

# Elements of Software Engineering and Information Systems

## Lecture 1 – Introduction to Software Engineering

Prof. Ing. Lelio Campanile, PhD

Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Data Science  
Dipartimento di Matematica e Fisica  
Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli

A.A. 2025/2026

- 1 Topics Covered
- 2 Professional Software Development
- 3 Software Engineering Ethics
- 4 Case Studies
  - Insulin Pump Control System
  - Mentcare System
  - Wilderness Weather Station
  - iLearn: A Digital Learning Environment
- 5 Key Points

# Topics covered

## Professional software development

What is meant by software engineering.

## Software engineering ethics

A brief introduction to ethical issues that affect software engineering.

## Case studies

An introduction to three examples that are used in later lectures.

---

# Professional Software Development

---

- The economies of ALL developed nations are dependent on software.
- More and more systems are software controlled.
- Software engineering is concerned with theories, methods and tools for professional software development.
- Expenditure on software represents a significant fraction of GNP in all developed countries.

- Software costs often dominate computer system costs. The costs of software on a PC are often greater than the hardware cost.
- Software costs more to maintain than it does to develop. For systems with a long life, maintenance costs may be several times development costs.

## Key Insight

Software engineering is concerned with **cost-effective** software development.

## Increasing system complexity

As new software engineering techniques help us to build larger, more complex systems, the demands change. Systems have to be built and delivered more quickly; larger, even more complex systems are required; systems have to have new capabilities that were previously thought to be impossible.

## Failure to use software engineering methods

It is fairly easy to write computer programs without using software engineering methods and techniques. Many companies have drifted into software development as their products and services have evolved. They do not use software engineering methods in their everyday work. Consequently, their software is often more expensive and less reliable than it should be.

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering

---

## Question

## Answer

---

What is software?

What are the attributes of good software?

What is software engineering?

What are the fundamental SE activities?

What is the difference between SE and computer science?

What is the difference between SE and system engineering?

---

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering

Question	Answer
What is software?	Computer programs and associated documentation. Software products may be developed for a particular customer or may be developed for a general market.
What are the attributes of good software?	
What is software engineering?	
What are the fundamental SE activities?	
What is the difference between SE and computer science?	
What is the difference between SE and system engineering?	

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering

Question	Answer
What is software?	Computer programs and associated documentation. Software products may be developed for a particular customer or may be developed for a general market.
What are the attributes of good software?	Good software should deliver the required functionality and performance to the user and should be maintainable, dependable and usable.
What is software engineering?	
What are the fundamental SE activities?	
What is the difference between SE and computer science?	
What is the difference between SE and system engineering?	

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering

Question	Answer
What is software?	Computer programs and associated documentation. Software products may be developed for a particular customer or may be developed for a general market.
What are the attributes of good software?	Good software should deliver the required functionality and performance to the user and should be maintainable, dependable and usable.
What is software engineering?	Software engineering is an engineering discipline that is concerned with all aspects of software production.
What are the fundamental SE activities?	
What is the difference between SE and computer science?	
What is the difference between SE and system engineering?	

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering

Question	Answer
What is software?	Computer programs and associated documentation. Software products may be developed for a particular customer or may be developed for a general market.
What are the attributes of good software?	Good software should deliver the required functionality and performance to the user and should be maintainable, dependable and usable.
What is software engineering?	Software engineering is an engineering discipline that is concerned with all aspects of software production.
What are the fundamental SE activities?	Software specification, software development, software validation and software evolution.
What is the difference between SE and computer science?	
What is the difference between SE and system engineering?	

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering

Question	Answer
What is software?	Computer programs and associated documentation. Software products may be developed for a particular customer or may be developed for a general market.
What are the attributes of good software?	Good software should deliver the required functionality and performance to the user and should be maintainable, dependable and usable.
What is software engineering?	Software engineering is an engineering discipline that is concerned with all aspects of software production.
What are the fundamental SE activities?	Software specification, software development, software validation and software evolution.
What is the difference between SE and computer science?	Computer science focuses on theory and fundamentals; software engineering is concerned with the practicalities of developing and delivering useful software.
What is the difference between SE and system engineering?	

