EEL 4783: Hardware/Software Co-design with FPGAs

Lecture 6: Short Introduction to C/C++ Programming*

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High Level Question: Why is Software Hard?

Answer(s):

- Complexity: Every conditional ("if") doubles number of paths through your code, every bit of state doubles possible states.
 Solution: reuse code with functions, avoid duplicate state variables
- Mutability: Software is easy to change.. Great for rapid fixes .. And rapid breakage .. always one character away from a bug. Solution: tidy, readable code, easy to understand by inspection.
- Flexibility: Programming problems can be solved in many different ways. Few hard constraints → plenty of "rope".
 Solution: discipline and idioms; don't use all the rope

Writing and Running Programs

```
#include <stdio.h>
/* The simplest C Program */
int main(int argc, char **argv)
{
   printf("Hello World\n");
   return 0;
}
```

1. Write text of program (source code) using an editor such as emacs, save as file e.g. my_program.c

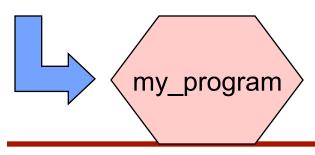
2. Run the compiler to convert program from source to an "executable" or "binary":

\$ gcc –Wall –g my_program.c –o my_program

-Wall –g ?

\$ gcc -Wall -g my_program.c -o my_program
tt.c: In function `main':
tt.c:6: parse error before `x'
tt.c:5: parm types given both in parmlist and separately
tt.c:8: `x' undeclared (first use in this function)
tt.c:8: (Each undeclared identifier is reported only once
tt.c:8: for each function it appears in.)
tt.c:10: warning: control reaches end of non-void function
tt.c: At top level:
tt.c:11: parse error before `return'

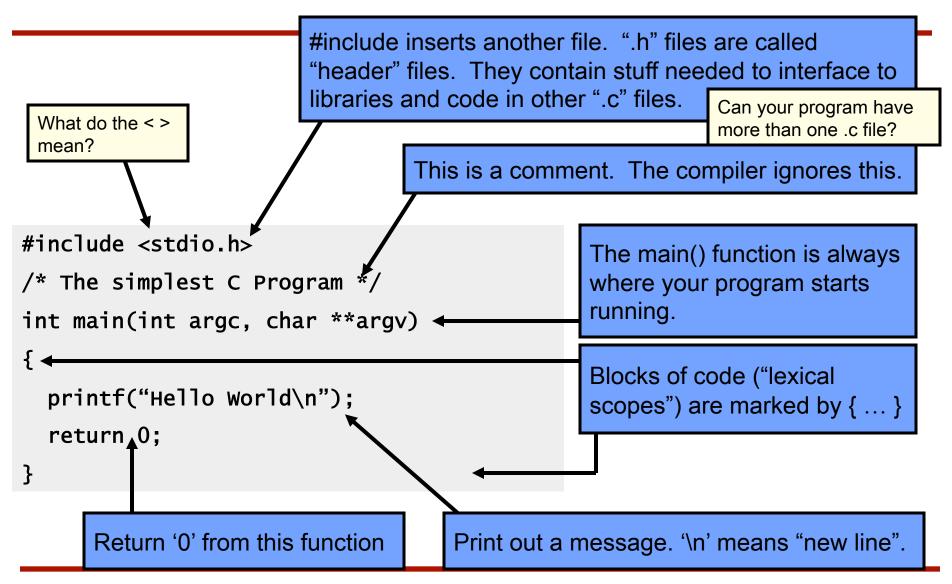
3-N. Compiler gives errors and warnings; edit source file, fix it, and re-compile



N. Run it and see if it works © \$./my_program
Hello World

What if it doesn't work?

