

CS 330 SOFTWARE ENGINEERING I
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT COLORADO SPRINGS
GLOSSARY

In order to provide an optimum frame of reference for the class, this glossary establishes a set of consistent technical definitions. Definitions contained here in are based on such references as the IEEE Standard Dictionary of Electrical and Electronic Terms (e.g., ANSI/IEEE Std 729-1983), and the Rome Air Development Center (RADC-TR-90-239) Testability/Diagnostic Design Encyclopedia. Definitions may be considered to have come from these sources unless otherwise indicated.

Adaptive maintenance. Maintenance performed to make a software product usable in a changed environment.

Analytical model. A representation of a process or phenomenon by a set of solvable equations. Contrast with simulation.

Anomaly. An operational characteristic (or implementation) which is believed to require corrective action.

Audit. (1) An independent review for the purpose of assessing compliance with software requirements, specifications, baselines, standards, procedures, instructions, codes, and contractual and licensing requirements. See also code audit. (2) An activity to determine through investigation the adequacy of, and adherence to, established procedures, instructions, specifications, codes, and standards or other applicable contractual and licensing requirements, and the effectiveness of implementation.

Certification. (1) A written guarantee that a **system** or **computer program** complies with its specified **requirements**. (2) A written authorization that states that a **computer system** is secure and is permitted to operate in a defined environment with or producing sensitive information. (3) The formal demonstration of **system** acceptability to obtain authorization for its **operational** use. (4) The process of confirming that a **system, software subsystem, or computer program** is capable of satisfying its specified **requirements** in an operational environment. Certification usually takes place in the field under actual conditions, and is utilized to evaluate not only the software itself, but also the **specifications** to which the software was constructed. Certification extends the process of **verification** and **validation** to an actual or simulated operational environment. (5) The procedure and action by a duly authorized body of determining, verifying and attesting in writing to the qualifications of personnel, processes, procedures, or items in accordance with applicable requirements (ANSI/ASQC A3-1978).

Corrective maintenance. Maintenance performed specifically to overcome existing faults. See also software maintenance.

Correctness. (1) The extent to which software is free from design defects and from coding defects; that is, fault free. (2) The extent to which software meets its specified requirements. (3) The extent to which software meets user expectations.

Criticality. A classification of a software error or fault based upon an evaluation of the degree of impact of that error or fault on the development or operation of a system (often used to determine whether or when a fault will be corrected).

Debugging. The process of locating, analyzing, and correcting suspected **faults**. Compare with **testing**.

Defect Density. Defect density is a metric used after design and code inspections to judge the quality of the translation of requirements into design. It is defined as the cumulative (over time) defects encountered

divided by the total number of units in the CSCI and the cumulative (over time) defects corrected divided by the total number of units per CSCI.

Design analysis. (1) The evaluation of a **design** to determine correctness with respect to stated **requirements**, conformance to design standards, **system efficiency**, and other criteria. (2) The evaluation of alternative design approaches. See also **preliminary design**.

Design analyzer. An **automated design tool** that accepts information about a **program's design** and produces such outputs as **module hierarchy** diagrams, graphical representations of control and **data structure**, and **lists** of accessed **data blocks**.

Design. (1) The process of defining the software architecture, components, modules, interfaces, test approach, and data for a software system to satisfy specified requirements. (2) The result of the design process.

Diagnosis. The functions performed and the techniques used in determining and isolating the cause of malfunctions.

Diagnostic accuracy. The degree of correctness with which the diagnostic output agrees with the true state of the item being diagnosed.

Diagnostic capability. All the diagnostic characteristics associated with the detection, isolation, and reporting of faults.

Diagnostic element. Any distinct, single part of the diagnostic capability, e.g., automatic and manual testing, training, maintenance aiding, and technical information.

Diagnostic software. Used to determine operational health of hardware and/or software and report diagnostic information (e.g., health status) according to the diagnostic requirements.

Diagnostics. Anything relating to or used in making a diagnosis.

Documentation. The documentation indicator identifies potential problems in the deliverable software documentation. This metric is the combined average of the weighted averages for the documentation and source listings in terms of a product's modularity, descriptiveness, consistency, simplicity, expandability, and testability or instrumentation characteristics [AFSCP 87].