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering

Question	Answer
What is software?	Computer programs and associated documentation. Software products may be developed for a particular customer or may be developed for a general market.
What are the attributes of good software?	Good software should deliver the required functionality and performance to the user and should be maintainable, dependable and usable.
What is software engineering?	Software engineering is an engineering discipline that is concerned with all aspects of software production.
What are the fundamental SE activities?	Software specification, software development, software validation and software evolution.
What is the difference between SE and computer science?	Computer science focuses on theory and fundamentals; software engineering is concerned with the practicalities of developing and delivering useful software.
What is the difference between SE and system engineering?	System engineering is concerned with all aspects of computer-based systems development including hardware, software and process engineering. Software engineering is part of this more general process.

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering (cont.)

---

**Question****Answer**

---

What are the key challenges facing SE?

What are the costs of SE?

What are the best SE techniques and methods?

What differences has the web made to SE?

---

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering (cont.)

Question	Answer
What are the key challenges facing SE?	Coping with increasing diversity, demands for reduced delivery times and developing trustworthy software.
What are the costs of SE?	
What are the best SE techniques and methods?	
What differences has the web made to SE?	

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering (cont.)

Question	Answer
What are the key challenges facing SE?	Coping with increasing diversity, demands for reduced delivery times and developing trustworthy software.
What are the costs of SE?	Roughly 60% of software costs are development costs, 40% are testing costs. For custom software, evolution costs often exceed development costs.
What are the best SE techniques and methods?	
What differences has the web made to SE?	

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering (cont.)

Question	Answer
What are the key challenges facing SE?	Coping with increasing diversity, demands for reduced delivery times and developing trustworthy software.
What are the costs of SE?	Roughly 60% of software costs are development costs, 40% are testing costs. For custom software, evolution costs often exceed development costs.
What are the best SE techniques and methods?	While all software projects have to be professionally managed and developed, different techniques are appropriate for different types of system. For example, games should always be developed using a series of prototypes whereas safety critical control systems require a complete and analyzable specification to be developed. You can't, therefore, say that one method is better than another.
What differences has the web made to SE?	

# Frequently asked questions about software engineering (cont.)

Question	Answer
What are the key challenges facing SE?	Coping with increasing diversity, demands for reduced delivery times and developing trustworthy software.
What are the costs of SE?	Roughly 60% of software costs are development costs, 40% are testing costs. For custom software, evolution costs often exceed development costs.
What are the best SE techniques and methods?	While all software projects have to be professionally managed and developed, different techniques are appropriate for different types of system. For example, games should always be developed using a series of prototypes whereas safety critical control systems require a complete and analyzable specification to be developed. You can't, therefore, say that one method is better than another.
What differences has the web made to SE?	The web has led to the availability of software services and the possibility of developing highly distributed service-based systems. Web-based systems development has led to important advances in programming languages and software reuse.

## Generic products

- Stand-alone systems that are marketed and sold to any customer who wishes to buy them.
- Examples: PC software such as graphics programs, project management tools; CAD software; software for specific markets such as appointments systems for dentists.

## Customized products

- Software that is commissioned by a specific customer to meet their own needs.
- Examples: embedded control systems, air traffic control software, traffic monitoring systems.

# Product specification

## Generic products

The specification of what the software should do is owned by the software developer and decisions on software change are made by the developer.

## Customized products

The specification of what the software should do is owned by the customer for the software and they make decisions on software changes that are required.

# Essential attributes of good software

Product characteristic	Description
Maintainability	
Dependability and security	
Efficiency	
Acceptability	

# Essential attributes of good software

Product characteristic	Description
Maintainability	Software should be written in such a way so that it can evolve to meet the changing needs of customers. This is a critical attribute because software change is an inevitable requirement of a changing business environment.
Dependability and security	
Efficiency	
Acceptability	

# Essential attributes of good software

Product characteristic	Description
Maintainability	Software should be written in such a way so that it can evolve to meet the changing needs of customers. This is a critical attribute because software change is an inevitable requirement of a changing business environment.
Dependability and security	Software dependability includes a range of characteristics including reliability, security and safety. Dependable software should not cause physical or economic damage in the event of system failure. Malicious users should not be able to access or damage the system.
Efficiency	
Acceptability	

