More Python

Principles of Programming Languages

Colorado School of Mines

https://lambda.mines.edu
LGA & Review
Learning Group Activity

Review the learning group activity with your group members:

1. What questions, comments, or snarky remarks did you have on the official Python style guide (PEP 8)?
2. Demonstrate what you made in Python.
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)
```
Functions
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...")
```
Keyword Arguments

When we define a function in Python we may define **keyword arguments**. Keyword arguments differ from **positional arguments** in that keyword arguments:

- Take a default value if unspecified
- Can be placed either in order or out of order:
  - **In order**: arguments are assigned in the order of the function definition
  - **Out of order**: the argument name is written in the call
- Positional and keyword arguments can be mixed, so as long as the positional arguments go first.
Keyword Arguments: Example

```python
def point_twister(x, y=1, z=0):
    return x + 2*z - y

# all of these are valid calls
print(point_twister(1, 2, 3))    # x=1, y=2, z=3
print(point_twister(1, 2))       # x=1, y=2, z=0
print(point_twister(1))          # x=1, y=1, z=0
print(point_twister(1, z=2, y=0)) # x=1, y=0, z=2
print(point_twister(1, z=2))     # x=1, y=1, z=2
```

**Style Note**

PEP 8 says that we should place spaces around our "=" in assignments, but these are not assignments, and should be written without spaces around the "."
Passing a Dictionary as the Keyword Arguments

Just like a tuple or list can be expanded to the positional arguments of a function call using *some_tuple, a dictionary can be expanded to the keyword arguments of a function using **some_dict. For example:

```python
my_point = {'x': 10, 'y': 15, 'z': 20}
print(point_twister(**my_point))
```
*args and **kwargs

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

The names args and kwargs are merely a convention. For example, you could use the names rest and kwargs instead if you wanted.
def fancy_args(a, b, *args, c=10, **kwargs):
    print("a is", a)
    print("b is", b)
    print("c is", c)
    print("args is", args)
    print("kwargs is", kwargs)

fancy_args(1, 2, 3, 4, c=15, d=16, e=17)
# a is 1
# b is 2
# c is 15
# args is (3, 4)
# kwargs is {'d': 16, 'e': 17}
Anonymous Functions

The Python keyword `lambda` creates an anonymous function. The syntax is:

```
lambda arg1, arg2, ...: result
```

For example:

```
double = lambda x: x * 2
```

But is it really cleaner?

A lot of `lambda` functions can make your code hard to read. But there does exist the occasion a `lambda` will make your life easier (defaultdict example).
Generators
A special kind of function exists called a **generator function**. A generator function yields values rather than returning them: rather than exiting the function call, the function continues to run and yield more values.

```python
def one_to(stop):
    x = 1
    while x <= stop:
        yield x
        x += 1
```
Using Generator Functions

Calling a generator function produces a **generator object**:

```python
my_gen = one_to(5)
```

Calling `next` on the generator object gets us the next thing it yields:

```python
print(next(my_gen))  # => 1
print(next(my_gen))  # => 2
print(next(my_gen))  # => 3
print(next(my_gen))  # => 4
```

When the function exits, calling `next` raises a `StopIteration` exception:

```python
print(next(my_gen))  # => 5
print(next(my_gen))  # raises StopIteration
```
But we rarely use `next` directly...

for loops can use it for us:

```python
# Prints 1, 2, then 3
# The loop exits on StopIteration
for x in one_to(3):
    print(x)
```

We can create lists, sets, and many other things from generator objects:

```python
list(one_to(8))  # => [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8]
set(one_to(8))   # => {1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8}
tuple(one_to(8)) # => (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8)
```
We could define a function (similar to) `range` that we talked about last time:

```python
def range(start, stop, step=1):
    i = start
    while i < stop:
        yield i
        i += step
```
A generator function can be created anonymously:

\[(x \times 2 \text{ for } x \text{ in } \text{nums if } x \% 2 == 0)\]

Consider this similar to the following Haskell list comprehension:

\[\{x \times 2 \mid x <- \text{nums}, x \mod 2 == 0\}\]

There’s three parts to a generator expression:

