

# CSCI 104

## Operator Overloading & Copy Semantics

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# Get the Example Code

- Download the code
  - \$ wget [http://ee.usc.edu/~redekopp/cs104/str\\_ops.tar](http://ee.usc.edu/~redekopp/cs104/str_ops.tar)
  - \$ tar xvf str\_ops.tar
  - \$ wget <http://ee.usc.edu/~redekopp/cs104/complex.tar>
  - \$ tar xvf complex.tar
- Str should mimic the C++ string class
  - Properly handle memory allocation
  - Let you treat it like an array where you can do '[i]' indexing
  - Let you do comparison on string objects with '==' and other operators, etc.
- Complex should mimic a complex number

# List/Array Indexing

- Arrays and vectors allow indexing using square brackets: [ ]
  - E.g. `my_list[i]` equivalent to `my_list.get(i)`
- It would be nice to allow that indexing notation for our List class
- But if we just try it won't compile...How does the compiler know what to do when it sees a List object followed by square brackets
- Enter C++ operator overloading
  - Allows us to write our own functions that will be "tied" to and called when a symbolic operator (+, -, \*, [ ]) is used

```
#ifndef LLISTINT_H
#define LLISTINT_H
class LListInt{
public:
    LList(); // Constructor
    ~LList(); // Destructor
    int& get(int loc);

    ...
private:
    Item* head_;
};
#endif

int main()
{
    LListInt my_list();
    my_list.push_back(5);
    my_list.push_back(7);

    cout << my_list.get(0) << endl;
    cout << my_list[0] << endl;

    return 0;
}
```

# Function Overloading

- What makes up a signature (uniqueness) of a function
  - name
  - number and type of arguments
- No two functions are allowed to have the same signature; the following 3 functions are unique and allowable...
  - `void f1(int);`      `void f1(double);`      `void f1(List<int>&);`
  - `void f1(int, int);`      `void f1(double, int);`
- We say that “f1” is overloaded 5 times

# Operator Overloading

- C/C++ defines operators (+,\*,-,==,etc.) that work with basic data types like int, char, double, etc.
- C/C++ has no clue what classes we'll define and what those operators would mean for these yet-to-be-defined classes
  - Class complex {  
    public:  
        double real, imaginary;  
    };
  - Complex c1,c2,c3;  
    c3 = c1 + c2; // should add component-wise
  - Class List {  
    ...  
    };
  - List l1,l2;  
    l1 = l1 + l2; // should concatenate l2 items to l1

```
class User{  
public:  
    User(string n); // Constructor  
    string get_name();  
private:  
    int id_;  
    string name_;  
};
```

user.h

```
#include "user.h"  
User::User(string n) {  
    name_ = n;  
}  
string User::get_name(){  
    return name_;  
}
```

user.cpp

```
#include<iostream>  
#include "user.h"  
  
int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {  
    User u1("Bill"), u2("Jane");  
    // see if same username  
    // Option 1:  
    if(u1 == u2) cout << "Same";  
  
    // Option 2:  
    if(u1.get_name() == u2.get_name())  
        { cout << "Same" << endl; }  
    return 0;  
}
```

user\_test.cpp

# Operator Overloading w/ Global Functions

- Can define global functions with name "operator{+-...}" taking two arguments
  - LHS = Left Hand side is 1<sup>st</sup> arg
  - RTH = Right Hand side is 2<sup>nd</sup> arg
- When compiler encounters an operator with objects of specific types it will look for an "operator" function to match and call it

```
int main()
{
    int hour = 9;
    string suffix = "p.m.";

    string time = hour + suffix;
    // WON'T COMPILE...doesn't know how to
    // add an int and a string
    return 0;
}
```

```
string operator+(int time, string suf)
{
    stringstream ss;
    ss << time << suf;
    return ss.str();
}
int main()
{
    int hour = 9;
    string suffix = "p.m.";

    string time = hour + suffix;
    // WILL COMPILE TO:
    // string time = operator+(hour, suffix);

    return 0;
}
```

