

[544] gRPC

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Learning Objectives

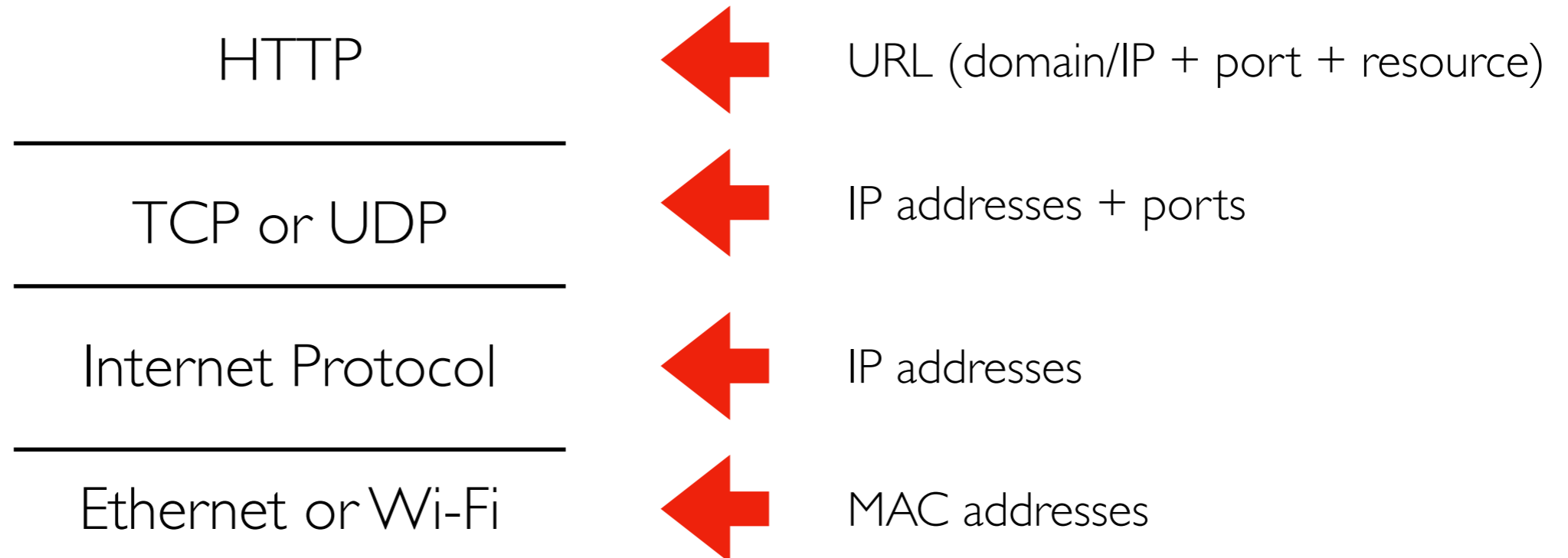
- describe the functionality that HTTP provides (beyond what TCP alone provides)
- call functions remotely via gRPC

Outline

HTTP

gRPC

HTTP (Hypertext Transfer Protocol)