1. The output expression which computes each value, this is \(x \times 2\) above
2. Preforming something for every element in a sequence, this is \(\text{for } x \text{ in } \text{nums}\) above
3. Selecting a subset of elements to operate on, this is \(\text{if } x \% 2 == 0\) above
Multiple loops can be written inside of a GE, and the loops will be evaluated outside-in:

```python
>>> gen = ((x, y) for x in range(15)
    if happy(x)
    for y in range(2))

>>> list(gen)
[(1, 0), (1, 1),
 (7, 0), (7, 1),
 (10, 0), (10, 1),
 (13, 0), (13, 1)]
```

Note

The function happy is not included in Python, but can be found on the course website.
If a GE is the only argument to a function call, the second set of parentheses can be omitted:

```python
print("The smallest was:",
    min(input("Give me a number: ") for _ in range(5)))
```

You could use this to build lists or sets, for example:

```python
list(x + 1 for x in range(3)) # => [1, 2, 3]
set(x + 1 for x in range(3))  # => {1, 2, 3}
```

But Python provides a more convenient syntax for that...
Comprehensions

A list comprehension is written as a GE with brackets. Think of it as a eager generator expression:

\[ [x \times 2 \text{ for } x \text{ in } \text{nums} \text{ if } x \mod 2 == 0] \]

Similarly, a set comprehension is written as a GE with braces:

\{x \mod 7 \text{ for } x \text{ in } \text{range}(0, 20, 5)\}

And we can even write dictionary comprehensions:

\{x: f(x) \text{ for } x \text{ in } \text{range}(10)\}
Applications of GEs

- File readers
  
  ```python
  reader = (float(line) for line in f)
  while event_queue:
      process_event(next(reader))
  ```

- Hash function pRNGs
  
  ```python
  rng = (h(x)/MAX_HASH for x in count())
  ```

- **The possibilities are endless!** I use GEs and comprehensions all the time since they are highly expressive.
Modules
Often times, we wish to break our software into several files and namespaces. Python provides a very simple way to do this:

1. Write your functions in a file called `somemodule.py`
2. Type `import somemodule` at the top of your program.
3. You’ll now have access to an object named `somemodule` whose members are the objects from `somemodule.py`

See `happy.py` on the course website for a simple example.
Typing `import somemodule` will provide you with a module object which you can access members, but does not declare any new variables in your namespace except for the `somemodule` object.

To bring in certain members, you can use a `from` statement:

```
from somemodule import f1, f2
```
Often times we don’t want to call the module in our namespace what the filename is, so we can use as to rename:

```python
import somemodule as mod
mod.f1(...)
```

Or, using a from:

```python
from somemodule import f1 as somefunc
somefunc(...)
```
More Complex Modules

We may wish to make very complex modules, which are composed of multiple files. To do so:

1. Create a directory with the desired module name (e.g., somemodule)
2. Put a file in that directory named __init__.py. When import somemodule is typed, this is the file that will be imported.
3. Create other parts of the module under other file names, these can be imported by typing import somemodule.somefile. From within our module, we can type from .somefile import x.
Functional Programming
The partial function from the `functools` library provides us with a partial applicator:

```python
from functools import partial

value_print = partial(print, "The value is: ")

value_print(10)
# The value is: 10
```
The `min` and `max` functions select the minimum/maximum element from an sequence or generator, optionally based on a key function:

```python
closest_point = min(points, key=partial(dist, ref))
```

Compare to the equivalent procedural code:

```python
closest_dist = float('inf')
closest_point = None
for p in points:
    d = dist(ref, p)
    if d < closest_dist:
        closest_dist = d
        closest_point = p
```

You tell me which code snippet is more expressive. ;)

Python takes a little inspiration from Haskell and provides a zip generator function which yields pairwise tuples from each of its arguments.

```python
small = [1, 2, 3]
med = [10, 20, 30]
large = [100, 200, 300]
for a, b, c in zip(small, med, large):
    print(a, b, c)
# 1 10 100
# 2 20 200
# 3 30 300
```

Pro Tip: Iterating over the columns of a row-major 2D list

```python
for col in zip(*arr)
```
map(f, *sequences) is a generator function that applies a function to a sequence of elements. Anything that can be done with map could also be done using a GE (and potentially zip), so your choice on whether to use this.

reduce(f, seq) is the general-case reduction function: it takes a function and folds it across the sequence. (from functools)
Thursday

There will be a quiz on the Lambda Calculus on Thursday. Make sure you take a stab at the practice problems on the course website.