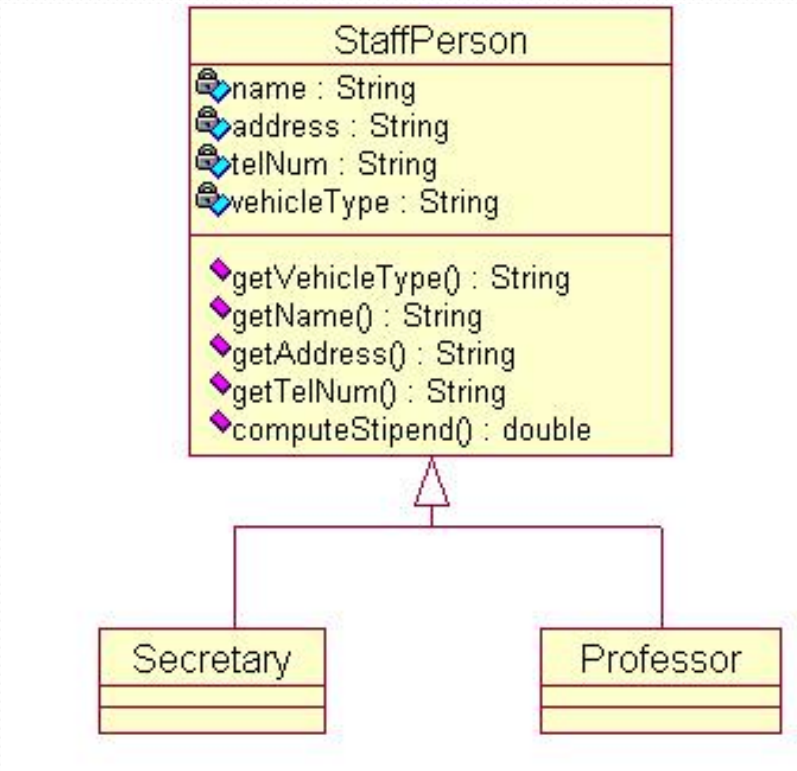

```
public class Shape {
    ...
}

public class Rectangle extends Shape {
    ...
}
```

Rectangle inherits all attributes
and methods from Shape that are not private

Inheritance Arises . . .

As a way to *generalize* data and behavior of related classes



Secretary
properties:
name
address
phone number
drivesVehicle
salary
behavior:
computeSalary()

Professor
properties:
name
address
phone number
drivesVehicle
salary
behavior:
computeSalary()

See demos in `lesson5.lecture.polymorphism1, lesson5.lecture.polymorphism2`

And . . .

```
class Employee {
   //constructor
   Employee(String aName,
            double aSalary) {
         name = aName;
         salary = aSalary;
   }
   public String getName() {
         return name;
   }
   public double getSalary() {
         return salary;
   }
   public void raiseSalary(double byPercent) {
         double raise = salary * byPercent / 100;
         salary += raise;
   }

   private String name;
   private double salary;
}
```

As a way to *extend* the behavior of a particular class

```
class Manager extends Employee {
   public Manager(String name, double salary) {
         super(name,salary);
         bonus = 0;
   }
   @Override
   public double getSalary() {
         //no direct access to private
         //variables of superclass
         double baseSalary = super.getSalary();
         return baseSalary + bonus;
   }
   public void setBonus(double b) {
         bonus = b;
   }
   private double bonus;
}
```

Rules Concerning Inheritance

- A subclass constructor must make use of one of the superclass constructors (see Manager class), but does not need the same signature as any of these constructors
- A class can have multiple (overloaded) constructors. To call one constructor from another, "this" is used (must be the first line of the constructor). Example:

```
public Employee(String name) {
        this(name, 0.00);
 }
```

- A constructor can call a superclass constructor using "super". See Manager class (also notice super is used in another way to call a superclass method).
- To prevent a class from having any subclasses, the class can be declared *final*..
- If A is a subclass of class B, when the constructor of A is invoked, there is a specific sequence of steps by which the static/instance variables are initialized and the bodies of the two constructors are executed.

