CMPT 373
Software Development Methods

Handling Erroneous Behavior

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Sources of Error

- Your software exists in an adversarial context
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  - Users (both ignorant & malign)
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- You should develop your software to respond appropriately to erroneous behavior
Sources of Error

● Your software exists in an adversarial context
  – Users (both ignorant & malign)
  – External software components
  – Internal software components
  – Environmental context

● You should develop your software to respond appropriately to erroneous behavior
  – The challenge is knowing what to do & when
User Error

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Mallory, how much money would you like to transfer to Bob?

Ask yourself what should be allowable & enforce it
User Error

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- Validate & sanitize all user input
  - Command line
  - Files
  - Databases
  - ...

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- Command line
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- ...

Prefer to provide feedback indicating the user error
User Error

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• Validate & sanitize all user input
  – Command line
  – Files
  – Databases
  – ...

• Prefer to provide feedback indicating the user error

• You can even use software hardening tools for better security
  (more in CMPT 473)
Handling Non-user Errors

- What if a function returns an unexpected value?
  - Can’t just print an error message for that function and ask it to return again....
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- Strategies for erroneous scenarios
Handling Non-user Errors

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- Strategies for erroneous scenarios
  - Design them out of existence

Similar to what we did with ambiguous function arguments.
Handling Non-user Errors

- What if a function returns an unexpected value?
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  - Design them out of existence
  - Assertions
Handling Non-user Errors

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  - Return error codes & out arguments
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  - Design them out of existence
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  - Exceptions
  - Return error codes & out arguments

- All of these come with a cost and trade one form of complexity for another.
Defining Away Erroneous Behavior

- Use the type system to your advantage

```python
computeForce(Mass{16g}, Acceleration{9.8mss})
```
Defining Away Erroneous Behavior

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- Generalize away corner cases
Defining Away Erroneous Behavior

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  - Implicitly – e.g. Null Object Pattern

---

Null Object Pattern

Create a subtype representing an object with no information.

Any getters/methods effectively perform no-ops.
Defining Away Erroneous Behavior

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- Generalize away corner cases
  - Implicitly – e.g. Null Object Pattern
  - Explicitly – e.g. getChildren() vs getLeft() & getRight()

What are the trade offs?
Defining Away Erroneous Behavior

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- Make inconsistent state unrepresentable
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  - State Pattern – richer state machines
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  - Sum types – e.g. boost::variant & std::variant (& optional!)
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```cpp
enum class CurrentState { SLEEP, PLAY, WORK }

class Student {
    CurrentState state;
    uint64_t timeWorked;
};
```
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What can go wrong?
State Patterns & Sum Types

- How can we fix it?
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```java
class CurrentState {
    ...
};
```
State Patterns & Sum Types

- How can we fix it?

class CurrentState {
    ...
};

class Sleep : public CurrentState {
    ...
};

class Work : public CurrentState {
    uint64_t timeWorked;
};
State Patterns & Sum Types

- How can we fix it?

class Student {
    unique_ptr<CurrentState> state;
};

class CurrentState {
    ...
};

class Sleep : public CurrentState {
};

class Work : public CurrentState {
    uint64_t timeWorked
};
State Patterns & Sum Types

• How can we fix it?

```cpp
class Student {
    unique_ptr<CurrentState> state;
};

class CurrentState {
    // This is part of the state pattern!
};
```

```cpp
class Sleep : public CurrentState {
};
```

```cpp
class Work : public CurrentState {
    uint64_t timeWorked;
};
```
State Patterns & Sum Types

- How can we fix it?

```cpp
class Student {
    struct Sleep {};
    struct Play {};
    struct Work { uint64_t timeWorked; };

    std::variant<Sleep, Play, Work> currentState;
};
```

This uses \textit{sum types}!
State Patterns & Sum Types

- How can we fix it?

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class Student {
    struct Sleep {}
    struct Play {}
    struct Work { uint64_t timeWorked; }

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State Patterns & Sum Types

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```cpp
std::optional<int>
divide(int numerator, int denominator);
```
Defining Away Erroneous Behavior

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  - Phantom Types – Exploit parametric polymorphism
double distanceTraveled(double speed, double time) {
    return speed * time;
}

What can go wrong?
double
distanceTraveled(double speed, double time) {
    return speed * time;
}

What can go wrong?

// Miles per hour * seconds?
... = distanceTraveled(3, 5);

d1 = ...; // Meters
d2 = ...; // Miles
... = d1 + d2; // Uh oh.
Phantom Types

- Parameterize your types by unique type names...