# Essential attributes of good software

Product characteristic	Description
Maintainability	Software should be written in such a way so that it can evolve to meet the changing needs of customers. This is a critical attribute because software change is an inevitable requirement of a changing business environment.
Dependability and security	Software dependability includes a range of characteristics including reliability, security and safety. Dependable software should not cause physical or economic damage in the event of system failure. Malicious users should not be able to access or damage the system.
Efficiency	Software should not make wasteful use of system resources such as memory and processor cycles. Efficiency therefore includes responsiveness, processing time, memory utilisation, etc.
Acceptability	

# Essential attributes of good software

Product characteristic	Description
Maintainability	Software should be written in such a way so that it can evolve to meet the changing needs of customers. This is a critical attribute because software change is an inevitable requirement of a changing business environment.
Dependability and security	Software dependability includes a range of characteristics including reliability, security and safety. Dependable software should not cause physical or economic damage in the event of system failure. Malicious users should not be able to access or damage the system.
Efficiency	Software should not make wasteful use of system resources such as memory and processor cycles. Efficiency therefore includes responsiveness, processing time, memory utilisation, etc.
Acceptability	Software must be acceptable to the type of users for which it is designed. This means that it must be understandable, usable and compatible with other systems that they use.

## Definition

Software engineering is an engineering discipline that is concerned with all aspects of software production from the early stages of system specification through to maintaining the system after it has gone into use.

**Engineering discipline** Using appropriate theories and methods to solve problems bearing in mind organizational and financial constraints.

**All aspects of software production** Not just technical process of development. Also project management and the development of tools, methods etc. to support software production.

# Importance of software engineering

- More and more, individuals and society rely on advanced software systems. We need to be able to produce reliable and trustworthy systems economically and quickly.

## Key Insight

It is usually cheaper, in the long run, to use software engineering methods and techniques for software systems rather than just write the programs as if it was a personal programming project. For most types of system, the majority of costs are the costs of **changing the software** after it has gone into use.

## The four fundamental activities

- 1 **Software specification**, where customers and engineers define the software that is to be produced and the constraints on its operation.
- 2 **Software development**, where the software is designed and programmed.
- 3 **Software validation**, where the software is checked to ensure that it is what the customer requires.
- 4 **Software evolution**, where the software is modified to reflect changing customer and market requirements.

## Heterogeneity

Increasingly, systems are required to operate as distributed systems across networks that include different types of computer and mobile devices.

## Business and social change

Business and society are changing incredibly quickly as emerging economies develop and new technologies become available. They need to be able to change their existing software and to rapidly develop new software.

## Security and trust

As software is intertwined with all aspects of our lives, it is essential that we can trust that software.

## Scale

Software has to be developed across a very wide range of scales, from very small embedded systems in portable or wearable devices through to Internet-scale, cloud-based systems that serve a global community.

- There are many different types of software system and there is no universal set of software techniques that is applicable to all of these.
- The software engineering methods and tools used depend on the type of application being developed, the requirements of the customer and the background of the development team.

## Stand-alone applications

Application systems that run on a local computer, such as a PC. They include all necessary functionality and do not need to be connected to a network.

## Interactive transaction-based applications

Applications that execute on a remote computer and are accessed by users from their own PCs or terminals. These include web applications such as e-commerce applications.

## Embedded control systems

Software control systems that control and manage hardware devices. Numerically, there are probably more embedded systems than any other type of system.

# Application types (cont.)

## Batch processing systems

Business systems that are designed to process data in large batches. They process large numbers of individual inputs to create corresponding outputs.

## Entertainment systems

Systems that are primarily for personal use and which are intended to entertain the user.

## Systems for modeling and simulation

Systems that are developed by scientists and engineers to model physical processes or situations, which include many, separate, interacting objects.

# Application types (cont.)

## Data collection systems

Systems that collect data from their environment using a set of sensors and send that data to other systems for processing.

## Systems of systems

Systems that are composed of a number of other software systems.

## Fundamental Principles

Some fundamental principles apply to **all types** of software system, irrespective of the development techniques used:

- Systems should be developed using a managed and understood development process. Of course, different processes are used for different types of software.
- Dependability and performance are important for all types of system.
- Understanding and managing the software specification and requirements (what the software should do) are important.
- Where appropriate, you should **reuse** software that has already been developed rather than write new software.

