Lecture - III  
Processes

Tevfik Koşar

University at Buffalo  
September 4th, 2012

Roadmap

- Processes
  - Basic Concepts
  - Process Creation
  - Process Termination
  - Context Switching
  - Process Queues
  - Process Scheduling
  - Interprocess Communication

Process Concept

- A process is a program in execution;
- A process image consists of three components:
  1. an executable program
  2. the associated data needed by the program
  3. the execution context of the process, which contains all information the O/S needs to manage the process (ID, state, CPU registers, stack, etc.)

Process Control Block

- The Process Control Block (PCB)
  - is included in the context, along with the stack
  - is a “snapshot” that contains all necessary and sufficient data to restart a process where it left off (ID, state, CPU registers, etc.)
  - is one entry in the operating system’s process table (array or linked list)

Process State

- As a process executes, it changes state
  - new: The process is being created
  - ready: The process is waiting to be assigned to a processor
  - running: Instructions are being executed
  - waiting: The process is waiting for some event to occur
  - terminated: The process has finished execution
Process Creation

Some events that lead to process creation (enter)

- When a system is initialized, several background processes or “daemons” are started (email, logon, etc.)
- A user requests to run an application
- An existing process spawns a child process
- For example, a server process (i.e., web server, file server) may create a new process for each request it handles
- The init daemon waits for user login and spawns a shell
- A batch system takes on the next job in line

Process Creation by spawning

Process Creation

A tree of processes on a typical UNIX system

Process Creation

1. Clone child process
   - pid = fork()

Process Creation

2. Replace child’s image
   - execve(name, ...)

Fork Example 1

```c
#include <stdio.h>

int main(...)
{
    int ret_from_fork, mypid;

    mypid = getpid();  // who am I?
    printf("Before: my pid is %d\n", mypid);  // tell pid
    ret_from_fork = fork();

    sleep(1);
    printf("After: my fork returns pid: %d, said %d\n", ret_from_fork, getpid());
    return 0;
}
```

Fork Example 2

```c
#include <stdio.h>

int main(...)
{
    fork();
    fork();
    fork();
    printf("my pid is %d\n", getpid());
}
```

How many lines of output will this produce?
Process Termination

Some events that lead to process termination (exit)
- regular completion, with or without error code
  - the process voluntarily executes an `exit(err)` system call to indicate to the O/S that it has finished
- fatal error (uncatchable or uncaught)
  - service errors: no memory left for allocation, I/O error, etc.
  - total time limit exceeded
  - arithmetic error, out-of-bounds memory access, etc.
- killed by another process via the kernel
  - the process receives a `SIGKILL` signal
  - in some systems the parent takes down its children with it

Some events that lead to process pause / dispatch
- I/O wait
  - a process invokes an I/O system call that blocks waiting for the I/O device: the O/S puts the process in “Waiting” mode and dispatches another process to the CPU
- preemptive timeout
  - the process receives a timer interrupt and relinquishes control back to the O/S dispatcher: the O/S puts the process in “Ready” mode and dispatches another process to the CPU
  - not to be confused with “total time limit exceeded”, which leads to process termination

Process "Context" Switching

- When CPU switches to another process, the system must save the state of the old process and load the saved state for the new process
- Context-switch time is overhead; the system does no useful work while switching
- Switching time is dependent on hardware support

CPU Switch From Process to Process

Process "Context" Switching

- How does a full process switch happen, step by step?
  1. save CPU context, including PC and registers (the only step needed in a simple mode switch)
  2. update process state (to “Ready”, “Blocked”, etc.) and other related fields of the PCB
  3. move the PCB to the appropriate queue
  4. select another process for execution: this decision is made by the CPU scheduling algorithm of the O/S
  5. update the PCB of the selected process (state = "Running")
  6. update memory management structures
  7. restore CPU context to the values contained in the new PCB

Process "Context" Switching

- What events trigger the O/S to switch processes?
  - interrupts — external, asynchronous events, independent of the currently executed process instructions
    - clock interrupt → O/S checks time and may block process
    - I/O interrupt → data has come, O/S may unblock process
    - memory fault → O/S may block process that must wait for a missing page in memory to be swapped in
  - exceptions — internal, synchronous (but involuntary) events caused by instructions → O/S may terminate or recover process
  - system calls — voluntary synchronous events calling a specific O/S service → after service completed, O/S may either resume or block the calling process, depending on I/O, priorities, etc.
Process Scheduling Queues

- **Job queue** - set of all jobs in the system
- **Ready queue** - set of all processes residing in main memory, ready and waiting to execute
- **Device queues** - set of processes waiting for an I/O device
- Processes migrate among the various queues

Representation of Process Scheduling

Three Level CPU Scheduling

Schedulers

- **Long-term scheduler** (or job scheduler) - selects which processes should be brought into the ready queue
- **Short-term scheduler** (or CPU scheduler) - selects which process should be executed next and allocates CPU
Schedulers (Cont.)

