CSE 451: Operating Systems
Winter 2006

Module 24
Course Review

Ed Lazowska
lazowska@cs.washington.edu
Allen Center 570

Architectural Support

- Privileged instructions
  - what are they, and who gets to execute them?
  - how does CPU know whether to execute them?
  - why do they need to be privileged?
  - what do they manipulate?
- Events
  - exceptions: what generates them? trap vs. fault?
  - interrupt: what generates them?

OS Structure

- What are the major components of an OS?
- How are they organized?
  - what is the difference between monolithic, layered, microkernel OS's?
    - advantages and disadvantages?

Processes

- What is a process? What does it virtualize?
  - differences between program, process, thread?
  - what is contained in process?
    - what does PCB contain?
  - state queues?
    - which states, what transitions are possible?
    - when do transitions happen?
- Process manipulation
  - what does fork() do? how about exec()?
  - how do shells work?

Threads

- What is a thread?
  - why are they useful?
  - user level vs. kernel level threads?
- How does thread scheduling differ from process scheduling?
  - what operations do threads support?
  - what happens on a thread context switch? what is saved in TCB?
  - preemptive vs. non-preemptive scheduling?

Synchronization

- Why do we need it?
  - data coordination? execution coordination?
  - what are race conditions? when do they occur?
  - when are resources shared? (variables, heap objects, …)
- What is mutual exclusion?
  - what is a critical section?
  - what are the requirements of critical sections?
    - mutex, progress, bounded waiting, performance
  - what are mechanisms for building critical sections?
    - locks, semaphores, (monitors), condition variables

Locks and Semaphores

- What does it mean for acquire/release to be atomic?
- how can locks be implemented?
  - spinlocks? interrupts? OS/thread-scheduler?
  - test-and-set?
  - limitations of locks?
- Semaphores
  - wait vs. signal? difference between semaphore and lock?
  - when do threads block on semaphores? when do they wake?
  - bounded buffers problem
    - producer/consumer
  - readers/writers problem

Process Scheduling

- Long term vs. short term
- When does scheduling happen?
  - job changes state, interrupts, exceptions, job creation
- Scheduling goals?
  - maximize CPU utilization
  - maximize job throughput
  - minimize {turnaround time | waiting time | response time}
  - batch vs. interactive: what are their goals?
- What is starvation? what causes it?
- FCFS/FIFO, SPT, SRPT, priority, RR, MLFQ…

Memory Management

- What good is virtual memory?
- Mechanisms for implementing memory management
  - physical vs. virtual addressing
  - partitioning, paging, segmentation
  - page tables, TLB
- Page replacement policies?
- What are overheads related to memory management?

Virtualizing Memory

- What is difference between a physical and virtual address?
  - fixed vs. variable paritioning?
    - base/limit registers..
    - internal vs. external fragmentation
- Paging
  - advantages, disadvantages?
  - what are page tables, PTEs?
    - what are: VPN, PFN, offset? relationship to VA?
    - what's in a PTE? what are modify/reference/valid/prot bits?

Paging, TLBs

- How to reduce overhead of page table?
  - how do multi-level page tables work?
  - what problem does TLB solve?
  - why do they work?
  - how are they managed?
    - software vs. hardware managed?
- Page faults
  - what is one? how is it used to implement demand paging?
  - what is complete sequence of steps for translating a virtual address to a PA?
    - all the way from TLB access to paging in from disk
- MM tricks
  - shared memory? Mapped files? copy-on-write?

Page Replacement

- What is page replacement algorithm?
  - what application behavior does it exploit?
  - when is page replacement algorithm invoked?
- Understand:
  - Belady's (optimal), FIFO, LRU, approximations of LRU, LRU clock, working set, page fault frequency
  - what is thrashing? why does it occur and when?

Disk

- Memory hierarchy and locality
- Physical disk structure
  - platters, surfaces, tracks, sectors, cylinders, arms, heads
- Disk interface
  - how does OS make requests to the disk?
- Disk performance
  - access time = seek + rotation + transfer
- Disk scheduling
  - how does it improve performance?
  - FCFS, SSTF, SCAN, C-SCAN?

Files and Directories

- What is a file
  - what operations are supported?
  - what characteristics do they have?
  - what are file access methods?
- What is a directory
  - what are they used for?
  - how are they implemented?
  - what is a directory entry?
- How does path name translation work?
- ACLs vs. capabilities
  - matrix
  - advantages and disadvantages of each

FS layout

- What are file system layouts for?
- General strategies?
  - contiguous, linked, indexed?
  - tradeoffs?
- What is an inode?
  - how are they different than directories?
  - how are inodes and directories used to do path resolution, and find files?

FS buffer cache

- What is a buffer cache?
  - why do OS's use them?
- What are differences between caching reads and writes?
  - write-through, write-back, write-behind?
  - read-ahead?

FFS, LFS

- What is FFS, how specifically does it improve over original Unix FS?
- How about LFS, what are the basic ideas, when does it yield an improvement, when does it not?

RAID

- Basic concepts of RAID
  - stripe files across multiple disks to improve throughput
  - compensate for decreased reliability with parity/ECC
- Sources of improvement as you go from RAID-0 to RAID-5

Networking

- ISO 7-layer model
- Ethernet protocol
- IP and routing
- TCP principles (sending a long message via postcards)
- Protocol encapsulation

RPC

- Basic idea – what does it buy you over message passing?
- Subtopics: IDL, stubs, stub generation, parameter marshaling, binding, runtime/transport, error handling, performance, thread pools
- Transparency: when is distribution transparent, when is it not?

Distributed systems

- Loosely-coupled, closely-coupled, tightly-coupled
- Grapevine as an example, in detail

Distributed file systems

- Issues:
  - Basic abstraction, naming, caching, sharing/coherency, replication, performance
- Examples – compare and contrast:
  - NFS
  - AFS
  - Sprite

Buffer overflow exploits

- General concepts of buffer overflow exploits
- Details – how, specifically, would you program one, for the x86 architecture?