Embedded diagnostics. That portion of the diagnostic capability that is an integral part of the prime item.

Error analysis. (1) The process of investigating an observed **software fault** with the purpose of tracing the fault to its source. (2) The process of investigating an observed **software fault** to identify such information as the cause of the fault, the phase of the development process during which the fault was introduced, methods by which the fault could have been prevented or detected earlier, and the method by which the fault was detected. (3) The process of investigating **software errors, failures, and faults** to determine quantitative rates and trends.

Error category. One of a set of classes into which an error, fault, or failure might fall. Categories may be defined for the cause, criticality, effect, life-cycle phase when introduced or detected, or other characteristics of the error, fault, or failure.

Error data. A term commonly (but not precisely) used to denote information describing software problems, faults, failures, and changes, their characteristics, and the conditions under which they are encountered.

Error model. A mathematical **model** used to predict or estimate the number of remaining **faults**, **reliability**, required test time, or similar characteristics of a **software system**. See also **error prediction**.

Error prediction. A quantitative statement about the expected number or nature of software problems, faults, or failures in a software system. See also error model.

Error. (1) A discrepancy between a computed, observed, or measured value or condition and the true, specified, or theoretically correct value or condition (ANSI). (2) Human action that results in **software** containing a **fault**. Examples include omission or misinterpretation of user **requirements** in a software **specification**, incorrect translation or omission of a requirement in the **design specification**. This is not a preferred usage. See also **failure**, **fault**.

Failure rate. (1) The ratio of the number of **failures** is given unit of measure; for example, failures per unit of time, failures per number of transactions, failures per number of **computer** runs. (2) In **reliability** modeling, the ratio of the number of **failures** of a given category or severity to a given period of time; for example, failures per second of **execution time**, failures per month. Synonymous with failure ratio.

Failure. (1) The termination of the ability of a **functional unit** to perform its required **function**. (2) The inability of a **system** or system **component** to perform a required **function** within specified limits. A failure may be produced when a **fault** is encountered. (3) A departure of **program** operation from program **requirements**.

Failure Density/Fault Intensity. Failure Density is a metric used to monitor faults during the maintenance period after software is released. This metric is a continuation of the fault density/intensity concept and is a estimate of the number of failures that may be discovered after release. The focus of this metric is on monitoring product quality from the customer's aspect.

A failure has been classified as "a manifestation of a fault or a departure, during execution, of the software program from its intended function" [STEP 92]. The inputs for this indicator are obtained during test activities. "The severity and class of failures as well as the software faults that caused the failure are documented and used as the basis for this indicator" [AFSCP 87].

Fault density. Fault density is a metric used after testing to judge how well the requirements have been implemented and to determine if sufficient software testing has been accomplished. It is defined as the cumulative (over time) faults (causes of the faults, not the faults themselves) divided by the total number of units in the CSCI and the cumulative (over time) faults corrected divided by the total number of units per CSCI; where, the average size of a unit is 100 lines of code.

Fault seeding. The process of intentionally adding a known number of **faults** to those already in a **computer program** for the purposes of estimating the number of **indigenous faults** in the **program**. Synonymous with the **bug seeding** (faults are typically called defects in the software).

Fault tolerance. The built-in capability of a **system** to provide continued correct **execution** in the presence of a limited number of **hardware** or **software faults**.

Fault. (1) An accidental condition that causes a **functional unit** to fail to perform its required **function**. (ISO) (2) A manifestation of an **error** (2) in **software** Synonymous with **bug**.

Firmware. (1) **Computer programs** and **data** loaded in a class of memory that cannot be dynamically modified by the **computer** during processing (i.e., **microcode, microprogram**). (2) **Hardware** that contains a **computer program** and **data** that cannot be changed in its user environment. The computer programs and data contained in firmware are classified as **software**; the circuitry containing the computer program and data is classified as **hardware**.

Formal language. A language whose rules are explicitly established prior to its use. Synonymous with **artificial language**. Examples include **programming languages**, such as FORTRAN and Ada, and mathematical or logical languages, such as predicate calculus. Contrast with **natural language**.

