CSSE 120 – Introduction to Software Development

Concept: *Counted Loops* and *Range expressions*

Loops

A ***loop*** is, well, something that *loops*, that is, ***executes repeatedly***. For example, to print the numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, … 1000, you could either:

- Stupid approach: Write 1,000 print statements:

```
print(1)
print(2)
print(3)
  ...
  ...
print(1000)
```

- Sensible approach: Write a *single* loop whose *body* runs 1,000 times:

```
for k in range(1000):
    print(k)
```

Do you see why loops are valuable?

range expressions

For the first type of loop that we will examine we need ***range*** expressions. There are three forms of ***range*** expressions. Here is the first (we'll see the other two later in this course).

- `range(n)` – generates the sequence of integers: **`0, 1, 2, ... n-1`**.
  - For example, **`range(7)`** generates the sequence: **`0 1 2 3 4 5 6`**.
  - The sequence generated by **`range(n)`** has **`n`** numbers in it. Note that the sequence starts at **`0`**, not **`1`**, hence stops at **`n-1`**. We will see later why this is handy.

Counted loops

There are many kinds of loops. For now, we will introduce only ***counted loops*** – loops that go a certain number of times, for example a loop that goes 500 times or a loop that goes ***n*** times where ***n*** is a variable with an integer value.

A ***counted loop*** has the form shown in the box to the right, where ***k*** can be any variable and ***n*** can be any variable or constant whose value is an integer. The ***for*** statement makes its ***body*** (the indented part, shown as **`...`** in the box to the right) run ***n*** times, with ***k*** set to ***`0, 1, 2, ... n-1,`*** per the ***range*** expression.

```
for k in range(n):
    ...
    ...
```

Here (on the next page) are some examples:

Code snippet | **What the code snippet prints**

```
for k in range(10):
    print(k, '   ', math.sin(k))
```

```
0     0.0
1     0.8414709848078965
2     0.9092974268256817
3     0.1411200080598672
4     -0.7568024953079282
5     -0.9589242746631385
6     -0.27941549819892586
7     0.6569865987187891
8     0.9893582466233818
9     0.4121184852417566
```

The variable ***k*** takes on the values ***0, 1, 2, ... 9,*** per the ***range*** statement. You can (and usually do) also use ***k*** in *expressions* in the body of the loop, as in the above example.

```
x = 6
for blah in range(x):
    print(blah, '   ', math.sin(blah))
```

```
0     0.0
1     0.8414709848078965
2     0.9092974268256817
3     0.1411200080598672
4     -0.7568024953079282
5     -0.9589242746631385
```

The variable after the symbol **for** is called the ***index variable***. It can be any variable (as in the silly example above), but the common style is to use single-letter variable names like ***i***, ***j***, ***k***, ***m*** and ***n***.

The entire ***body*** of the **for** loop (that is, the ***indented lines***) are executed repeatedly. So in this example, the loop runs 4 times, printing 4 things each time, producing 16 lines of output.

```
for k in range(4):
    print(k)
    print(k * k)
    print(math.sqrt(k))
    print()
```

```
0
0
0.0

1
1
1.0

2
4
1.4142135623730951

3
9
1.7320508075688772
```

print with nothing in the parentheses simply prints a blank line.