Introduction to Database Systems

Database Systems Lecture 1
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In this Lecture

- Course Information
- Databases and Database Systems
- Some History
- The Relational Model

For more information
- Connolly and Begg – Chapters 1 and 2
- Ullman and Widom (2ed.) – Chapter 1
- The module website
  www.cs.nott.ac.uk/~nza/G51DBS/

Course Information

- Contact details
  - Natasha Alechina
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  - Office: B50
- Lectures
  - Mondays at 9 (sorry, not my fault) LT2
  - Wednesdays at 12 in LT3
  - Labs Wednesday 9-11 starting 13 February
- Assessment
  - 25% Coursework
    - Some lab-marked exercises
    - A written exercise with a database design
  - 75% Examination
    - 2 hour written exam
    - Answer 3 out of 5 questions
    - Format similar to last years' G51DBS and G52DBS before that.

Textbook

- Recommended textbooks:
  - 'Database Systems: A practical approach to design, implementation and management' by Connolly and Begg
  - `A first course in database systems' by Ullman and Widom.
- Other textbooks:
  - There are *lots* of database texts
  - Most of them would be fine also
- For example:
  - 'Database Systems' by CJ Date

Course Overview

- Several main topics
  - Database systems
  - Data models
  - Database design
  - SQL
  - Transactions
  - Concurrency
  - Administration
- Practical sessions
  - Will start on 13 February
  - SQL
    - creating a database
    - querying a database

Why Study Databases?

- Databases are useful
  - Many computing applications deal with large amounts of information
  - Database systems give a set of tools for storing, searching and managing this information
- Databases in CS
  - Databases are a 'core topic' in computer science
  - Basic concepts and skills with database systems are part of the skill set you will be assumed to have as a CS graduate

What is a Database?

- "A set of information held in a computer"
  Oxford English Dictionary
- "One or more large structured sets of persistent data, usually associated with software to update and query the data"
  Free On-Line Dictionary of Computing
- "A collection of data arranged for ease and speed of search and retrieval"
  Dictionary.com

Databases

- Web indexes
- Library catalogues
- Medical records
- Bank accounts
- Stock control
- Personnel systems
- Product catalogues
- Telephone directories
- Train timetables
- Airline bookings
- Credit card details
- Student records
- Customer histories
- Stock market prices
- Discussion boards
- and so on…

Database Systems

- A database system consists of
  - Data (the database)
  - Software
  - Hardware
  - Users
- We focus mainly on the software
- Database systems allow users to
  - Store
  - Update
  - Retrieve
  - Organise
  - Protect

  their data.

Database Users

- End users
  - Use the database system to achieve some goal
- Application developers
  - Write software to allow end users to interface with the database system
- Database Administrator (DBA)
  - Designs & manages the database system
- Database systems programmer
  - Writes the database software itself

Database Management Systems

- A database is a collection of information
- A database management system (DBMS) is the software than controls that information
- Examples:
  - Oracle
  - DB2 (IBM)
  - MS SQL Server
  - MS Access
  - Ingres
  - PostgreSQL
  - MySQL

What the DBMS does

- Provides users with
  - Data definition language (DDL)
  - Data manipulation language (DML)
  - Data control language (DCL)
- Often these are all the same language
- DBMS provides
  - Persistence
  - Concurrency
  - Integrity
  - Security
  - Data independence
- Data Dictionary
  - Describes the database itself

Data Dictionary - Metadata

- The dictionary or catalog stores information about the database itself
- This is data about data or 'metadata'
- Almost every aspect of the DBMS uses the dictionary
- The dictionary holds
  - Descriptions of database objects (tables, users, rules, views, indexes,…)
  - Information about who is using which data (locks)
  - Schemas and mappings

File Based Systems

- File based systems
  - Data is stored in files
  - Each file has a specific format
  - Programs that use these files depend on knowledge about that format
- Problems:
  - No standards
  - Data duplication
  - Data dependence
  - No way to generate ad hoc queries
  - No provision for security, recovery, concurrency, etc.

Relational Systems

- Problems with early databases
  - Navigating the records requires complex programs
  - There is minimal data independence
  - No theoretical foundations
- Then, in 1970, E. F. Codd wrote "A Relational Model of Data for Large Shared Databanks" and introduced the relational model

Relational Systems

- Information is stored as *tuples* or *records* in *relations* or *tables*
- There is a sound mathematical theory of relations
- Most modern DBMS are based on the relational model
- The relational model covers 3 areas:
  - Data structure
  - Data integrity
  - Data manipulation
- More details in the next lecture…

ANSI/SPARC Architecture

- ANSI - American National Standards Institute
- SPARC - Standards Planning and Requirements Committee
- 1975 - proposed a framework for DBs
- A three-level architecture
  - Internal level: For systems designers
  - Conceptual level: For database designers and administrators
  - External level: For database users

Internal Level

- Deals with physical storage of data
  - Structure of records on disk - files, pages, blocks
  - Indexes and ordering of records
  - Used by database system programmers
- Internal Schema

```
RECORD EMP
LENGTH=44
HEADER: BYTE(5)
   OFFSET=0
NAME: BYTE(25)
   OFFSET=5
SALARY: FULLWORD
   OFFSET=30
DEPT: BYTE(10)
   OFFSET=34
```

Conceptual Level

- Deals with the organisation of the data as a whole
  - Abstractions are used to remove unnecessary details of the internal level
  - Used by DBAs and application programmers
- Conceptual Schema

```
CREATE TABLE
Employee (
 Name
  VARCHAR(25),
 Salary REAL,
 Dept_Name
  VARCHAR(10))
```

External Level

- Provides a view of the database tailored to a user
  - Parts of the data may be hidden
  - Data is presented in a useful form
  - Used by end users and application programmers
- External Schemas

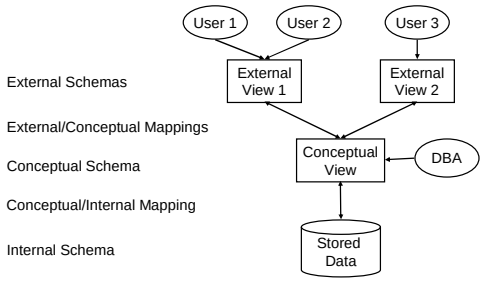
```
Payroll:
 String Name
 double Salary

Personnel:
 char *Name
 char *Department
```

Mappings

- Mappings translate information from one level to the next
  - External/Conceptual
  - Conceptual/Internal
- These mappings provide data independence
- Physical data independence
  - Changes to internal level shouldn't affect conceptual level
- Logical data independence
  - Conceptual level changes shouldn't affect external levels

ANSI/SPARC Architecture



This Lecture in Exams

- Describe the three levels of the ANSI/SPARC model. You should include information about what each level is for, which users might be interested in which levels, and how the levels relate to one another. (2004/05, 7 marks)

Next Lecture

The Relational Model
- Relational data structure
- Relational data integrity
- Relational data manipulation

For more information
- Connolly and Begg chapters 3 and 4
- Ullman and Widom (2 ed.) Chapter 3.1, 5.1
- E.F. Codd's paper

(there is a link on last year's G51DBS webpage)