AMSS Lecture 9: The UML Meta-Model & Profile Diagrams

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Agenda

Goals

- Understand the ideas behind the UML meta-model
- Using **Profile Diagrams** to customize UML for a domain

The UML Meta-Model

- UML Meta-Model Basics
- Meta-Model Architecture (MOF layers)
- How UML Constructs Are Defined

Profile Diagrams

- Profiles as Meta-Model Customizations

The UML Meta-Model

1. What Is a Meta-Model?

- A *model* represents a real-world system.
- A *meta-model* defines the **rules for building models**.
- UML itself is not just a set of diagrams — it is a **modeling language** defined by a meta-model.

Key idea

The UML meta-model defines:

- What a *Class*, *Attribute*, *Operation*, *Association* are
- How they relate
- What diagrams can contain

Model-Driven Architecture (MDA)

MDA is a software development approach defined by the Object Management Group (OMG)

- Focuses on creating and transforming models

  rather than writing code directly

- Separates business logic from platform-specific implementation

- Supports automation:

  models $\rightarrow$ transformations $\rightarrow$ generated code

Key MDA Model Types

CIM	Computation-Independent Model (business/domain understanding)
PIM	Platform-Independent Model (logic without tech details)
PSM	Platform-Specific Model (technology-bound design)

Examples of MDA Languages / Modeling Standards

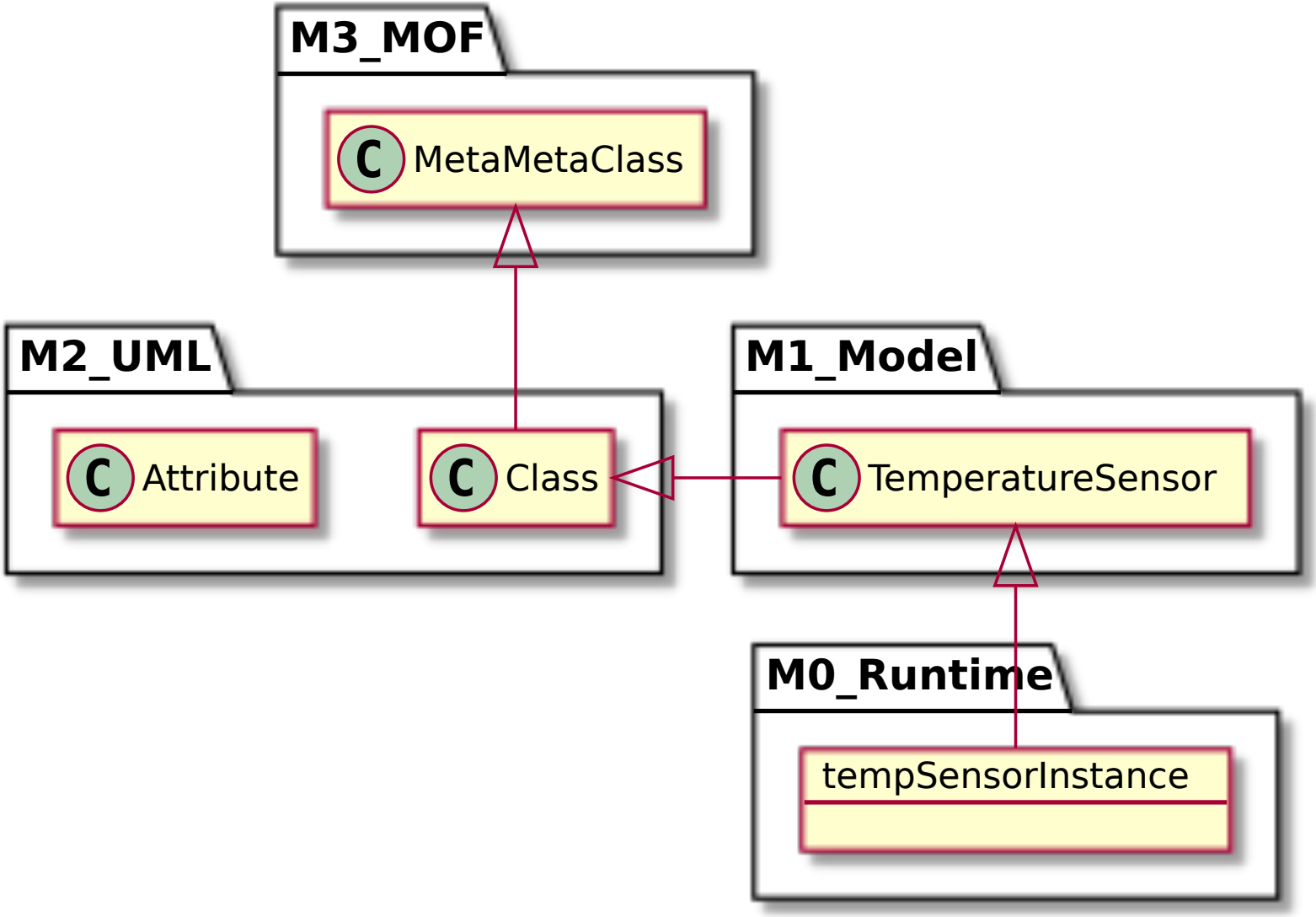
UML	Unified Modeling Language
	(primary MDA modeling language)
MOF	Meta-Object Facility
	(meta-modeling framework)
QVT	Query/View/Transformation
	(model transformation language)
OCL	Object Constraint Language
	(add constraints to models)
XMI	XML Metadata Interchange
	(model serialization/exchange format)