# Operator Overloading for Classes

- C++ allows users to write functions that define what an operator should do for a class
  - Binary operators: +, -, \*, /, ++, --
  - Comparison operators: ==, !=, <, >, <=, >=
  - Assignment: =, +=, -=, \*=, /=, etc.
  - I/O stream operators: <<, >>
- Function name starts with **'operator'** and then the actual operator
- Left hand side is the implied object for which the member function is called
- Right hand side is the argument

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex();
    Complex operator+(const Complex &rhs);

private:
    int real, imag;
};

Complex Complex::operator+(const Complex &rhs)
{
    Complex temp;
    temp.real = real + rhs.real;
    temp.imag = imag + rhs.imag;
    return temp;
}

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3);
    Complex c2(4,5);
    Complex c3 = c1 + c2;
    // Same as c3 = c1.operator+(c2);
    cout << c3.real << ", " << c3.imag << endl;
    // can overload '<<' so we can write:
    // cout << c3 << endl;
    return 0;
}
```

# Binary Operator Overloading

- For binary operators, do the operation on a new object's data members and return that object
  - Don't want to affect the input operands data members
    - Difference between:  $x = y + z$ ; vs.  $x = x + z$ ;
- Normal order of operations and associativity apply (can't be changed)
- Can overload each operator with various RHS types...
  - See next slide



# Binary Operator Overloading

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex()
    Complex operator+(const Complex &rhs);
    Complex operator+(int real);

private:
    int real, imag;
};

Complex Complex::operator+(const Complex &rhs)
{
    Complex temp;
    temp.real = real + rhs.real;
    temp.imag = imag + rhs.imag;
    return temp;
}

Complex Complex::operator+( int real)
{
    Complex temp = *this;
    temp.real += real;
    return temp;
}
```

```
int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3), c2(4,5), c3(6,7);

    Complex c4 = c1 + c2 + c3;
    // (c1 + c2) + c3
    // c4 = c1.operator+(c2).operator+(c3)
    //      = anonymous-ret-val.operator+(c3)

    c3 = c1 + c2;
    c3 = c3 + 5;
}
```

# Relational Operator Overloading

- Can overload  
==, !=, <, <=, >, >=
- Return bool

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex();
    Complex operator+(const Complex &rhs);
    bool operator==(const Complex &rhs);
    int real, imag;
};

bool Complex::operator==(const Complex &rhs)
{
    return (real == rhs.real && imag == rhs.imag);
}

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3);
    Complex c2(4,5);
    // equiv. to c1.operator==(c2);
    if(c1 == c2)
        cout << "C1 & C2 are equal!" << endl;

    return 0;
}
```

**Nothing will be displayed**

# Practice

- Add the following operators to your Str class
  - Operator[]
  - Operator==(const Str& rhs);
  - If time do these as well but if you test them they may not work...more on this later!
  - Operator+(const Str& rhs);
  - Operator+(const char\* rhs);

# Non-Member Functions

- What if the user changes the order?
  - int on LHS & Complex on RHS
  - No match to a member function b/c to call a member function the LHS has to be an instance of that class
- We can define a non-member function (good old regular function) that takes in two parameters (both the LHS & RHS)
  - May need to declare it as a friend

```
int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3);
    Complex c2(4,5);
    Complex c3 = 5 + c1;
                // ?? 5.operator+(c1) ??
                // ?? int.operator+(c1) ??
                // there is no int class we can
                // change or write

    return 0;
}
```

**Doesn't work**

```
Complex operator+(const int& lhs, const Complex &rhs)
{
    Complex temp;
    temp.real = lhs + rhs.real;    temp.imag = rhs.imag;
    return temp;
}
int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3);
    Complex c2(4,5);
    Complex c3 = 5 + c1;    // Calls operator+(5,c1)
    return 0;
}
```

**Still a problem with this code**  
**Can operator+(...) access Complex's private data?**

# Friend Functions

- A friend function is a function that is not a member of the class but has access to the private data members of instances of that class
- Put keyword 'friend' in function prototype in class definition
- Don't add scope to function definition

