UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL

Winter 2024 Examination Period

SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

Second Year Examination for the Degrees of Bachelor of Science Master of Engineering

COMS20007W
Programming Languages and Computation

TIME ALLOWED: 3 Hours

This paper contains *three* questions, worth 40, 30 and 30 marks respectively. Answer *all* questions. The maximum for this paper is 100 marks. Credit will be given for partial answers.

Other Instructions:

Candidates may bring to the exam room 1 double-sided A4 page of notes in any format. A reminder of key definitions is provided at the back of this paper.

TURN OVER ONLY WHEN TOLD TO START WRITING

- Q1. This question is about syntax.
 - *(a) Consider the following grammar, whose start symbol is S.

For each of the following, state if it is true or false.

- i. $S \to^* \epsilon$
- ii. $S \rightarrow^*$ item and item
- iii. $S \rightarrow \mathsf{item}$
- iv. $T \rightarrow^*$ item, item
- $\text{v. } T \to \epsilon$

[5 marks]

*(b) Consider the following context-free grammar:

$$S \longrightarrow aSaS \mid bS \mid \epsilon$$

Give derivations for each of the following strings.

- i. aa
- ii. abab
- iii. bb
- iv. baa
- v. aab

[10 marks]

*(c) Consider the following grammar over 7 terminal symbols:

$$\$$
 key val : $\{\ \}$;

with start symbol S and whose rules are:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} S & \longrightarrow & R \;\$ \\ R & \longrightarrow & \{\;F\;\} \\ F & \longrightarrow & K\;G \\ G & \longrightarrow \; ;\; K\;G \mid \epsilon \\ K & \longrightarrow & \mathsf{key}:D \\ D & \longrightarrow & \mathsf{val}\mid R \end{array}$$

The nullable, first and follow maps for this grammar are:

| Nonterminal | Nullable | First | Follow | | |
|-------------|----------|--------------|--------|--|--|
| S | | { | | | |
| R | | { | \$; | | |
| F | | key | } | | |
| G | ✓ | ; | } | | |
| K | | key | ; } | | |
| D | | key val { | ; } | | |

i. Copy the following table into your answer book (make sure the cells are quite large) and use the nullable, first and follow maps above to complete the entries so that it forms a parse table for the grammar.

| Nonterminal | \$ { | } | key | : | val |
|-------------|---------|---|-----|---|-----|
| S | | | | | |
| R | | | | | |
| F | | | | | |
| G | | | | | |
| K | | | | | |
| D | | | | | |

ii. Is this grammar LL(1)?

[5 marks]

- ** (d) Recall that we write |u| for the length of a given word u. For each of the following languages over the alphabet $\{a, b, \#\}$, design a grammar to express it.
 - i. $\{w \mid w \in \{a,b\}^* \text{ and no } a \text{ occurs after (further to the right of) any } b \text{ in } w\}$
 - ii. $\{u \# v \mid u, v \in \{a, b\}^* \text{ and } |u| = |v|\}$
 - iii. $\{u\#v\#w\mid u,v,w\in\{a,b\}^* \text{ and u is the reverse of w } \}$

[6 marks]

** (e) Give an LL(1) grammar equivalent to the following grammar (i.e. expressing the same language).

$$T \longrightarrow ' \text{ tyvar } | (T) | T \text{ tycon } | T \Rightarrow T | T, T$$

The 7 terminal symbols of this grammar are:

' tyvar ()
$$\Rightarrow$$
 tycon ,

[4 marks]

*** (f) Consider the following language over $\{0, 1\}$:

 $\{w\mid \text{any two occurrences of 1 in } w \text{ are separated by an even number of letters}\}$

So, for example, 1000010 is in this language, because the only occurrences of 1 are separated by 4 letters. However, 1101 is not, because the second and third occurrences of 1 are only separated by 1 letter.

- i. Construct a CFG to express this language.
- ii. Justify informally why your CFG is correct.

[6 marks]

***(g) Argue that no word of shape uauvbv, with $u,v\in\{a,b\}^*$, can be written as ww for some choice of $w\in\{a,b\}^*$.

[4 marks]

- Q2. This question is about semantics.
 - *(a) Consider the following code fragments from the While language:

i. while
$$0 \le x$$
 do $x \leftarrow (x-1)$

ii.
$$x * (y - z)$$

iii.
$$12 * x \le y + z$$

iv. if
$$y \leq 4$$
 then $x \leftarrow (x-1)$ else $x \leftarrow y$

For each of these fragments:

- Indicate whether it is an arithmetic expression, Boolean expression, or statement;
- If it is an expression, calculate its value in the state $[x \mapsto -1, y \mapsto 1]$. Your answer should make explicit reference to the denotation function in your answer.
- If it is a statement, determine the final state when the statement is executed in the initial state $[x \mapsto -2, y \mapsto 3, z \mapsto 4]$. You should justify your answer by providing the associated trace.

