CONSTRUCTOR UNIVERSITY

Database Design

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Core Database Design Steps

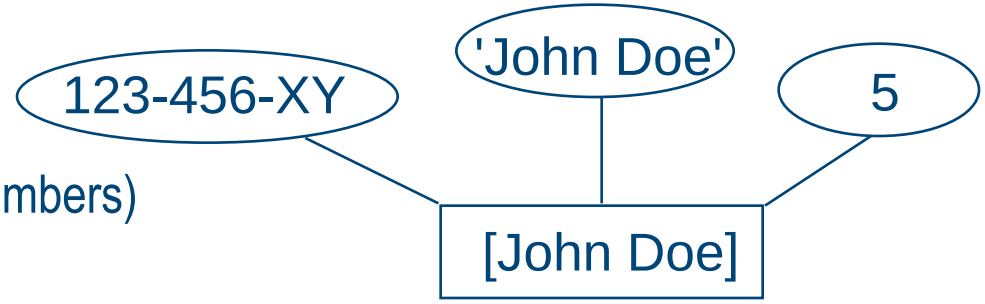
- Conceptual design ← Our focus in this Chapter
  - Construct a description of the information used in an enterprise
  - *Focus on documenting customer intention, disregard technology*
- Logical design
  - Construct a description based on a specific data model (e.g., relational)
  - *Focus on abstract tech, disregard implementation*
- Physical design
  - Describe implementation using a particular DBMS, file structures, indexes, security, …

Issues in Conceptual Design

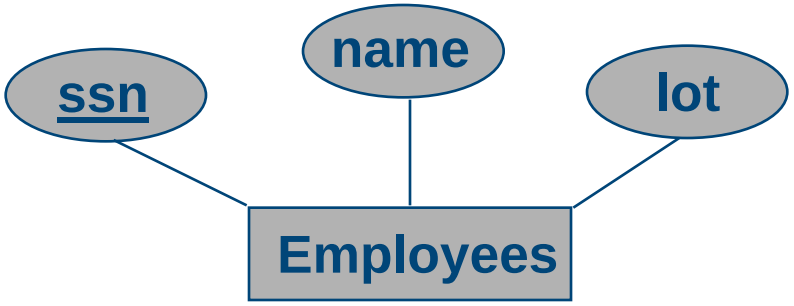
- Conceptual design: (we use ER Model at this stage)
  - What are the entities and relationships in the enterprise?
  - What information about these entities and relationships should we store in the database?
  - What are the integrity constraints or business rules that hold?
- database `schema' in the ER Model represented pictorially = ER diagrams
  - Can map an ER diagram into a relational schema
  - Actually lack of textual equivalent is shortcoming
  - … also: no formal semantics (originally)

Entity-Relationship Model: Basics

- Entity: Real-world object distinguishable from other objects
  - entity described (in DB) using a set of attributes
  - Simple attribute values (strings, numbers)