DEMO: package lesson3.lecture.orderofexec

Using the Default Constructor

A subclass may make use of the implicit (default) constructor *only if* either

- the no-argument constructor of the superclass has been explicitly defined, OR
- no constructor in the superclass is explicitly defined

In either of these cases, the subclass may make use (possibly implicitly) of the superclass' default constructor.

Example

```
//This is ok
class Employee{
            //…//
}
class Manager extends Employee {
            //…//
}
```

Example

```
//This is ok

class Employee{
    Employee(String name, double salary) {
            //…//
    }

     //explicit coding of default constructor
     //since another constructor is present
     Employee() {
          //…//
     }
}

class Manager extends Employee {
    //no explicit constructor call here,
    //so the  superclass default
    //constructor is used implicitly
}
```

Overriding a method

- A subclass can change inherited behavior of the super class by overriding methods
- To override an inherited method, the method in the subclass must have the same signature and return type as the method in the superclass.
- Best practice is to also add the `@Override` annotation

```
@Override
public String toString() {
    return "Employee [salary=" + salary + ", getFirstname()="
    + getFirstname() + ", getLastname()=" + getLastname()
    + "]";
}
```

Best Practices for Using Inheritance

- *IS-A Principle* Class C may extend class D if C IS-A D.
  Example: Manager IS-A Employee
  Example: Secretary IS-A StaffPerson

- *Liskov Substitution Principle (LSP)*: C may extend D if an object of type C may be used during execution where an object of type D is expected without breaking the code.

  Example: We may use a Manager instance wherever an Employee instance is expected, so having Manager as a subclass of Employee adheres to LSP.

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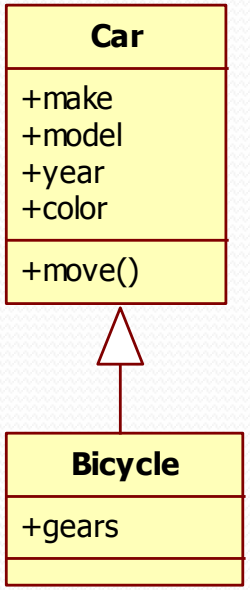
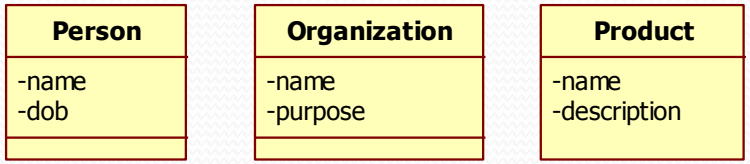
Wrong Use of Inheritance: Convenient Code Re-use

- We've written the code for move() in our car class, and we want to re-use this code for our bicycle class.
- Why is this a bad design decision?

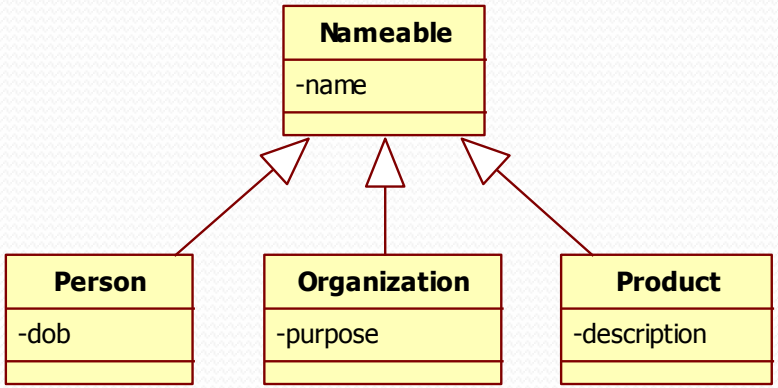


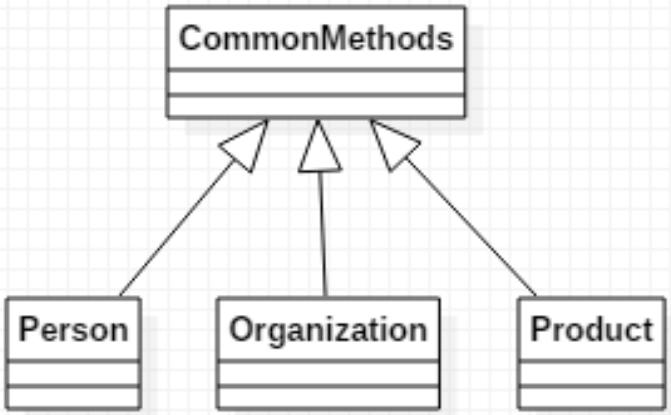
Inheritance Just for Code Reuse

- The following classes all have a name property



- Why do these examples of inheritance represent BAD design decisions?