Formal method. A mathematically sound approach to the specification and design of computer software.

Formal specification. (1) A **specification** written and approved in accordance with established standards. (2) In **proof of correctness**, a description in a **formal language** of the externally visible behavior of a **system** or system **component**.

Formal testing. The process of conducting **testing** activities and reporting results in accordance with an approved **test plan**.

Functional decomposition. A method of designing a **system** by breaking it down into its **components** in such a way that the components correspond directly to system **functions** and sub-functions.

Functional specification. A **specification** that defines the **functions** that a **system** or system **components** must perform. See also **performance specification**.

Imperfect debugging. In **reliability** modeling, the assumption that attempts to correct or remove a detected **fault** are not always successful.

Implementation requirement. Any **requirement** that impacts or constrains the **implementation** of a **software design**; for example, design descriptions, software development standards, **programming language** requirements, software **quality assurance** standards.

Implementation. (1) A realization of an **abstraction** in more concrete terms; in particular, in terms of **software**, or both. (2) A machine executable form of a **program**, or a form of a program that can be translated automatically to machine executable form. (3) The process of translating a **design** into **code** and **debugging** the code.

Independent verification and validation. (1) **Verification** and **validation** of a **software product** by an organization that is both technically and managerially separate from the organization responsible for developing the product. (2) **Verification** and **validation** of a **software product** by individuals or groups other than those who performed the original **design**, but, who may be from the same organization. The degree of independence must be a function of the importance of the **software**.

Indigenous fault. A **fault** existing in a **computer program** that has not been inserted as part of a **fault seeding** process.

Inductive assertion method. A **proof of correctness** technique in which **assertions** are written describing **program** inputs, outputs, and intermediate conditions, a set of theorems is developed relating satisfaction of the **input assertions** to satisfaction of the **output assertions**, and the theorems are proved to be true.

Inspection. (1) A formal evaluation technique in which **software requirements, design, or code** are examined in detail by a person or group other than the author to detect **faults**, violations of development standards, and other problems. Contrast with **walk-through**. (2) A phase of quality control that by means of examination, observation or measurement determines the conformance of materials. (3) A phase of quality control that by means of examination, observation or measurement determines the conformance of materials, supplies, components, parts, appurtenances, **systems, processes** or structures to predetermined **quality requirements**.

Integrated diagnostics. A structured process that maximizes the effectiveness of diagnostics by integrating pertinent elements, such as testability, automatic and manual testing, training, maintenance aiding, and technical information, as a means for providing a cost effective capability to detect and isolate unambiguously all faults known or expected to occur in weapon systems and equipment in order to satisfy weapon system mission requirements.

Integration testing. An orderly progression of **testing** in which **software** elements, **hardware** or both are combined and tested until the entire **system** has been integrated. See also **system testing**.

Integration. The process of combining **software** elements, **hardware** elements, or both into overall **system**.

Integrity. The extent to which unauthorized access to or **modification** of **software** or **data** can be controlled in a **computer system**. See also **security**.

Interface requirement. A **requirement** that specifies a **hardware, software, or data base** element with which a **system** or system **component** must **interface**, or that sets forth constraints on formats, timing, or other factors caused by such an interface.

Interface specification. A **specification** that sets forth the **interface requirements** for a **system** or system **component**.

Interface testing. **Testing** conducted to ensure that **program** or **system components** pass information or control correctly to one another.

Interface. (1) A shared boundary. An interface might be a **hardware component** to link two devices or it might be a portion of storage or registers accessed by two or more **computer programs**. (ANSI) (2) To interact or communicate with another **system component**.

Maintainability. (1) The ease with which **software** can be maintained. (2) The ease with which **maintenance** of a **maintenance** of a **functional unit** can be performed in accordance with prescribed **requirements** (ISO).

Model. A representation of a real world **process**, device, or concept. See also **analytical model, availability model, debugging model, error model, reliability model, simulation, statistical test model**.

Operation and maintenance phase. The period of time in the **software life-cycle** during which a **software product** is employed in its **operational** environment, monitored for satisfactory **performance**, and modified as necessary to correct problems or to respond to changing **requirements**.

