Software Development Methods

Introduction

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Challenge of Quality Software Development

- What do people ask of a program/software?
  - Correct, i.e., does what it is supposed to do
  - Efficient, performing its tasks efficiently
  - Friendly to the user
  - Well-structured and easy to maintain
  - Fast and cheap to develop
  - Secure as it should be
  - Etc.
- These pose quite a challenge!

Are You Up to That Challenge?

- Many students (who would become practicing programmers)
  - rarely care about writing “good” programs,
  - know few useful programming techniques, and
  - cannot use development tools effectively.
- Consequence: low quality software!
- Shouldn’t you start to get serious?

Note: in this course, a good program is one that is at least correct and well-structured.

Course Objectives

- Learn how to develop correct and high-quality software with better engineering skills:
  - The UML
  - Design patterns
  - Verification/analysis tools
- Also, get exposed to a bit of formality so that you will be able to describe and reason about programs more precisely

Note: there are numerous other software development methods. You are encouraged to explore them through course taking or self-study.

Programming in Class

- Environment is controlled
- Problems are well-defined (sorting, BFS, etc.)
- Solutions are well-defined (in your algorithm textbooks)
- Programs seldom change (write once, use once)
- Correctness may not be an issue
- Robustness has rarely been an issue

Programming in the Real World

- Environment is open
- Problems are *not* well-defined
- There may be multiple options available
- Programs change all the time
- Correctness is most important
- Robustness is necessary

Example – An Inventory System

A 24-hour store asks you to develop an inventory system:

- The system will be used by many people.
- It is impossible to know what goods or categories the store will have.
- What database and user interface packages would you use?
- What if they ask you to add new features?
- Your system should better not be confused by different calendar systems (particularly in Taiwan).
- Your system should better be able to be working all year long.

About Software Project Management

- Software development, after all, will be done by engineers.
- Project leaders need to know what engineering options they have.
- We will look at the software development problem from an engineer's point of view.
- The course material should be complementary to related software project management courses.

Software Specification

- After several meetings with your client, you have an informal idea of what your client wants.
- You bring the informal idea back and start developing the system with your colleagues.
- But your colleagues did not participate in the meetings. They are not as familiar with the domain knowledge as you are.
- What would you do?

Example – Sorting Template

- Suppose you would like to develop a sorting algorithm for any totally ordered set.
  - A set S is totally ordered if either $a < b$, $a = b$, or $a > b$ for any $a, b \in S$
- How do you convey the idea to your colleague?

Modeling Totally Ordered Sets

- An element of a totally ordered set is an object of class `TOSet`.
- The class `TOSet` has a static member function `compare (TOSet &, TOSet &)` that compares two elements.
- We can create an object and assign its value.

Sorting Template

- The sorting function accepts an array of `TOSet` objects as inputs.
- It uses `compare (TOSet &, TOSet &)` to compare elements in the array.
- It outputs a permutation of the input array such that the elements in the permutation are ordered by the `compare (TOSet &, TOSet &)` function.

Problems

- It is still ambiguous. (What do you mean by "ordered by the `compare (TOSet &, TOSet &)` function?")
- It is not complete. (What is a permutation?)
- It is written in natural language.
- It is already very complicated. (What if you have 30 classes in your system?)

Unified Modeling Language

- UML is designed for software/program specification.
- It is a graphical language.
- It can be used to describe the relation among different classes.
- It is convenient to illustrate the interactions among different objects.
- It has a more rigorous semantics.
- There are tools that can simulate your UML designs.
- Etc.

From Specification to Design

- Software development is more than writing down the specification.
- UML specification is a way of communication.
- Like natural languages, you may know the words and grammar of English. But you still may not compose a good essay in English.
- After learning some basics of UML, we will discuss useful programming techniques for system design.

An Exercise

Compute

$$\int x^3 \ln^3 x dx = ?$$

Solution

$$\begin{aligned}
\int x^3 \ln^3 x dx &= \frac{x^4}{4}\ln^3 x - \int \frac{x^4}{4}\frac{3\ln^2 x}{x}dx \\
&= \frac{x^4}{4}\ln^3 x - \frac{3}{4}\int x^3 \ln^2 x dx \\
&= \frac{x^4}{4}\ln^3 x - \frac{3}{4}[\frac{x^4}{4}\ln^2 x - \int \frac{x^4}{4}\frac{2\ln x}{x}dx] \\
&= \frac{x^4}{4}\ln^3 x - \frac{3}{16}x^4\ln^2 x + \frac{3}{8}\int x^3 \ln x dx \\
&= \frac{x^4}{4}\ln^3 x - \frac{3}{16}x^4\ln^2 x + \frac{3}{8}[\frac{x^4}{4}\ln x - \int \frac{x^4}{4}\frac{1}{x}dx] \\
&= \frac{x^4}{4}\ln^3 x - \frac{3}{16}x^4\ln^2 x + \frac{3}{32}x^4\ln x - \frac{3}{32}\int x^3 dx \\
&= \frac{x^4}{4}\ln^3 x - \frac{3}{16}x^4\ln^2 x + \frac{3}{32}x^4\ln x - \frac{3}{128}x^4
\end{aligned}$$