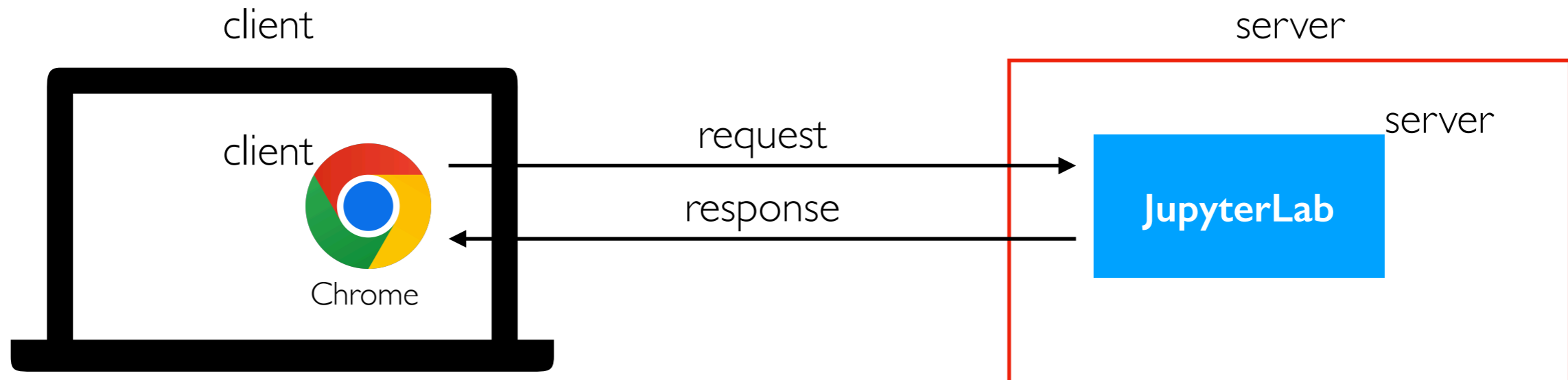
`https://tyler.caraza-harter.com:443/cs544/f24/schedule.html`

domain name
(mapped to an IP)

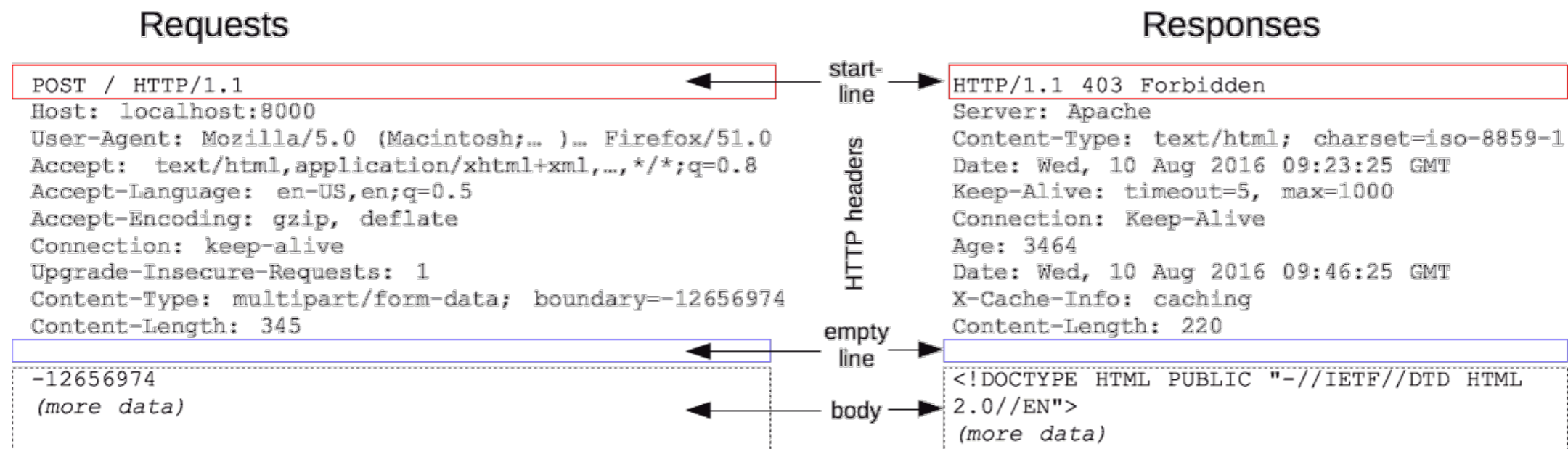
port
(443 is default
for https)

resource

HTTP Messages Between Clients and Servers



Parts: method, resource, status code, headers, body



<https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Web/HTTP/Messages>

HTTP Methods (types of messages)

Types of request

- **POST**: create a new resource (request+response have body)
- **PUT**: update a resource (request+response have body, usually)
- **GET**: fetch a resource (response has body)
- **DELETE**: delete a resource
- others...