Operational reliability. The **reliability** of a **system** or **software subsystem** in its actual use environment. Operational reliability may differ considerably from reliability in the specified or test environment.

Output assertion. A logical expression specifying one or more conditions that **program** outputs must satisfy in order for the program to be correct.

Performance evaluation. The technical assessment of a **system** or system **component** to determine how effectively operating objectives have been achieved.

Performance requirement. A **requirement** that specifies a **performance** characteristic that a **system** or system **component**, must possess; for example, speed, **accuracy**, frequency.

Performance specification. (1) A **specification** that sets forth the **performance requirements** for a **system** or system **component**. (2) Synonymous with **requirements specification**. (U.S. Navy usage) See also **functional specification**.

Physical requirement. A **requirement** that specifies a physical characteristic that a **system** or system **component** must possess; for example material, shape, size, weight.

Process. (1) In a **computer system**, a unique, finite course of events defined by its purpose or by its effect, achieved under given conditions. (2) To perform operations on **data** in process. (ISO)

Product Metrics. Product metrics measure aspects relating to quality, customer satisfaction, and difficulty to produce, but "may not reveal anything about how the software has evolved into its current state" [Conte 86]. These indicators include: size - LOC, fault density/intensity, documentation, test sufficiency, prediction accuracy, and customer satisfaction.

Product specification. Synonymous with **design specification**. (DoD usage)

Program instructions stored in a read-only storage. An assembly composed of a **hardware** unit and a **computer program** integrated to form a functional entity whose **configuration** cannot be altered during normal operation. The computer program is stored in the hardware unit as an integrated circuit with a fixed logic configuration that will satisfy a specific application or operational **requirement**.

Program specification. Any **specification** for a **computer program**. See **functional specification**, **performance specification**, **requirements specification**.

Program synthesis. The use of **software tools** to aid in the transformation of a **program specification** into a **program** that realizes that **specification**.

Proof of correctness. (1) A formal technique used to prove mathematically that a **program** satisfies its **specifications**. See also **total correctness**. (2) A **program** proof that results from applying this technique.

Pseudo-code. A combination of **programming language** and **natural language** used for **computer program design**.

Qualification testing. **Formal testing**, usually conducted by the developer for the customer, to demonstrate that the **software** meets its specified **requirements**.

Quality metric. A quantitative measure of the degree to which **software** processes a given attribute that affects its **quality**.

Real time. (1) Pertaining to the processing of **data** by a **computer** in connection with another **process** outside the computer according to time requirements imposed by the outside process. This term is also used to describe **systems** operating in **conversational** mode, and processes that can be influenced by human

intervention while they are in progress. (ISO) (2) Pertaining to the actual time during which a physical **process** transpires; for example, the performance of a computation during the actual time that the related physical process transpires, in order that results of the computation can be used in guiding the physical process. (ANSI)

Redundancy. The inclusion of duplicate or alternate **system** elements to improve **operational reliability** by ensuring continued operation in the event that a primary element fails.

Regression testing. Selective re-testing to detect **faults** introduced during **modification** of a **system** or system **component**, to verify that modifications have not caused unintended adverse effects, or to verify that a modified system or system component still meets its specified **requirements**.

Reliability assessment. The process of determining the achieved level of **reliability** of an existing **system** or system **component**.

Reliability data. Information necessary to assess the **reliability** of **software** at selected points in the **software life-cycle**. Examples include **error data** and time data for **reliability models**, **program** attributes such as **complexity**, and programming characteristics such as development techniques employed and programmer experience.

Reliability growth. The improvement in **software reliability** that results from correcting **faults** in the **software**.

Reliability model. A **model** used for predicting, estimating, or assessing **reliability**. See also **reliability assessment**.

Reliability, numerical. The probability that an item will perform a required **function** under stated conditions for a stated period of time. (ANSI/ASQC A3-1978)

Reliability. The ability of an item to perform a required **function** under stated conditions for a stated period of time. (ANSI/ASQC A3-1978) (2) See **software reliability**.

