CIS 631
Parallel Processing

Lecture 8: Shared Memory
Parallel Programming

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Acknowledgements

- Portions of the lectures slides were adopted from:
  - I. Foster, “Designing and Building Parallel Programs,” 1995
  - Vijay Pai, COMP 422, “Parallel Programming,” Rice University, 2002
  - John Mellor-Crummey, COMP 422, “Parallel Programming,” Rice University, 2010
  - A. Grama, A. Gupta, G. Karypis, and V. Kumar, “Introduction to Parallel Computing,” 2003
Outline

- Shared memory parallelism and programming
- Process-based vs. thread-based programming
- Pthreads programming
- Exercise 3
- Project 2
Shared Memory Multiprocessors

- All processes share the same **physical memory** space
- Processes generally do not share **virtual memory** space

How to program for parallel execution?
Shared Address Space Programming Taxonomy

- Process model
  - Each process’s data is private, but can create shared space
  - Example: Linux shared memory segments

- Lightweight process (LWP) / thread model
  - Virtual memory is global, shared between LWP / threads
  - Example: Pthreads, Cilk (lazy, lightweight threads)

- Language-based model
  - Threads have shared /private data, built on runtime system
  - Example: OpenMP, Java

- Global address space (for distributed memory)
  - Language or library supported
Shared Memory Programming – IPC (Really!?)

- Multiple processes can run in parallel concurrently
- Multiple processes can be used in a parallel execution
- How?
  - Inter-process communication (IPC)
    - Sockets
  - Message passing (MPI)
    - IPC
    - Memory mapping implementation
  - Through file system (yucky, but possible)
- Effectively programming as a multi-computer system
- BUT, get advantage of shared file system, devices, ... !!!
Shared Memory Programming – Process

- Shared memory parallel programming possible only if processes can access same virtual memory space (some)
- One way is to use OS VM address sharing mechanisms
  - Linux (shm) memory mapping and synchronization
  - Incur overheads of using OS support
    - Less than going through IPC and network interfaces though!

Why might you use this?
Shared Memory Programming – Multithreading

- Process-level parallel programming via virtual memory space sharing suffers from overheads
  - Processes are heavy-weight and cost more to switch
  - Interaction with OS mechanisms not very clean
- Desire way to:
  - Create lighter-weight units of computation
  - Program light-weight computation interaction
- Must be able to address shared data directly
  - Object $x$ is the same object $x$ no matter which computation unit references it
  - The virtual memory space (or some portion) is shared
Multi-threading

- Creation of “threads of execution” that share process VM

- Threads inherit process’ s VM address space
- All global data AND instructions are shared
- Thread-private data possible
  - Through memory allocation and local variables
Multi-threading: Advantages and Disadvantages

☐ Advantages
  ☑ Light-weight computation
  ☑ Fast thread switching
  ☑ Shared data through memory addressing
  ☑ Synchronization support through shared memory
  ☑ Low overhead
  ☑ User has control over threads of execution

☐ Disadvantages
  ☑ User has control over threads of execution and memory
  ☑ Prone to concurrent programming (synchronization) errors
  ☑ Performance of memory system may be harder to optimize
Shared Memory Parallel Programming

- What does the user have to do?
  - Decide how to decompose computation into parallel parts
  - Create (and destroy) threads to support decomposition
  - Add synchronization to satisfy dependences
- In some sense, similar to message passing programming
  - Think distributed memory, then program share memory
- Execution on a shared memory multiprocessor
  - OS can run threads on available processors
  - Threads run concurrently and can run in parallel
  - Cache coherency kicks in to support consistency model
- Synchronization programming is the hard part!
What’s a thread?

- Control perspective
  - A thread is a single stream of control in a program
  - A thread can execute an instruction stream

- State perspective
  - A thread embodies a state of execution
  - It contains an instruction pointer, a stack, registers, …

- “Thread of execution”
  - Control plus state

- Threads inherit from parent process
  - Virtual address space, file descriptors, …
  - Threads are peers, only have parent relationship to process
General Thread Structure

- Typically, a thread is the execution of a piece of code
  - Represents a portion of the program (light-weight)
  - Given a well-defined entry point (e.g., routine)
  - Inherits process’s symbol table (e.g., to get to libraries)
- Task-based parallelism
  - Parallel parts form separate procedures or functions
  - Kick off thread with specific routine
  - Kick off thread with a common routine and then specialize
- Data-based parallelism
  - Invoke threads to work on different data
  - Automatic with shared memory support
Why threads?

