CS162
Operating Systems and
Systems Programming
Lecture 5

Cooperating Threads

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Review: Per Thread State

- Each Thread has a Thread Control Block (TCB)
  - Execution State: CPU registers, program counter, pointer to stack
  - Scheduling info: State (more later), priority, CPU time
  - Accounting Info
  - Various Pointers (for implementing scheduling queues)
  - Pointer to enclosing process? (PCB)?
  - Etc (add stuff as you find a need)
- OS Keeps track of TCBs in protected memory
  - In Arrays, or Linked Lists, or ...

Review: Yielding through Internal Events

- Blocking on I/O
  - The act of requesting I/O implicitly yields the CPU
- Waiting on a "signal" from other thread
  - Thread asks to wait and thus yields the CPU
- Thread executes a yield()
  - Thread volunteers to give up CPU
    computePI() {
      while(TRUE) {
        ComputeNextDigit();
        yield();
      }
    }
  - Note that yield() must be called by programmer frequently enough!

Review: Stack for Yielding Thread

- How do we run a new thread?
  run_new_thread() {
    newThread = PickNewThread();
    switch(curThread, newThread);
    ThreadHouseKeeping(); /* Later in lecture */
  }
- How does dispatcher switch to a new thread?
  - Save anything next thread may trash: PC, regs, stack
  - Maintain isolation for each thread
**Review: Two Thread Yield Example**

- Consider the following code blocks:
  ```
  proc A() {
    B();
  }
  proc B() {
    while(TRUE) {
      yield();
    }
  }
  ```

- Suppose we have 2 threads:
  - Threads S and T

**Goals for Today**

- More on Interrupts
- Thread Creation/Destruction
- Cooperating Threads

Note: Some slides and/or pictures in the following are adapted from slides ©2005 Silberschatz, Galvin, and Gagne.
Many slides generated from my lecture notes by Kubiatowicz.

**Example: Network Interrupt**

- Disable/Enable All Ints ➔ Internal CPU disable bit
  - RTI reenables interrupts, returns to user mode
- Raise/lower priority: change interrupt mask
- Software interrupts can be provided entirely in software at priority switching boundaries

```
add $r1,$r2,$r3
subi $r4,$r1,#4
slli $r4,$r4,#2
PC saved
```
Review: Preemptive Multithreading

- Use the timer interrupt to force scheduling decisions
  - Timer Interrupt routine:
    ```c
    TimerInterrupt() {
        DoPeriodicHouseKeeping();
        run_new_thread();
    }
    ```
- This is often called preemptive multithreading, since threads are preempted for better scheduling
  - Solves problem of user who doesn’t insert yield();

Review: Lifecycle of a Thread (or Process)

- As a thread executes, it changes state:
  - new: The thread is being created
  - ready: The thread is waiting to run
  - running: Instructions are being executed
  - waiting: Thread waiting for some event to occur
  - terminated: The thread has finished execution
- “Active” threads are represented by their TCBs
- TCBs organized into queues based on their state

ThreadFork(): Create a New Thread

- ThreadFork() is a user-level procedure that creates a new thread and places it on ready queue
  - We called this CreateThread() earlier
- Arguments to ThreadFork():
  - Pointer to application routine (fcnPtr)
  - Pointer to array of arguments (fcnArgPtr)
  - Size of stack to allocate
- Implementation:
  - Sanity Check arguments
  - Enter Kernel-mode and Sanity Check arguments again
  - Allocate new Stack and TCB
  - Initialize TCB and place on ready list (Runnable)

How do we initialize TCB and Stack?

- Initialize Register fields of TCB
  - Stack pointer made to point at stack
  - PC return address \( \Rightarrow \) OS (asm) routine ThreadRoot()
  - Two arg registers initialized to fcnPtr and fcnArgPtr
- Initialize stack data?
  - No. Important part of stack frame is in registers (ra)
  - Think of stack frame as just before body of ThreadRoot() really gets started

ThreadRoot stub

Initial Stack
Administrivia

- If you haven’t generated a new key yet (and given a passcode), you must do this NOW!
  - We need the ssh keys to make the group accounts
- Sections in this class are mandatory
  - Make sure that you go to the section that you have been assigned
- Should be reading Nachos code by now!
  - You should know enough to start working on the first project
  - Set up regular meeting times with your group
  - Let’s try to get group interaction problems figured out early

How does Thread get started?