Requirement. (1) A condition or capability needed by a user to solve a problem or achieve an objective. (2) A condition or capability that must be met or possessed by a **system** or system **component** to satisfy a contract, standard, **specification**, or other formally imposed **document**. The set of all requirements forms the basis for subsequent development of the system or system component. See also **requirements analysis**, **requirements phase**, **requirements specification**.

Requirements analysis. (1) The process of studying user needs to arrive at a definition of **system** or **software requirements**. (2) The **verification** of **system** or **software requirements**.

Requirements phase. The period of time in the **software life-cycle** during which the **requirements** for a **software product**, such as the functional and **performance** capabilities, are defined and documented.

Requirements specification language. A **formal language** with special constructs and **verification** protocols used to specify, verify, and **document requirements**.

Requirements specification. A **specification** that sets forth the **requirements** for a **system** or system **component**; for example, a **software configuration item**. Typically included are **functional requirements**, **performance requirements**, **interface requirements**, **design requirements**, and development standards.

Reusability. The extent to which a **module** can be used in multiple applications.

Semantics. (1) The relationships of characters or groups of characters to their meanings, independent of the manner of their interpretation and use. (ISO) (2) The relationships between symbols and their meanings. (ANSI)

Simulation. The representation of selected characteristics of the behavior of one physical or abstract **system** by another system. In a digital **computer system**, simulation is done by **software**; for example, (a) the representation of physical phenomena by means of operations performed by a computer system, (b) the representation of operations of a computer system by those of another computer system. (ISO) Contrast with **analytical model**.

Size - LOC (Lines Of Code). Because there exists a relationship between the number of LOC and the amount of effort necessary to develop software products, an increase in the total number of LOC can lead to schedule slips, costs overruns, and staffing problems. The amount of estimated new, reused, modified and total CSCI LOC are monitored on a monthly basis. A linear relationship between LOC and cost does not exist since reused or modified code alters the total amount of time or effort necessary for production.

Software development cycle. (1) The period of time that begins with the decision to develop a **software product** and ends when the product is delivered. This cycle typically includes a **requirements phase, design phase, implementation phase, test phase**, and sometimes, **installation and checkout phase**. Contrast with **software life-cycle**. (2) The period of time that begins with the decision to develop a **software product** and ends when the product is no longer being enhanced by the developer. (3) Sometimes used as a synonym for **software life-cycle**.

Software development plan. A **project plan** for the development of a **software product**. synonymous with **computer program development plan**.

Software development process. The process by which user needs are translated into **software requirements**, software requirements are transformed into **design**, the design is implemented in **code**, and code tested, documented, and certified for **operational** use.

Software diagnostics. Methods, processes, and techniques applied to software for the development of high assurance programs, fault tolerance, including the support and maintenance of systems.

Software errors. (or document discrepancies) Functional deficiencies where the software operation or implementation (and/or document) does not meet requirements or standards.

Software life-cycle (definition I). The software life-cycle consists of a set of **discrete activities** occurring in a given order during the development and use of software and software systems. The **time periods** during which these activities occur are referred to as phase. At the current time a **consensus has not developed** as to which phases comprise the software life-cycle.

Software life-cycle (definition II). The period of time that starts when a **software product** is conceived and ends when the product is no longer available for use. The software life-cycle typically includes a **requirements phase, design phase, implementation phase, test phase, installation and checkout phase, operation and maintenance phase**, and sometimes, **retirement phase**. Contrast with **software development cycle**.

Software Maintenance. (1) **Modification** of a **software product** after **delivery** to correct **faults**. (2) **Modification** of a **software product** after **delivery** to correct **faults**, to improve **performance** or other

attributes, or to adapt the product to a changed environment. See also **adaptive maintenance, corrective maintenance, perfective maintenance.**

Software product. A **software** entity designated for **delivery** to a user.

Software reliability. (1) The probability that **software** will not cause the **failure** of a **system** for a specified time under specified conditions. The probability is a function of the inputs to and use of the system as well as a function of the existence of **faults** in the software. The inputs to the system determine whether existing faults, if any, are countered. (2) The ability of a **program** to perform a required **function** under stated conditions for a stated period of time.

