



# 95-702 Distributed Systems

## Lecture 2: Server-Side Programming: An Introduction to Servlets

# What is a Servlet?

- Created by Sun back in 1997
- A Java class that extends HttpServlet
- Responds to HTTP requests
- The response is usually XHTML or some other XML language
- May maintain state across several interactions (may use cookies or URL rewriting or hidden form fields)
- Live within a web container
- May be generated by a JSP compiler

# Servlet Lifecycle

- The container loads the servlet class.
- The servlet's `init()` method is called exactly once.
- Upon each request, the container calls the servlet's `service()` method.
- The `service()` method selects the appropriate method to call and calls it.
- Finally, before the container shuts down, it calls the servlet's `destroy()` method.