Canvas **REST** API example:

GET <https://canvas.wisc.edu/api/v1/conversations>
(see all Canvas conversations in JSON format)

POST <https://canvas.wisc.edu/api/v1/conversations>
(create new Canvas conversation)

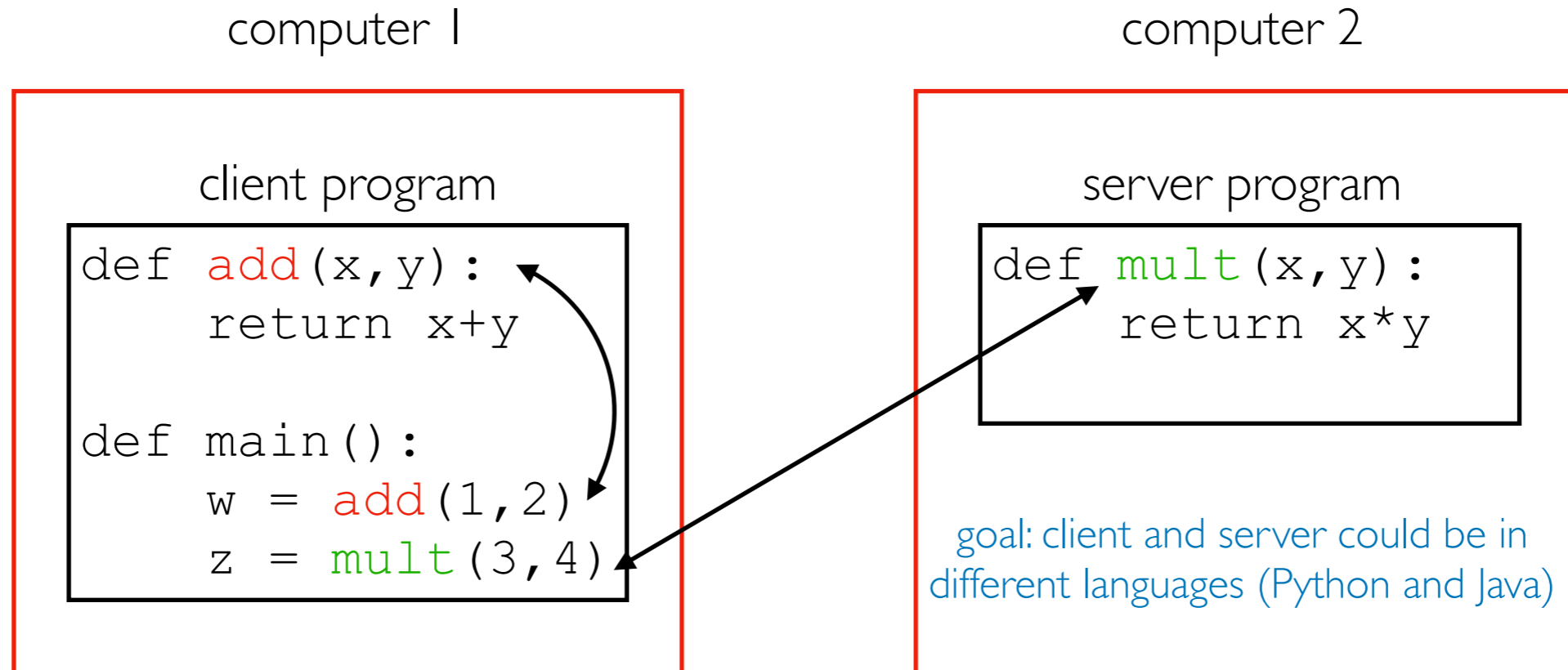
<https://canvas.instructure.com/doc/api/conversations.html>