- Portable, widely-available programming model
  - Requires OS support, but practically all OSes do
- Easier to program (some say)
- Efficiencies in scheduling
  - Versus processes (Why?)
- Efficiencies in latency hiding
  - I/O, communication (How?)
- More dynamic concurrency
- Requires code to be thread-safe
POSIX Pthreads

- POSIX standard multi-threading interface
  - For general multi-threaded concurrent programming
  - Largely independent across implementations
  - Broadly supported on different platforms
  - Common target for library and language implementation

- Provides primitives for
  - Thread creation and management
  - Synchronization

- We will only look at a subset of Pthreads
- See webpage for links to Pthreads programming
Thread Creation

```c
#include <pthread.h>
int pthread_create(
    pthread_t *thread_id,
    const pthread_attr_t *attribute,
    void *(*thread_function) (void *),
    void *arg);
```

- **thread_id**
  - thread’s unique identifier
- **attribute**
  - contain details on scheduling policy, priority, stack, ...
- **thread_function**
  - function to be run in parallel (entry point)
- **arg**
  - arguments for function `func`
Example of Thread Creation

```c
void *func(void *arg) {
    int *I=arg;
    ...
}

void main()
{
    int X;
    pthread_t id;
    ...
    pthread_create(&id, NULL, func, &X);
    ...
}
```
**Pthread Termination**

```c
void pthread_exit(void *status)
```

- Terminates the currently running thread
- Implicitly called when function called in `pthread_create` returns
Thread Joining

```c
int pthread_join(
    pthread_t thread_id,
    void **status);
```

- Waits for thread `thread_id` to terminate
  - Either by returning
  - Or by calling `pthread_exit()`
- Status receives the return value or the value given as argument to `pthread_exit()`
Thread Joining Example

```c
void *func(void *){
    ...
}

pthread_t id;
int X;
...

pthread_create(&id, NULL, func, &X);
...

pthread_join(id, NULL);
...
```

main()

pthread_create(func)

pthread_join(id)

pthread_exit()
General Program Structure

- Encapsulate parallel parts in functions
- Use function arguments to parameterize thread behavior
- Call `pthread_create()` with the function
- Call `pthread_join()` for each thread created
- Need to take care to make program “thread safe”
Matrix Multiply

\[ A \times B = C \]
\[ A[i,:] \cdot B[:,j] = C[i,j] \]

```
for( i=0; i<n; i++ )
    for( j=0; j<n; j++ ) {
        c[i][j] = 0.0;
        for( k=0; k<n; k++ )
            c[i][j] += a[i][k]*b[k][j];
    }
```
Parallel Matrix Multiply

- All i- or j-iterations can be run in parallel
- If we have p processors, n/p rows to each processor
- Corresponds to partitioning i-loop

\[ \mathbf{A} \times \mathbf{B} = \mathbf{C} \]
void mmult(void* s)
{
    int slice = (int) s;
    int from = (slice*n)/p;
    int to = ((slice+1)*n)/p;
    for(i=from; i<to; i++)
        for(j=0; j<n; j++) {
            c[i][j] = 0.0;
            for(k=0; k<n; k++)
                c[i][j] += a[i][k]*b[k][j];
        }
}
Matrix Multiply: Main

```c
int main()
{
    pthread_t thrd[p];

    for( i=0; i<p; i++ )
        pthread_create(&thrd[i], NULL,
                        mmult,(void*) i);

    for( i=0; i<p; i++ )
        pthread_join(thrd[i], NULL);
}
```
Pthread Process Management

- pthread_create()
  - Creates a parallel thread executing a given function
  - Passes function arguments
  - Returns thread identifier

- pthread_exit()
  - Terminates thread.