- Short-term scheduler is invoked very frequently (milliseconds) ⇒ (must be fast)
- Long-term scheduler is invoked very infrequently (seconds, minutes) ⇒ (may be slow)
- The long-term scheduler controls the degree of multiprogramming
- Processes can be described as either:
  - I/O-bound process - spends more time doing I/O than computations, many short CPU bursts
  - CPU-bound process - spends more time doing computations; few very long CPU bursts
  ⇒ long-term schedulers need to make careful decision

Addition of Medium Term Scheduling

- In time-sharing systems: remove processes from memory "temporarily" to reduce degree of multiprogramming.
- Later, these processes are resumed ⇒ Swapping

Cooperating Processes

- Independent process cannot affect or be affected by the execution of another process
- Cooperating process can affect or be affected by the execution of another process
- Advantages of process cooperation
  - Information sharing
  - Computation speed-up
  - Modularity
  - Convenience
- Disadvantage
  - Synchronization issues and race conditions

Interprocess Communication (IPC)

- Mechanism for processes to communicate and to synchronize their actions
- Shared Memory: by using the same address space and shared variables
- Message Passing: processes communicate with each other without resorting to shared variables

Communications Models

- Message Passing facility provides two operations:
  - send(message) - message size fixed or variable
  - receive(message)
- If P and Q wish to communicate, they need to:
  - establish a communication link between them
  - exchange messages via send/receive
- Two types of Message Passing
  - direct communication
  - indirect communication
Message Passing - direct communication

- Processes must name each other explicitly:
  - `send(P, message)` - send a message to process P
  - `receive(Q, message)` - receive a message from process Q
- Properties of communication link
  - Links are established automatically
  - A link is associated with exactly one pair of communicating processes
  - Between each pair there exists exactly one link
  - The link may be unidirectional, but is usually bi-directional
- Symmetrical vs Asymmetrical direct communication
  - `send(P, message)` - send a message to process P
  - `receive(id, message)` - receive a message from any process
- Disadvantage of both: limited modularity, hardcoded

Message Passing - indirect communication

- Messages are directed and received from mailboxes (also referred to as ports)
  - Each mailbox has a unique id
  - Processes can communicate only if they share a mailbox
- Primitives are defined as:
  - `send(A, message)` - send a message to mailbox A
  - `receive(A, message)` - receive a message from mailbox A

Indirect Communication (cont.)

- Operations
  - create a new mailbox
  - send and receive messages through mailbox
  - destroy a mailbox
- Properties of communication link
  - Link established only if processes share a common mailbox
  - A link may be associated with many processes
  - Each pair of processes may share several communication links
  - Link may be unidirectional or bi-directional

Indirect Communication (cont.)

- Mailbox sharing
  - P1, P2, and P3 share mailbox A
  - P1 sends; P2 and P3 receive
  - Who gets the message?
- Solutions
  - Allow a link to be associated with at most two processes
  - Allow only one process at a time to execute a receive operation
  - Allow the system to select arbitrarily the receiver. Sender is notified who the receiver was.

Synchronization

- Message passing may be either blocking or non-blocking
- **Blocking** is considered *synchronous*
  - Blocking send has the sender block until the message is received
  - Blocking receive has the receiver block until a message is available
- **Non-blocking** is considered *asynchronous*
  - Non-blocking send has the sender send the message and continue
  - Non-blocking receive has the receiver receive a valid message or null

Buffering

- Queue of messages attached to the link; implemented in one of three ways
  1. Zero capacity - 0 messages
     - Sender must wait for receiver (rendezvous)
  2. Bounded capacity - finite length of n messages
     - Sender must wait if link full
  3. Unbounded capacity - infinite length
     - Sender never waits
Summary

- Processes
  - Basic Concepts
  - Process Creation
  - Process Termination
  - Context Switching
  - Process Queues
  - Process Scheduling
  - Interprocess Communication

- Next Lecture: Threads
- Reading Assignment: Chapter 3 from Silberschatz
- HW 1 will be out next class, due 1 week

Acknowledgements

- "Operating Systems Concepts" book and supplementary material by A. Silberschatz, P. Galvin and G. Gagne
- "Operating Systems: Internals and Design Principles" book and supplementary material by W. Stallings
- "Modern Operating Systems" book and supplementary material by A. Tanenbaum
- R. Doursat and M. Yuksel from UNR