Outline

HTTP

gRPC

Remote Procedure Calls (RPCs)



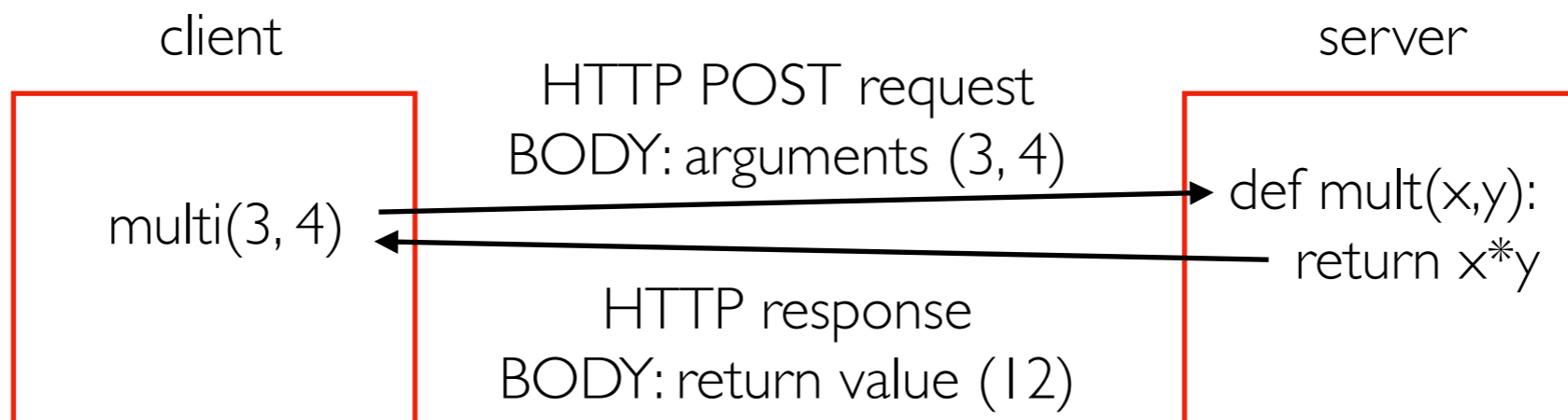