- The Web is now a platform for running application and organizations are increasingly developing web-based systems rather than local systems.
- Web services allow application functionality to be accessed over the web.
- Cloud computing is an approach to the provision of computer services where applications run remotely on the 'cloud'.
  - Users do not buy software but pay according to use.

- Web-based systems are complex distributed systems but the fundamental principles of software engineering discussed previously are as applicable to them as they are to any other types of system.
- The fundamental ideas of software engineering apply to web-based software in the same way that they apply to other types of software system.

## Software reuse

Software reuse is the dominant approach for constructing web-based systems. When building these systems, you think about how you can assemble them from pre-existing software components and systems.

## Incremental and agile development

Web-based systems should be developed and delivered incrementally. It is now generally recognized that it is impractical to specify all the requirements for such systems in advance.

## Service-oriented systems

Software may be implemented using service-oriented software engineering, where the software components are stand-alone web services.

## Rich interfaces

Interface development technologies such as AJAX and HTML5 have emerged that support the creation of rich interfaces within a web browser.

---

# Software Engineering Ethics

---

- Software engineering involves wider responsibilities than simply the application of technical skills.
- Software engineers must behave in an honest and ethically responsible way if they are to be respected as professionals.

## Key Principle

Ethical behaviour is more than simply upholding the law but involves following a set of principles that are **morally correct**.

## Confidentiality

Engineers should normally respect the confidentiality of their employers or clients irrespective of whether or not a formal confidentiality agreement has been signed.

## Competence

Engineers should not misrepresent their level of competence. They should not knowingly accept work which is outwith their competence.

## Intellectual property rights

Engineers should be aware of local laws governing the use of intellectual property such as patents, copyright, etc. They should be careful to ensure that the intellectual property of employers and clients is protected.

## Computer misuse

Software engineers should not use their technical skills to misuse other people's computers. Computer misuse ranges from relatively trivial (game playing on an employer's machine, say) to extremely serious (dissemination of viruses).

- The professional societies in the US have cooperated to produce a code of ethical practice.
- Members of these organisations sign up to the code of practice when they join.
- The Code contains eight Principles related to the behaviour of and decisions made by professional software engineers, including practitioners, educators, managers, supervisors and policy makers, as well as trainees and students of the profession.

- Computers have a central and growing role in commerce, industry, government, medicine, education, entertainment and society at large. Software engineers are those who contribute by direct participation or by teaching, to the analysis, specification, design, development, certification, maintenance and testing of software systems.
- Because of their roles in developing software systems, software engineers have significant opportunities to do good or cause harm, to enable others to do good or cause harm, or to influence others to do good or cause harm. To ensure, as much as possible, that their efforts will be used for good, software engineers must commit themselves to making software engineering a beneficial and respected profession.

## Software Engineering Code of Ethics and Professional Practice

*ACM/IEEE-CS Joint Task Force on Software Engineering Ethics and Professional Practices*

### PREAMBLE

The short version of the code summarizes aspirations at a high level of the abstraction; the clauses that are included in the full version give examples and details of how these aspirations change the way we act as software engineering professionals. Without the aspirations, the details can become legalistic and tedious; without the details, the aspirations can become high sounding but empty; together, the aspirations and the details form a cohesive code.

Software engineers shall commit themselves to making the analysis, specification, design, development, testing and maintenance of software a beneficial and respected profession. In accordance with their commitment to the health, safety and welfare of the public, software engineers shall adhere to the following Eight Principles.

# Ethical principles

- 1 **PUBLIC** – Software engineers shall act consistently with the public interest.
- 2 **CLIENT AND EMPLOYER** – Software engineers shall act in a manner that is in the best interests of their client and employer consistent with the public interest.
- 3 **PRODUCT** – Software engineers shall ensure that their products and related modifications meet the highest professional standards possible.
- 4 **JUDGMENT** – Software engineers shall maintain integrity and independence in their professional judgment.
- 5 **MANAGEMENT** – Software engineering managers and leaders shall subscribe to and promote an ethical approach to the management of software development and maintenance.
- 6 **PROFESSION** – Software engineers shall advance the integrity and reputation of the profession consistent with the public interest.
- 7 **COLLEAGUES** – Software engineers shall be fair to and supportive of their colleagues.
- 8 **SELF** – Software engineers shall participate in lifelong learning regarding the practice of their profession and shall promote an ethical approach to the practice of the profession.