```cpp
struct Meters {}
struct Miles {}
struct Seconds {}
struct Hours {}

template <typename T, typename U>
struct Speed { double speed; }

template <typename T>
struct Distance { double distance; }

template <typename T>
struct Time { double time; }
```
Phantom Types

- Consistent units are enforced via template arguments

```cpp
template <typename T, typename U>
Distance<T>
distanceTraveled(Speed<T,U> speed, Time<U> time) {
    return {speed.speed * time.time};
}

template <typename T>
Distance<T>
operator+(Distance<T> d1, Distance<T> d2) {
    return d1.distance + d2.distance;
}
```
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Phantom Types

distanceTraveled(Speed<Miles, Hours>{3}, Time<Seconds>{5});

phantom.cpp:37:19: error: no matching function for call to 'distanceTraveled'
... deduced conflicting types for parameter 'U' ('Hours' vs. 'Seconds')
Phantom Types

distanceTraveled(Speed<
Miles, Hours>{3}, Time<
Seconds>{5});

phantom.cpp:41:30: error: invalid operands to binary expression
... deduced conflicting types for parameter 'T' ('Miles' vs. 'Meters')

d1 = distanceTraveled(Speed<
Miles, Hours>{3}, Time<
Hours>{5});
d2 = distanceTraveled(Speed<
Meters, Seconds>{3}, Time<
Seconds>{5});
d3 = d2 + d3;

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phantom.cpp:41:30: error: invalid operands to binary expression
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What are the trade offs for using this technique?
Assertions

- Assertions check the *invariants* of your program
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  - What should be true when a function starts?
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- These are guaranteed bugs that should never happen in production!
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```cpp
#include <cassert>
constexpr char ascii[256] = ...

char getChar(int asciiCode) {
    assert(0 < asciiCode && asciiCode < 256
            && "ASCII code out of range.");
}
```
Assertions

- Assertions check the invariants of your program
  - What should be true when a function starts?
  - What should be true when a function ends?

- These are guaranteed bugs that should never happen in production!

- In general, better quality code has more assertions.
Exceptions

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- What should you do when an exception is thrown?
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- What should you do when an exception is thrown?
  - Nothing?
  - Try again?
  - Log the error & continue?
  - Log the error & abort?
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- What should you pass to an exception when throwing?
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- What should you do when an exception is thrown?
  - Nothing?
  - Try again?
  - Log the error & continue?
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- What should you pass to an exception when throwing?
  - Do you expect it to be re-tried?
  - Do you expect it to be logged?
Handling Erroneous Behavior

- As a developer, how do you respond to erroneous behavior?
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What if the cause occurred much earlier?
Handling Erroneous Behavior

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- What if an absence of behavior is erroneous?
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- What if it only happens when deployed?
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- What if an absence of behavior is erroneous?
- What if a trend makes something erroneous?
- What if it only happens when deployed?

*Tracking* behavior is crucial.
Real world software uses *logging*. 
A logging system records program state & events over time.
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```cpp
LOG(INFO) << "Creating new account. "
    << "name:" << username;
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LOG(INFO) << "Creating new account. "
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LOG_IF(INFO, numUsers > 10)
    << "Many users logged in. "
    << "numusers:" << numUsers;
```
• A logging system records program state & events over time.

LOG(INFO) << "Creating new account. "
    << "name:" << username;

LOG_IF(INFO, numUsers > 10)
    << "Many users logged in. "
    << "numusers:" << numUsers;

CHECK_LT(index, size) << "Index out of bounds."
CHECK_NONNULL(ptr);
Logging

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- **Common to log:** [Fu et al., ICSE 2014]
Logging

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  - Assertion failures
  - Critical return values
  - Exceptions

\[
\text{Unexpected Situations}
\]
Loggin

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**Common to log:** [Fu et al., ICSE 2014]

- Assertion failures
- Critical return values
- Exceptions
- Key branch points
- Observation points

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\text{Unexpected Situations} \\
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- Logging *too little* or *too much* can be a problem
Logging

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- **Common to log:** [Fu et al., ICSE 2014]
  - Assertion failures
  - Critical return values
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  - Key branch points
  - Observation points

- **Logging too little** or **too much** can be a problem
  - Might miss what you want
  - Might create a haystack for your needle
  - Might spend too many resources!
Logging Guidelines

- Log all assertion failures
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- Log exceptions at most once
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    (e.g. if deleting a file failed because it was not there)
Logging Guidelines

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- Log *all* events needed for auditing
Logging Guidelines

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- Log logic that *provides context* for possible errors
Logging Guidelines

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● Log exceptions at most once
  - Might *defer* logging if exception is rethrown
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    (e.g. if deleting a file failed because it was not there)

● Log all events needed for auditing

● Log logic that provides context for possible errors

Bear in mind, logging also comes at a price.
It is a *cross-cutting concern*.
Logging Guidelines

- Make your log easy to use
  - Machine parsable if possible (JSON logging!)
Logging Guidelines

- Make your log easy to use
  - Machine parsable if possible
  - What / When / Why / Where should be clearly captured
Summary

- Many strategies for dealing with possible errors.
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- All strategies have a cost.
Summary

- Many strategies for dealing with possible errors.
- Designing them away is preferred.
- All strategies have a cost.
- Logging is critical for dealing with real world code.