[10 marks]

** (b) In this part, we will consider an extension of the While language with an additional construct - $par(S_1; S_2)$. The grammar defining the statements of this extended language is thus given as follows:

$$S \longrightarrow \mathsf{par}(S;\ S) \mid \mathsf{skip} \mid x \leftarrow A \mid S; S \mid \mathsf{if}\ B \ \mathsf{then}\ S \ \mathsf{else}\ S \mid \mathsf{while}\ B \ \mathsf{do}\ S$$

where the definition of arithmetic and Boolean expressions are unchanged.

The operational semantics of this statement is given by the following rule:

$$\begin{array}{c|c} \langle S_1,\,\sigma_1\rangle \rightarrow \sigma_2 & \langle S_2,\,\sigma_1\rangle \rightarrow \sigma_2 \\ \hline \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2),\,\sigma_1\rangle \rightarrow \langle S_2,\,\sigma_2\rangle & \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2),\,\sigma_1\rangle \rightarrow \langle S_1,\,\sigma_2\rangle \\ \hline \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2),\,\sigma_1\rangle \rightarrow \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1';\,S_2),\,\sigma_2\rangle & \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2),\,\sigma_1\rangle \rightarrow \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2'),\,\sigma_2\rangle \\ \hline \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2),\,\sigma_1\rangle \rightarrow \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2'),\,\sigma_2\rangle & \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2),\,\sigma_1\rangle \rightarrow \langle \mathsf{par}(S_1;\,S_2'),\,\sigma_2\rangle \\ \hline \end{array}$$

where all other rules still apply.

Here is an example trace using this rule:

$$\langle \mathsf{par}(x \leftarrow x + y; \ y \leftarrow y * 2), \ [y \mapsto 1] \rangle$$

$$\rightarrow \langle x \leftarrow x + y, \ [y \mapsto 2] \rangle$$

$$\rightarrow [x \mapsto 2, \ y \mapsto 2]$$

- i. Find a $\sigma \in$ State such that $\langle \mathsf{par}(x \leftarrow x + y; \ y \leftarrow y * 2), \ [y \mapsto 1] \rangle \to^* \sigma$ and where σ is distinct from the final state given above. Justify your answer by giving a trace.
- ii. Prove that, if $\langle S_1, \sigma_1 \rangle \to^* \sigma_2$, then $\langle \operatorname{par}(S_1; S_2), \sigma \rangle \to^* \langle S_2, \sigma_2 \rangle$ for any states $\sigma_1, \sigma_2 \in \operatorname{State}$ and any statements $S_1, S_2 \in \mathcal{S}$ by induction over the length of the trace.

[10 marks]

*** (c) Let P be the following While program:

while
$$!(a = b) do$$

if $b \le a$
then $a \leftarrow a - b$
else $b \leftarrow b - a$

- i. Compute the final state of the program from the initial state $[a\mapsto 15,\ b\mapsto 6].$ You do not need to provide a trace.
- ii. Find an initial state $\sigma \in \mathsf{State}$ for which there does *not* exist a final state $\sigma' \in \mathsf{State}$ such that $\langle P, \sigma \rangle \to^* \sigma'$. You should briefly justify your answer.
- iii. Find a loop invariant I from which you can conclude the Hoare triple:

$$\{I\} P \{I \&\& a = b\}$$

and which demonstrates that the program does not terminate from the initial state given in part ii. You should briefly justify your answer.

[10 marks]

- Q3. This question is about computability.
 - *(a) Show that the function $f: \mathbb{N} \longrightarrow \mathbb{N}$ defined by

$$f(x) \begin{cases} \simeq x*2 & \text{if } 0 \leq x \leq 10 \\ \simeq x*3 & \text{if } 11 \leq x \leq 100 \text{ and } x \text{ is even} \\ \simeq x & \text{if } 11 \leq x \leq 100 \text{ and } x \text{ is odd} \\ \uparrow & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

is computable. [5 marks]

- *(b) State whether each of the following statements is true or false.
 - (i) The set of numbers that are greater than 42 is decidable.
 - (ii) Every surjection has an inverse.
 - (iii) There are bijections that are not injections.
 - (iv) The set $\{10^x \mid x = 0, 1, 2, ...\}$ is decidable.
 - (v) If a function has an inverse then it must be computable.