Inheritance Violating IS-A Principle

What's wrong with the following implmentation of a stack? (Hint: Problem shows up when you try to apply LSP.) Note: the Java library implementation of Stack makes the same mistake.

```
class Stack<T> extends ArrayList<T> {
    private int stackPointer = 0;

    public void push(T article) {
        int insertPosition = stackPointer++;
        add(insertPosition, article);
    }

    public T pop() {
        return remove(--stackPointer);
    }
}
```

See Demo: lesson3.lecture. stacklinkedlist

Main Point 1

Inheritance is used to model IS-A relationships and must obey the Liskov Substitution Principle.

Although Inheritance offers reuse (the subclass inherits all public and protected methods and attributes), reuse should never the *reason* for creating an inheritance relationship.

The field of pure intelligence is inherited by everyone, and can easily be accessed through the practice of the TM technique.

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Benefits of Inheritance

- It reduces code redundancy
- Subclasses are much more succinct (smaller class file) than they would be without inheritance. (E.g. Faculty, Secretary classes.)
- You reuse and extend code that has already been thoroughly tested without modifying it. (E.g. Manager class)
- You can derive a new class from an existing class even if we don't own the source code for the latter! (See demo: `lesson3.lecture.inheritance1.MyStringList`.)

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Fragility of Ineritance

- Subclasses of a superclass – even when the IS-A criterion is met – may use the superclass in unexpected ways leading to broken code.
- Example: the Rectangle-Square Problem

See `lesson3.lecture.inheritance2`

Inheritance Violates Encapsulation

- If A is a subclass of B, even if A is not modified in any way, a change in B can break A.
- Example: Suppose A overrides all methods in B by first validating input arguments in each method (for security reasons). If a new method is added to B and A is not updated, the new method introduces a security hole.
- Example: Extending HashSet – see lesson3.lecture.inheritance3.
  - Problem: In implementation of HashSet, addAll calls the add method, so we are increment addCount too many times in calls to addAll.
  - Fix: Don't increment addCount in addAll operations
  - The real problem: Now ExtendedHashSet depends on an undocumented implementation detail of HashSet. If creators of HashSet change the implementation, our ExtendedHashSet will break.

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Designing for Inheritance

- To support inheritance, a class must document which overridable methods it uses in its own internal operations.
  Example: the remove method in AbstractCollection
- More subtle points may also need to be considered:
  See Bloch, Effective Java, pp. 88 - 89

Forbidding Inheritance

Two ways:

- Make the class final, OR
- Make all constructors private and provide static factory methods to create instances.