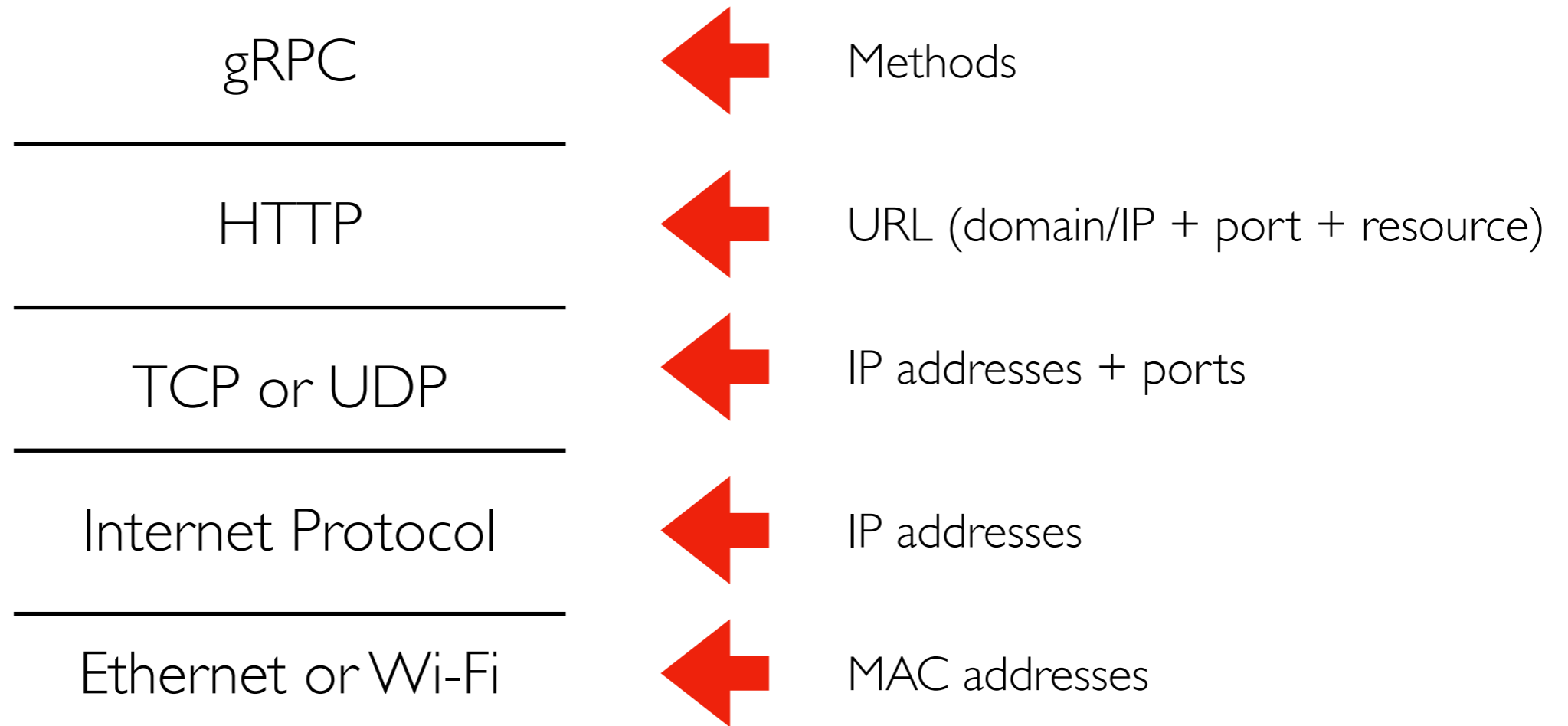
procedure = function