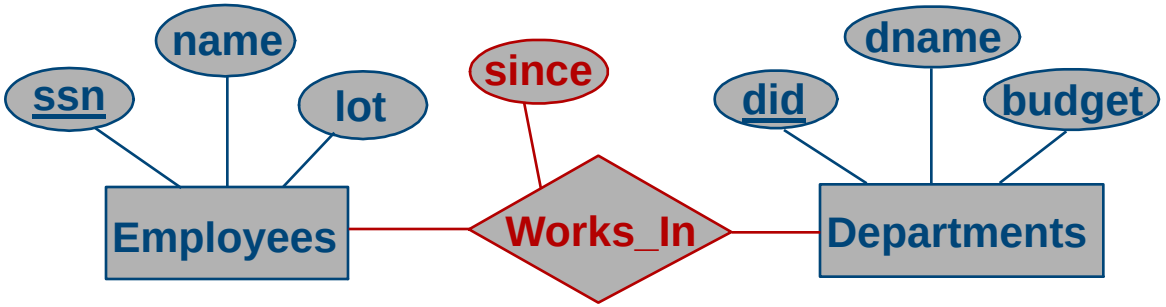


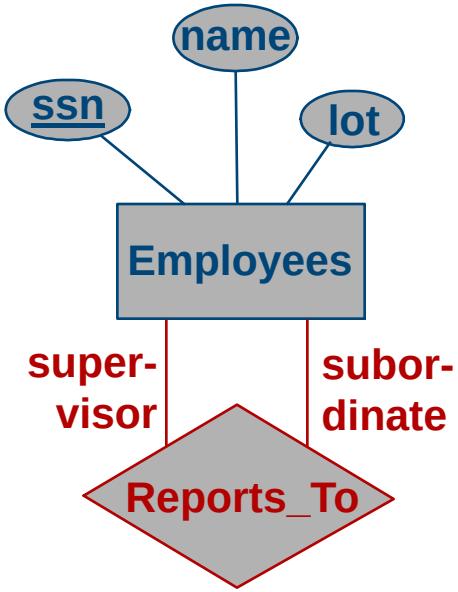
- Entity set: collection of similar entities
  - E.g., all employees
  - All entities in an entity set have the same set of attributes
    - *Until we consider ISA hierarchies, anyway!*
  - Each entity set has a key
  - Each attribute has a domain = data type



ER Model Basics (Contd.)

- Relationship: (unique!) association among two or more entities
  - E.g., Attishoo works_in Pharmacy department
- Relationship Set: Collection of similar relationships
  - An n-ary (binary, ternary, …) relationship set R relates n entity sets E1 ... En
  - each relationship in R involves entities e1∈E1, ..., en∈En
  - Same entity set can participate in different relationship sets, or even in the same set (but then in different roles)