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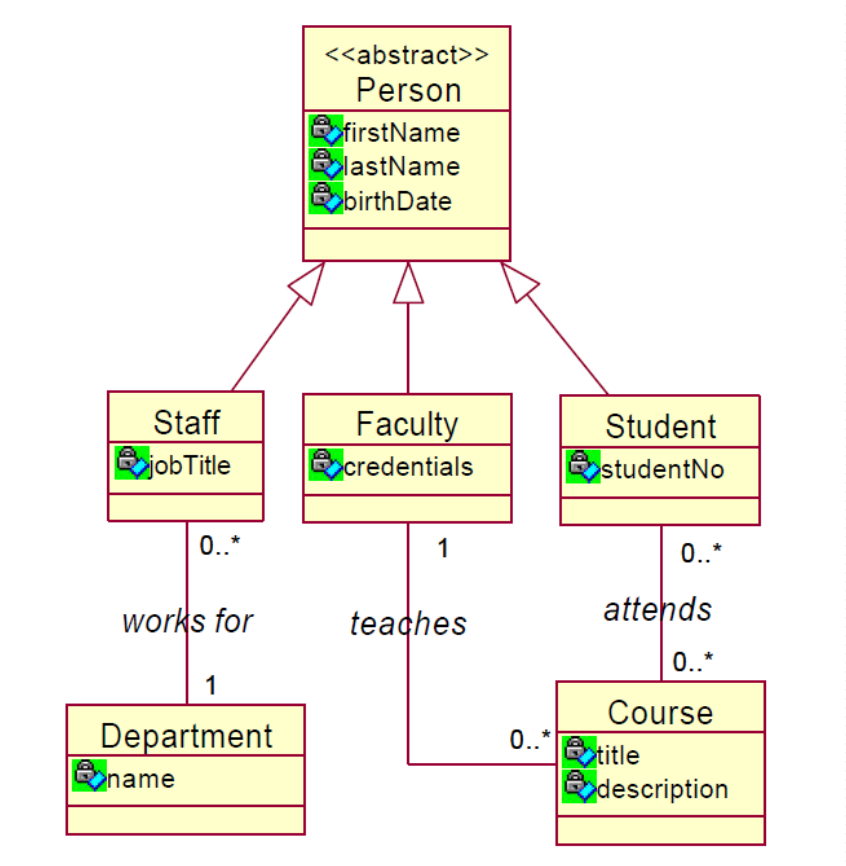
Using "Composition" Instead of Inheritance

- To avoid the pitfalls of inheritance, it is always possible to use composition instead of inheritance. To illustrate the technique, imagine two classes, Person and PersonWithJob. Instead of asking PersonWithJob to inherit from Person, you can *compose* Person in PersonWithJob and forward requests for Person functionality to the composed class. We still get the benefit of reusing Person.

Example: Better Implementation of Stack

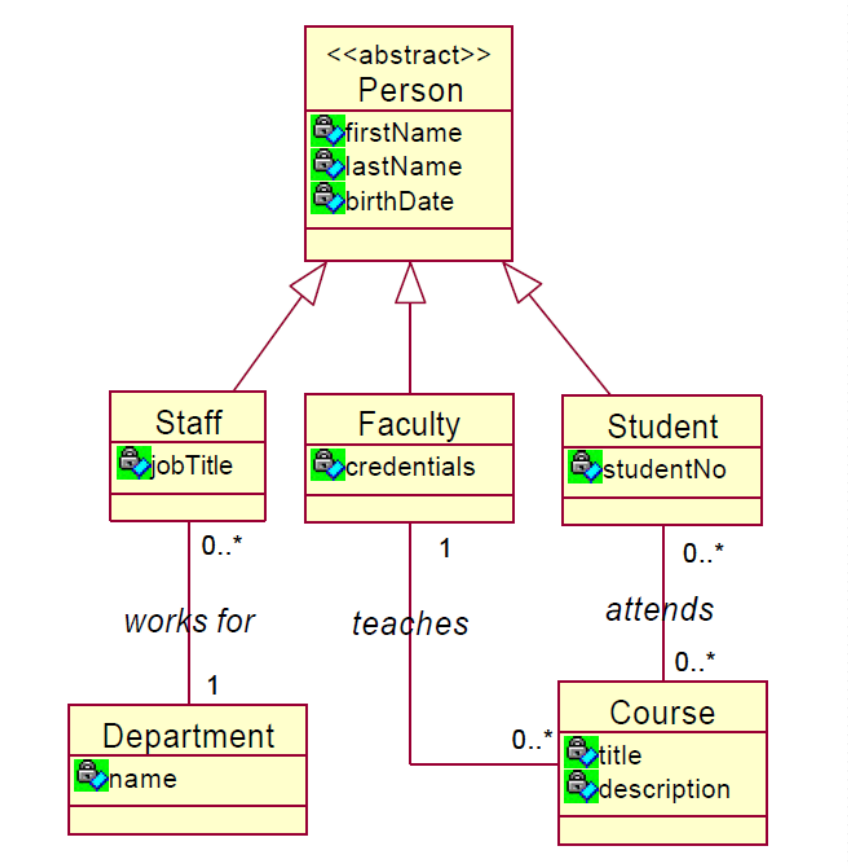
See lesson3.lecture.composition2 for an implementation using Composition.

