Testing and Testability

- Good Test Cases
- Black-Box Testing
- White-Box Testing
  - rationale and approach
  - white box testing exercise
  - code coverage
  - complexity
- Testability
  - Observeability
  - Controllability

Good Test Cases

- Fundamental Characteristics
  - dispositive — determines correctness
  - valid — that answer is correct
  - deterministic — yields consistent results
- Usability Characteristics
  - isolated — independent test cases
  - automated — runs w/o assistance
  - self-contained — brings what it needs

automation is essential

- tests must be run regularly
  - on each new version of the component
- tests must be run repeatably
  - the exact same tests run every single time
- results must be checked mechanically
  - tired/bored eyes can miss minor errors
- results must be summarized and reported
  - to measure improvement/regression
- these are repetitive, mind-numbing tasks

Black Box Testing

- based on specified functionality
  - not based on any design knowledge
- does it perform all specified functions
  - with all specified options
  - and perform each of them correctly
- does it reasonably handle obvious errors
  - invalid requests from users/callers
  - anticipatable failures of underlying services
- common for acceptance criteria

improving Black-Box tests

- Specifications
  - tell us what functions to test, not what values
- boundary value analysis tries to choose
  - parameters near the edges of their range
- orthogonal array testing tries to choose
  - well distributed combinations of parameters
- these are all parameter choice heuristics
  - why not use our knowledge of the code to choose more probative parameter values?

Beyond Black-Box Testing

- Black-box testing can be reasonable
  - when output is defined as a function of inputs
- White box testing has a much farther reach
  - identify equivalence partitions of input combinations
    - enabling better parameter choice for black-box testing
  - code poorly exercised by primary interfaces
    - state results from combinations of operations
    - crucial interactions with other components
  - state ill-captured by return values and output
    - component depends on large/complex internal state
  - functionality not described by requirements
    - mechanisms defined by implementation strategy

Test Cases

- **name**
  - unique identifier for this test case
- **Purpose**
  - component and functional area it tests
  - brief prose description of what assertion it tests
- **set-up**
  - brief description of pre-conditions for test case
- **operation**
  - operations to be performed (and how)
- **results**
  - what results we will capture (and how)
  - how we will use them to determine correctness

EXERCISE (ordered doubly linked lists)

```
void insertValue(node *newNode, dbllist *list) {
      node *curr, *prev;
      prev = NULL;

      // scan for correct place to insert
      for ( curr = list->next;
            curr && curr->data < newNode->data;
            curr = curr->next )
                  prev = curr;

      // update next pointer in pre node
      newNode->next = curr;
      newNode->prev = prev;
      if (prev == NULL)
                  list->next = newNode;
      else
                  prev->next = newNode;

      // update prev pointer in next node
      if (curr == NULL)
                  list->prev = newNode;
      else
                  curr->prev = newNode;
}
```

```
node *deleteNode(unsigned long value, dbllist*list) {
      node *prev, *curr, *next;

      // scan for the desired node
      for ( curr = list->next;
            curr && curr->data < value;
            curr = curr->next );

      if (curr == NULL || curr->data != value)
                  return(0);      // value may not be there

      // update next pointer in prev node
      if ((prev = curr->prev) != NULL)
                  prev->next = curr;
      else
                  list->next = curr;

      // update prev pointer in next node
      if ((next =curr->next) != NULL)
                  next>prev = prev;
      else
                  list->prev = prev;

      // return the removed node
      return( curr  );
}
```


White/Black - how to choose?

- purpose of testing is to gain confidence
  - that we have found all of our defects
  - that the component will function properly
- the question is …
  - what set of tests will best give us confidence
  - not “which testing philosophy is best”
- black/white aren’t competing philosophies
  - they are approaches to test case definition
  - each with its own strengths and weaknesses

Code Coverage

- the (too) simple goal
  - to ensure we’ve tested “all” the code
- how to measure code coverage
  - statically – simply by analyzing the code
  - run-time - with automatic instrumentation
- the process
  - identify yet unexecuted code segments
  - define test cases to exercise them
  - run them, verify both coverage and result

100% code coverage?

- 100% branch coverage may be too little
  - need all combinations of decisions
  - including a wide range of loop iterations
- 100% path coverage may be impossible
  - impossible condition combinations
  - errors that should never happen
- Advice
  - higher coverage is always a good thing
  - large numbers of paths may hide problems
  - supplement coverage with reviews

Code Complexity

- complex code is a problem
  - it is harder to design and implement
  - it is more likely to contain bugs
  - it requires more test cases
- we should be able to quantify complexity
  - best known metric is cyclomatic complexity
  - number of independent code paths
  - static call fan-out and depth
  - number of interfaces and parameters
  - inter-component coupling

static complexity analysis

- valuable as a basis for comparison
  - module A is much more complex than B
- limited use for estimating test cases
  - branch & code paths != execution-paths
- it ignores major sources of complexity
  - asynchronous interactions
  - thread serialization
  - fallibility of called services
  - coupling through dynamic data

what makes code "testable"

- observeability
  - all interesting program behavior is visible
- controllability
  - all interesting program behavior is triggerable
- logical isolate-ability of functionality
  - so we can exercise one function at a time
- incremental construction
  - able to build and test from the earliest stages
- these result from architecture and design

Observeability

- What kinds of output are produced?
  - can they all be externally observed?
- Many are easily observed
  - return values
  - output text and dialogs
  - files and their contents
- Others are more difficult to observe
  - messages sent to other components
  - requests for system services

Controllability

- Many factors determine the code path
  - can they all be driven externally?
- Many can be driven very simply
  - scripted commands
  - prepared input files and data bases
- Some inputs can be simulated
  - messages from other components
  - errors that are not easily caused
  - these simulations must be realistic?

Internal State & Methods

- internal state (in-memory data-bases)
  - how can we initialize these?
  - how can we observe changes to them?
- internal methods (that act on internal state)
  - how can we trigger them?
  - how can we observe their behavior?
- diagnostic options and operations
  - set or display internal state
  - initiate specific internal actions
- test harnesses and in-vitro testing
  - exercise components outside of the system

For the next lecture

- Wikipedia: Design Patterns
  - brief introduction
- Model View Controller Architecture
  - a general U/I paradigm
- The Bridge design pattern
  - decoupling abstraction from implementation
- The Visitor design pattern
  - walking complex structures
- Nguyen/Wong: Design patterns for games