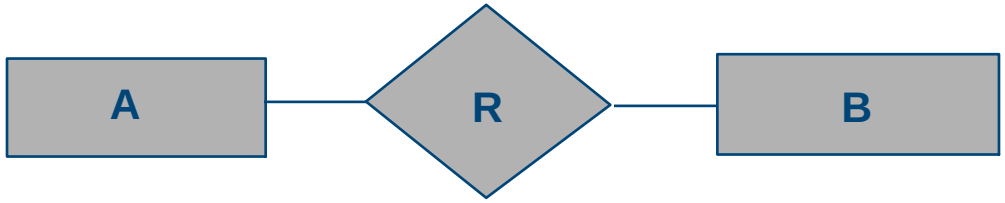




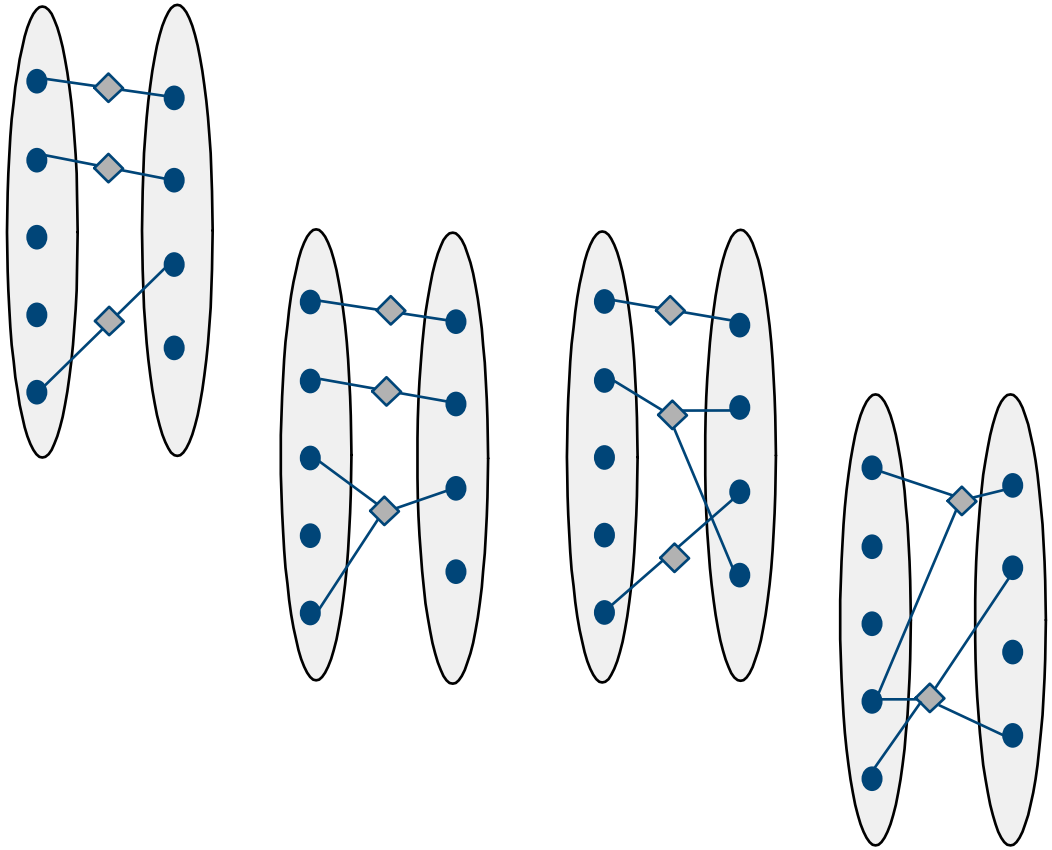
Constraints

- Used to capture more application semantics
- ...on relationship sets:
  - Key constraints (multiplicities)
- ...on entity sets:
  - Participation constraints

Key Constraints: Multiplicity (contd)

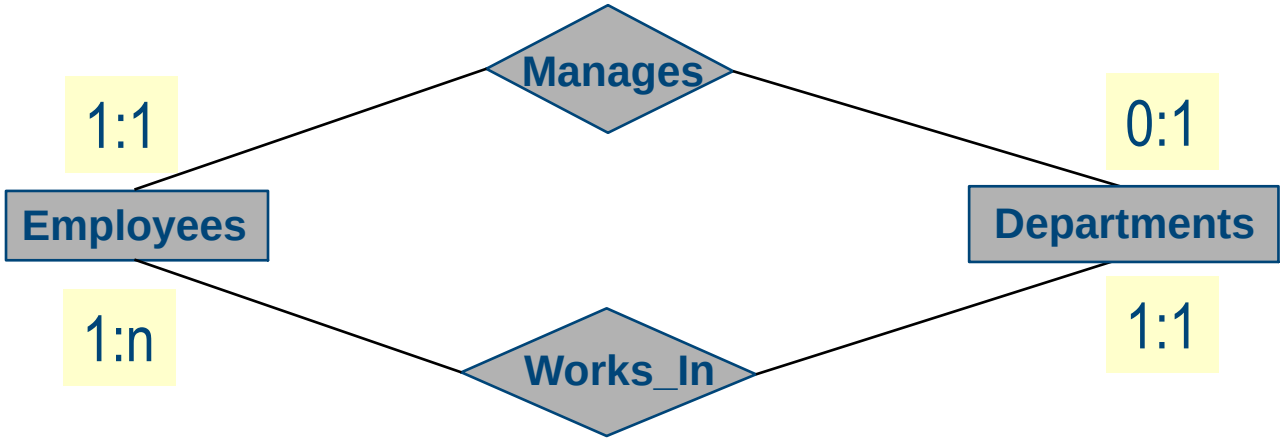


- Multiplicity classification:
  - One-to-one "1:1“
  - One-to-many "1:n"
  - Many-to-many "m:n"



More Detail Wanted!

- Want to refine further: *how many connections on each leg of relship?*
- Attach intervals to leg:

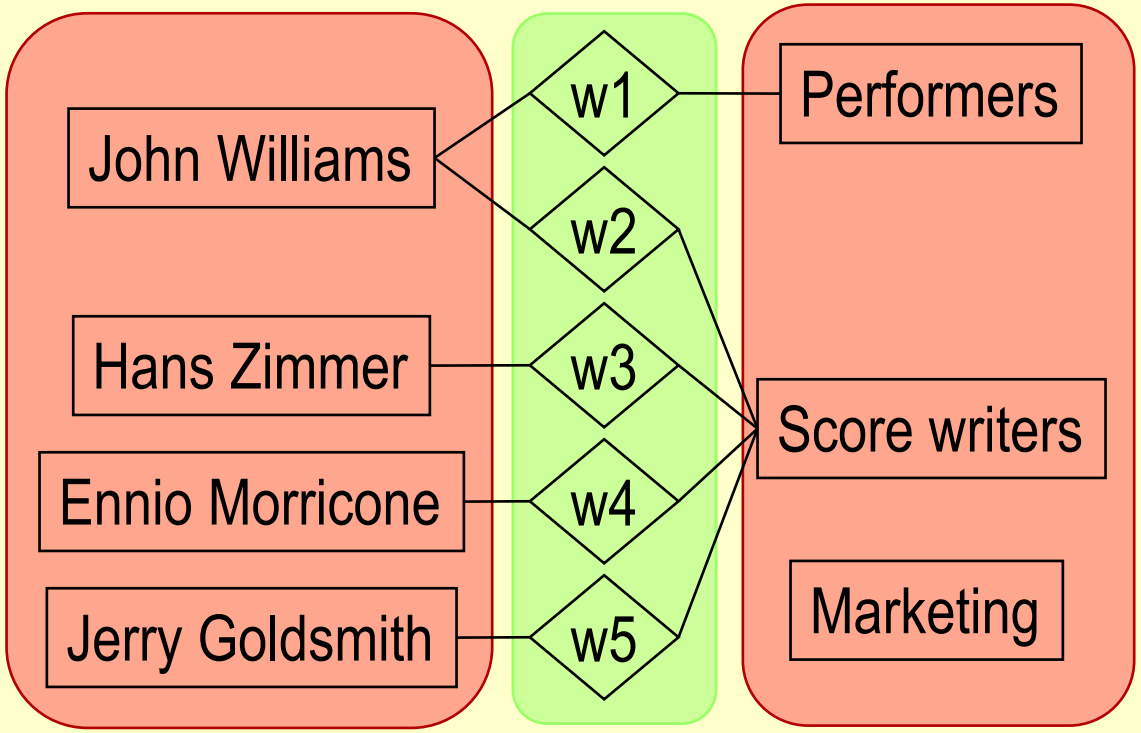


- Read as:
  - *„an Employee sees, through its Manages tunnel, none or one Department“*
  - *„a Department sees, through its Works_In tunnel, at least one Employee“*

Relationships Example

- Schema:

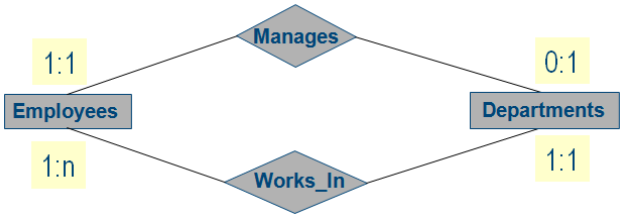
- Instances:



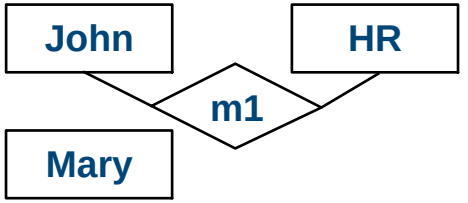
- Uniqueness?
- Multiplicities?
- Participation?

