Introduction to Computer Programming
CSCI-UA 2

Functions
Encapsulating Logic
Functions

Groups of statements that can be run more than once in a program

Reusable chunks of code

Take input, provide output

Can be reused in a variety of contexts

Maximize code reuse, minimize code redundancy

Encapsulate logic, splitting complex systems into manageable parts
Calling Functions

type(3.7)

Function name

Arguments passed into function

Return Value

( ) tells Python to execute the function

Even if a function takes no input, the brackets are still required

Some functions do not return a value
Defining Functions

Just like writing a Python program but with some extra syntax

Function header:

• Begins with `def`
• Followed by name of function
• Function parameter list
• Ends with a `:`
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**Documentation String**

“Doc String”

Optionally follows function header

Explains what function will do

May include example(s)

Almost always good to include for clarity and as a reminder
Function Body

All the code that follows the header

Simply an indented block of code with necessary statements

This code can use the variables from the function header

Function should return a value with the keyword return

After return, Python jumps out of the function and back to the program
Function Syntax

def name(parameters):
    statements

A return value is not required

return None

Anything besides return are called “side effects”

A print() statement is an example of a side effect
Variables
Local and Global

Variable scope is something we must pay attention to when using functions. When and where is a variable accessible to your program? Local variables are only usable within the function they are local to. Global variables are usable by any function or code within your program.
Local Variables

def area(rad):
    import math
    return math.pi * rad ** 2

When this function ends, rad is automatically deleted because it is local.
Global Variables

rad = 5

def area():
    import math
    return math.pi * rad ** 2

def change_rad(new_rad):
    rad = new_rad

This program will not allow rad to be changed because it is global

To change the radius variable:
    global rad
Main Function

main()

It is both common and a good idea to use a main function in your programs. This is usually the starting point of a program and is run by typing: main(). This simplifies rerunning programs and as well as passing input values.
Function Parameters

Used to pass input into a function
Python passes values by reference
Default values can be set for parameters

```python
def name(parameter = 'default')
```
A module is a group of related functions

Different from a regular Python program in that it acts like a toolbox

A module usually does not have a main() function

To use a module, simply import it
Importing Modules and Calling Functions

Calling function after importing module:

```
import module_name

module_name.function()
```

Calling function after importing module along with all of its functions:

```
from module_name import *

function()
```
Module Namespaces

Functions within a module are available when you import them.

Modules form namespaces.

Different modules with the same function name will not clash in the same program:

```python
module1.function(parameter)
module2.function(parameter)
```

The only time functions may conflict is when you import all using `*`.
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