- Disagreement in principle with the policies of senior management.
- Your employer acts in an unethical way and releases a safety-critical system without finishing the testing of the system.
- Participation in the development of military weapons systems or nuclear systems.

---

# Case Studies

---

## A personal insulin pump

An embedded system in an insulin pump used by diabetics to maintain blood glucose control.

## A mental health case patient management system

Mentcare. A system used to maintain records of people receiving care for mental health problems.

## A wilderness weather station

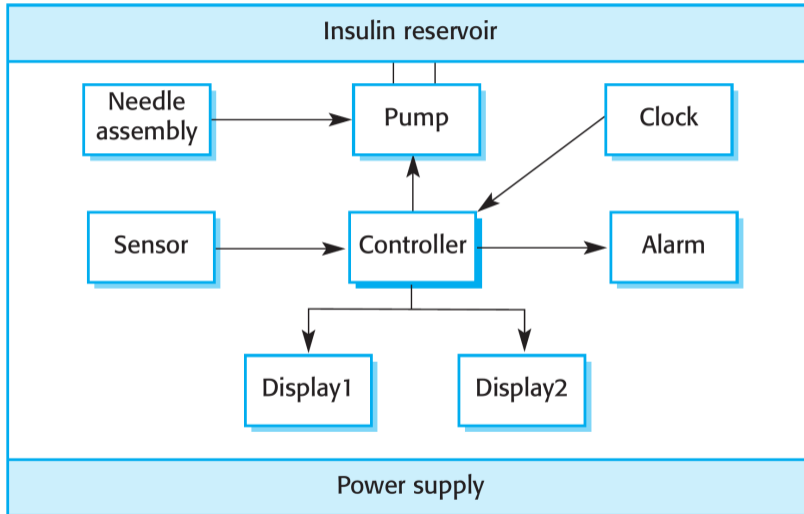
A data collection system that collects data about weather conditions in remote areas.

## iLearn: a digital learning environment

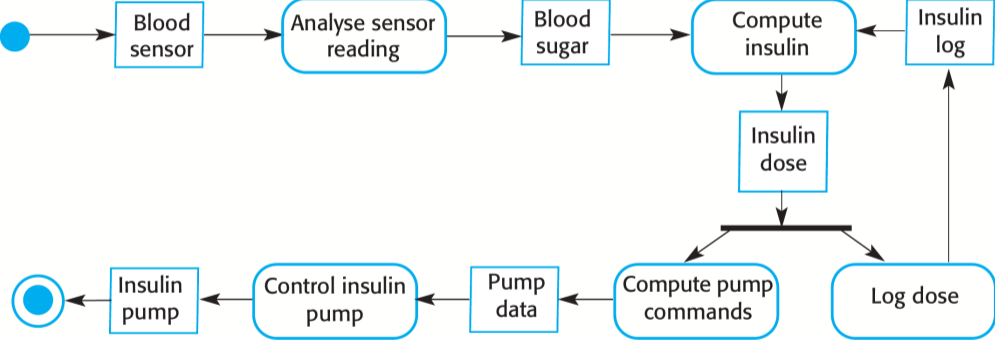
A system to support learning in schools.

- Collects data from a blood sugar sensor and calculates the amount of insulin required to be injected.
- Calculation based on the rate of change of blood sugar levels.
- Sends signals to a micro-pump to deliver the correct dose of insulin.
- Safety-critical system as low blood sugars can lead to brain malfunctioning, coma and death; high-blood sugar levels have long-term consequences such as eye and kidney damage.

# Insulin pump hardware architecture



# Activity model of the insulin pump



## Safety-critical requirements

- The system shall be **available** to deliver insulin when required.
- The system shall perform **reliably** and deliver the correct amount of insulin to counteract the current level of blood sugar.
- The system must therefore be designed and implemented to ensure that the system **always** meets these requirements.