C Syntax and Hello World



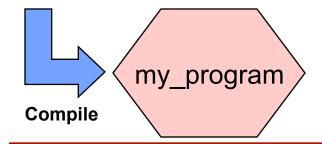
A Quick Digression About the Compiler



Preprocess



```
__extension__ typedef
    __long int __off_t;
    __extension__ typedef long long int __off64_t;
    extern void flockfile (FILE *__stream) ;
    extern int ftrylockfile (FILE *__stream) ;
    extern void funlockfile (FILE *__stream) ;
    int main(int argc, char **argv)
{
        printf("Hello World\n");
        return 0;
}
```



Compilation occurs in two steps: "Preprocessing" and "Compiling"

Why?

In Preprocessing, source code is "expanded" into a larger form that is simpler for the compiler to understand. Any line that starts with '#' is a line that is interpreted by the Preprocessor.

- Include files are "pasted in" (#include)
- Macros are "expanded" (#define)
- Comments are stripped out (/* */ , //)
- Continued lines are joined (\);

\?

The compiler then converts the resulting text into binary code the CPU can run directly.

OK, We're Back.. What is a Function?

A Function is a series of instructions to run. You pass Arguments to a function and it returns a Value.

"main()" is a Function. It's only special because it always gets called first when you run your program.

```
#include <stdio.h>

/* The simplest C Program */

int main(int argc, char **argv)

{

printf("Hello World\n");

return 0;

}

Returning a value

Function Arguments

Calling a Function: "printf()" is just another function, like main(). It's defined for you in a "library", a collection of functions you can call from your program.
```

What is "Memory"?

Memory is like a big table of numbered slots where bytes can be stored.

The number of a slot is its Address.

One byte Value can be stored in each slot.

Some "logical" data values span more than one slot, like the character string "Hello\n"

A Type names a logical meaning to a span of memory. Some simple types are:

char
char [10]
int
float
int64_t

a single character (1 slot) an array of 10 characters signed 4 byte integer 4 byte floating point signed 8 byte integer

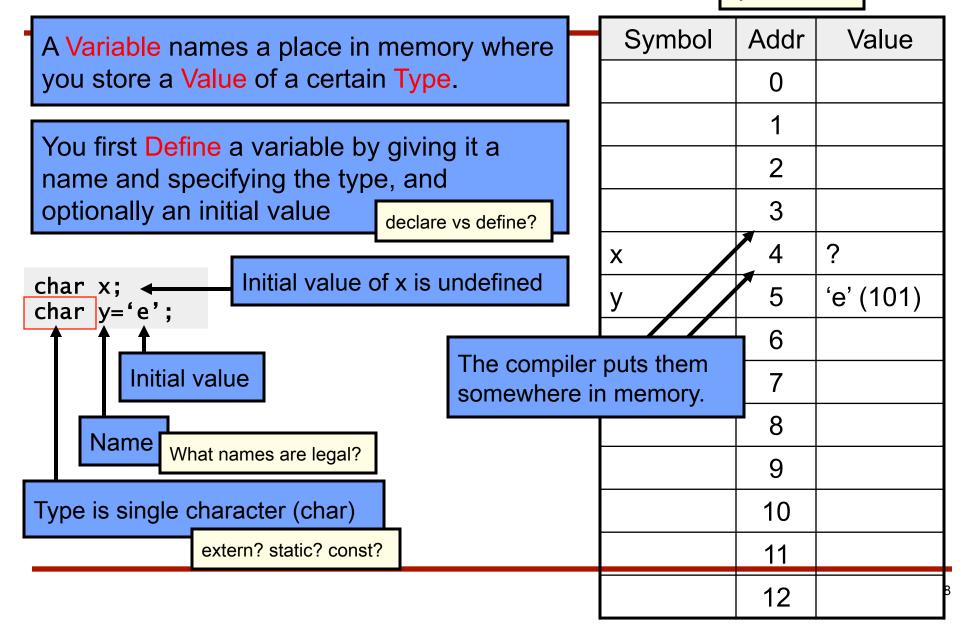
not always...

Signed?...

Addr	Value	
0		
1		
2		
3	72	?
4	'H' (72)	
5	'e' (101)	
6	'l' (108)	
7	'l' (108)	
8	'o' (111)	
9	'\n' (10)	
10	'\0' (0)	
11		
12		7

What is a Variable?

symbol table?



