CS 261 – Data Structures

C Pointers Review
Object Oriented vs. Procedural

In OOP (e.g. Java), we define classes with methods and call methods ‘on’ class instances

```java
student s = new Student();
s.print();
```

In C, we define functions and in order to modify the structure with that function, we must pass the structure into the function

```c
void printStudent(struct Student myStudent)
{
    /* Code to print a single student struct*/
}
...
struct Student s;
... /*fill s*/
printStudent(s)
```
There’s one problem however…
C is pass-by-value !!!
C is Pass By Value

Pass-by-value: a copy of the argument is passed in to a parameter
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Pass-by-value: a copy of the argument is passed in to a parameter

```c
void foo (int a) {
    a = a + 2;
}
...
int main (int argc, char **argv) {
{
    int b = 6;
    foo(b);
    printf("b = \%d\n", b);
}
```

Question: What is the output?
Answer: >> b = 6

What if we want to change b?
Simulation of Pass-By-Reference

C is Pass-by-value: a copy of the arguments are passed in to a parameter

Changes made inside the function are not reflected outside

What if we want to change a parameter?

We simulate what is often called “Pass-By-Reference”

To do so, we need to learn about **Pointers**
Pointers

A pointer is simply a value that can refer to another location in memory.

In other words, its value is an address in memory!

Declaring a Pointer (*)

```c
int *pVal;
```

Initializing a Pointer

```c
pVal = 0;   /* 0 means uninitialized */
```

Get address of (or pointer to) a stored value (&)

```c
int a = 5;
pVal = &a;
```

Dereferencing a Pointer (*)

```c
*pVal = 4;   /* Assignment*/
int b = *pVal;   /* Access */
```
double *ptr;
double pi, e;

ptr = &pi;
*ptr = 3.14159;
ptr = &e;
*ptr = 2.71828;

printf("Values: %p %g %g %g\n",
        ptr, *ptr, pi, e);
double *ptr;
double pi, e;

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## Pointer Example

```c
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```

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addr</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.141</td>
<td>pi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>333</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>ptr</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>515</td>
<td>2.718</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>516</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pointer Example

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double pi, e;

ptr = &pi;
*ptr = 3.14159;
ptr = &e;
*ptr = 2.71828;

printf("Values: %p %g %g %g\n",
    ptr, *ptr, pi, e);

>> Values: 0x203  2.718  3.141  2.718
Pass-By-Reference Simulation

Main Idea: If I can pass an address (i.e. a pointer), I can’t modify it, however, I can modify what it points to (or references)!

```c
void foo (int *a)
{
    *a = *a + 2;
}
...
void main (int argc, char **argv)
{
    int b = 6;
    foo(&b)
    printf("b = %d\n", b);
}
```

Question: What is the output?
Answer: >> b = 8
Pointers and Structures

Pointers often point to structures. Introduces some new syntax:

```c
void setGateType(struct Gate *g, int gateVal)
{
    (*g).type = gateVal;
}
```

```c
struct Gate {
    int type;
    struct Gate *left;
    struct Gate *right;
};
```
Pointers and Structures

Pointers often point to structures. Introduces some new syntax:

```c
void setGateType(struct Gate *g, int gateVal)
{
    g->type = gateVal  /* equiv to (*g).type */
}
```

```c
struct Gate {
    int       type;
    struct Gate *left;
    struct Gate *right;
};
```
Very common idiom:

```c
struct Vector vec;    /* Note: value, not pointer. */
vectorInit(&vec);
vectorAdd (&vec, 3.14159);

/*or*/
struct Vector *vec2;
vec2 = createVector();  /* returns pointer to struct Vector */
vectorAdd(vec2, 3.1459);
```
Static Memory Allocation

If I know exactly what I need at compile time, I can use static allocation.

e.g. If I need a single struct gate or 5 struct gates

```c
struct Gate p;

or

struct Gate p[5];

or

struct Gate p1;

struct Gate p2;

...
```
Dynamic Memory Allocation

But, what if I don’t know at compile time? e.g. I need $N$ gates?...where $N$ will be provided as a command line argument or where the user would request one at a time?

/* N gates at once */
struct Gate *p = malloc(N * sizeof(struct Gate));
Dynamic Memory Allocation

No `new` operator
Use `malloc(num-of-bytes)` instead
`malloc` always returns a pointer
Use `sizeof` to figure out how big (how many bytes) something is

```c
struct Gate *p = malloc(sizeof(struct Gate));
assert(p != 0); /* Always a good idea. */
p->type = 3; /* safe!*/
...
free(p);
```
Arrays in C are (more or less) pointers

```c
void foo(double d[]) {
    d[0] = 3.14159;
}
...

or

double data[4]; /*compile time*/
double * data = malloc(4*sizeof(double)); /*runtime*/
data[0] = 42.0;
foo(data); /* Note: NO ampersand. */
printf("What is data[0]? %g", data[0]);
```
Arrays

```c
int a[10]
int *pa;
```

a is a pointer to the first element of the array.

a[i] refers to the i-th element of the array.

pa=&a[0] makes pa point to element 0 of the array, in other words, pa = a.

a[2] is the same as *(pa+2) [why? Hint: Contiguous Mem]

One difference: a pointer is a variable, but an array name is not.

```
 pa = a;     //legal
 pa++;       //legal
 a = pa;     //not legal
 a++;        //not legal
```
Side Note: Booleans

C versions (pre C99) did not have a boolean data type
Can use ordinary integer: test is zero (false) or all other integers (true)
Can also use pointers: test is null/zero (false) or not null (true)

```c
int i;
if (i != 0) ...
if (i) ... /* Same thing. */

double *p;
if (p != 0) ...
if (p) ... /* Same thing. */
```

In C99, we can use bool, but must include header <stdbool.h>
Side Note: Uninitialized Pointers

What if I don’t init a pointer, and then access it?

```c
struct Gate *p;
/* If external to function, initialized to 0 */
/* If automatic (e.g. local vars), undefined */
p->type = 4; /* Either way...segmentation fault error */
```