- pthread_join()
  - Waits for particular thread to terminate
Pthreads Synchronization

- Create/exit/join
  - Provide some coarse form of synchronization
  - “Fork-join” parallelism
  - Requires thread creation/destruction
- Need for finer-grain synchronization
  - Mutex locks
  - Condition variables
#include <pthread.h>
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <assert.h>

#define NUM_THREADS 5

void *TaskCode(void *argument)
{
    int tid;

    tid = *(*(int *) argument);
    printf("Hello World! It's me, thread %d\n", tid);

    /* optionally: insert more useful stuff here */

    return NULL;
}

int main(void)
{
    pthread_t threads[NUM_THREADS];
    int thread_args[NUM_THREADS];
    int rc, i;

    /* create all threads */
    for (i=0; i<NUM_THREADS; ++i) {
        thread_args[i] = i;
        printf("In main: creating thread %d\n", i);
        rc = pthread_create(&threads[i], NULL, TaskCode, (void *) &thread_args[i]);
        assert(0 == rc);
    }

    /* wait for all threads to complete */
    for (i=0; i<NUM_THREADS; ++i) {
        rc = pthread_join(threads[i], NULL);
        assert(0 == rc);
    }

    exit(EXIT_SUCCESS);
}
Mutex Locks – Create, Destroy

- Creates a new mutex lock $\text{mutex}$
  
  ```c
  pthread_mutex_init(
      pthread_mutex_t * mutex,
      const pthread_mutex_attr *attr);
  ```

- Destroys the mutex specified by mutex.
  
  ```c
  pthread_mutex_destroy(
      pthread_mutex_t *mutex);
  ```
Mutex Locks – Lock

- Tries to acquire the lock specified by mutex
  ```c
  pthread_mutex_lock(
    pthread_mutex_t *mutex)
  ```

- If mutex is already locked
  - Calling thread blocks until mutex is unlocked

- If mutex is not locked
  - Mutex is locked and calling thread returned

- Mutually exclusive
Mutex Locks – Unlock

- Unlock mutex lock

```c
pthread_mutex_unlock(
    pthread_mutex_t *mutex);
```

- If calling thread has mutex currently locked
  - Mutex will be unlocked
  - If other threads are blocked waiting on this mutex
    - one will unblock and acquire mutex
    - which one is determined by the scheduler
Use of Mutex Locks

- Pthreads provides only exclusive locks
- Other systems allow other types of locks
  - Shared-read, exclusive-write locks
- Critical sections
  - Code sections only to be executed by one thread
- Applications
  - Update of shared variables
  - Queues
  - Stacks
- Problem is that mutex locks can be inefficient
  - Excessive polling
**Condition Variables**

- Condition variables are objects for thread synchronization
- Allows a thread to block itself until specified data reaches a predefined state
- A condition variable is associated with a predicate
  - When predicate become true, the condition variable is used to signal thread(s) waiting on the condition
- A condition variable always has an associated mutex
- A thread locks the mutex and tests the predicate
  - If not true, threads waits on condition variable
- A blocked thread is released on a signal
  - It then acquires the mutex before resuming
Condition variables – Init, Destroy

☐ Creates a new condition variable cond

```c
pthread_cond_init(
    pthread_cond_t *cond,
    pthread_cond_attr *attr)
```

☐ Destroys the condition variable cond

```c
pthread_cond_destroy(
    pthread_cond_t *cond)
```
Condition Variables – Wait

- Wait on cond
  ```
  pthread_cond_wait(
      pthread_cond_t *cond,
      pthread_mutex_t *mutex)
  ```

- Blocks the calling thread
- Unlocks the mutex on success
Condition Variables – Signal

- Unblocks one thread waiting on `cond`
  ```
  pthread_cond_signal(
      pthread_cond_t *cond)
  ```
- Which one is determined by scheduler
- If no thread waiting, then signal is a no-op
Condition Variables – Broadcast

- Unblocks all threads waiting on `cond`

```c
pthread_cond_broadcast(
    pthread_cond_t *cond)
```

- If no thread waiting, then broadcast is a no-op
Use of Condition Variables

- To implement signal-wait synchronization
- Be careful
  - A signal is “forgotten” if there is no corresponding wait that has already happened.
PIPE Example

- Send picture images into a pipeline
- Transformations performed at each pipeline stage
- Separate flag for each picture image

P1: for ( i=0; i<num_pics; read(in_pic); i++ ) {
    int_pic_1[i] = trans1( in_pic );
    signal( event_1_2[i] );
}

P2: for ( i=0; i<num_pics; i++ ) {
    wait( event_1_2[i] );
    int_pic_2[i] = trans2( int_pic_1[i] );
    signal( event_2_3[i] );
}
**PIPE Using Pthreads**