Multi-byte Variables

padding

Different types consume different amounts of memory. Most architectures store data on "word boundaries", or even multiples of the size of a primitive data type (int, char)

char x;
char y='e';
int z = 0x01020304;

0x means the constant is written in hex

An int consumes 4 bytes

Symbol	Addr	Value
	0	
	1	
	2	
	3	
Х	4	?
У	5	'e' (101)
	6	
	7	
Z	8	4
	9	3
	10	2
	11	1
	12	

Lexical Scopir (Returns nothing)

Every Variable is Defined within some scope. A Variable cannot be referenced by name (a.k.a. Symbol) from outside of that scope.

Lexical scopes are defined with curly braces { }.

The scope of Function Arguments is the complete body of the function.

The scope of Variables defined inside a function starts at the definition and ends at the closing brace of the containing block

The scope of Variables defined outside a function starts at the definition and ends at the end of the file. Called "Global" Vars.

```
void p(char x)
            /* p,x */
  char y;
            /* p.x.v */
  char z;
            /* p,x,y,z */
            /* p */
char z:
            /* p,z */
void q(char a)
  char b:
            /* p,z,q,a,b */
                         char b?
    char c;
            /* p,z,q,a,b,c */
                          legal?
  char d:
  /* p,z,q,a,b,d (not c) */
/* p,z,q */
```

Expressions and Evaluation

Expressions combine Values using Operators, according to precedence.

Symbols are evaluated to their Values before being combined.

```
int x=1;
int y=2;
x + y * y \rightarrow x + 2 * 2 \rightarrow x + 4 \rightarrow 1 + 4 \rightarrow 5
```

Comparison operators are used to compare values. In C, 0 means "false", and *any other value* means "true".

```
int x=4;

(x < 5) \rightarrow (4 < 5) \rightarrow <true>

(x < 4) \rightarrow (4 < 4) \rightarrow 0

((x < 5) \mid \mid (x < 4)) \rightarrow (<true> \mid \mid (x < 4)) \rightarrow <true>
```

first clause was true

Comparison and Mathematical Operators

```
== equal to
< less than
<= less than or equal
> greater than
>= greater than or equal
!= not equal
&& logical and
|| logical or
! logical not
```

```
+ plus
- minus
* mult
/ divide
% modulo
```

```
& bitwise and
| bitwise or
^ bitwise xor
~ bitwise not
<< shift left
>> shift right
```

The rules of precedence are clearly defined but often difficult to remember or non-intuitive. When in doubt, add parentheses to make it explicit. For oft-confused cases, the compiler will give you a warning "Suggest parens around ..." – do it!

Beware division:

- If second argument is integer, the result will be integer (rounded):
 5 / 10 → 0 whereas 5 / 10.0 → 0.5
- Division by 0 will cause a FPE

Don't confuse & and &&.. $1 \& 2 \rightarrow 0$ whereas $1 \&\& 2 \rightarrow <$ true>

Assignment Operators

```
x = y assign y to x x += y assign (x+y) to x x += y assign (x+y) to x x -= y assign (x+y) to x x += y assign (x+y) to x
```

Note the difference between ++x and x++:

```
int x=5;
int y;
int y;
y = ++x;
/* x == 6, y == 6 */
int x=5;
int y;
y = x++;
/* x == 6, y == 5 */
```

Don't confuse = and ==! The compiler will warn "suggest parens".

```
int x=5;
if (x==6) /* false */
{
    /* ... */
}
/* x is still 5 */

int x=5;
if (x=6) /* always true */
{
    /* x is now 6 */
}
/* x is still 5 */

recommendation
```

A More Complex Program: pow

"if" statement

```
/* if evaluated expression is not 0 */
if (expression) {
    /* then execute this block */
} else {
    /* otherwise execute this block */
}
Short-circuit eval?

    X?Y:Z
detecting brace errors
```

Tracing "pow()":

- What does pow(5,0) do?
- What about pow(5,1)?
- "Induction"