Example
Composition over Inheritance



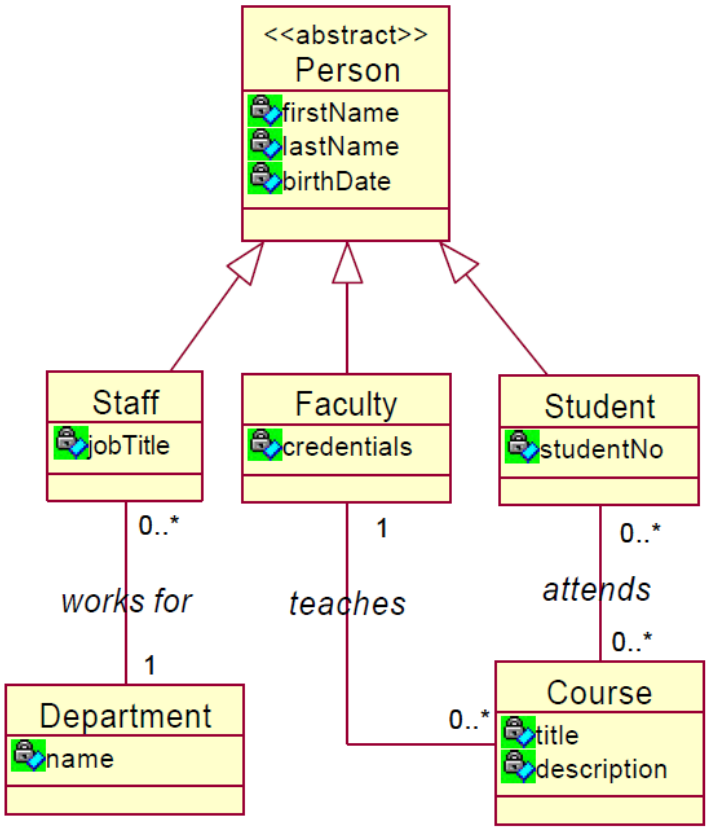
See any problems with this design?

Example
Composition over Inheritance



- Problems:
  - Inheritance is a static relationship and it must be decided at object construction time which type of person someone is
  - Once constructed a person cannot change from being a Student to being Staff or Faculty
    - In the **real world** people change all the time
  - Also a person cannot assume multiple roles of being a Staff member and a Student at the same time
    - Again, not how **it really works**