2. The Meta-Object Facility (MOF) Architecture

UML is defined using a 4-layer meta-model architecture:

Layer	Meaning	Example
M3	Meta-meta-model	MOF defining UML's structure
M2	Meta-model	UML specification (classes, states, components...)
M1	Model	Your diagrams (class diagrams, state diagrams...)
M0	Runtime	Real objects in the running system

Visualization of the 4-layered MOF architecture for UML



Meta-Object Facility (MOF) in More Detail

- MOF is an Object Management Group (OMG) standard
- Defines how meta-models are built
- UML, SysML, BPMN meta-models are all built using MOF
- Enables interoperability between modeling tools

Key MOF Concepts

Classes	Meta-classes used to define modeling concepts (e.g., UML Class)
Properties	Define attributes and relationships in the meta-model
Packages	Group meta-model elements
Associations	Link meta-classes together

MOF Variants

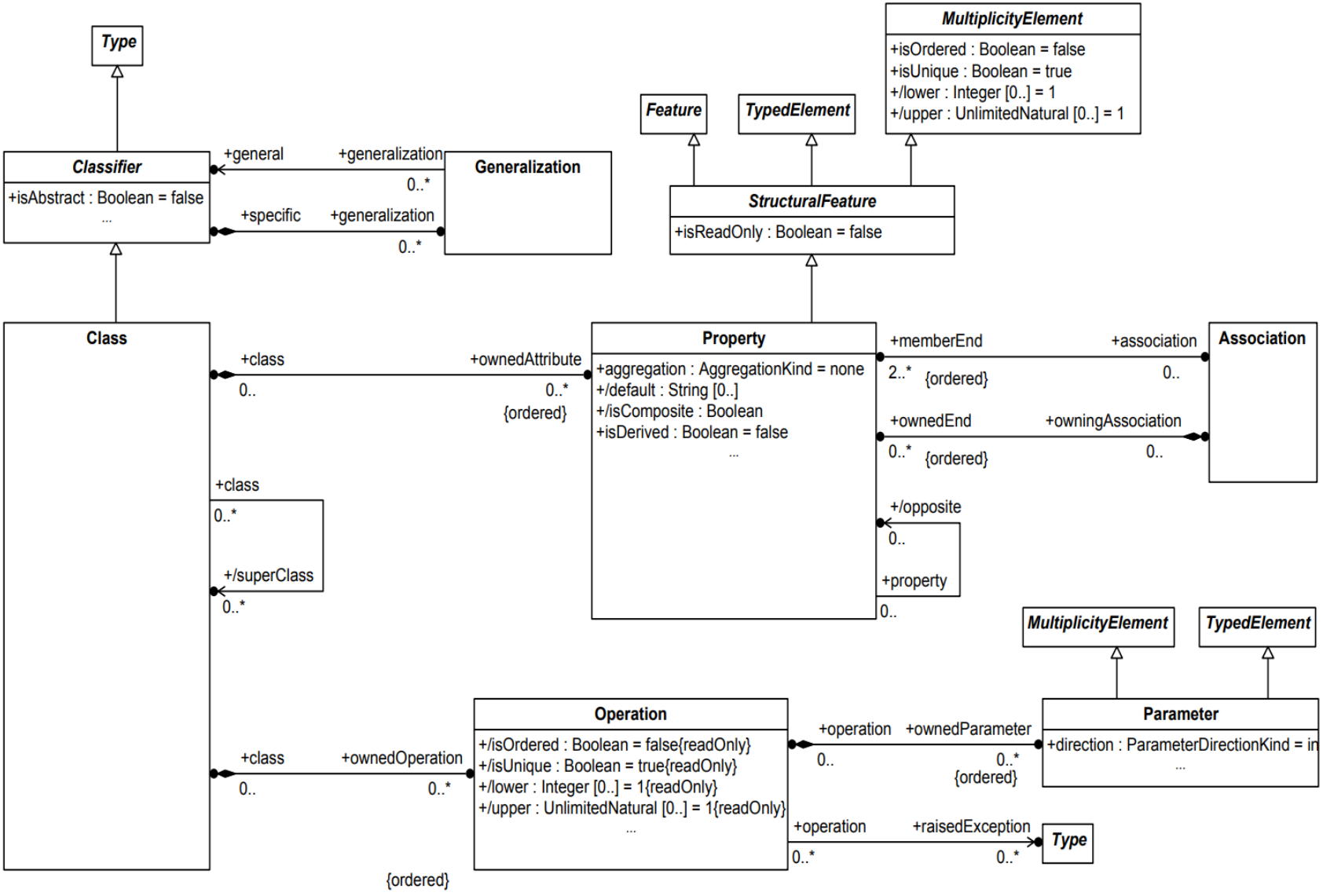
Essential MOF (EMOF)

- A simplified subset of MOF
- Used for simple DSLs, transformation systems
  - Many DSLs (Domain-Specific Languages) use EMOF for simplicity

Complete MOF (CMOF)

- Offers the full expressive power of MOF
  - A particular aspect of CMOF is its Reflection layer
  - UML is defined in CMOF

Essential MOF (EMOF) classes



Profiles and Profile diagrams

4. Profiles and Stereotypes (10 minutes)

Profiles are **lightweight extensions** to the UML meta-model

- Add domain-specific concepts
- Add constraints
- Specialize existing UML meta-model elements
  - without modifying UML itself