- **main** calling **add** is a regular procedure call
- **main** call **mult** is a remote procedure call

There are MANY tools to do RPCs

- Thrift (developed at Meta)
- gRPC (developed at Google) -- this semester

gRPC builds on HTTP



Serialization/deserialization (Protobufs)

How do we represent arguments and return values as bytes in a request/response body?

Serialization: various types (ints, strs, lists, etc) to **bytes** ("wire format")

Deserialization: **bytes** to various types

Challenge 1: every language has different types and we want cross-languages calls

gRPC uses Google's **Protocol Buffers** provide a uniform type system across languages.

Challenge 2: different CPUs order bytes differently

cpu A int32:

byte 1	byte 2	byte 3	byte 4
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cpu B int32:

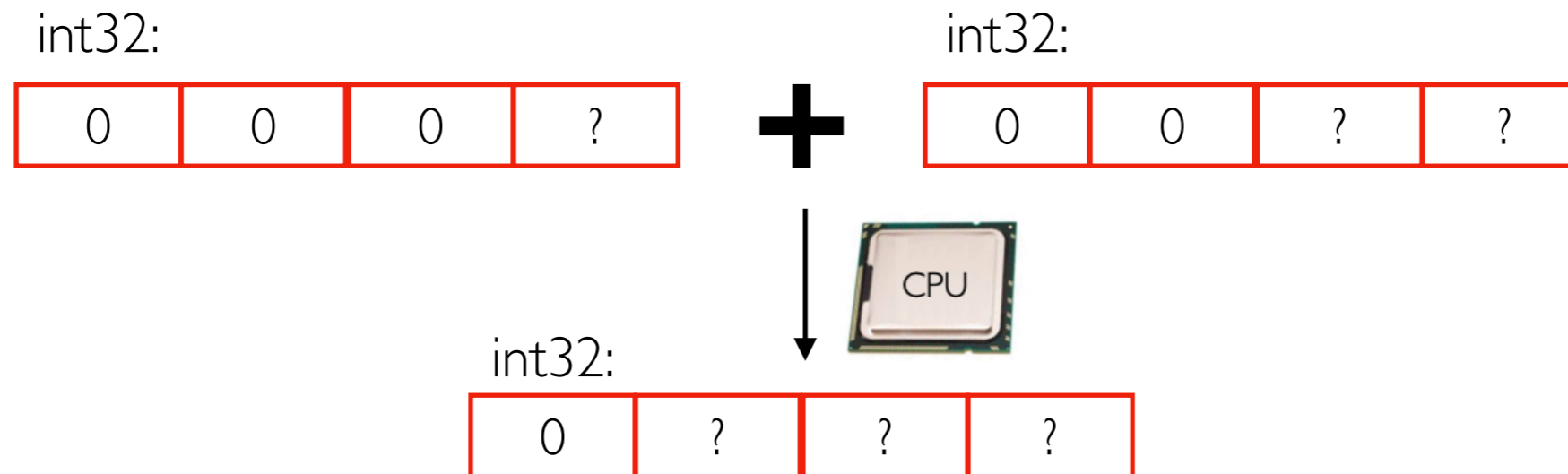
byte 4	byte 3	byte 2	byte 1
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.proto	C++	Java	Python
double	double	double	float
float	float	float	float
int32	int32	int	int
int64	int64	long	int
uint32	uint32	int	int
uint64	uint64	long	int
sint32	int32	int	int
sint64	int64	long	int
bool	bool	boolean	bool
string	string	String	str
bytes	string	ByteString	bytes

Equivalent with digit order: "twelve" is "12" by convention, but people could have chosen "21" to mean "twelve"

<https://protobuf.dev/programming-guides/proto/>

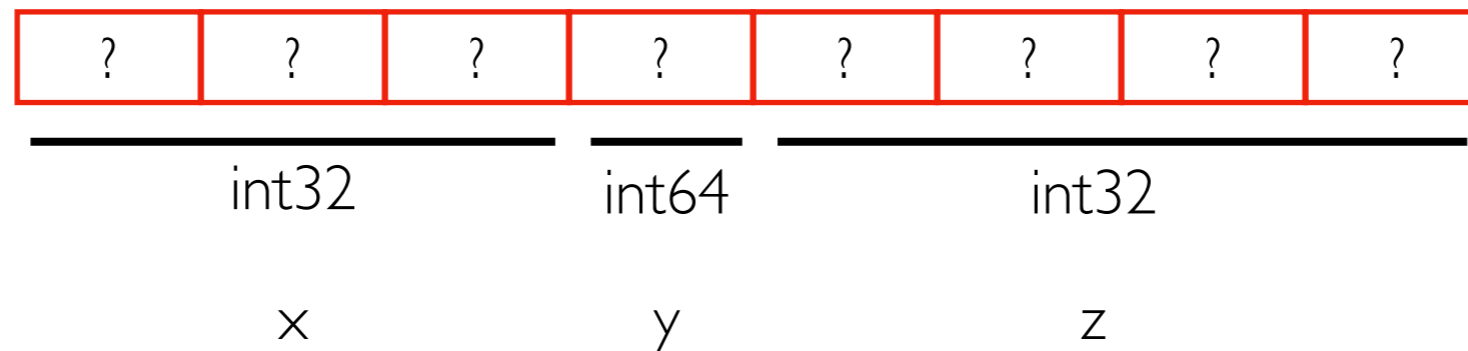
Variable-Length Encoding



For **computational efficiency**, int32's use 4 bytes during computation. Also helps w/ offsets.

For **space efficiency**, smaller numbers in int32s could use fewer bytes (4 bytes is max). This reduces network traffic.

Example nums in a protobuf:



Demos...