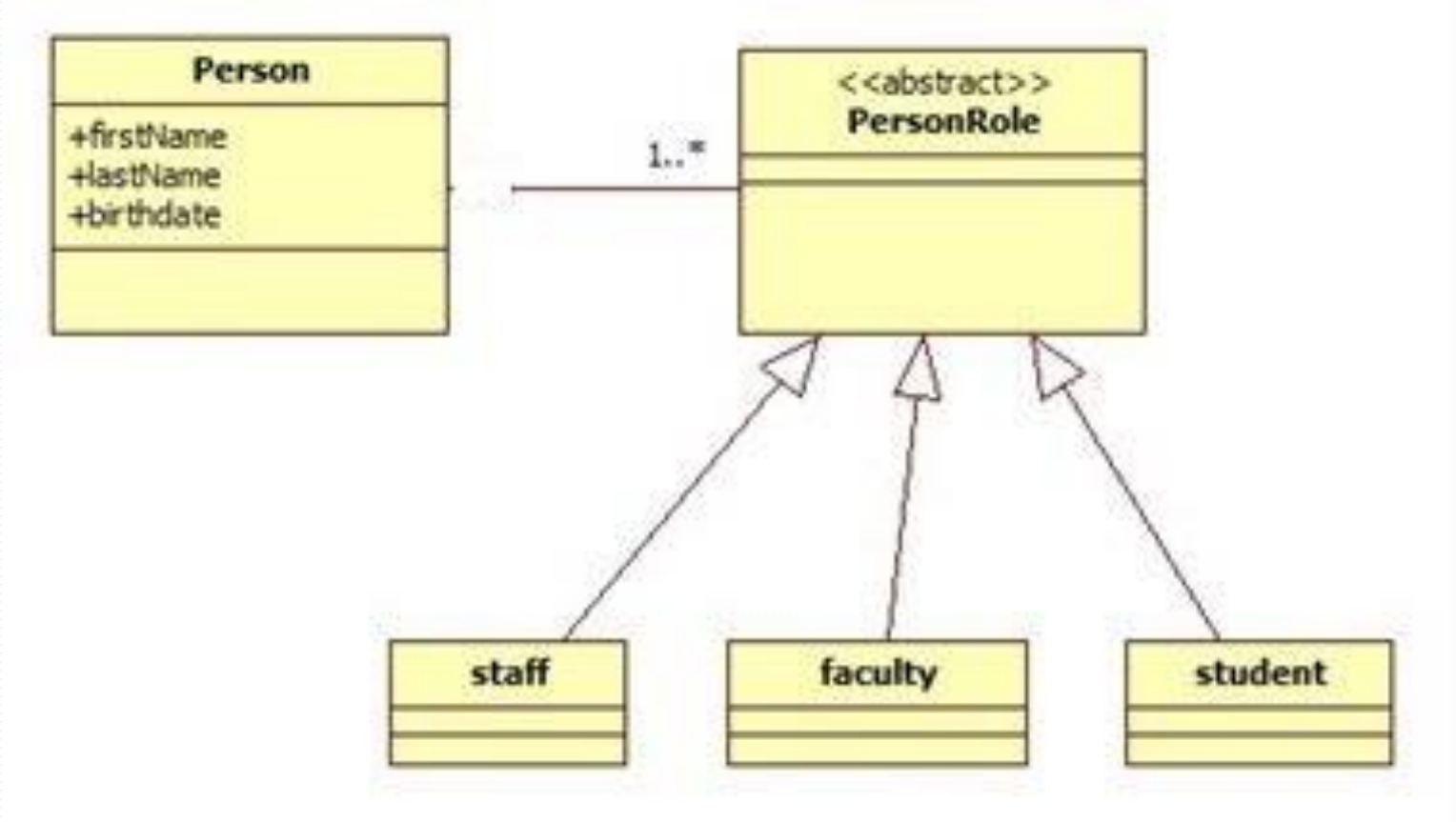
In-class exercise: Composition over Inheritance



- In your small groups try to redesign this class hierarchy using composition. You do not need to eliminate inheritance, but can you use composition to solve the problems mentioned above?

Solution

- Introduce a PersonRole class. This allows a Person to assume 1 or more PersonRoles



Main Point 2

Inheritance should be used only when you have a clear IS-A relationship and even then, a careful plan for using inheritance should be thought through. Otherwise, it is better to forbid inheritance and use composition.

Even in clear IS-A relationships, inheritance may not be the best choice because of its inflexibility.

Software relationships that reflect the real world are more natural and easier to understand. Likewise, life in accord with natural law tends to go forward without obstacles; life in violation of natural law tends to be “bumpy”.

Exercise

Problem Description: Our rent-a-wreck business rents cars, trucks, motorcycles, and mopeds. Create a inheritance model that we might use for our rentals.

1)Show a few common attributes and methods for your super-class.

2)Show some unique attributes and at least one unique method for each sub-class.

3)Show one method that will be overridden in all sub-classes.

Summary

Today we considered the pros and cons of using inheritance. We saw that we must be cautious when using inheritance because it is a permanent relation for the lifetime of an object.

Our goal is to build software that supports change and extensibility.

In general we know that composition has better support for change so we favor using composition except in cases where we have a clear 'is-a' relationship.

We see the same in life, at the surface level there is constant change, Problems arise when change is needed but not easily supported.

Connecting the Parts of Knowledge With the Wholeness of Knowledge

1. When requirements change, you should implement these changes by adding new code, not by changing old code that already works.

2. Inheritance and Composition are Object-Oriented principles that support reuse of implementation.

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3. **Transcendental Consciousness** is the infinitely adaptable field of pure intelligence that can be 'reused' by every individual at all places, at all times.

4. **Wholeness moving within itself**: In Unity Consciousness, the individual is united with everything else, and inherits the total potential of natural for fulfillment of all desires spontaneously.