- Eventually, run_new_thread() will select this TCB and return into beginning of ThreadRoot()
  - This really starts the new thread

What does ThreadRoot() look like?

- ThreadRoot() is the root for the thread routine:

```
ThreadRoot()
{
    DoStartupHousekeeping();
    UserModeSwitch(); /* enter user mode */
    Call fcnPtr(fcnArgPtr);
    ThreadFinish();
}
```

- Startup Housekeeping
  - Includes things like recording start time of thread
  - Other Statistics
- Stack will grow and shrink with execution of thread
- Final return from thread returns into ThreadRoot() which calls ThreadFinish()
  - ThreadFinish() will start at user-level

What does ThreadFinish() do?

- Needs to re-enter kernel mode (system call)
  - “Wake up” (place on ready queue) threads waiting for this thread
    - Threads (like the parent) may be on a wait queue waiting for this thread to finish
- Can’t deallocate thread yet
  - We are still running on its stack!
  - Instead, record thread as “waitingToBeDestroyed”
- Call run_new_thread() to run another thread:
  ```
  run_new_thread()
  {
      newThread = PickNewThread();
      switch(curThread, newThread);
      ThreadHouseKeeping();
  }
  ```
  - ThreadHouseKeeping() notices waitingToBeDestroyed and deallocates the finished thread’s TCB and stack
**Additional Detail**

- Thread Fork is not the same thing as UNIX fork
  - UNIX fork creates a new process so it has to create a new address space
  - For now, don’t worry about how to create and switch between address spaces
- Thread fork is very much like an asynchronous procedure call
  - Runs procedure in separate thread
  - Calling thread doesn’t wait for finish
- What if thread wants to exit early?
  - ThreadFinish() and exit() are essentially the same procedure entered at user level

**Parent-Child relationship**

- Every thread (and/or Process) has a parentage
  - A “parent” is a thread that creates another thread
  - A child of a parent was created by that parent

**ThreadJoin() system call**

- One thread can wait for another to finish with the ThreadJoin(tid) call
  - Calling thread will be taken off run queue and placed on waiting queue for thread tid
- Where is a logical place to store this wait queue?
  - On queue inside the TCB

**Use of Join for Traditional Procedure Call**

- A traditional procedure call is logically equivalent to doing a ThreadFork followed by ThreadJoin
- Consider the following normal procedure call of B() by A():
  ```
  A() { B(); }
  B() { Do interesting, complex stuff }
  ```
- The procedure A() is equivalent to A():
  ```
  A'() {
    tid = ThreadFork(B,null);
    ThreadJoin(tid);
  }
  ```
- Why not do this for every procedure?
  - Context Switch Overhead
  - Memory Overhead for Stacks


**Kernel versus User-Mode threads**

- We have been talking about Kernel threads
  - Native threads supported directly by the kernel
  - Every thread can run or block independently
  - One process may have several threads waiting on different things
- Downside of kernel threads: a bit expensive
  - Need to make a crossing into kernel mode to schedule
- Even lighter weight option: User Threads
  - User program provides scheduler and thread package
  - May have several user threads per kernel thread
  - User threads may be scheduled non-preemptively relative to each other (only switch on yield())
  - Cheap
- Downside of user threads:
  - When one thread blocks on I/O, all threads block
  - Kernel cannot adjust scheduling among all threads

**Threading models mentioned by book**

- Simple One-to-One Threading Model
- Many-to-One
- Many-to-Many

**Multiprocessing vs Multiprogramming**

- Remember Definitions:
  - Multiprocessing = Multiple CPUs
  - Multiprogramming = Multiple Jobs or Processes
  - Multithreading = Multiple threads per Process
- What does it mean to run two threads “concurrently”?
  - Scheduler is free to run threads in any order and interleaving: FIFO, Random, ...
  - Dispatcher can choose to run each thread to completion or time-slice in big chunks or small chunks

