Last lectures: Processes

- A process is the unit of execution
- Represented with PCBs in the OS: process state, scheduling, memory management information, ...
- A process goes through a number of states: New, Ready, Running, Waiting, ...
- The OS switches between processes – context switch
- Communication is through message-passing or shared memory.

Chapter 5: Threads

- Overview – what are threads?
- Multithreading Models
- Threading Issues
- Pthreads
- Solaris 2 Threads
- Windows 2000 Threads
- Linux Threads
- Java Threads
Threads

- Single sequential execution stream within a process
- The address space of a process is potentially shared among multiple threads
- Each thread has its own thread ID, PC, stack, registers and other things such as priority
- No system call is required to cooperate between threads!
- User and kernel level threads
- Forking a thread can be a system call or a simple user level library call.

Single and Multithreaded Processes
Benefits

- Responsiveness/concurrency
- Resource Sharing
  - each thread sees global memory for example
- Economy
  - it is faster than using processes
- Utilization of MP Architectures such as Simultaneous Multithreading Processors – parallelism across multiple threads

Memory Layout

```
main() {
    ......
    fork_thread(producer);
    fork_thread(consumer);
    ......
}
producer() {
    ......
}
consumer() {
    ......
}
```
User Threads

- Thread management done by user-level threads library
  - The OS knows only about the process
  - The OS schedules the process, not the threads within the process
  - User can define scheduling policy
  - The programmer uses a thread library to create, delete, synchronize, schedule threads.

- Examples
  - POSIX Pthreads (IEEE standard)
  - Mach C-threads (Mach is a famous kernel)
  - Solaris threads

Kernel Threads

- Supported by the Kernel
  - The OS knows about
  - The OS schedules the threads similar to processes (can use the same scheduling techniques as for processes)
  - Requires a small context switch, i.e., it is faster, no memory management information is changed
  - Kernel threads will/can get more time slices than user level threads but they are not flexible.

- Examples
  - Windows 95/98/NT/2000
  - Solaris
  - Tru64 UNIX
  - BeOS
  - Linux
Multithreading Models

- Many-to-One
- One-to-One
- Many-to-Many

Many-to-One

- Many user-level threads mapped to single kernel thread.
- Used on systems that do not support kernel threads.
Many-to-One Model

One-to-One

- Each user-level thread maps to kernel thread.

- Examples
  - Windows 95/98/NT/2000
  - OS/2
One-to-one Model

- Allows many user level threads to be mapped to many kernel threads.
- Allows the operating system to create a sufficient number of kernel threads.
- Solaris 2
- Windows NT/2000 with the ThreadFiber package

Many-to-Many Model
Many-to-Many Model

Threading Issues

- Semantics of fork() and exec() system calls.
- Thread cancellation.
- Signal handling
- Thread pools
- Thread specific data
Pthreads

- a POSIX standard (IEEE 1003.1c) API for thread creation and synchronization.
- API specifies behavior of the thread library, implementation is up to development of the library.
- Common in UNIX operating systems.

Solaris 2 Threads
Solaris Process

- Implements the one-to-one mapping.
- Each thread contains
  - a thread id
  - register set
  - separate user and kernel stacks
  - private data storage area

Windows 2000 Threads
Linux Threads

- Linux refers to them as *tasks* rather than *threads*.
- Thread creation is done through `clone()` system call.
- `Clone()` allows a child task to share the address space of the parent task (process)

Java Threads

- Java threads may be created by:
  - Extending `Thread` class
  - Implementing the `Runnable` interface
- Java threads are managed by the JVM.
Java Thread States