Photo credit: Andrew Kennedy

JAVA GENERICS

Lecture 17
CS2110 – Spring 2017

Java Collections

Early versions of Java lacked generics…

```
interface Collection {
  /** Return true iff the collection contains ob */
  boolean contains(Object ob);

  /** Add ob to the collection; return true iff
    * the collection is changed. */
  boolean add(Object ob);

  /** Remove ob from the collection; return true iff
    * the collection is changed. */
  boolean remove(Object ob);
  ...
}
```

Java Collections

Lack of generics was painful because programmers had to manually cast.

```
Collection c = ...
c.add("Hello")
c.add("World");
...
for (Object ob : c) {
  String s= (String) ob;
  System.out.println(s + " : " + s.length());
}
```

… and people often made mistakes!

Using Java Collections

Limitation seemed especially awkward because built-in arrays do not have the same problem!

```
String[] a = ...
a[0]= ("Hello")
a[1]= ("World");
...
for (String s : a) {
  System.out.println(s);
}
```

In late 1990s, Sun Microsystems initiated a design process to add generics to the language ...

Arrays → Generics

Array of Strings, ArrayList of strings ---same concept with a different syntax

We should be able to do the same thing with object types generated by classes!

```
Object[] oa= ...            // array of Objects
String[] sa= ...            // array of Strings
ArrayList<Object> oA= ... // ArrayList of Objects
ArrayList<String> oA= ... // ArrayList of Strings
```

Proposals for adding Generics to Java

Andrew Meyers

Turing Award winner Barbara Liskov

Nate Foster

PolyJ

Pizza/GJ

LOOJ

Generic Collections

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With generics, the Collection interface becomes...

```
interface Collection<T> {
  /** Return true iff the collection contains x */
  boolean contains(T x);

  /** Add x to the collection; return true iff
    * the collection is changed. */
  boolean add(T x);

  /** Remove x from the collection; return true iff
    * the collection is changed. */
  boolean remove(T x);
  ...
}
```

Using Java Collections

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With generics, no casts are needed...

```
Collection<String> c= ...
c.add("Hello")
c.add("World");
...
for (String s : c) {
  System.out.println(s + " : " + s.length());
}
```

… and mistakes (usually) get caught!

Type checking (at compile time)

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The compiler can automatically detect uses of collections with incorrect types...

```
// This is Demo0
Collection<String> c= ...
c.add("Hello")  /* Okay */
c.add(1979);    /* Illegal: static error! */
```

Generally speaking,

Collection<String>

behaves like the parameterized type

Collection<T>

where all occurrences of T have been replaced byString.

Subtyping

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Subtyping extends naturally to generic types.

```
interface Collection<T> { ... }
interface List<T> extends Collection<T> { ... }
class LinkedList<T> implements List<T> { ... }
class ArrayList<T> implements List<T> { ... }


/* The following statements are all legal. */
List<String> l= new LinkedList<String>();
ArrayList<String> a= new ArrayList<String>();
Collection<String> c= a;
l= a
c= l;
```

Array Subtyping

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Java's type system allows the analogous rule for arrays:

```
// This is Demo1
String[] as= new String[10];
Object[] ao= new Object[10];

ao= as;          //Type-checks: considered outdated design
ao[0]= 2110;     //Type-checks: Integer subtype Object
String s= as[0]; //Type-checks: as is a String array
```

What happens when this code is run? TRY IT OUT!

It throws an ArrayStoreException! Because arrays are built into Java right from beginning, it could be defined to detect such errors

Array Subtyping

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Java's type system allows the analogous rule for arrays:

```
// This is Demo1
String[] as= new String[10];
Object[] ao= new Object[10];

ao= as;
ao[0]= 2110;
String s= as[0];
```

Is this legal? TRY IT OUT!

Subtyping

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String[] is a subtype of Object[]

...is ArrayList<String> a subtype of ArrayList<Object>?

```
// This is Demo1
ArrayList<String> ls= new ArrayList<String>();
ArrayList<Object> lo= new ArrayList<Object>();

lo= ls;             //Suppose this is legal
lo.add(2110);       //Type-checks: Integer subtype Object
String s = ls.get(0); //Type-checks: ls is a List<String>
```

TRY IT OUT!

The answer is NO. ArrayList<String> is NOT a subtype of ArrayList<Object>

A type parameter for a method

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```
Demo 2
/** Replace all values x in list ts by y. */
public void replaceAll(List<Double> ts, Double x, Double y) {
  for (int i= 0; i < ts.size(); i= i+1)
     if (Objects.equals(ts.get(i), x))
        ts.set(i, y);
}
```

We would like to rewrite the parameter declarations so this method can be used for ANY list, no matter the type of its elements.

A type parameter for a method

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Try replacing Double by some "Type parameter" T, and Java will still complain that type T is unknown.

```
/** Replace all values x in list ts by y. */
                             T            T          T
public void replaceAll(List<Double> ts, Double x, Double y) {
  for (int i= 0; i < ts.size(); i= i+1)
     if (Objects.equals(ts.get(i), x))
        ts.set(i, y);
}
```

Somehow, Java must be told that T is a type parameter and not a real type. Next slide says how to do this

A type parameter for a method

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Placing <T> after the access modifier indicates that T is to be considered as a type parameter, to be replaced when method is called.

```
/** Replace all values x in list ts by y. */
public <T> void replaceAll(List<T> ts, T x, T y) {
  for (int i= 0; i < ts.size(); i= i+1)
     if (Objects.equals(ts.get(i), x))
        ts.set(i, y);
}
```

Printing Collections

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Suppose we want to write a method to print every value in a Collection<T>.