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <inttypes.h>
float pow(float x, uint32_t exp)
  /* base case */
  if (exp == 0) {
    return 1.0;
  /* "recursive" case */
  return x*pow(x, exp - 1);
int main(int argc, char **argv)
  float p;
  p = pow(10.0.5):
  printf("p = %f\n", p);
  return 0;
```

Challenge: write pow() so it requires log(exp) iterations

The "Stack"

Recall lexical scoping. If a variable is valid "within the scope of a function", what happens when you call that function recursively? Is there more than one "exp"?

Yes. Each function call allocates a "stack frame" where Variables within that function's scope will reside.

```
float x
uint32_t
exp
float x
uint32_t
int argc
thar
**argv

float p

5.0
Return 1.0
Return 5.0

Return 5.0

Char
5.0

Return 5.0

Float p

5.0
```

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <inttypes.h>
float pow(float x, uint32_t exp)
 /* base case */
  if (exp == 0) {
                              static
    return 1.0:
                              Java?
  <u>/* "recursive" case */</u>
  return x*pow(x, exp - 1);
int main(int argc, char **argv)
  float p:
  p = pow(5.0, 1);
  printf("p = %f\n", p);
  return 0;
```

Iterative pow(): the "while" loop

Other languages?

Problem: "recursion" eats stack space (in C). Each loop must allocate space for arguments and local variables, because each new call creates a new "scope".

```
Solution: "while" loop.

loop:
    if (condition) {
        statements;
        goto loop;
    }

while (condition) {
        statements;
        poto loop;
    }
```

```
float pow(float x, uint exp)
{
   int i=0;
   float result=1.0;
   while (i < exp) {
      result = result * x;
      i++;
   }
   return result;
}

int main(int argc, char **argv)
{
   float p;
   p = pow(10.0, 5);
   printf("p = %f\n", p);
   return 0;
}</pre>
```

The "for" loop

The "for" loop is just shorthand for this "while" loop structure.

```
float pow(float x, uint exp)
{
   float result=1.0;
   int i;
   i=0;
   while (i < exp) {
      result = result * x;
      i++;
   }
   return result;
}

int main(int argc, char **argv)
{
   float p;
   p = pow(10.0, 5);
   printf("p = %f\n", p);
   return 0;
}</pre>
```



```
float pow(float x, uint exp)
{
   float result=1.0;
   int i;
   for (i=0; (i < exp); i++) {
      result = result * x;
   }
   return result;
}

int main(int argc, char **argv)
{
   float p;
   p = pow(10.0, 5);
   printf("p = %f\n", p);
   return 0;
}</pre>
```

Referencing Data from Other Scopes

So far, all of our examples all of the data values we have used have been defined in our lexical scope

```
float pow(float x, uint exp)
{
  float result=1.0;
  int i;
  for (i=0; (i < exp); i++) {
    result = result * x;
  }
  return result;
}

int main(int argc, char **argv)
{
  float p;
  p = pow(10.0, 5);
  printf("p = %f\n", p);
  return 0;
}</pre>
```

Nothing in this scope

Uses any of these variables

Can a function modify its arguments?

What if we wanted to implement a function pow_assign() that modified its argument, so that these are equivalent:

```
float p = 2.0;

/* p is 2.0 here */

p = pow(p, 5);

/* p is 32.0 here */

prow_assign(p, 5);

/* p is 32.0 here */
```

Would this work?

```
void pow_assign(float x, uint exp)
{
  float result=1.0;
  int i;
  for (i=0; (i < exp); i++) {
    result = result * x;
  }
  x = result;
}</pre>
```

NO!

Remember the stack!

```
void pow_assign(float x, uint exp)
{

    float result=1.0;
    int i;
    for (i=0; (i < exp); i++) {
       result = result * x;

    }

    x = result;
}

float p=2.0;
    pow_assign(p, 5);
}</pre>
```

Java/C++?