[5 marks]

- ** (c) State whether each of the following statements is true or false.
 - (i) If a predicate is semi-decidable then it is also decidable.
 - (ii) The Church-Turing thesis implies that no computer is more powerful than the While programming language.
 - (iii) The set of numbers $\{2^{2^{2^{n}}} \mid n=0,1,2,\ldots\}$ is undecidable.
 - (iv) It is possible to implement an interpreter for Java in the While programming language.
 - (v) A function is computable if and only if it is partial and injective.

[5 marks]

** (d) Consider the following predicate.

$$U = \{ \ulcorner S \urcorner \mid \llbracket S \rrbracket_{\mathbf{x}} \left(k \right) \text{ is a multiple of } k \text{, for all } 0 \leq k \leq 10^5 \}$$

Is U semi-decidable? Why, or why not?

[5 marks]

***(e) Show that the predicate U defined above is undecidable.

[5 marks]

*** (f) Show that the predicate

$$V = \left\{ \left\langle \ulcorner S \urcorner \,, \ulcorner T \urcorner \right\rangle \mid \text{ and for all } k \in \mathbb{N} \text{ we have } \llbracket S \rrbracket_{\mathbf{x}} \left(k \right) \simeq 2 \times \llbracket T \rrbracket_{\mathbf{x}} \left(k \right) \right\}$$

is undecidable. [5 marks]

Reminder of Important Definitions

Grammars

A Context Free Grammar (CFG) consists of four components:

- An alphabet of terminal symbols.
- A finite, non-empty set of *non-terminal* symbols, disjoint from the terminals.
- A finite set of *production rules*.
- A designated non-terminal called the start symbol.

A sentential form, usually α , β , γ and so on, is just a finite sequence of terminals and nonterminals.

The sentential form α can make a *derivation step* to β , written $\alpha \to \beta$, just if:

- α has shape $\gamma_1 \, X \, \gamma_2$ and β has shape $\gamma_1 \, \delta \, \gamma_2$
- and there is a production rule $X := \delta$ in the grammar

A *derivation sequence* is a non-empty sequence of sentential forms α_1 , α_2 , ... α_{k-1} , α_k in which consecutive elements of the sequence are derivation steps:

$$\alpha_1 \to \alpha_2 \to \cdots \to \alpha_{k-1} \to \alpha_k$$

A sentential form β is *derivable* from α , written $\alpha \to^* \beta$ just if there is a derivation sequence starting with α and ending with β .

We say that a word w is in the *language of a grammar* G with start symbol S, and write $w \in L(G)$ just if $S \to^* w$.

Nullable

On nonterminals:

$$\mathsf{Nullable}(X) \text{ iff } X \to^* \epsilon$$

On sentential forms:

$$\mathsf{Nullable}_s(\alpha) = \begin{cases} \mathsf{true} & \text{if } \alpha = \epsilon \\ \mathsf{false} & \text{if } \alpha \text{ is of shape } a\beta \\ \mathsf{Nullable}(X) \land \mathsf{Nullable}_s(\beta) & \text{if } \alpha \text{ is of shape } X\beta \end{cases}$$

First

On nonterminals:

$$\mathsf{First}(X) = \{ a \mid \exists \beta. \, X \to^* a\beta \}$$

On sentential forms:

$$\mathsf{First}_s(\alpha) = \begin{cases} \emptyset & \text{if } \alpha = \epsilon \\ \{a\} & \text{if } \alpha \text{ is of shape } a\beta \\ \mathsf{First}(X) & \text{if } \alpha \text{ is of shape } X\beta \text{ and } \neg \mathsf{Nullable}(X) \\ \mathsf{First}(X) \cup \mathsf{First}_s(\beta) & \text{if } \alpha \text{ is of shape } X\beta \text{ and } \mathsf{Nullable}(X) \end{cases}$$

Follow

On nonterminals:

$$\mathsf{Follow}(X) = \{ a \mid \exists \alpha \beta. \ S \to^* \alpha X a \beta \}$$

Parse Tables and LL(1)

We define the *parsing table*, usually T, for a given grammar as a 2d array indexed by pairs of a nonterminal and a terminal. Each entry T[X,a] is a set of production rules from the grammar, such that some rule $X \longrightarrow \beta$ is in the set T[X,a] just if, either:

- 1. $a \in \mathsf{First}_s(\beta)$
- 2. or, Nullable_s(β) and $a \in Follow(X)$

A grammar whose parsing table contains at most one rule in each cell is called LL(1).

