Operating Systems: Processes and Threads

Week 1: Lecture 2, Thu 8.9.2011

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Process

- is an activity that has a program, input, output and a state.
- Some terms:
  - Text/code = executable instructions
  - Data = variables
  - Stack = work area
  - Parameter passing to subroutines/system calls
  - Process Control Block, PCB entry in Process Table = management information

Process model

One physical program counter switches between processes
Conceptual model of 4 independent, sequential processes
Only one program active at any instant on one CPU pseudoparallelism

Process Creation

Principal events that cause process creation
1. System initialization
2. Execution of a process creation system
3. User request to create a new process
4. Initiation of a batch job
**Process Creation**

- Operating system does
  - Create PCB (new process table entry)
  - OS ‘generates’ a unique ID
  - Allocate memory for the process
  - Initiate PCB
  - Link PCB to other structures
    - Place to Ready-queue, link to parent process, etc.

**Process Termination**

- Conditions which terminate processes
  1. Normal exit (voluntary)
  2. Error exit (voluntary)
  3. Fatal error (involuntary)
  4. Killed by another process (involuntary)

**Process Hierarchies**

- Parent creates a child process, child process can create its own process
- Forms a hierarchy
  - UNIX calls this a “process group”
  - Windows has no concept of process hierarchy
    - all processes are created equal

**Process States (1)**

- Possible process states
  - running
  - blocked
  - ready
- Transitions between states shown

**Process States**

- Process states for time of Figure 3.4
- Dispatcher – lähettäjä, huolitsija, lennon selvittäjä

*Sta Fig 3.8*
### Fields of a process table entry

- **Process management**
  - Registers
  - Program counter
  - Program status word
  - Stack pointer
  - Process state
  - Priority
  - Scheduling parameters
  - Process ID
  - Parent process
  - Process group
  - Signals
  - Time when process started
  - CPU time used
  - Child's CPU time
  - Time of next alarm

- **Memory management**
  - Pointer to text segment
  - Pointer to data segment
  - Pointer to stack segment

- **File management**
  - Root directory
  - Working directory
  - File descriptors
  - User ID
  - Group ID

### Tasks on interrupt

1. Hardware stacks program counter, etc.
2. Hardware loads new program counter from interrupt vector.
3. Assembly language procedure saves registers.
4. Assembly language procedure sets up new stack.
5. C interrupt service routine typically reads and buffers input.
6. Scheduler decides which process to run next.
7. C procedure returns to the assembly code.
8. Assembly language procedure starts up new current process.

The process is not always changed in step 6, if running process can continue. Process can be changed only at step 6.

### Threads

- One thread interacts with user
- One thread handles reformatting in background
- One thread handles disk backups in background

### Word processor with three threads

- Dispatcher receives requests
- Handles to an idle worker thread for processing
- Suitable model for such: finite-state machine

### Multithreaded web server using dispatcher

- Dispatcher receives requests
- Handles to an idle worker thread for processing
- Suitable model for such: finite-state machine

### Thread model

(a) Three processes each with one thread
(b) One process with three threads
Thread Model: Process vs thread

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per process Items</th>
<th>Per thread Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address space</td>
<td>Program counter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global variables</td>
<td>Registers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open files</td>
<td>Stack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child processes</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pending alarms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signals and signal handlers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Items shared by all threads in a process
- Items private to each thread in the thread
- Each thread has its own stack!

Why threads?
- Multiple parallel activities. Threads provide easier programming models
- Faster to create and destroy one thread than a whole process
- When one thread waits, another might be able to execute
- Shared data area of threads in one process. Efficient resource sharing and easy communication.

BUT
- Mutual exclusion and synchronization are fully programmer's responsibility (no support from OS or anything else)

POSIX threads (pthreads)

IEEE standard for threads for portable thread programs
- `pthread_create()` - Create a new thread
- `pthread_exit()` - Terminate the calling thread
- `pthread_join()` - Wait for a specific thread to exit
- `pthread_yield()` - Release the CPU to let another thread run
- Functions for synchronization and mutual exclusion
- And more than 50 other functions

User-level vs kernel-level threads

- Kernel (or OS) is not aware of threads, schedules processes
- User process must dispatch threads itself
- All thread control and dispatching done by the kernel
- No control on the user level