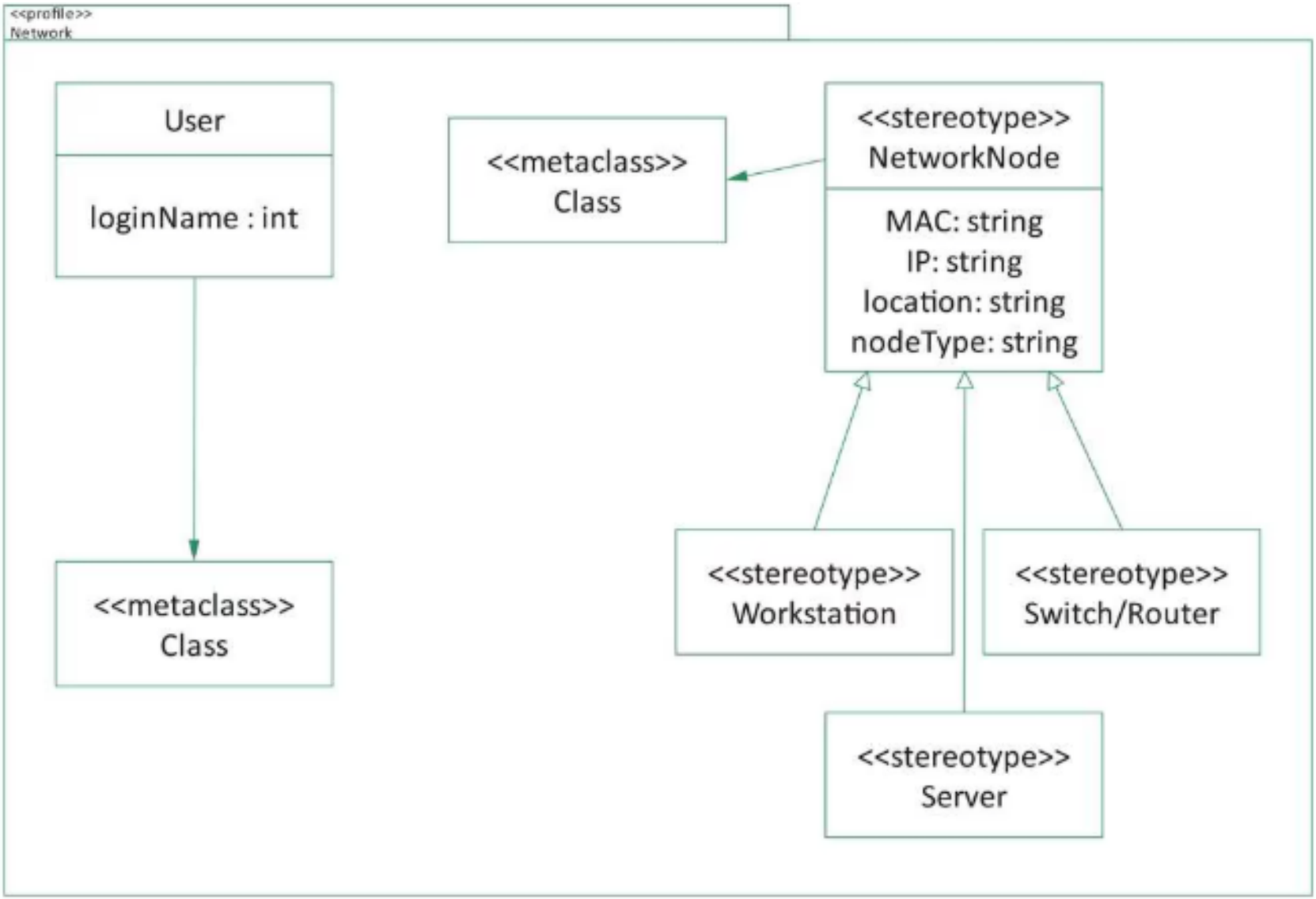
Stereotypes extend UML elements

- Add tagged values
- Add constraints
- Add semantics