```
class Dummy
{
public:
    Dummy(int d) { dat = d };
    friend int inc_my_data(Dummy &dum);
private:
    int dat;
};

// don't put Dummy:: in front of inc_my_data(...)
int inc_my_data(Dummy &dum)
{
    dum.dat++;
    return dum.dat;
}

int main()
{
    Dummy dumb(5);
    dumb.dat = 8; // WON'T COMPILE
    int x = inc_my_data(dumb);
    cout<< x << endl;
}
```

# Non-Member Functions

- Revisiting the previous problem

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex();
    // this is not a member function
    friend Complex operator+(const int&, const Complex& );
private:
    int real, imag;
};

Complex operator+(const int& lhs, const Complex &rhs)
{
    Complex temp;
    temp.real = lhs + rhs.real;    temp.imag = rhs.imag;
    return temp;
}

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3);
    Complex c2(4,5);
    Complex c3 = 5 + c1;    // Calls operator+(5,c1)
    return 0;
}
```

**Now things work!**

# Why Friend Functions?

- Can I do the following?
- error: no match for 'operator<<' in 'std::cout << c1'
- /usr/include/c++/4.4/ostream:108: note: candidates are: /usr/include/c++/4.4/ostream:165: note: std::basic\_ostream<\_CharT, \_Traits>& std::basic\_ostream<\_CharT, \_Traits>::operator<<(long int) [with \_CharT = char, \_Traits = std::char\_traits<char>]
- /usr/include/c++/4.4/ostream:169: note: std::basic\_ostream<\_CharT, \_Traits>& std::basic\_ostream<\_CharT, \_Traits>::operator<<(long unsigned int) [with \_CharT = char, \_Traits = std::char\_traits<char>]
- /usr/include/c++/4.4/ostream:173: note: std::basic\_ostream<\_CharT, \_Traits>& std::basic\_ostream<\_CharT, \_Traits>::operator<<(bool) [with \_CharT = char, \_Traits = std::char\_traits<char>]
- /usr/include/c++/4.4/bits/ostream.tcc:91: note: std::basic\_ostream<\_CharT, \_Traits>& std::basic\_ostream<\_CharT, \_Traits>::operator<<(short int) [with \_CharT = char, \_Traits = std::char\_traits<char>]

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex();
    Complex operator+(const Complex &rhs);
private:
    int real, imag;
};

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3);
    cout << c1; // equiv. to cout.operator<<(c1);
    cout << endl;
    return 0;
}
```

# Why Friend Functions?

- cout is an object of type 'ostream'
- << is just an operator
- But we call it with 'cout' on the LHS which would make "operator<<" a member function of class ostream
- Ostream class can't define these member functions to print out user defined classes because they haven't been created
- Similarly, ostream class doesn't have access to private members of Complex

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex();
    Complex operator+(const Complex &rhs);
private:
    int real, imag;
};

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3);
    cout << "c1 = " << c1;
    // cout.operator<<("c1 = ").operator<<(c1);

    // ostream::operator<<(char *str);
    // ostream::operator<<(Complex &src);

    cout << endl;
    return 0;
}
```



# Ostream Overloading

- Can define operator functions as friend functions
- LHS is 1<sup>st</sup> arg.
- RHS is 2<sup>nd</sup> arg.
- Use friend function so LHS can be different type but still access private data
- Return the ostream& (i.e. os which is really cout) so you can chain calls to '<<' and because cout/os object has changed

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex();
    Complex operator+(const Complex &rhs);
    friend ostream& operator<<(ostream&, const Complex &c);
private:
    int real, imag;
};

ostream& operator<<(ostream &os, const Complex &c)
{
    os << c.real << "," << c.imag << "j";
    //cout.operator<<(c.real).operator<<(",").operator<<...
    return os;
}

