Introduction to: Computers & Programming: Review for Midterm 1

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Summary

• Procedural Matters
• What you need to Know
• Practice Test and Answers
Procedural Matters Regarding the Midterm

• The test date: October 11, 2017
  – Section 007: 60 FA 150 at 8AM
  – Section 011: 60 FA 110 at 11AM
  – Classrooms are crowded – please contact me in advance if you need to take the test with the other class.

• I will take attendance – please bring your School ID

• The test will be graded on a curve

• The midterm counts for 20% of the final grade
  – Low grades discounted if higher on Midterm2 and Final
How open/closed is the test?

• You can use a simple calculator on the test with +, -, X, ÷, and exponents.
  – Cell Phones have calculators, but no actual writing of code, communicating with others, looking at websites, etc.

• There will be a glossary on the test, similar to the one on the sample test.

• Test is mostly about problem solving using the tools of Python, not memorization.
Type of Questions that Could Be on the Test

• Section I: Answer questions about Code
  – What is printed out?
    • Look for “print” commands (sometimes include several rounds of interaction for a complex program)
  – What value is returned by a function?
    • Look for “return” commands
  – What is the value of a variable?
    • Look for the last assignment statement (with =)
  – Open ended questions:
    • What does a function called by the main program do?
    • What are the conditions that will cause the program to end?
      – look at if and while statements to figure out answer
    • Give some plausible input and output for a program (trace what the program does).

• Section II: Write functions that solve stated problems
  – Read questions carefully
  – Common errors:
    • Functions that solve problem not stated in the question
    • Functions without input parameters that only solve problem for sample input
      – Example: function adds only 500 and 3457, but it really should add any 2 numbers
What you should know

• Topics: *algorithm, function, program, operator, input, output, side effect, variable, data types, if statements, else, decision trees, loops*

• Know how to:
  – Define functions
  – Use input parameters to functions
  – Use input statements
  – Assign values to variables
  – Return values from functions and operators
  – Use print statements, including the sep and end keywords
  – Import modules
  – Use data types and coerce (or cast) one data type to another
  – Write simple functions that work and are easy to understand, due to comments and variable/function names
  – If/elif/else statements and basic decision trees
  – Use for loops and while loops
Algorithms

– May be asked to implement an algorithm in Python
– Pseudo Code: a series of ordered statements
  • Structured using line numbers, indents, bullets, etc.
  • Connected by logical and temporal connectors
    – *if*, *else*, *unless*, *not*, *until*, *when*
  • Includes Loops using various terms, including
    – repeat action until condition is satisfied
    – do action X times

– Flow Chart: Connected Series of Boxes
  • circles/ovals = start/end
  • rectangles = steps in processing
  • diamonds = decisions
  • arrows = sequence of steps
Functions

- Programming language Functions have 3 optional features:
  - Input (via parameters)
  - Output (return statements)
  - Side effects (print statements and other effects)
- Using the “input” function to solicit interactive input from a user
  - Do NOT reset parameters of the function with an input statement
- *print versus return*
  - *print* is significant for its side effect—printing to computer screen
  - *return*
    - Exits function
    - Provides a value to a function call – Example:
      - If: function1(a) returns 5 and function2(b) returns 10
      - Then: function(a) + function(b) = 15
Data Types

• Floats and Integers
• Sequences: Strings and Ranges
• Boolean (True or False)
• Nonetype
  – Output of void functions, like print
String Components

• Two identical delimiters: "", ', ""
• The Characters between delimiters including:
  – digits (0-9)
  – letters(a,b,c,..z,A,B,C,...,Z, space)
  – escape characters: \n, \t, '

• Sample Strings:
  – '!@##$^&*())'
  – "This is an apostrophe: ' "
  – 'This is a double quote: “ ' 
  – ""Triple quotes can include ' or “ or between them""
More on Strings

- Special characters are often represented with the backslash + a character, together these are called “escape characters”
  - 'The quote \' and the newline \n are useful'
- When printed, a string will be displayed in a way that interprets these components.
  - The quote ' and the newline are useful
  - The delimiters are eliminated and escape characters are interpreted.
Ranges

• range(number)
  – sequence of consecutive numbers
  – starts with 0
  – length = number
  – ends with number-1
  – range(5) is equivalent to [0,1,2,3,4]

• range(start,number)
  – subsequence that begins at start
  – Range(1,5) is equivalent to [1,2,3,4]
More on sequences

• Items in sequence can be referenced by position numbers

• 'cat' consists of 3 letters
  – starts at position 0 and ends at position 3
  – \( c \ a \ t \) 

  \[
  0 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 
  \]

• range(5) consists of 5 numbers beginning at position 0 and ending at position 5
  – range(5) --> \([0,1,2,3,4]\)
  – \(0 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4 \)

• referencing items by position
  – 'cat'[0] --> 'c', 'cat'[1] --> 'a', 'cat'[2] --> 't', 'cat'[3] is error
  – range(5)[0]--> 0 ,range(5)[3] --> 3, range(5,1)[1] -->[1],
Numbers

- Integers:
  - No Decimal Place

- Float
  - Limited in Length
  - Used for numbers with decimals
  - Approximations using Scientific Notation

- Normal Division with Integer Input
  - Output is a float

- Integer Division (//)
  - Input/Output are integers (output is floor of answer)

- Import Math library for many special functions/variables
Type Conversion Functions (Numbers)