Strategies and Patterns

- What strategies do we have?
  - polynomial integration
  - integral of $\ln x$
  - variable substitution
  - integration by parts
- The problem is solved by choosing combinations of strategies.
- What about program development?
- Is there any strategy or pattern for programming?

Note: integration by parts

$$\int f(x)g'(x)dx = f(x)g(x) - \int f'(x)g(x)dx$$

Data Structures and Algorithms

- Suppose you want to implement a database system.
- The user may ask you to search or sort by field.
- You may use sorting algorithms, search algorithms, even balanced tree data structures.
- For different situations, you may use different sorting algorithms (e.g., memory- versus disk-based).
- You do not develop your program from scratch.

What about System Architecture?

- Suppose you want to develop a system for
  - vehicle controller
  - user interface
  - data management
- Is there any known strategy or pattern that could be applied?

Example – Vehicle

- Let's suppose we want to define a vehicle rental system at seashore resorts.
- They have bikes, cars, sailboats, and yachts
  - Class **LandVehicle** for bikes and cars
  - Class **WaterVehicle** for sailboats and yachts
- One day, a resort management team decides to introduce hovercrafts.
- How would you modify the class hierarchy to include the new product?

Design Patterns

- An objected-oriented programming technique for system design
- A collection of class hierarchies
- Used in commercial tools and systems

From Design to Testing and Verification

- A software developed by proper methodologies does not necessarily entail quality.
- UML specifications allow clients, system architects, and programmers to communicate.
- Design patterns help system architects and programmers to deploy software structures sensibly.
- But they do not imply the system cannot go wrong.

Some Systems Are Critical

- Device drivers
- Medical instruments
- Automotive control
- Online banking
- Stock exchange
- Etc.

What Are the Problems?

- Design flaws
- Programming errors

A Lesson from the Hardware Industry

- The first Pentium was found to have the infamous F00F bug.
- IC manufacturing costs lots of money.
- No company would want to have a buggy design to be sent to the foundry.
- But how?

Note: the “Pentium floating point divide” bug (in 1993) ultimately cost Intel US$ 475 million.

Testing and Verification

- IC design houses use tools to help them catch bugs.
  - Testing: run simulation on designs to find bugs
  - Verification: analyze designs to prove they are correct
- Software houses are increasingly using similar tools.

Testing

- Testing is usually performed after the system is implemented.
- Nonetheless, one can test the system design before it is implemented.
- Simulator generates random inputs.
- Erroneous behaviors can be observed if the proper inputs are generated.

Verification

- It can check the system before it is implemented.
- Verification tools try all possible inputs.
- Erroneous behaviors can be observed if the proper inputs are generated.
- Correctness can be ensured if all inputs have been tested.

Ingredients of Verification

- Behavior Modeling
- Property Specification
- Verification Algorithm/Tool
  (or, if that fails, Proof and Proof Checker)

Behavior Modeling

- It describes system behavior.
- We need a formal language to avoid ambiguity.
- Unlike typical programming languages, the control flow of a program is of main concern.
- Users specify their systems as models in modeling languages.

Property Specification

- It specifies what properties are of interest.
- Another formal language is needed.
- High-level properties are independent of the implementation.
- Users specify the requirements in property specification languages.

Automatic Verification Tools

- A verification tool takes the model and property specification as input.
- It checks whether the model satisfies the property or not.
- Many verification problems are undecidable and some work-around techniques (e.g., abstraction) may help.

Correctness Proofs and Proof Checking

- Correctness proofs are the last resort, when everything else fails.
- Unfortunately, proofs are usually hard to produce.
- Even worse, you can make mistakes in a proof.
- Fortunately, checking if a proof is really a proof can be automated.

Programming in the Small

- We will also study development methods that probably only work for smaller programs.
- However, a larger program is composed of smaller ones.
- Making the smaller programs correct helps improve the overall quality of the larger one.

Conclusion

- This is a course that views software development from an engineer's viewpoint.
- It covers design and programming techniques for software development.
- It also introduces you to useful verification methods and tools.
- We hope you will appreciate the methodologies and improve software quality with better engineering skills.