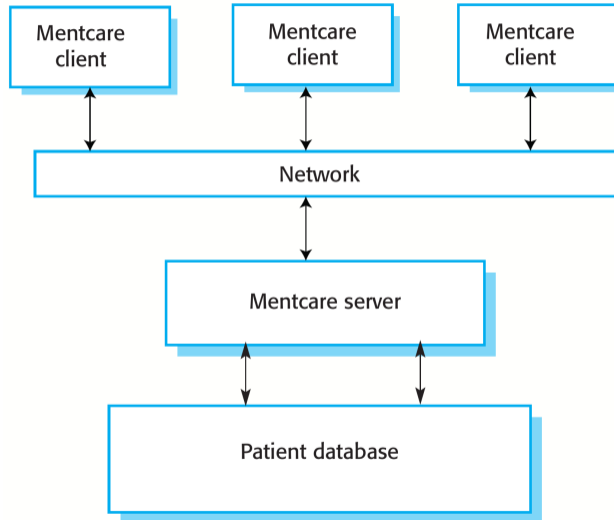
# Mentcare: A patient information system for mental health care

- A patient information system to support mental health care is a medical information system that maintains information about patients suffering from mental health problems and the treatments that they have received.
- Most mental health patients do not require dedicated hospital treatment but need to attend specialist clinics regularly where they can meet a doctor who has detailed knowledge of their problems.
- To make it easier for patients to attend, these clinics are not just run in hospitals. They may also be held in local medical practices or community centres.

- Mentcare is an information system that is intended for use in clinics.
- It makes use of a centralized database of patient information but has also been designed to run on a PC, so that it may be accessed and used from sites that do not have secure network connectivity.
- When the local systems have secure network access, they use patient information in the database but they can download and use local copies of patient records when they are disconnected.

- To generate management information that allows health service managers to assess performance against local and government targets.
- To provide medical staff with timely information to support the treatment of patients.

# The organization of the Mentcare system



# Key features of the Mentcare system

## Individual care management

Clinicians can create records for patients, edit the information in the system, view patient history, etc. The system supports data summaries so that doctors can quickly learn about the key problems and treatments that have been prescribed.

## Patient monitoring

The system monitors the records of patients that are involved in treatment and issues warnings if possible problems are detected.

## Administrative reporting

The system generates monthly management reports showing the number of patients treated at each clinic, the number of patients who have entered and left the care system, number of patients sectioned, the drugs prescribed and their costs, etc.

## Privacy

It is essential that patient information is **confidential** and is never disclosed to anyone apart from authorised medical staff and the patient themselves.

## Safety

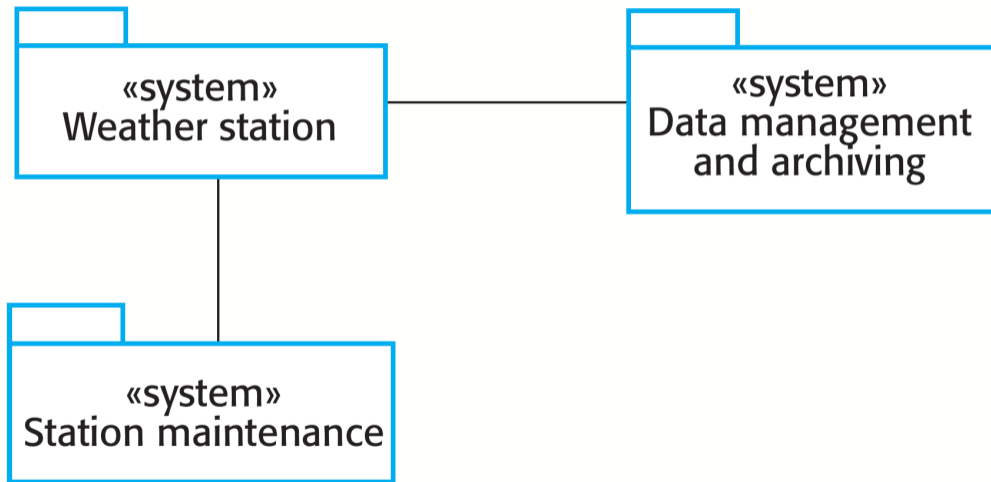
Some mental illnesses cause patients to become suicidal or a danger to other people. Wherever possible, the system should **warn** medical staff about potentially suicidal or dangerous patients.

