

LECTURE 3

PYTHON TOUR PART II

DOCSTRINGS, FUNCTIONS, MODULES, CLASSES

MCS 275 Spring 2023

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LECTURE 3: PYTHON TOUR II

Reminders and announcements:

- Read the [syllabus](#).
- Homework 1 posted. Due Noon on Wed 18 January.
- No class on Monday (MLK holiday).
- See Blackboard announcement about impact of potential faculty strike

NOTES FOR SELF STUDY

Expanded version of the code from the last two lectures:

Python tour (prep for MCS 275)

DOCSTRINGS

The first non-comment statement in any Python file should be a string on a line by itself. That string should describe the file. It is called a **docstring**.

Docstrings can also appear as the first statement inside a function body or class definition.

Anywhere else you want to put explanatory text, use a comment.

FUNCTIONS

Named^{*}, reusable code blocks you can call (run) from elsewhere in your code.

```
def divisible_by_7(x):  
    """Return True if x is divisible by 7""" # <-- docstring!  
    return x % 7 == 0  
  
# ... and then later ...  
  
if divisible_by_7(10987654321):  
    print("Hey, did you know 10987654321 is a multiple of 7?!")
```

^{*}It is also possible to define unnamed (anonymous) functions using `lambda`, but that isn't discussed in this quick overview.

See Lutz, Chapters 16-18 or MCS 260 [Lec 9](#) and [Lec 24](#).

MODULES

A module keeps a bunch of related code in one place; good for reuse and organization. The statement

```
import modulename
```

will look for `modulename.py` in current directory, or a built-in module with that name, and make its functions, classes, etc. available.

Use `modulename.funcname(...)` to call a function in a module.

See Lutz, Chapters 22-23 or MCS 260 [Lec 20](#).

CLASSES

Classes let you define custom types in Python with **attributes** (data) and **methods** (behavior).

```
class Point:
    """A point in the xy-plane""" # <--- Remember docstring!
    def __init__(self,x,y):
        """Initialize new point instance"""
        self.x = x    # make a new attribute (self.x)
        self.y = y    # make a new attribute (self.y)
    def translate(self,dx,dy):
        """Move the point by a vector (dx,dy)"""
        self.x += dx
        self.y += dy

P = Point(1,2) # calls __init__(...)
P.translate(5,0)
print("After moving, P.x is",P.x) # will print 6
```


See Lutz, Chapters 27-28 and MCS 260 Lectures [25](#), [26](#), [27](#), [28](#).

REFERENCES

- The [Python tour](#) is an expanded version of the live coding examples from today's lecture.
- Individual slides refer to chapters from Lutz (Learning Python 5ed).
 - Free access to online book for UIC students; see course web page.
- The [MCS 260 Fall 2021 home page](#) has slide presentations, sample code, and other resources for review.

REVISION HISTORY

- 2023-01-13 Initial publication
- 2023-01-16 Fixed some links