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3), c2(4,5);
    cout << c1 << c2;
    // operator<<(cout, c1);
    cout << endl;
    return 0;
}
```

**Template for adding ostream capabilities:**  
**friend ostream& operator<<(ostream &os, const T &rhs);**  
**(where T is your user defined type)**

# Summary

- Make the operator a member function of a class...
  - IF the **left hand side** of the operator is an instance of **that class**
  - The member function should only take in one argument which is the RHS object
- Make the operator a friend function of a class if...
  - IF the **left hand side** of the operator is an instance of **another class** and **right hand side** is an instance of **the class**
  - This function requires two arguments, first is the LHS object and second is the RHS object

# Practice

- Add an ostream operator ('<<') to your Str class

# Exercises For Home

- Write a '[' operator member function for you List class
  - Have it throw an exception if the index is out of bounds
- Write an '==' operator to check if two lists have exactly the same contents in the exactly the same order
- Write a '+' operator to append one list to the end of another

```
#include <iostream>
#include "listint.h"

using namespace std;

int main()
{
    List<int> m1, m2;

    m1.push_back(5);
    m2.push_back(5);
    if(m1 == m2){
        cout << "Should print!";
    }

    cout << "0-th item is " << m1[0];
    cout << endl;

    m1[0] = 7;
    if(m1 == m2){
        cout << "Should not print!"; << endl;
    }
    return 0;
}
```

Copy constructors and assignment operators

# **COPY SEMANTICS**

# Get the Code

- On your VM run the command:
  - `wget http://ee.usc.edu/~redekopp/cs104/copycon.cpp`

# this Pointer

- How do member functions know which object's data to be operating on?
- d1 is implicitly passed via a special pointer call the 'this' pointer

0x7e0

cards[52]	37	21	4	9	16	43	20	39
top_index	0							

d2

0x2a0

cards[52]	41	27	8	39	25	4	11	17
top_index	1							

d1

d1 is implicitly passed to shuffle()

```
#include<iostream>
#include "deck.h"

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    Deck d1, d2;
    d1.shuffle();
}
```

poker.cpp

```
#include<iostream>
#include "deck.h"

void Deck::shuffle()
{
    cut(); // calls cut()
           // for this object
    for(i=0; i < 52; i++){
        int r = rand() % (52-i);
        int temp = cards[r];
        cards[r] = cards[i];
        cards[i] = temp;
    }
}
```

deck.cpp

Actual code you write

this  
0x2a0

```
int main() { Deck d1;
             d1.shuffle();
}

void Deck::shuffle(Deck *this)
{
    this->cut(); // calls cut()
                // for this object
    for(i=0; i < 52; i++){
        int r = rand() % (52-i);
        int temp = this->cards[r];
        this->cards[r] = this->cards[i];
        this->cards[i] = temp;
    }
}
```

deck.cpp

Compiler-generated code

# Another Use of 'this'

- This can be used to resolve scoping issues with similar named variables

```
class Student {
public:
    Student(string name, int id, double gpa);

    ~Student(); // Destructor
private:
    string name;
    int id;
    double gpa;
};

Student::Student(string name, int id, double gpa)
{ // which is the member and which is the arg?
    name = name; id = id; gpa = gpa;
}

Student::Student(string name, int id, double gpa)
{ // Now it's clear
    this->name = name;

    this->id = id;

