

CS051A

INTRO TO COMPUTER SCIENCE WITH TOPICS IN AI

8: Scoping and debugging



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Lectures



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Labs

Lecture 8: Scoping and debugging

- ▶ Scoping
- ▶ Debugging
- ▶ Strings

scope.py

- ▶ What will be printed out when we run scope.py?
 - ▶ When we run the file, the first two functions, `double_input` and `triple_input`, will get defined.
 - ▶ Then, the interpreter will execute the three statements at the end of the file, one at a time.
 - ▶ The first `print` statement will print out 20.
 - ▶ The second `print` statement will print out 30.
 - ▶ Why not 60, that is in `double_input` we assigned 20 to `val` as the first line.
 - ▶ `val = 2*val` updates the value of the parameter **NOT** the variable outside the function.

Scope

- ▶ The **scope** of a variable is the portion of the code we can reference that variable in and have it be valid.
- ▶ When we declare a variable *in the Python console/shell*, e.g., `x = 10`, what is its scope?
 - ▶ The scope is any shell statements/expressions typed after it.
- ▶ When we declare a variable (outside a function) *in a file*, what is its scope?
 - ▶ anywhere below it in the file. Remember, running a program is very similar to typing those commands into the shell
- ▶ When we declare a variable *inside a function*, what is its scope?
 - ▶ anywhere below it but **within the function**
- ▶ What is the scope of the parameters?
 - ▶ anywhere **within the function**
 - ▶ It doesn't really make sense outside of the function since we wouldn't have a value for it
- ▶ Additionally, the scope also defines the context for a variable reference.

scope2.py

- ▶ What will be printed out when we run scope2.py?
 - ▶ The program starts at the top and declares three **global** variables x, y, and z.
 - ▶ Then, it defines the function mystery1.
 - ▶ Then it calls mystery1 with the arguments 10 and 20.
 - ▶ The parameter a is associated with the value 10. The parameter z gets the value 20.
 - ▶ Notice that this is **different** than the global variable z! In particular, when we execute `z = 100`, this reassigned the value of the local z, but not the global.
 - ▶ The function prints out s, x, y, and z.
 - ▶ s is a local variable. x and y are global. z is the parameter.
 - ▶ And then sets the value of the local variable z to 100.
 - ▶ After mystery1 returns, we print out the values of the global variables x, y and z.
 - ▶ x and y weren't changed anywhere. z being changed was the parameter not the global z.
 - ▶ What would happen if we had uncommented mystery2 and then added a call to it at the end and ran scope2.py?
 - ▶ Error. The scope of a is only defined within mystery1, so it cannot be accessed anywhere outside the function.

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When things go wrong

- ▶ The `quadruple_input` function in [debugging.py](#) code attempts to quadruple the input value by adding it four times.
- ▶ However, no matter the input it returns 6.

```
>>> quadruple_input(5)
6
>>> quadruple_input(4)
6
>>> quadruple_input(6)
6
```

Debugging

- ▶ A **bug** is a behavior in the code that is not intended.
- ▶ **Debugging** is the practice of trying to find and fix bugs.
- ▶ You might be able to look at the code and find the bug in this example. However, if you can't, you can try and add more information to your program to figure out what the problem is.
- ▶ Adding `print` statement is one good way to figure out what your function is doing

debugging-with-prints.py

- ▶ If we run this version, we start to see what the problem is.
- ▶ The problem is that we've used the `input` parameter as the variable in the `for` loop and the value is getting lost!
- ▶ The fix is to use a different variable name here (e.g., `i`)
- ▶ When you're all done debugging and your code works, make sure to remove the `print` statements!
- ▶ It's worth taking ten seconds to make your print formatting nice:
 - ▶ In loop vs out of loop,
 - ▶ Iteration boundaries,
 - ▶ Labels for positions.

```
>>> quadruple_input(5)
A:  0 5
-- 
B:  0 0
C:  0 0
-- 
B:  0 1
C:  1 1
-- 
B:  1 2
C:  3 2
-- 
B:  3 3
C:  6 3
D:  6 3
```

The debugger

- ▶ Use the little bug  icon to run a special debugging program.
- ▶ It runs Python code in a special way that is under the control of another program
- ▶ When the program breaks (because you asked it to with a "break point"  by clicking in the gutter near the line numbers, you can...
 - ▶ Step in/step out/step over the next line of code (if it's not stuck at an error, of course).
 - ▶ View call stack.
 - ▶ View stack frame, i.e. variables in local scope.

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String methods that might come handy

- ▶ Remember, strings are immutable.
- ▶ `s.lower()`: returns a copy of the string `s` converted to lower case.
- ▶ `s.replace(old, new)`: returns a copy of `s` with all occurrences of substring `old` replaced by `new`.
- ▶ `s.find(sub)`: returns the lowest index in string `s` where substring `sub` is found.
 - ▶ `s.find(sub, start)`: returns the lowest index in string `s` where substring `sub` is found within `s[start:]`.
 - ▶ `s.find(sub, start, end)`: returns the lowest index in string `s` where substring `sub` is found within `s[start:end]`.

```
>>> fruit = "Banana"
>>> fruit.lower()
'banana'
>>> fruit
'Banana'
>>> fruit.replace("a", "o")
'Bonono'
>>> fruit
'Banana'
>>> fruit = fruit.replace("a", "o")
>>> fruit
'Bonono'
>>> fruit.find("a")
-1
>>> fruit.find("o")
1
>>> fruit.find("o", 3)
3
>>> fruit.count("o")
3
>>> fruit.count("a")
0
```

Practice Time

- ▶ Write a function `find_letter(string, letter)` which returns the index of the first occurrence of letter in `string`.

```
>>> def find_letter(string, letter):
...     return string.find(letter)
...
>>> find_letter("hello", "l")
2
>>> def find_letter_alternative(string, letter):
...     for index in range(len(string)):
...         if string[index] == letter:
...             return index
...     return -1
...
>>> find_letter_alternative("hello", "l")
2
```

Resources

- ▶ Textbook: [Appendix \(Debugging\)](#)
- ▶ [scope.py](#)
- ▶ [scope2.py](#)
- ▶ [debugging.py](#)
- ▶ [debugging-with-prints.py](#)

Practice Problems

- ▶ [Practice 5 \(solution\)](#)

Homework

- ▶ Assignment 4