In C, all arguments are passed as values

But, what if the argument is the *address* of a variable?

float x 32.0
uint32_t 5
exp 32.0
float 32.0
result

Grows

Passing Addresses

Recall our model for variables stored in memory

What if we had a way to find out the address of a symbol, and a way to reference that memory location by address?

```
address_of(y) == 5
memory_at[5] == 101
```

```
void f(address_of_char p)
{
   memory_at[p] = memory_at[p] - 32;
}
```

```
char y = 101;    /* y is 101 */
f(address_of(y));    /* i.e. f(5) */
/* y is now 101-32 = 69 */
```

Symbol	Addr	Value
	0	
	1	
	2	
	3	
char x	4	'H' (72)
char y	5	'e' (101)
	6	
	7	
	8	
	9	
	10	
	11	
	12	

"Pointers"

Pointers are used in C for many other purposes:

- Passing large objects without copying them
- Accessing dynamically allocated memory
- Referring to functions

Pointer Validity

A Valid pointer is one that points to memory that your program controls. Using invalid pointers will cause non-deterministic behavior, and will often cause Linux to kill your process (SEGV or Segmentation Fault).

There are two general causes for these errors:

How should pointers be initialized?

- Program errors that set the pointer value to a strange number
- Use of a pointer that was at one time valid, but later became invalid

Will ptr be valid or invalid?

```
char * get_pointer()
{
  char x=0;
  return &x;
}

{
  char * ptr = get_pointer();
  *ptr = 12; /* valid? */
}
```

Answer: Invalid!

A pointer to a variable allocated on the stack becomes invalid when that variable goes out of scope and the stack frame is "popped". The pointer will point to an area of the memory that may later get reused and rewritten.

But now, ptr points to a location that's no longer in use, and will be reused the next time a function is called!

Grows

More on Types

We've seen a few types at this point: char, int, float, char *

Types are important because:

- They allow your program to impose logical structure on memory
- They help the compiler tell when you're making a mistake

In the next slides we will discuss:

- How to create logical layouts of different types (structs)
- How to use arrays
- How to parse C type names (there is a logic to it!)
- How to create new types using typedef

Structures

struct: a way to compose existing types into a structure

Packing?

```
struct timeval is defined in this header
#include <sys/time.h> ◆
/* declare the struct */
                                            structs define a layout of typed fields
struct my_struct { ←
 int counter:
 float average;
                                            structs can contain other structs
 struct timeval timestamp; ←
  uint in_use:1:←
                                            fields can specify specific bit widths
  uint8_t data[0]; ←
                                   Why?
};
                                            A newly-defined structure is initialized
/* define an instance of my_struct */
struct my_struct x = { ←
                                            using this syntax. All unset fields are 0.
  in_use: 1,
 timestamp: {
   tv_sec: 200
                                            Fields are accessed using '.' notation.
x.counter = 1; \leftarrow
x.average = sum / (float)(x.counter);
                                            A pointer to a struct. Fields are accessed
struct my_struct * ptr = &x; ←
ptr->counter = 2;
                                            using '->' notation, or (*ptr).counter
(*ptr).counter = 3; /* equiv. */
```

Arrays

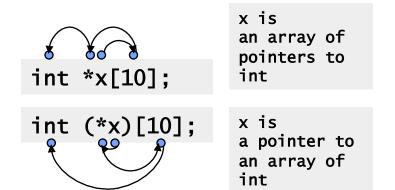
Arrays in C are composed of a particular type, laid out in memory in a repeating pattern. Array elements are accessed by stepping forward in memory from the base of the array by a multiple of the element size.

```
/* define an array of 10 chars */
                                             Brackets specify the count of elements.
char x[5] = {'t', 'e', 's', 't', '\0'}; 	
                                             Initial values optionally set in braces.
/* accessing element 0 */
x[0] = T';
                                             Arrays in C are 0-indexed (here, 0..9)
/* pointer arithmetic to get elt 3 */
                                             x[3] == *(x+3) == 't' (NOT 's'!)
char elt3 = *(x+3); /* x[3] */
/* x[0] evaluates to the first element;
 * x evaluates to the address of the
                                          What's the difference
                                                                  Symbol
                                                                             Addr
                                                                                     Value
 * first element, or &(x[0]) */
                                          between char x[] and
                                                                                       't'
                                          char *x?
                                                                   char x
                                                                             100
/* 0-indexed for loop idiom */
                                                                     [0]
#define COUNT 10
char y[COUNT];
                                 For loop that iterates
                                                                                      'e'
                                                                   char x
                                                                             101
int i:
                                 from 0 to COUNT-1.
                                                                     [1]
for (i=0; i<COUNT; i++) { ◆
 /* process y[i] */
                                 Memorize it!
                                                                                      's'
                                                                   char x
                                                                             102
  printf("%c\n", y[i]);
                                                                     [2]
                                                                                       't'
                                                                   char x
                                                                             103
                                                                     [3]
                                                                   char x
                                                                             104
                                                                                      '\0'
```