    this->gpa = gpa;
}
```



# Struct/Class Assignment

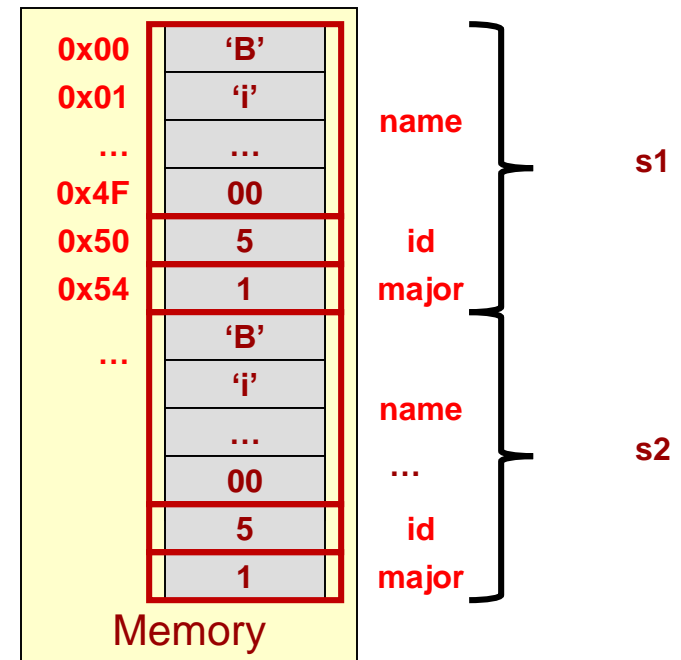
- Assigning one struct or class object to another will perform an element by element copy of the source struct/class to the destination struct/class

```
#include<iostream>
using namespace std;

enum {CS, CECS };

struct student {
    char name[80];
    int id;
    int major;
};

int main(int argc, char *argv[])
{
    student s1,s2;
    strncpy(s1.name,"Bill",80);
    s1.id = 5; s1.major = CS;
    s2 = s1;
    return 0;
}
```



# Multiple Constructors

- Can have multiple constructors with different argument lists

```
#include<iostream>
#include "student.h"

int main()
{
    Student s1; // calls Constructor 1
    string myname;
    cin >> myname;
    s1.set_name(myname);
    s1.set_id(214952);
    s1.set_gpa(3.67);

    Student s2(myname, 32421, 4.0);
        // calls Constructor 2
}
```

```
class Student {
public:
    Student(); // Constructor 1
    Student(string name, int id, double gpa);
        // Constructor 2

    ~Student(); // Destructor
    string get_name();
    int get_id();
    double get_gpa();

    void set_name(string name);
    void set_id(int id);
    void set_gpa(double gpa);
private:
    string _name;
    int _id;
    double _gpa;
};
```

```
Student::Student()
{
    _name = "", _id = 0; _gpa = 2.0;
}

Student::Student(string name, int id, double gpa)
{
    _name = name; _id = id; _gpa = gpa;
}
```

Student.h

Student.cpp

# Copy Constructors

- Write a prototype for the constructor that would want to be called by the red line of code
- Realm of Reasonable Answers:
  - Complex(Complex)
  - We will see that this can't be right...
  - Complex(Complex &)
  - Complex(const Complex &)
- We want a constructor that will build a new Complex object (c3) by making a copy of another (c1)

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);

    // What constructor definition do I
    // need for c3's declaration below

    ~Complex()
private:
    int real, imag;
};

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3), c2(4,5)
    Complex c3(c1);

}
```

# Assignment & Copy Constructors

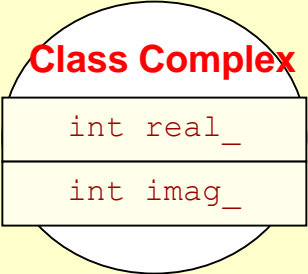
- C++ compiler automatically generates a **default copy constructor**
  - Constructor called when an object is allocated and initializes the object to be a copy of another object of the same type
  - Signature would look like **Complex(const Complex &);**
  - Called by either of the options shown in the code
  - **Simply performs an element by element copy**
  
- C++ compiler automatically generates a **default assignment function**
  - Called when you assign to an object that is already allocated (memory already exists)
  - **Simply performs an element by element copy**
  - **Complex& operator=(const Complex &);**

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    // compiler will provide by default:
    // Complex(const Complex& );
    // Complex& operator=(const Complex&);
    ~Complex()
private:
    int real, imag;
};

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3), c2(4,5)