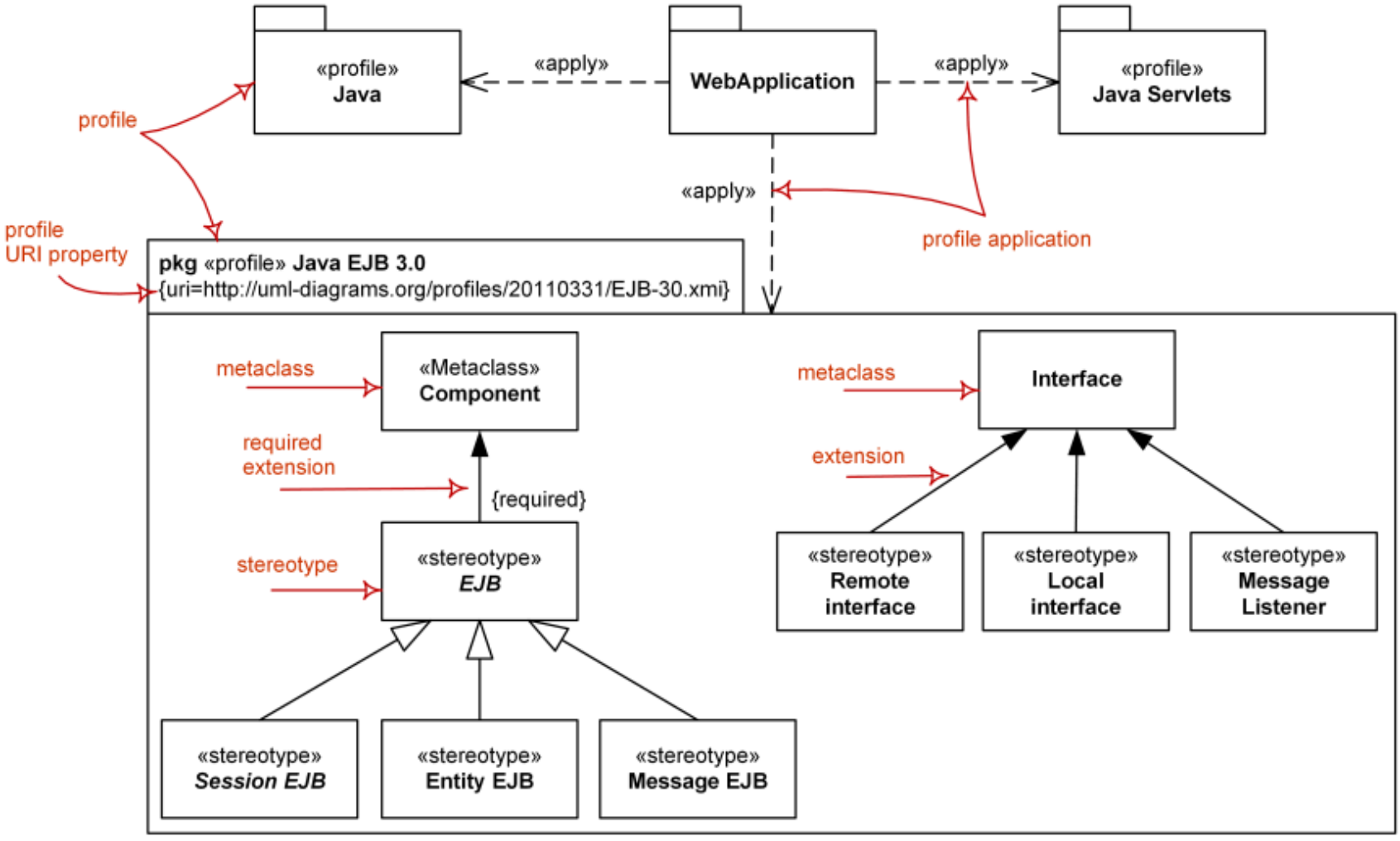
5. Profile Diagrams

Define UML *extensions* for domain-specific modeling.