How to Parse and Define C Types

At this point we have seen a few basic types, arrays, pointer types, and structures. So far we've glossed over how types are named.

C type names are parsed by starting at the type name and working outwards according to the rules of precedence:



Arrays are the primary source of confusion. When in doubt, use extra parens to clarify the expression.

Function Types

For more details: The other confusing form is the function type. \$ man qsort For example, qsort: (a sort function in the standard library) void qsort(void *base, size_t nmemb, size_t size, The last argument is a int (*compar)(const void *, const void *)); comparison function /* function matching this type: */ int cmp_function(const void *x, const void *y); const means the function is not allowed to modify /* typedef defining this type: */ typedef int (*cmp_type) (const void *, const void *); ← memory via this pointer. /* rewrite gsort prototype using our typedef */ void qsort(void *base, size_t nmemb, size_t size, cmp_type compar); size t is an unsigned int void * is a pointer to memory of unknown type.

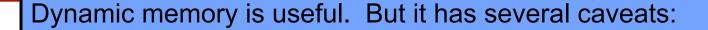
Dynamic Memory Allocation

So far all of our examples have allocated variables statically by defining them in our program. This allocates them in the stack.

But, what if we want to allocate variables based on user input or other dynamic inputs, at run-time? This requires dynamic allocation.

```
sizeof() reports the size of a type in bytes
                                                                                     For details:
                                                                                     $ man calloc
int * alloc_ints(size_t requested_count)
                                                                   calloc() allocates memory
  int * big_array:
                                                                   for N elements of size k
  big_array = (int *)calloc(requested_count, sizeof(int));
  if (big_array == NULL) {
                                                                   Returns NULL if can't alloc
    printf("can't allocate %d ints: %m\n", requested_count);
    return NULL:
                                      %m?
                                               Emstar tips
  /* now big_array[0] .. big_array[requested_count-1] are
                                                                   It's OK to return this pointer.
   * valid and zeroed. */
                                                                   It will remain valid until it is
  return big_array; 	◀
                                                                   freed with free()
```

Caveats with Dynamic Memory



- Whereas the stack is automatically reclaimed, dynamic allocations must be tracked and free()'d when they are no longer needed. With every allocation, be sure to plan how that memory will get freed. Losing track of memory is called a "memory leak".

 Reference counting
- Whereas the compiler enforces that reclaimed stack space can no longer be reached, it is easy to accidentally keep a pointer to dynamic memory that has been freed. Whenever you free memory you must be certain that you will not try to use it again. It is safest to erase any pointers to it.
- Because dynamic memory always uses pointers, there is generally no way for the compiler to statically verify usage of dynamic memory. This means that errors that are detectable with static allocation are not with dynamic