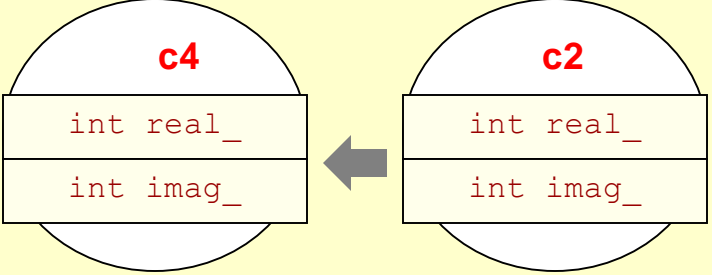
    Complex c3(c1); // copy constructor
    Complex c4 = c1; // copy constructor

    c4 = c2; // default assignment oper.
    // c4.operator=(c2)
}
```



**Class Complex**

int real\_  
int imag\_



**c4**      **c2**

int real\_  
int imag\_      int real\_  
int imag\_

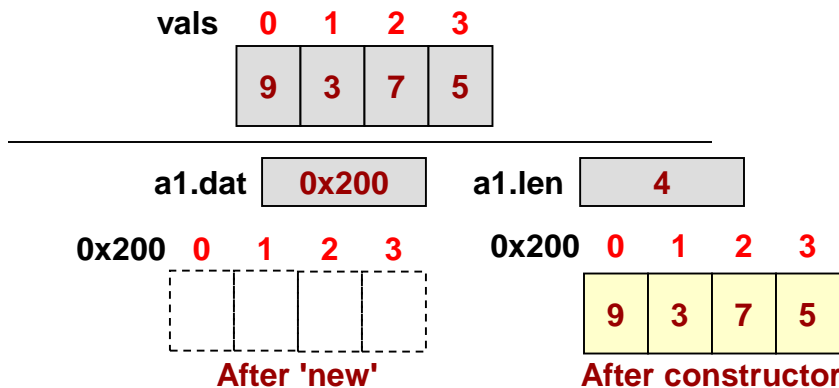
# Assignment & Copy Constructors

- C++ compiler automatically generates a **default copy constructor**
- C++ compiler automatically generates a **default assignment function**
- See picture below of what a1 looks like as it is constructed

```

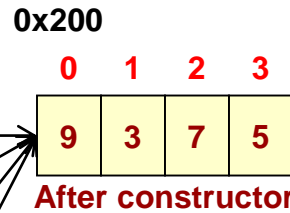
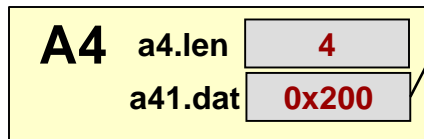
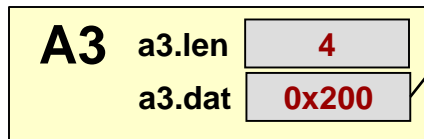
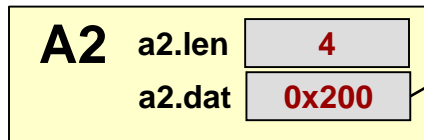
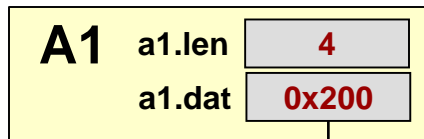
class MyArray
{
public:
    MyArray(int d[], int num); //normal
    ~MyArray();
    int len; int *dat;
};
// Normal constructor
MyArray::MyArray(int d[], int num)
{
    dat = new int[num]; len = num;
    for(int i=0; i < len; i++){
        dat[i] = d[i];
    }
}

int main()
{
    int vals[] = {9,3,7,5};
    MyArray a1(vals,4);
    MyArray a2(a1); // calls default copy
    MyArray a3 = a1; // calls default copy
    MyArray a4;
    a4 = a1; // calls default assignment
    // how are the contents of a2, a3, a4
    // related to a1
}
    