Software. (1) **Computer programs, procedures,** rules, and possibly associated **documentation** and **data** pertaining to the operation of a **computer system.** See also **application software, system software.** (2) **Programs, procedures,** rules, and any associated **documentation** pertaining to the operation of a **computer system.** (ISO)

Specification language. A language, often a machine-processable combination of **natural** and **formal language,** used to specify the **requirements, design,** behavior, or other characteristics of a **system** or system **component.** See also **requirements specification language.**

Stability. (1) The ability to continue unchanged despite disturbing or disruptive events. (2) The ability to return to an original state after disturbing or disruptive events.

State diagram. A **directed graph** in which **nodes** correspond to internal states of a **system,** and edges correspond to transitions; often used for describing a system in terms of state changes.

Static analysis. The process of evaluating a **program** without executing the program. Similar to **desk checking, code audit, inspection, static analyzer, walk-through.** Contrasts with dynamic analysis.

Statistical test model. A **model** that relates **program faults** to the input data set (or sets) which cause them to be encountered. The model also gives the probability that these faults will cause the program to fail.

Stepwise refinement. A **system development methodology** in which **data** definitions and processing steps are defined broadly at first and then with increasing detail. Contrasts with hierarchical decomposition, top-down, bottom-up.

Structured design. A disciplined approach to **software design** that adheres to a specified set of rules based on principles such as **top-down design, stepwise refinement,** and **data** flow analysis.

Symbolic execution. A **verification** technique in which **program execution** is simulated using symbols rather than actual values for input data, and program outputs are expressed as logical or mathematical expressions involving these symbols.

Syntax. (1) The relationship among characters or groups of characters, independent of their meanings or the matter of their interpretation and use. (ISO) (2) The structure of expressions in a language. (ANSI)

System architecture. The structure and relationship among the **components** of a **system.** The system architecture may also include the system's **interface** with its operational environment.

System design. (1) The process of defining the **hardware** and **software** architectures, **components**, **modules**, **interfaces**, and **data** for a **system** to satisfy specified system **requirements**. (2) The result of the system design process.

System reliability. The probability that a **system**, including all **hardware** and **software subsystems**, will perform a required task or mission for a specified environment. See also **operational reliability**, **software reliability**.

Termination proof. In **proof of correctness**, the demonstration that a **program** will terminate under all specified input conditions.

Test bed. A test environment containing the **hardware**, **instrumentation tools**, **simulators**, and other support **software** necessary for **testing** a **system** or system **component**.

Test repeatability. An attribute of a test indicating whether the same results are produced each time the test is conducted.

Test report. A **document** describing the conduct and results of the **testing** carried out for a **system** or system **component**.

Test validity. The degree to which a test accomplishes its specified goal.

Testability. (1) The extent to which **software** facilitates both the establishment of test criteria and the evaluation of the software with the respect to those criteria. (2) The extent to which the definition of **requirements** facilitates analysis of the requirements to establish test criteria.

Testing. The process of exercising or evaluating a **system** or system **component** by manual or automated means to verify that it satisfies specified **requirements** or to identify differences between expected and actual results. Compares with **debugging**.

Tolerance. The ability of a **system** to provide continuity of operation under various abnormal conditions.

Total correctness. In **proof of correctness**, a designation indicating that a **program's output assertions** follow logically from its **input assertions** and processing steps, and that, in addition, the program terminates under all specified input conditions. Contrast with **partial correctness** which is a weaker property.

Validation involves checking that the program as implemented meets the expectations of the software customer in such a way to ensure compliance with software **requirements**. See also **verification**.

Verification. (1) The process of determining whether or not the products of a given phase of the **software development cycle** fulfill the **requirements** established during the previous phase. See also **validation**. (2) Formal proof of **program** correctness. See **proof of correctness**. (3) The act of reviewing, inspecting, **testing**, checking, auditing, or otherwise establishment and documenting whether or not items, **processes**, services, or **documents** conform to specified **requirements**. (ANSI/ASQC A3-1978).

Walk-through. A process in which a designer or programmer leads one or more other members of the development team through a **segment of design** or **code** that he or she has written, while the other members ask questions and make comments about technique, style, possible **errors**, violation of development standards, and other problems. Contrast with **inspection**.