User-level threads

Advantages
- Fast dispatching
- No mode switch
- No interrupt
- No process switch!
- Programmer can freely choose the scheduling mechanism

Disadvantages
- When one thread is blocked on system call, it blocks the whole process (and all other threads)
- Threads of one process cannot be executed on several processors or cores concurrently

Kernel-level threads

Advantages
- Threads of one process can be executed simultaneously on multiple processors
- If one thread is blocked, the other threads of this process may still continue
- Often also the kernel implementation is multithreaded

Disadvantages
- Dispatching a thread has two phases:
  - Interrupt +, interrupt handling and mode switch
  - Dispatcher (and return to user mode)
- Slower than in user-level threads
Hybrid Implementations

Multiplexing user-level threads onto kernel-level threads

Making single-threaded code multithreaded

- Global variables
  - Threads may not be aware of others using the same variable
  - See next slide for solutions
- Library procedures
  - Might not be reentrant (second call to procedure before the first one is finished is not safe)
  - Solution: rewrite the library or use an excluding jacket
- Signals
  - No simple solutions - difficult already in single thread
- Stack management
  - How to increase a thread’s stack in case of stack overflow

Threads and global variables

Conflicts between threads over the use of a global variable

One solution:
- Prohibit global variables

Alternative:
- Private global variables
- Accessing these is tricky, language may not support
- New library procedures

Interprocess Communication

Race Conditions

Two processes want to access shared memory at same time

Critical Regions (1)

Four conditions to provide mutual exclusion
1. No two processes simultaneously in critical region
2. No assumptions made about speeds or numbers of CPUs
3. No process running outside its critical region may block another process
4. No process must wait forever to enter its critical region
Critical Regions (2)

Mutual Exclusion
- Busy Waiting – occupy the CPU while waiting
- Sleep and Wakeup
  - Semaphores
  - Mutexes
  - Monitors
  - Message Passing
  - Barriers

Mutual exclusion using critical regions

Scheduling
Introduction to Scheduling (1)
- Bursts of CPU usage alternate with periods of I/O wait
  - a CPU-bound process
  - an I/O bound process

Scheduling in Batch Systems (1)

Scheduling in Batch Systems (2)
- Three level scheduling
Scheduling in Interactive Systems (1)

- Round Robin Scheduling
  - a) list of runnable processes
  - b) list of runnable processes after B uses up its quantum

Scheduling in Interactive Systems (2)

A scheduling algorithm with four priority classes

Scheduling in Real-Time Systems

Schedulable real-time system

- Given
  - periodic events
  - event $i$ occurs within period $P_i$ and requires $C_i$ seconds
  - Then the load can only be handled if

\[
\sum_{i=1}^{m} \frac{C_i}{P_i} \leq 1
\]

Policy versus Mechanism

- Separate what is allowed to be done with how it is done
  - a process knows which of its children threads are important and need priority

Scheduling algorithm parameterized

- mechanism in the kernel

- Parameters filled in by user processes
  - policy set by user process

Thread Scheduling (1)

Possible scheduling of threads

- 50-msec process quantum
- threads run 5 msec/ CPU burst

Extra pages: Scheduling example
CPU Scheduling: Algorithms examples
- First-Come-First-Served (FCFS)
- Round Robin (RR)
- Virtual Round Robin (VRR)
- Shortest Process Next (SPN)
- Shortest Remaining Time (SRT)
- Highest Response Ratio Next (HRRN)
- Multilevel Feedback
- Fair Share Scheduling (FSS)

Process set
(Tabl 9.4 [Stal05])

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Arrival Time</th>
<th>Service Time</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
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Service Time = running time on CPU
No I/O in the example (unrealistic?)

FCFS - First Come First Served

RR - Round Robin

RR - effect of the time slice

Virtual RR: jonomalli

Figure 8.7 Queuing Diagram for Virtual Round-Robin Scheduler
SPN - Shortest Process Next

SRT - Shortest Remaining Time

HRRN - Highest Response Ratio Next

Multilevel Feedback

Feedback q=1

Feedback q=2
## Table 9.3 [Stal05]

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Note: Table 9.3: 
- FCFS: First Come, First Serve
- Round Robin
- SN: Shortest Job First
- SR: Shortest Remaining Time
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