```
void print(Collection<Object> c) {
  for (Object x : c) {
    System.out.println(x);
  }
}
...
Collection<Integer> c= ...
c.add(42);
print(c);  /* Illegal: Collection<Integer> is not a
            * subtype of Collection<Object>! */
```

Wildcards

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To get around this problem, Java's designers added *wildcards* to the language

```
void print(Collection<?> c) {
  for (Object x : c) {
    System.out.println(x);
  }
}
...
Collection<Integer> c= ...
c.add(42);
print(c);   /* Legal! */
```

One can think of Collection<?> as a "Collection of *some* unknown type of values".

Wildcards

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We can't add values to collections whose types are wildcards ...

```
void doIt(Collection<?> c) {
  c.add(42); /* Illegal! */
}
...
Collection<String> c= ...
doIt(c);   /* Legal! */
```

42 can be added to
- Collection<Integer>
- Collection<Number>
- Collection<Object>

but c could be Collection of anything, not just supertypes of Integer

Object
Number
Integer

How to say that ? Can be a supertype of Integer?

Bounded Wildcards

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Sometimes it is useful to have some information about a wildcard. Can do this by adding bounds...

```
void doIt(Collection<? super Integer> c) {
  c.add(42); /* Legal! */
}
...
Collection<Object> c= ...
doIt(c);    /* Legal! */
Collection<Float> c= ...
doIt(c);    /* Illegal! */
```

Now c can only be a Collection of Integer or some *supertype* of Integer, and 42 can be added to any such Collection

"? super" is useful when you are only *giving* values to the object, such as putting values into a Collection

Bounded Wildcards

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"? extends" is useful when you are only *receiving* values from the object, such as getting values out of a Collection.

```
void doIt(Collection<? extends Shape> c) {
  for (Shape s : c)
     s.draw();
}
...
Collection<Circle> c= ...
doIt(c);  /* Legal! */
Collection<Object> c= ...
doIt(c);  /* Illegal! */
```

Object
Shape
Rectangle
Square

Bounded Wildcards

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Wildcards can be nested. The following *receives* Collections from an Iterable and then *gives* floats to those Collections.

```
void doIt(Iterable<? extends Collection<? super Float>> cs) {
  for(Collection<? super Float> c : cs)
    c.add(0.0f);
}
...
List<Set<Float>> l= ...
doIt(l);  /* Legal! */
Collection<List<Number>> c= ...
doIt(c);  /* Legal! */
Iterable<Iterable<Float>> i= ...
doIt(i);  /* Illegal! */
ArrayList<? extends Set<? super Number>> a= ...
doIt(a);  /* Legal! */
```

We skip over this in lecture. Far too intricate for everyone to understand. We won't quiz you on this.

Generic Methods

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Here's the printing example again. Written with a method type-parameter.

```
<T> void print(Collection<T> c) {// T is a type parameter
  for (T x : c) {
    System.out.println(x);
  }
}
...
Collection<Integer> c= ...
c.add(42);
print(c);  /* More explicitly: this.<Integer>print(c) */
```

But wildcards are preferred when just as expressive.

Concatenating Lists

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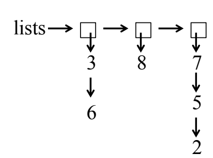
Suppose we want to concatenate a list of lists into one list. We want the return type to depend on what the input type is.



Return this list

→ 3 → 6 → 8 → 7 → 5 → 2

Concatenating Lists

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The return type depends on what the input type is.

```
/** Return the flattened version of ls. */
<T> List<T> flatten(List<? extends List<T>> lists) {
  List<T> flat= new ArrayList<T>();
  for (List<T> l : lists)
     flat.addAll(l);
  return flat;
}
...
List<List<Integer>> is= ...
List<Integer> i= flatten(is);
List<List<String>> ss= ...
List<String> s= flatten(ss);
```

Interface Comparable

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Interface Comparable<T> declares a method for comparing one object to another.

```
interface Comparable<T> {
   /* Return a negative number, 0, or positive number
    * depending on whether this is less than,
    * equal to, or greater than that */
  int compareTo(T that);
}
```

Integer, Double, Character, and String are all Comparable with themselves

Our binary search

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Type parameter: anything T that implements Comparable<T>

```
/** Return h such that c[0..h] <= x < c[h+1..].
  * Precondition: c is sorted according to .. */
public static <T extends Comparable<T>>
                   int indexOf1(List<T> c, T x) {
   int h= -1;
   int t= c.size();
   // inv: h < t  &&  c[0..h] <= x < c[t..]
   while (h + 1 < t) {
      int e= (h + t) / 2;
      if (c.get(e).compareTo(x) <= 0)
          h= e;
      else t= e;
   }
   return h;
}
```

Those who fully grok generics write:

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Type parameter: anything T that implements Comparable<T>

```
/** Return h such that c[0..h] <= x < c[h+1..].
  * Precondition: c is sorted according to .. */
public static <T extends Comparable<? super T>>
                   int indexOf1(List<T> c, T x) {
   int h= -1;
   int t= c.size();
   // inv: h < t  &&  c[0..h] <= x < c[t..]
   while (h+1 < t) {
      int e= (h + t) / 2;
      if (c.get(e).compareTo(x) <= 0)
          h= e;
      else t= e;
    }
return h;
}
```

Anything that is a superclass of T.

Don't be concerned with this! You don't have to fully understand this.