**Correctness for systems with concurrent threads**

- If dispatcher can schedule threads in any way, programs must work under all circumstances
  - Can you test for this?
  - How can you know if your program works?
- Independent Threads:
  - No state shared with other threads
  - Deterministic ⇒ Input state determines results
  - Reproducible ⇒ Can recreate Starting Conditions, I/O
  - Scheduling order doesn’t matter (if switch() works!!!)
- Cooperating Threads:
  - Shared State between multiple threads
  - Non-deterministic
  - Non-reproducible
  - Non-deterministic and Non-reproducible means that bugs can be intermittent
  - Sometimes called “Heisenbugs”
Interactions Complicate Debugging

• Is any program truly independent?
  - Every process shares the file system, OS resources, network, etc
  - Extreme example: buggy device driver causes thread A to crash "independent thread" B

• You probably don’t realize how much you depend on reproducibility:
  - Example: Evil C compiler
    » Modifies files behind your back by inserting errors into C program unless you insert debugging code
  - Example: Debugging statements can overrun stack

• Non-deterministic errors are really difficult to find
  - Example: Memory layout of kernel+user programs
    » depends on scheduling, which depends on timer/other things
  - Original UNIX had a bunch of non-deterministic errors
  - Example: Something which does interesting I/O
    » User typing of letters used to help generate secure keys

Why allow cooperating threads?

• People cooperate; computers help/enhance people’s lives, so computers must cooperate
  - By analogy, the non-reproducibility/non-determinism of people is a notable problem for “carefully laid plans”

• Advantage 1: Share resources
  - One computer, many users
  - One bank balance, many ATMs
    » What if ATMs were only updated at night?
  - Embedded systems (robot control: coordinate arm & hand)

• Advantage 2: Speedup
  - Overlap I/O and computation
    » Many different file systems do read-ahead
  - Multiprocessors – chop up program into parallel pieces

• Advantage 3: Modularity
  - more important than you might think
  - Chop large problem up into simpler pieces
    » To compile, for instance, gcc calls cpp | cc1 | cc2 | as | ld
    » Makes system easier to extend

High-level Example: Web Server

• Server must handle many requests

• Non-cooperating version:
  serverLoop() {
    con = AcceptCon();
    ProcessFork(ServiceWebPage(), con);
  }

• What are some disadvantages of this technique?

Threaded Web Server

• Now, use a single process

• Multithreaded (cooperating) version:
  serverLoop() {
    connection = AcceptCon();
    ThreadFork(ServiceWebPage(), connection);
  }

• Looks almost the same, but has many advantages:
  - Can share file caches kept in memory, results of CGI scripts, other things
  - Threads are much cheaper to create than processes, so this has a lower per-request overhead

• Question: would a user-level (say one-to-many) thread package make sense here?
  - When one request blocks on disk, all block ...

• What about Denial of Service attacks or Slash-dot effects?
Thread Pools

- Problem with previous version: Unbounded Threads
  - When web-site becomes too popular - throughput sinks
- Instead, allocate a bounded "pool" of worker threads, representing the maximum level of multiprogramming

```java
master() {
    allocThreads(worker, queue);
    while (TRUE) {
        con = AcceptCon();
        if (con != null) {
            Enqueue(queue, con);
            sleepOn(queue);
        } else {
            ServiceWebPage(con);
        }
    }
}

worker(queue) {
    while (TRUE) {
        con = Dequeue(queue);
        if (con == null)
            sleepOn(queue);
        else
            ServiceWebPage(con);
    }
}
```

Summary

- Interrupts: hardware mechanism for returning control to operating system
  - Used for important/high-priority events
  - Can force dispatcher to schedule a different thread (preemptive multithreading)
- New Threads Created with ThreadFork()
  - Create initial TCB and stack to point at ThreadRoot()
  - ThreadRoot() calls thread code, then ThreadFinish()
  - ThreadFinish() wakes up waiting threads then prepares TCB/stack for destruction
- Threads can wait for other threads using ThreadJoin()
- Threads may be at user-level or kernel level
- Cooperating threads have many potential advantages
  - But: introduces non-reproducibility and non-determinism
  - Need to have Atomic operations