Abstract Syntax of Arithmetic Expressions

An arithmetic expression is a tree described by the following grammar:

$$A := n \mid x \mid A + A \mid A - A \mid A * A$$

where n ranges over integer literals, and x ranges over variables. Parentheses are used to resolve ambiguity and to indicate the structure of the tree. We write \mathcal{A} for the set of arithmetic expressions.

Abstract Syntax of Boolean Expressions

A Boolean expression is a tree described by the following grammar.

$$B ::= \mathsf{false} \mid \mathsf{true} \mid !B \mid B \& \& B \mid B \parallel B \mid A = A \mid A \leq A$$

Parentheses are used to resolve ambiguity and to indicate the structure of the tree. We write \mathcal{B} for the set of Boolean expressions.

Abstract Syntax of Statements

A statement is a tree described by the following grammar:

$$S \coloneqq \mathsf{skip} \mid x \leftarrow A \mid S; S \mid \mathsf{if} \ B \ \mathsf{then} \ S \ \mathsf{else} \ S \mid \mathsf{while} \ B \ \mathsf{do} \ S$$

Braces " $\{\cdots\}$ " are used to resolve ambiguity and to indicate the structure of the tree. We write S for the set of statements.

States

A state is a total function from the set State $= \text{Var} \to \mathbb{Z}$, where Var is the set of variables. We write $[x_1 \mapsto v_1, \, x_2 \mapsto v_2, \, \dots, \, x_n \mapsto v_n]$ to indicate the state that maps the variable $x_i \in \text{Var}$ to the value $v_i \in \mathbb{Z}$ for all $i \leq n$. By convention, any variable not explicitly mentioned by a given state σ is assigned the value 0.

For a given state $\sigma \in \mathsf{State}$, we write $\sigma[x \mapsto v]$ for some variable $x \in \mathsf{Var}$ and $v \in \mathbb{Z}$ to denote the state that maps the variable x to v and any other variable y to the value $\sigma(y)$.

Semantics of Arithmetic Expressions

The denotation function for arithmetic expressions $[\![\cdot]\!]_{\mathcal{A}} \in \mathcal{A} \to (\mathsf{State} \to \mathbb{Z})$, which is defined by recursion in Figure 1. We say that two arithmetic expressions $e_1, e_2 \in \mathcal{A}$ are semantically equivalent if, and only if, $[\![e_1]\!]_{\mathcal{A}}(\sigma) = [\![e_2]\!]_{\mathcal{A}}(\sigma)$ for all states $\sigma \in \mathsf{State}$.

Figure 1: Definition of the denotational semantics of arithmetic expressions.

Semantics of Boolean Expressions

The denotation function for Boolean expressions $[\![\cdot]\!]_{\mathcal{B}} \in \mathcal{B} \to (\mathsf{State} \to \mathbb{B})$ is defined by recursion in Figure 2. We say that two Boolean expressions $e_1, e_2 \in \mathcal{B}$ are semantically equivalent if, and only if, $[\![e_1]\!]_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) = [\![e_2]\!]_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma)$ for all states $\sigma \in \mathsf{State}$.

$$\begin{split} & \llbracket \mathsf{false} \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) &= \bot \\ & \llbracket \mathsf{true} \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) &= \top \\ & \llbracket !e \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) &= \neg \llbracket e \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) \\ & \llbracket e_1 \&\& e_2 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) &= \llbracket e_1 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) \wedge \llbracket e_2 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) \\ & \llbracket e_1 \parallel e_2 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) &= \llbracket e_1 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) \vee \llbracket e_2 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) \\ & \llbracket e_1 = e_2 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) &= \llbracket e_1 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{A}}(\sigma) = \llbracket e_2 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{A}}(\sigma) \\ & \llbracket e_1 \le e_2 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{B}}(\sigma) &= \llbracket e_1 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{A}}(\sigma) \le \llbracket e_2 \rrbracket_{\mathcal{A}}(\sigma) \\ \end{split}$$

Figure 2: Definition of the denotational semantics of Boolean expressions.

Semantics of Statements

The small-step operational semantics relation $\to \subseteq \mathcal{C} \times \mathcal{C}$ is defined by the rules in Figure 3 where the set of configurations \mathcal{C} is $(\mathcal{S} \times \mathsf{State}) \cup \mathsf{State}$.

Figure 3: Definition of the operational semantics of statements.