Some Common Errors and Hints

sizeof() can take a variable reference in place of a type name. This gurantees the right allocation, but don't accidentally allocate the sizeof() the *pointer* instead of the *object*!

```
malloc() allocates n bytes
/* allocating a struct with malloc() */
struct my_struct *s = NULL;
s = (struct my_struct *)malloc(sizeof(*s)): /* NOT sizeof(s)!! */
                                                                                       Why?
if (s == NULL) {
                                         Always check for NULL. Even if you just exit(1).
  printf(stderr, "no memory!");
  exit(1);
                                                      malloc() does not zero the memory,
memset(s, 0, sizeof(*s)); ◀
                                                      so you should memset() it to 0.
/* another way to initialize an alloc'd structure: */
struct mv_struct init = {
  counter: 1.
  average: 2.5,
  in use: 1
};
/* memmove(dst, src, size) (note, arg order like assignment) */
memmove(s, &init, sizeof(init)); 	◆
                                                      memmove is preferred because it is
                                                      safe for shifting buffers
/* when you are done with it, free it! */
                                                                                        Whv?
free(s):
s = NULL:
             Use pointers as implied in-use flags!
```

Macros

Macros can be a useful way to customize your interface to C and make your code easier to read and less redundant. However, when possible, use a static inline function instead.

What's the difference between a macro and a static inline function?

Macros and static inline functions must be included in any file that uses them, usually via a header file. Common uses for macros:

```
constants?
 /* Macros are used to define constants */
                                                     Float constants must have a decimal
 #define FUDGE FACTOR
                        45.6
                                                     point, else they are type int
 #define MSEC_PER_SEC
                        1000
 #define INPUT_FILENAME "my_input_file"
                                                                                         enums
 /* Macros are used to do constant arithmetic */
                                                                                         Why?
 #define TIMER VAL
                        (2*MSEC_PER_SEC)
                                                     Put expressions in parens.
 /* Macros are used to capture information from the compiler */
 #define DBG(args...) \
                                                     Multi-line macros need \
   do { \
     fprintf(stderr, "%s:%s:%d: ". \
       __FUNCTION__, __FILE__, __LINENO__); \
                                                     args... grabs rest of args
     fprintf(stderr, args...); \
                                                                                         Why?
   } while (0)
                                         Enclose multi-statement macros in do{}while(0)
_ /* ex. DBG("error: %d", errno): */
```

More on C

Macros and Readability

Sometimes macros can be used to improve code readability... but make sure what's going on is obvious.

```
/* often best to define these types of macro right where they are used */
#define CASE(str) if (strncasecmp(arg, str, strlen(str)) == 0)

void parse_command(char *arg)
{
    CASE("help") {
        /* print help */
    }
    CASE("quit") {
        exit(0);
    }
}

/* and un-define them after use */
#undef CASE
void parse_command(char *arg)
{
    if (strncasecmp(arg, "help", strlen("help")) {
        /* print help */
    }
    if (strncasecmp(arg, "quit", strlen("quit")) {
        exit(0);
    }
}

/* and un-define them after use */
#undef CASE
```

Macros can be used to generate static inline functions. This is like a C version of a C++ template. See emstar/libmisc/include/queue.h for an example of this technique.

Using "goto"

Some schools of thought frown upon goto, but goto has its place. A good philosophy is, always write code in the most expressive and clear way possible. If that involves using goto, then goto is not bad.

An example is jumping to an error case from inside complex logic. The alternative is deeply nested and confusing "if" statements, which are hard to read, maintain, and verify. Often additional logic and state variables must be added, just to avoid goto.



Solutions to the pow() challenge question

Recursive

Iterative

```
float pow(float x, uint exp)
{
  float result;

  /* base case */
  if (exp == 0)
    return 1.0;

  /* x^(2*a) == x^a * x^a */
  result = pow(x, exp >> 1);
  result = result * result;

  /* x^(2*a+1) == x^(2*a) * x */
  if (exp & 1)
    result = result * x;

  return result;
}
```

```
float pow(float x, uint exp)
{
  float result = 1.0;

  int bit;
  for (bit = sizeof(exp)*8-1;
      bit >= 0; bit--) {
    result *= result;
    if (exp & (1 << bit))
      result *= x;
  }

  return result;
}</pre>
```

Which is better? Why?

Final issues

- Come by my office hours (right after class)
- Any questions or concerns?