The system must be **available** when needed otherwise safety may be compromised and it may be impossible to prescribe the correct medication to patients.

# Wilderness weather station

- The government of a country with large areas of wilderness decides to deploy several hundred weather stations in remote areas.
- Weather stations collect data from a set of instruments that measure temperature and pressure, sunshine, rainfall, wind speed and wind direction.
  - The weather station includes a number of instruments that measure weather parameters such as the wind speed and direction, the ground and air temperatures, the barometric pressure and the rainfall over a 24-hour period. Each of these instruments is controlled by a software system that takes parameter readings periodically and manages the data collected from the instruments.

# The weather station's environment



## The weather station system

This is responsible for collecting weather data, carrying out some initial data processing and transmitting it to the data management system.

## The data management and archiving system

This system collects the data from all of the wilderness weather stations, carries out data processing and analysis and archives the data.

## The station maintenance system

This system can communicate by satellite with all wilderness weather stations to monitor the health of these systems and provide reports of problems.

# Additional software functionality

- Monitor the instruments, power and communication hardware and report faults to the management system.
- Manage the system power, ensuring that batteries are charged whenever the environmental conditions permit but also that generators are shut down in potentially damaging weather conditions, such as high wind.
- Support dynamic reconfiguration where parts of the software are replaced with new versions and where backup instruments are switched into the system in the event of system failure.

- A digital learning environment is a framework in which a set of general-purpose and specially designed tools for learning may be embedded plus a set of applications that are geared to the needs of the learners using the system.
- The tools included in each version of the environment are chosen by teachers and learners to suit their specific needs.
  - These can be general applications such as spreadsheets, learning management applications such as a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) to manage homework submission and assessment, games and simulations.

- The system is a service-oriented system with all system components considered to be a replaceable service.
- This allows the system to be updated incrementally as new services become available.
- It also makes it possible to rapidly configure the system to create versions of the environment for different groups such as very young children who cannot read, senior students, etc.

- **Utility services** that provide basic application-independent functionality and which may be used by other services in the system.
- **Application services** that provide specific applications such as email, conferencing, photo sharing etc. and access to specific educational content such as scientific films or historical resources.
- **Configuration services** that are used to adapt the environment with a specific set of application services and to define how services are shared between students, teachers and their parents.

Browser-based user interface      iLearn app

## Configuration services

Group management      Application management      Identity management

## Application services

Email    Messaging    Video conferencing    Newspaper archive  
Word processing    Simulation    Video storage    Resource finder  
Spreadsheet    Virtual learning environment    History archive

## Utility services

Authentication    Logging and monitoring    Interfacing  
User storage      Application storage      Search

## Integrated services

Services which offer an API (application programming interface) and which can be accessed by other services through that API. Direct service-to-service communication is therefore possible.

## Independent services

Services which are simply accessed through a browser interface and which operate independently of other services. Information can only be shared with other services through explicit user actions such as copy and paste; re-authentication may be required for each independent service.

## Summary

- Software engineering is an engineering discipline that is concerned with **all aspects** of software production.
- Essential software product attributes are **maintainability, dependability and security, efficiency** and **acceptability**.
- The high-level activities of specification, development, validation and evolution are part of all software processes.
- The fundamental notions of software engineering are universally applicable to all types of system development.

## Summary

- There are many different types of system and each requires appropriate software engineering tools and techniques for their development.
- The fundamental ideas of software engineering are applicable to all types of software system.
- Software engineers have **responsibilities** to the engineering profession and society. They should not simply be concerned with technical issues.
- Professional societies publish **codes of conduct** which set out the standards of behaviour expected of their members.

# Grazie per l'attenzione

Prof. Ing. Lelio Campanile, PhD

Professore a contratto

Dipartimento di Matematica e Fisica

Elements of Software Engineering and Information Systems

Corso di Laurea Magistrale in Data Science

Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli

Slide material: courtesy of Pearson Education Limited.

L'uso di queste slide è soggetto ad autorizzazione.