```



# Assignment & Copy Constructors

vals	0	1	2	3
	9	3	7	5



Default copy constructor and assignment operator make a **SHALLOW COPY** (data members only) rather than a **DEEP copy** (data members + what they point at)

```
class MyArray
{
public:
    MyArray(int d[], int num); //normal
    ~MyArray();
    int len; int *dat;
};
// Normal constructor
MyArray::MyArray(int d[], int num)
{
    dat = new int[num]; len = num;
    for(int i=0; i < len; i++){
        dat[i] = d[i];
    }
}

int main()
{
    int vals[] = {9,3,7,5};
    MyArray a1(vals,4);
    MyArray a2(a1); // calls default copy
    MyArray a3 = a1; // calls default copy
    MyArray a4;
    a4 = a1; // calls default assignment
    // how are the contents of a2, a3, a4
    // related to a1
}
```

# When to Write Copy Constructor

- Default copy constructor and assignment operator ONLY perform SHALLOW copies
  - **SHALLOW COPY (data members only)**
  - **DEEP copy (data members + what they point at)**
  - [Like saving a webpage to your HD...it makes a shallow copy and doesn't copy the pages linked to]
- You SHOULD/MUST define your own copy constructor and assignment operator when a DEEP copy is needed
  - When you have pointer data members that point to data that should be copied when a new object is made
  - Often times if your data members are pointing to dynamically allocated data, you need a DEEP copy
- If a Shallow copy is acceptable, you do NOT need to define a copy constructor

# Defining Copy Constructors

- Same name as normal constructor but should take in an argument of the object type:
  - Usually a const reference
- **MyArray(const MyArray&);**

```
class MyArray
{public:
    MyArray(int d[], int num);
    MyArray(const MyArray& rhs);
    ~MyArray();
private:
    int *dat; int len;
}
// Normal constructor
MyArray::MyArray(int d[], int num)
{
    dat = new int[num]; len = num;
    // copy values from d to dat
}
// Copy constructor
MyArray::MyArray(const MyArray &rhs){
{
    len = rhs.len; dat = new int[len];
    // copy from rhs.dat to dat
}

int main()
{
    intvals[] = {9,3,7,5};
    MyArray a1(vals,4);
    MyArray a2(a1);
    MyArray a3 = a1;
    // how are the contents of a2 and a1 related?
}
```



# Implicit Calls to Copy Constructor

- Recall pass-by-value passes a copy of an object...If defined the copy constructor will automatically be called to make this copy otherwise the default copy will perform a shallow copy

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    Complex(const Complex &rhs);
    ~Complex();
    int real, imag;
};
// Copy constructor
Complex::Complex(const Complex &c)
{
    cout << "In copy constructor" << endl;
    real = c.real; imag = c.imag;
}
// ** Copy constructor called for pass-by-value
int dummy(Complex rhs)
{
    cout << "In dummy" << endl;
}

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3), c2(4,5);
    int x = dummy(c1);
    //      ** Copy Constructor called on c1 **
}
```

# Copy Constructors

- Write a prototype for the constructor that would want to be called by the red line of code
- Now we see why the first option can't be right...because to pass c1 by value requires a call to the copy constructor which we are just now defining (circular reference/logic)
  - `Complex(Complex)`
    - We will see that this can't be right...
- The argument must be passed by reference
  - `Complex(const Complex &)`

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    Complex(Complex c); // Bad b/c pass
                        // by value req. copy to be made
                        // ...chicken/egg problem
    Complex(const Complex &c); // Good
    ~Complex()
private:
    int real, imag;
};

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3), c2(4,5)
    Complex c3(c1);
}
```

# Practice

- Add a copy constructor to your Str class

# Defining Copy Assignment Operator

- Operator=() is called when an object already exists and then you assign to it
  - Copy constructor called when you assign during a declaration:
    - E.g. MyArray a2=a1;
- Can define operator for '=' to indicate how to make a copy via assignment
- **Gotchas?**

