Python Introduction

Principles of Programming Languages

Colorado School of Mines

https://lambda.mines.edu
Learning Group Activity

Review the learning group activity with your group members:

1. Which activity did you choose?
2. What problems did you encounter, if any? Can your group members help?
3. What did you learn from the activity?
Why Python?

Why study Python in Principles of Programming Languages?

- Multi-paradigm
  - Object-oriented
  - Functional
  - Procedural
- Dynamically typed
- Relatively simple with little feature multiplicity
- Readability focused
- No specialized IDE required
- Fast, relative to other dynamically typed languages
  - And when it’s not fast enough, you can rewrite that performance-critical section in C. Python is natural to interop with C.
- **Highly General Purpose!**
  - Web programming, machine learning, GUI programming, Email processing, education, simulations, web scraping...
Installing Python

For this course, we will be using **Python 3.6**.

**Windows and Mac OS X:**

Install from https://www.python.org/downloads

**Linux:**

Check your distribution’s package manager for Python 3. If you are using a distribution that only has Python 3.5 (e.g., Ubuntu 16.04), that should be fine. Just don’t go any older than 3.5.

**Note**

While you are free to develop on whatever system you choose, your code is expected to work on a Linux machine. Therefore, it is recommended that you setup Linux on your computer.
Python is one of the few languages with an official style guide (PEP 8). Here’s a quick summary:

- Use 4-spaces for each level of indentation. **Never use hard tabs!**
- Use snake_case for function and variable names.
- Use CapWords for class names.
- Never *ever* use camelCase in Python.

For your LGA, you will get to explore the style guide in further detail.
The `print` function takes any amount of arguments, and prints them separated by spaces on the same line.

The `input` function takes an optional prompt string, prompts the user for input, and returns the string they typed.

```python
name = input("What is your name? ")
print("Nice to meet you", name)
```
A Simple Example

```python
for i in range(1, 101):
    if i % 3 == 0 and i % 5 == 0:
        print("Fizz Buzz")
    elif i % 3 == 0:
        print("Fizz")
    elif i % 5 == 0:
        print("Buzz")
    else:
        print(i)
```

**Indentation Denotes Scope**

Any time Python sees a :, it expects an indented section to follow. The indented section denotes the scope of the operation.
Builtin Types

- **bool**: True or False
- **int**: integers, not size-bound
- **float**: double-precision floating point numbers
- **complex**: complex numbers
- **str**: for Unicode strings, immutable
- **bytes**: for a sequence of bytes, immutable
- **list**: mutable ordered storage
- **tuple**: immutable ordered storage
- **set**: mutable unordered storage
- **frozenset**: immutable unordered storage
- **dict**: mutable key-value relation

**Functions**: yup, they’re first class!

**Classes**: they’re first class too (of type type)
# List literals

[1, 2, 3]

# Tuple literals

(1, 2, 3)

# ... 1 element tuples are special

(1,)

# Dictionary literals

{'Ada': 'Lovelace', 'Alan': 'Turing'}

# Set literals

{1, 2, 3}

# ...empty set is:

set()
String Formatting

To format elements into a string, you could convert each element to a string then add them all together:

```python
print("Time "+str(hours)+":"+str(minutes)+".")
```

Ow... my fingers hurt, and that was not too easy to read either. As an alternative, try `.format` on a string:

```python
print("Time {}:{}.").format(hours, minutes))
```

Or, if you have Python 3.6, use an f-string:

```python
print(f"Time {hours}:{minutes}")
```

See the Python documentation for more information. There’s plenty to this formatting language.

**Note**

Do not use old-style (printf-style) string formatting in this course.
Python’s primary structure for selection is if:

```python
if i == 0 and j == 1:
    print(i, j)
elif i > 10 or j < 0:
    print("whoa!")
else:
    print("all is fine")
```

Notice you do not need parentheses surrounding the condition like in C or C++.

There’s also a ternary operator (good for simple conditionals):

```python
def foo(bar, baz):
    return bar if bar else baz
```
Why no switch or case?

Most switch or case statements over-complicate what could be done in a single line using a dictionary. Where this is not the case, you really shouldn’t be using a switch anyway.

An Example switch in C

```c
switch (c) {
    case 'q':
        a++;
        break;
    case 'x':
        a--;
        break;
    case 'z':
        a += 4;
}
```

Python Equivalent

```python
diff = {'q': 1, 'x': -1, 'z': 4}
a += diff[c]
```
Python provides your traditional while loop, the syntax is similar to if:

```python
while n < 100:
    j /= n
    n += j
```

But under most cases, the **range-based** for loop is preferred:

```python
for x in mylist:
    print(x)
```

Note

Python’s for loop is a range-based for loop, unlike C’s for loop which is really just a fancy while loop.
Generating Ranges

The generator function `range` creates an iterable for looping over a sequence of numbers. The syntax is `range(start, stop, step).

- start is the number to start on
- stop is the number to stop *before*
- step is the amount to increment each time

```python
for i in range(0, 5, 1):
    print(i)
```

0
1
2
3
4

Optional Parameters

Both start and step are optional, and if omitted, will be assumed to be 0 and 1 respectively.
In Python, you can pair an else block with for and while. The block will be executed only if the loop finishes without encountering a break statement.

An example of this can be seen below:

```python
for i in range(10):
    x = input("Enter your guess: ")
    if i == x:
        print("You win!")
        break
else:
    print("Truly incompetent!")
```
Slicing

mylist = [1, 2, 3, 4]

# syntax is [start:stop:step], step optional
mylist[1:3] # => [2, 3]

# unused parameters can be omitted
mylist[::1] # => [4, 3, 2, 1]

# without the first element
mylist[1:] # => [2, 3, 4]

# without the last element
mylist[::1] # => [1, 2, 3]
Multiple assignments work like so:

```python
names = ("R. Stallman", "L. Torvalds", "B. Joy")
a, b, c = names
```

* can be used to collect a tuple:

```python
# drop the lowest and highest grade
grades = (79, 81, 93, 95, 99)
lowest, *grades, highest = grades
```

The same can be done to expand a tuple in a function call:

```python
# Each grade becomes a separate argument
print(*grades)
```
To define a function in Python, use the `def` syntax:

```python
def myfun(arg1, arg2, arg3):
    if arg1 == 'hello':
        return arg2
    return arg3
```

Even if your function does not take arguments, you still need the parentheses:

```python
def noargs():
    print("I'm all lonely without arguments...")
```
Python allows you to define functions that take a variable number of positional (*args) or keyword (**kwargs) arguments. In principle, this really just works like tuple expansion/collection.

```python
def crazyprinter(*args, **kwargs):
    for arg in args:
        print(arg)
    for k, v in kwargs.items():
        print("{}={}".format(k, v))

crazyprinter("hello", "cheese", bar="foo")
# hello
# cheese
# bar=foo
```
Next Time

- Modules
- Generator Functions
- List Comprehensions
- Functional Programming