Session 10

Form Dataset

Lecture Objectives

- Understand the relationship between HTML form elements and parameters that are passed to the servlet, particularly the form dataset
**Example - Form Input to a Servlet**

```html
<head>
<title>Who are you?</title>
</head>
<body>
<p>What is your name?</p>
<input type="text" name="fullName" value="Enter name" />
<br />
<input type="submit" />
</form>
</body>
</html>
```

Entering a name in this component changes the value of this form parameter.

**HelloYou Servlet**

```java
out.println(docType);
String name = request.getParameter("fullName");
out.println("<html>");
out.println("<head><title>>Hello, " + name + "</title></head>");
out.println("<body>");
out.println("Hello, " + name);
out.println("</body></html>");
out.close();
```

Servlet reads value of form data set.
A form element contains component elements that are used to collect information on a Web page.

Each component typically has a name and a value.

The collection of name/value pairs is referred to as the form data set.

Form values are initially set to the value in the html, but changed when the user enters data.

The entire form is associated with a URL that can obtain the data (usually after the submit button is pressed).

**HTML control types:**
- Buttons
- Submit
- Check boxes
- Radio buttons
- Menus
- Text input (INPUT and TEXTAREA)
- Password
- File select
- Hidden controls
- Object controls

Some form components can be multi-valued.

Users complete a form by modifying the form elements and then submitting to the server for servlet processing.
Drop-Down Component

```html
<select name="CountryOfRes" id="countryResidence">
  <option selected="selected" value="">Select one</option>
  <option value="CN">China</option>
  <option value="FR">France</option>
  <option value="DE">Germany</option>
  <option value="IE">Ireland</option>
  <option value="GB">United Kingdom</option>
  <option value="US">United States</option>
</select>
```

The value of the CountryOfRes form element is initially "", but changes when the user selects a different menu item.

Parameter name Vs. Parameter Value

Consider the following country drop-down form

```html
<select name="CountryOfRes" id="countryResidence">
  <option selected="selected" value="">Select one</option>
  <option value="CN">China</option>
  <option value="FR">France</option>
  <option value="DE">Germany</option>
  <option value="IE">Ireland</option>
  <option value="GB">United Kingdom</option>
  <option value="US">United States</option>
</select>
```

Notice that the value attribute is not always the same as the text contained in the value element.
Form Element Server Coordination

A Form element specifies attributes for:

- The program that will handle the completed and submitted form (action attribute)
- A script program that evaluates prior to submission to the server - and that can prevent data from being submitted. (onsubmit attribute)
- The method by which the user data will be sent to the server (method attribute)
  - GET – form data set is appended to the URL with a ? (used when form causes no side effects)
  - POST – form data set is included in the body of the form

Form Data Set

GET method – Form data set is included in the URL query string (by the browser)

www.mysite.com/path/program?first_name=Kevin&last_name=Knox

Note the use of:

- = associates a value with a name
- & separates consecutive name/value pairs

POST method – Form data set is encoded in a similar manner, but included with http header information

Post form data set is not immediately visible
Form Elements

- A form element’s name is given by the name attribute
- A form element has an initial value and a current value (both are strings)
- A form element is displayed in the browser according to the value of the type attribute
- Form submission - for the successful submissions, the form element’s value is paired with its name - all of these pairs are referred to as the form data set

```
<input name="ifirst_name" value="" type="text" />
```

Type attribute of the input tag is not required (default value is "text"), but it is a good practice to do so.

Radio Buttons

* Do you need hotel reservations? 
To ensure that you receive the discounted JavaOne Conference hotel rate, please make your hotel reservations through us.

```
<td>
  <span class="asterisk">*</span> Do you need hotel reservations?<br />
  ... Please make your hotel reservations through us.
</td>
<td>
  <input name="ihotel" value="Yes" type="radio" />
  Yes<br />
  <input name="ihotel" value="No" type="radio" checked="checked" />
  No
</td>
```

Radio buttons only occur in groups (only one can be selected at a time)
Radio button group is specified with a common name attribute

You can optionally specify the default selected button or checkbox
One radio button in the group should have checked="checked"
Example – Display the Form dataset

For GET requests, the form dataset is contained in the URL query string.

```html
<input name="bgColor" type="radio" value="red" checked="checked" />
...  
</form>
```
FormDataSet Servlet Fragment

```java
out.println("The form dataset for this request is ");
out.print(request.getQueryString());
```