```
class MyArray
{
public:
    MyArray();
    MyArray(int d[], int num);
    MyArray(const MyArray& rhs);
    MyArray& operator=(const MyArray& rhs);
    ~MyArray();
    int*dat; intlen;
}

MyArray::MyArray(const MyArray &rhs){
{
    len = rhs.len; dat = new int[len];
    // copy from rhs.dat to dat
}

MyArray& MyArray::operator=(const MyArray &rhs){
{
    len = rhs.len; dat = new int[len];
    // copy from rhs.dat to dat
}

int main()
{
    intvals[] = {9,3,7,5};
    MyArray a1(vals,4);
    MyArray a2;
    a2 = a1; // operator=() since a2 already exists
}
```

# Defining Copy Assignment Operator

- **Gotchas?**
  - Dest. object may already be initialized and simply overwriting data members may lead to a memory leak
  - **Self assignment** (which may also lead to memory leak or lost data)

```
class MyArray
{
public:
    MyArray();
    MyArray(int d[], int num);
    MyArray(const MyArray& rhs);
    MyArray& operator=(const MyArray& rhs);
    ~MyArray();
    int *dat; int len;
}

MyArray::MyArray(const MyArray &rhs) {
    { len = rhs.len; dat = new int[len];
      // copy from rhs.dat to dat
    }
}

MyArray& MyArray::operator=(const MyArray &rhs) {
    {
        if(this == &rhs) return *this;
        if(dat) delete dat;
        len = rhs.len; dat = new int[len];
        // copy from rhs.dat to dat
        return *this;
    }
}

int main()
{
    int vals1[] = {9,3,7,5}, vals2[] = {8,3,4,1};
    MyArray a1(vals1,4);
    MyArray a2(vals2,4);
    a1 = a1;  a2 = a1;
}
}
```

# Assignment Operator Practicals

- RHS should be a const reference
  - Const so we don't change it
  - Reference so we don't pass-by-value and make a copy (which would actually call a copy constructor)
- Return value should be a reference
  - Allows for chained assignments
  - Should return (\*this)
  - Reference so another copy isn't made

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex()
    Complex operator+(Complex right_op);
    Complex &operator=(const Complex &rhs);
private:
    int real, imag;
};

Complex &Complex::operator=(const Complex & rhs)
{
    real = rhs.real;
    imag = rhs.imag;
    return *this;
}

int main()
{
    Complex c1(2,3), c2(4,5);

    Complex c3, c4;
    c4 = c3 = c2;
    // same as c4.operator=( c3.operator=(c2) );
}
```

# Assignment Operator Overloading

- If a different type argument can be accepted we can overload the = operator

```
class Complex
{
public:
    Complex(int r, int i);
    ~Complex();
    Complex operator+(const Complex &rhs);
    Complex &operator=(const Complex &r);
    Complex &operator=(const int r);
    int real, imag;
};

Complex &Complex::operator=(const int& r)
{
    real = r; imag= 0;
    return *this;
}

int main()
{
    Complex c1(3,5);
    Complex c2,c3,c4;
    c2 = c3 = c4 = 5;
    // c2 = (c3 = (c4 = 5) );
    // c4.operator=(5); // Complex::operator=(int&)
    // c3.operator=(c4); // Complex::operator=(Complex&)
    // c2.operator=(c3); // Complex::operator=(Complex&)
    return 0;
}
```

# Copy Constructor Summary

- If you are okay with a shallow copy, you don't need to define a copy constructor or assignment operator
- **Rule of Three:**
  - Usually if you have dynamically allocated memory, you'll need a **copy constructor**, an **assignment operator**, and a **destructor** (i.e. if you need 1 you need all 3)
- Copy constructor should accept a const reference of the same object type
- Assignment operators should be careful to cleanup initialized members and check for self-assignment
- Assignment operators should return a reference type and return `*this`



# Exercises

- Add an assignment operator to your Str class
- Also add a '+=' operator to your Str class