- Replace by Pthreads condition variable wait/signal
  - Will not work
  - Signals before a wait are forgotten
  - Need to remember a signal
- Create a signal semaphore
  ```c
  semaphore_signal(i) {
    pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex_rem[i]);
    arrived[i] = 1;
    pthread_cond_signal(&cond[i]);
    pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex_rem[i]);
  }
  ```
PIPE Using Pthreads

```c
sempahore_wait(i) {
    pthreads_mutex_lock(&mutex_rem[i]);
    if( arrived[i] == 0 ) {
        pthreads_cond_wait(&cond[i],
                           mutex_rem[i]);
    }
    arrived[i] = 0;
    pthreads_mutex_unlock(&mutex_rem[i]);
}
```
PIPE with Pthreads

P1:
for( i=0; i<num_pics, read(in_pic); i++ ) {
  int_pic_1[i] = trans1( in_pic );
  semaphore_signal( event_1_2[i] );
}

P2:
for( i=0; i<num_pics; i++ ) {
  semaphore_wait( event_1_2[i] );
  int_pic_2[i] = trans2( int_pic_1[i] );
  semaphore_signal( event_2_3[i] );
}
Note on Semaphores

- Many shared memory programming systems (other than Pthreads) have semaphores as basic primitive
- If they do, you should use it, not construct it yourself
- Implementation may be more efficient than what you can do yourself
Reality Bites ...

- Thread create/exit/join is not so cheap
- More efficient if could have a parallel program where
  - Create/exit/join would happen rarely (once!)
  - Cheaper synchronization were used
- We need something that makes all threads wait
  - Barrier synchronization
Barrier Synchronization

- A wait at a barrier causes a thread to wait until all threads have performed a wait at the barrier
- At that point, they all proceed
Implementing Barriers in Pthreads

- Count the number of arrivals at the barrier
- Wait if this is not the last arrival
- Make everyone unblock if this is the last arrival
- Since the arrival count is a shared variable, enclose the whole operation in a mutex lock-unlock
Implementing Barriers in Pthreads

```c
void barrier()
{
    pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex_arr);
    arrived++;
    if (arrived<N) {
        pthread_cond_wait(
            &cond, &mutex_arr);
    }
    else {
        pthread_cond_broadcast(&cond);
        arrived=0; /* next barrier */
    }
    pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex_arr);
}
```
Note on Barriers

- Many shared memory programming systems (other than Pthreads) have barriers as basic primitive
- If they do, you should use it, not construct it yourself
- Implementation may be more efficient than what you can do yourself
Busy Waiting

- Not an explicit part of the API
- Available in shared memory programming environment

Initially: flag = 0;

P1: produce data;
    flag = 1;

P2: while( !flag )
    consume data;
Use of Busy Waiting

- On the surface, simple and efficient
- In general, not a recommended practice
- Often leads to messy and unreadable code
  - Blurs data/synchronization distinction
- On some architectures, may be inefficient
- May not even work as intended
  - Depending on consistency model
Private Data in Pthreads

- To make a variable private in Pthreads, you need to make an array out of it.
- Index the array by thread identifier, which you can get by the `pthreads_self()` call.
- Not very elegant or efficient.
Other Primitives in Pthreads

- Set the attributes of a thread
- Set the attributes of a mutex lock
- Set scheduling parameters
Next Class

- Shared memory parallel programming
- OpenMP
Exercise 3 – Pthreads

- Pthreads for dynamic scheduling of work tasks
- Three variants of scheduling framework:
  - Master-Slave, First-Come First-Serve (MS-FCFS)
  - Master-Slave, Round Robin (MS-RR)
  - Peer, Free For All (P-FFA)
- Work tasks are scheduled out of a task pool
- Task “object” represents unit of work and consists of:
  - Function identifier or function pointer
  - Arguments to function
- Implement each scheduling framework
- Demonstrate use of scheduling framework
Project 1 – Parallel Traffic Simulator

☐ Develop a simple parallel discrete event simulator

☐ Rectilinear grid of roads
  ○ Cars enter at grid edges
  ○ Road intersections may have traffic lights

☐ Decompose grid into sub-grids
  ○ Assign sub-grids to processes

☐ Simulation advances in time
  ○ Stochastic events take place
    ▶ Lights at intersections change: green, yellow, red
    ▶ Cars make decisions at intersections to turn or go straight
  ○ Must maintain causality

☐ Use MPI
Term Project

- Description now available on web
- Project of your own choosing
- Project teams
  - 2-3 people
    - Each should have strong Unix / C / C++ programmer
- Initial proposal (February 14)
- Interim status meeting (around March 1)
- Final report and demonstration (March 19)