Hoare Triples

A Hoare triple $\{P\}$ S $\{Q\}$ for P, $Q\subseteq$ State asserts that, for any state $\sigma\in$ State, if $\sigma\in P$ and $\langle S,\sigma\rangle\to^*\sigma'$, then $\sigma'\in Q$. The sets P and Q can be represented as Boolean expressions extended with quantifiers.

The rules for constructing Hoare triples are given in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Rules of Hoare logic.

Computable Functions

We write $[x \mapsto n]$ for the state that maps the variable x to the number $n \in \mathbb{N}$, and every other variable to 0.

A 'while' program S computes a partial function $f: \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$ (with respect to x) just if $f(m) \simeq n$ exactly when $\langle S, [\mathbf{x} \mapsto m] \rangle \Downarrow [\mathbf{x} \mapsto n]$.

A function $f: \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$ is *computable* just if there is a program S that computes f with respect to the variable x.

Predicates

The *characteristic function* of U is the function

$$\chi_U : \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$$

$$\chi_U(n) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } n \in U \\ 0 & \text{if } n \notin U \end{cases}$$

The semi-characteristic function of U is the partial function

$$\xi_U: \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$$

$$\xi_U(n) \begin{cases} \simeq 1 & \text{if } n \in U \\ \uparrow & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

A predicate $U \subseteq \mathbb{N}$ is *decidable* just if its characteristic function $\chi_U : \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$ is computable.

The 'while' program that computes the characteristic function χ_U of a predicate $U \subseteq \mathbb{N}$ is called a *decision procedure*. Any predicate for which there is no decision procedure is called *undecidable*.

A predicate $U \subseteq \mathbb{N}$ is *semi-decidable* just if its semi-characteristic function ξ_U is computable.

The *Halting Problem* is the following predicate:

$$\mathsf{HALT} = \{ \langle \lceil S \rceil, n \rangle \mid [\![S]\!]_{\mathbf{x}}(n) \downarrow \}$$

Bijections

A function $f: A \to B$ is *injective* (or 1-1) just if for any $a_1, a_2 \in \mathcal{A}$ we have that $f(a_1) = f(a_2)$ implies $a_1 = a_2$. We sometimes write $f: A \to B$ whenever f is an injection.

A function $f:A\to B$ is surjective just if for any $b\in\mathcal{B}$ there exists $a\in\mathcal{A}$ such that f(a)=b. We sometimes write $f:A\twoheadrightarrow B$ whenever f is a surjection.

A function $f: A \to B$ is a *bijection* just if it is both injective and surjective.

Let $f:A\to B$ be a function. f is an isomorphism just if it has an inverse. That is, if there exists a function $f^{-1}:B\to A$ such that:

- for all $a \in \mathcal{A}$ we have $f^{-1}(f(a)) = a$
- for all $b \in \mathcal{B}$ we have $f(f^{-1}(b)) = b$

Encoding Data

A pairing function is a bijection $\mathbb{N} \times \mathbb{N} \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathbb{N}$. We assume that we have a fixed pairing function

$$\langle -, - \rangle : \mathbb{N} \times \mathbb{N} \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathbb{N}$$

with the following inverse:

$$\mathsf{split}: \mathbb{N} \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathbb{N} \times \mathbb{N}$$

Reflections

Suppose we have two bijections:

$$\phi: A \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathbb{N} \quad \psi: B \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathbb{N}$$

The *reflection* of $f:A \rightarrow B$ under (ϕ, ψ) is the function

$$\tilde{f}: \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$$

$$\tilde{f}(n) = \psi(f(\phi^{-1}(n)))$$

Gödel Numbering

Let **Stmt** be the set of Abstract Syntax Trees of While. We assume that we have a Gödel numbering

$$\lceil - \rceil : \mathbf{Stmt} \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathbb{N}$$

which encodes While programs as natural numbers.

A *code transformation* is a function $f : \mathbf{Stmt} \to \mathbf{Stmt}$.

Universal Function

The universal function, U, is defined as follows:

$$U: \mathbf{Stmt} \times \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$$
$$U(P, n) = \llbracket P \rrbracket_{\mathbf{x}}(n)$$

Reductions

Let $U,W\subseteq\mathbb{N}$ be predicates, and let $f:\mathbb{N}\to\mathbb{N}$. The function f is a many-one reduction from U to W just if it is computable, and it is also the case that

$$n \in U \Leftrightarrow f(n) \in W$$

We may write $f: U \lesssim V$ (read "f is a reduction from U to V ").