

CMSC335

Web Application Development with JavaScript



JavaScript Introduction

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JavaScript

- A programming language that can appear in html pages
- It allow us to:
 - To create interactive web pages
 - To control a browser application
 - » Open and create new browser windows
 - » Download and display contents of any URL
 - To interact with the user
 - Ability to interact with HTML forms
- Process values provided by input elements such as checkbox, text, buttons, etc.
- **Example:** SqrTable.html

ECMAScript

- **Ecma International** - Organization that creates standards
 - <https://www.ecma-international.org/>
- **Scripting language** - language that acts on a system or an entity
- **ECMAScript** - specification for a general purpose scripting language
 - Provides rules that a scripting language must observe to be considered ECMAScript compliant
- **ECMAScript specification**
 - <https://www.ecma-international.org/publications-and-standards/standards/ecma-262/>

JavaScript

- **Javascript** - general purpose scripting language that conforms to the ECMAScript specification
- JavaScript is based on the ECMAScript specification
- A lightweight, interpreted, or just-in-time compiled language that can function as both a procedural and an object-oriented language
- Appears in web browser and non-browser environments (e.g., Node.js, Apache CouchDB)
- Reference: <https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/JavaScript>

JavaScript Engine

- JavaScript engines process JavaScript code
 - **Safari** - JavaScriptCore
 - **Chrome** - V8
 - **Firefox** - Spidermonkey
 - **Edge** - Chakra
- Client-Side JavaScript: the result of embedding a JavaScript engine in a web browser
- A JavaScript program can appear:
 - In a file by itself typically named with the extension .js
 - In html files between a <script> and </script> tags
- **Example:** TemplateJS.html
 - Right-click→Inspect→Console to see console.log() output

“use strict” in the template JS

- JavaScript's strict mode, introduced in ES5
- A way to opt in to a restricted variant of JavaScript, thereby implicitly opting-out of "sloppy mode"
- Several changes to normal JavaScript semantics:
 - Makes JavaScript silent errors throw errors
 - Prohibits some syntax likely to be defined in future versions of ECMAScript
- **Examples not allowed**
 - Declaring function in blocks `if (a < b) { function f() {} }`
 - **Setting a value to an undeclared variable**

Processing HTML Page with JS

- **DOM – Document Object Model**
 - Structured representation of the HTML page
 - Every HTML element is represented as a node
 - Browser uses HTML to build the DOM and can fix problems with the HTML so a valid DOM is generated
- **Lifecycle**
 - **Set the user interface**
 - » Parse the HTML and build the DOM
 - » Process (execute) JavaScript code
 - **Enter a loop and wait for events to take place**
- When JavaScript is seen in a page, the DOM construction is halted and JavaScript code execution is started
- JS can modify the DOM (e.g., creating, modifying nodes)
 - One reason why `<script></script>` elements appear at the bottom of a page

Event-Handling

- **Relies on a single-threaded execution model**
- An **event queue** keeps track of events that have taken place, but have not been processed (event-handler function for the event has not been called)
- All generated events (whether are user-generated or not) are placed in the event queue in the order they were detected by the browser
 - The browser mechanism that detects events and that adds them to the event queue is separate from the thread that is handling the events
- JavaScript periodically checks the event queue and if any event is found it executes the appropriate handler (if one was defined)

Browser's Global Objects

- Browsers provide two global objects: **window** and **document**
- **window** object - represents the window in which a page resides
 - Provides access to other global objects (e.g., document)
 - Keeps track of user's global variables
 - Allows JavaScript to access Browser's APIs
- **document** object
 - Property of the window object that represents the DOM of the current page
 - **Via this object you can access & modify the DOM**

Types of JavaScript Code

- **Function Code**
 - Code contained in a function
- **Global Code**
 - Code placed **outside all functions**
 - Automatically executed by JS engine
- As in Java, a stack is used to keep track of function calls. Each function call generates a **function execution context** (stack frame)
- There is one frame called the **global execution context** created when the JS program starts executing
 - Only one global execution context (at the bottom of the stack)

JavaScript Comments

- **Comments in JavaScript**

- Used to provide information to the programmer
- Used to identify sections in your code
- Ignored by the JavaScript interpreter

- **Two types of comments**

- Inline comment **// This is a comment until the end of the line**
- Block comment

/* The following is a
comment that spans
several lines ***/**

Variable Declarations

- Variable declaration (no type specification)

**var x; /* old (avoid)*/
let x; /* what to use */
const x /* for constants*/**

- Variables names must start with:
 - A letter, underscore or dollar sign and then
 - Can be followed by any number of letters, underscores, dollar signs or digits

JavaScript Data Types

- **JavaScript has no class concept**
 - We have functions
 - Using functions and prototypal inheritance we can implement the concept of classes
 - Syntax was added to define classes as you do in Java, but it is just syntactic sugar (no actual classes as in Java)
- **Two kinds of types**
 - **Primitive types** - data that is not an object and has no methods.
All primitives are immutable
 - **Reference types** - references to objects

JavaScript Data Types

- **Seven primitive data types in JavaScript**
 - **null** - has value null
 - **Boolean** - value of **true** or **false**
 - **number** - numeric data type using a double-precision 64-bit floating point form (IEEE 754)
 - **string** - character sequence delimited by single or double quotes
 - **undefined** - value automatically assigned to variable just declared or to parameters that have no corresponding arguments
 - **bigint** - represents integers in arbitrary precision format (precision limited by host system)
 - **symbol** - represents a unique identifier (guaranteed to be unique)
 - » `let x = Symbol("A"); let y = Symbol("A"); // x === y is false`
- **typeof** operator
 - Returns string indicating the type of data
 - Note: **typeof null** will returns “object”

JavaScript Data Types

- Reference types represents objects in JavaScript
- Reference values are instances of reference types and considered objects
- **Object** - collection of properties
 - **Property** - string that is associated with a value
 - **Value** - could be a primitive, object, function
- **Object creation**

```
let a = new Object();  
let b = {};  
let c = {  
    id: 789,  
    name: "Rose Smith"  
}; // object literal
```
- **JavaScript relies on garbage collection**
 - When an object is no longer needed, set the variable to null