Participation Constraints

- *Does every department have a manager?*

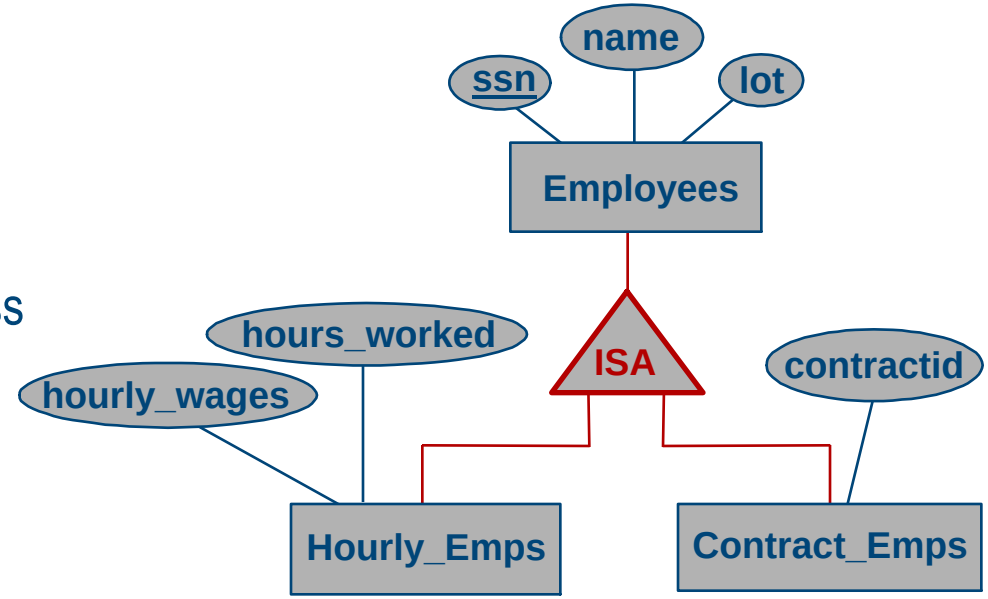


- Entity set E is total wrt. relationship set R
  :⇔ all E entities participate in R
- Entity set E is partial wrt. relationship set R
  :⇔ some E entities do not participate in R



ISA (`is a') Hierarchies

- A ISA B: every A entity is also a B entity ("A inherits from B")
  - A entities have attributes like B entities have, plus maybe more
  - A is called subclass, B superclass
- Purpose:
  - add attributes specific to a subclass
  - identify specific entitities that participate in a relationship



- Constraints:
  - Overlap constraints: Can Joe be an Hourly_Emps as well as a Contract_Emps entity? (Allowed/disallowed)
  - Covering constraints: Does every Employees entity also have to be an Hourly_Emps or a Contract_Emps entity? (Yes/no)

Summary of ER

- ER model popular for conceptual design
  - simple & expressive
  - close to the way people think about their applications
- Basic constructs:
  entities and relationships, both with attributes
- Some additional constructs:
  weak entities, ISA hierarchies, and aggregation
- Note: There are many variations on ER model

Summary of ER (Contd.)

- Several kinds of integrity constraints can be expressed in the ER model
  - key constraints
  - participation constraints
  - overlap/covering constraints for ISA hierarchies
- Some foreign key constraints implicit in definition of a relationship set
  - Some (actually: many) constraints cannot be expressed in the ER model
    - *notably, functional dependencies*
  - But: constraints play an important role in determining the best database design

Summary of ER (Contd.)

- ER design is subjective
  - often many ways to model a given scenario
  - When in doubt (and not only then), ask customer how they will query their data – this usually gives valuable insights
  - Analyzing alternatives can be tricky, esp. large schemas (SAP R/3: 15,000 tables!)
- Common choices include:
  - Entity vs. attribute, entity vs. relationship, binary or n-ary relationship
  - whether or not to use ISA hierarchies, whether or not to use aggregation
- Ensuring good database design: resulting relational schema should be analyzed and refined further → logical design phase
  - Functional dependency information, normalization techniques

UML™

[not in DBMS book, see course website]

- UML = Unified Modeling Language [www.uml.org]
  - Issued by OMG [Object Management Group, www.omg.org]
- "UML is a graphical language for visualizing, specifying, constructing, and documenting the artifacts of a software-intensive system."
  - does not prescribe particular methodology or process
- Notation & semantics for domains:
  - Use Case Model; Communication Model; Dynamic Model; Class Model; Physical Component Model; Physical Deployment Model
- Much more comprehensive than ER!
  - For our purpose: overkill

Relationships & Class Diagrams

- Relationship types:
  - association ("must know about the other")
  - aggregation / composition (class belongs to a collection)
  - generalization (one class is a superclass of the other)
- Navigability arrows
- Multiplicity
- Role names (optional)