- **Float**
  - Converts Integers and compatible strings to floats

- **Int**
  - Converts floats (by truncation) to integer
  - Converts compatible string to integer

- Converted Strings can participate in math operations
  - 5 * int('5')
  - 20 / float('5.5')
Converting Non-Strings to Strings

• \texttt{str(5.55)}
  – '5.55'

• Makes a string out of any type of object (using definition of that object)

• Once converted, non-strings can be combined with strings through concatenation
  – 'The number is '+\texttt{str(5)}
  – output = 5+100
  – 'The sum of 5 and 100 is '+ \texttt{str(output)}
Arithmetic Operators & the Assignment Operator

• Know all the mathematical operators and what they do: +, -, *, **, /, //, %

• Be familiar with the two equal signs
  – The assignment operator =
  – The test for equality operator ==

• Understand how most of the operators can be restated as functions
Boolean Operators

• **and, or, not**
  - True and True → True, True and False → False, False and True → False, False and False → False
  - not(True) → False, not(False) → True
  - False or False → False, True or False → True, False or True → True, True or True → True

• **<, >, <=, >=**
  – Expected meanings from math

• **==, !=**
  – 'is equal to', 'is not equal to'

• **in**
  – 2 purposes
    - in *for* loops – relates item to sequence
      - for character in 'abcd':
        print(character)
    - Boolean operator that tests for membership:
      - 'a' in 'abcdefg' → True
      - 5 in range(4) → False
Making Code Readable

• Comments
  – ## Know How to use comments
  – ## Know Why to use comments

• Naming Variables and Functions
  – Choose names that are self explanatory

• Use Parentheses with Operators
  – Do not rely on order of operations
  – Many operators are not covered by PEMDAS
  – You may not know what the defaults are
Identifiers

• Functions
  – How to define functions
  – Legal names for functions
  – Using colon, parentheses and indents

• Variables
  – Legal names of variables
  – The difference between local and global variables
If/elif/Else Statements

• Syntax (elif and else parts optional)
  If + boolean-expression + :
    body
  elif + boolean-expression + :
    body
  else:
    body

• Example:
  def classify_integer(integer):
    if integer==0:
      return('zero')
    elif (integer%2) == 0:
      return('even')
    else:
      return('odd')
while loops

• The first line = while + boolean + :
  – repetition continues as long as boolean is True
  – change in variable value inside boolean can cause boolean to be False

• Body of loop indented under first line
  – repeats until boolean is False

• def feel_good():
  stop = False
  while not(stop):
    print('You are the best!')
    if input('Do you feel better yet?') == 'yes':
      stop = True  ## equivalent to putting 'break' here
for Loops

• The first line of a for loop:
  – for VARIABLE in SEQUENCE:
    • VARIABLE is name of variable
    • SEQUENCE is a sequence
      – a range is a sequence of numbers
      – a string is a sequence of characters, etc.

• The body of the loop is indented beneath the first line
  – The body repeats one time for each element in sequence
  – On each iteration, VARIABLE is set to the next item

• for letter in 'word':
  print(letter)
  • 1\textsuperscript{st} iteration: letter == 'w'; 2\textsuperscript{nd} iteration: letter = 'o', etc.
  • Thus each letter in 'word' is printed on its own line
Sample loops” try in IDLE

- Sample for loop
  ```python
  def diagonal_print(word):
      number = 0
      for letter in word:
          print(number*' ',letter,sep='')
      number=number+1
  ```

- Sample while loop
  ```python
  def guess_my_number ():
      import random
      my_number = str(random.randint(1,10))
      guess = '100'
      while guess != my_number:
          guess = input('Guess my number: It is between 1 and 10: ')
          if guess != my_number:
              print('You guessed wrong. Try again')
      print('You are correct. My number is',my_number)
  ```
Basics of Planning a Program

• Figure out the big steps first and “pretend” that you have already written most of the functions.

• Then write the functions that you assume that you need. Writing these functions may involve pretending that more functions exist, but that is OK.

• Repeat process until you don't have to pretend anymore because the functions are simple enough to just write and be done.
Reminder: A Test is a Game

• Tests are imperfect for measuring a expertise because, independent of expertise, some people know how to play the test game better than others

• How to win the test game
  – Study sample tests (including instructions)
  – Time is a crucial factor (you have 1 hour and fifteen minutes)
  – Do easy problems before hard ones
  – Do not spend a lot of time on low-point problems
  – Do not get stuck on details that you don't need
    • Solving all problems is more important than doing 1 problem elegantly
  – Go for partial credit on program questions (most points)
    • If you cannot program some detail – write pseudo code
    • Basic solution strategy is more important than perfect syntax
  – Budget Your time
    • 4 section 1 questions X 7.5 minutes = 30 minutes
    • 2 section 2 questions X 15 minutes = 30 minutes
    • 15 minutes left over to finish whatever you need to finish
The Midterm is Next Class

• Please feel free to ask me any questions
• We will go over the practice midterm in class
  – Longer than actual Midterm 1
  – Individual problems may be harder or easier than those on real midterm
  – good for preparation, but don't let it scare you
  – ask questions
• Suggested Studying Methods
  – Obvious
    • look over previous class lectures, notes, homeworks, etc
    • Practice problems of your choosing
  – Look at previous tests from Python classes I taught
    • My website: http://nlp.cs.nyu.edu/people/meyers.html
    • Old tests from both CSCI-UA.002 and V22.0002 websites may be helpful, although sometimes different material was covered.
• Good luck!