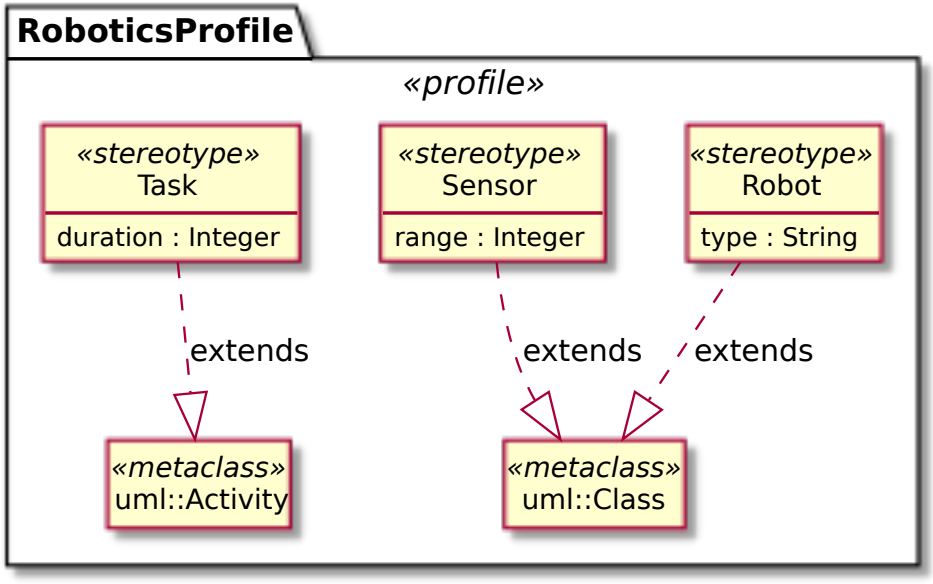
- custom stereotypes, tagged values, and constraints.

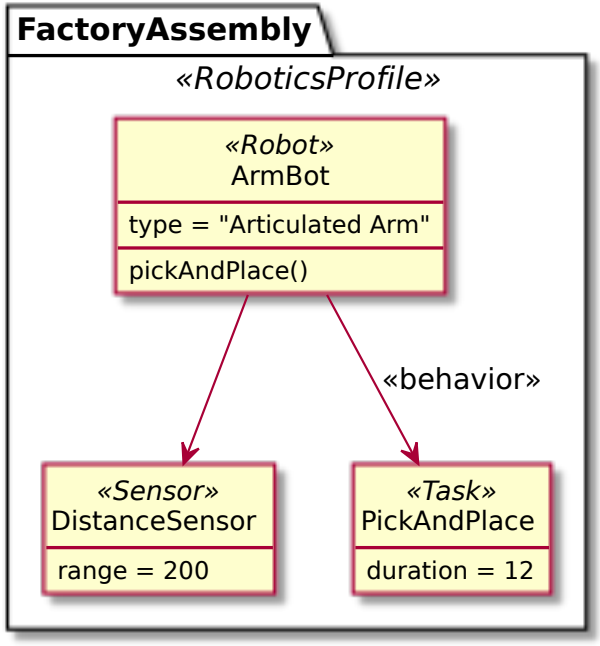


5. Profile Diagram example



A profile diagram and a DSL model using it





Why Profiles instead of modifying the UML meta-model?

- Profiles keep UML standard-compliant
- Tool-friendly
- Tailored for specific domains

  (IoT, automotive, medical, cloud, finance)

Examples:

- SysML = UML Profile
- MARTE (real-time systems) = UML Profile

Interactive exercise (Secure Web Services profile)

Create a UML Profile Diagram that extends UML to better describe security characteristics of web-service components.

Tasks

1. Create a WebSecurity profile
2. Add stereotypes
    a. SecureCompoent extends Component with encryption and CA tags
    b. SensitiveData extends Class with a dataCategory tag
    c. AuthRequired extends Operation with authLevel tag
3. Add at least one constraint
    - e.g., SensitiveData must have at least one private attribute

Summary

- UML is defined by a **meta-model** (M2 layer) using MOF (M3 layer)
- Your diagrams are **models** (M1), representing real objects (M0)
- Profiles customize UML **without altering the meta-model**
- Stereotypes add domain semantics and constraints
- Profiles are essential for domain-specific modeling (e.g., SysML)