Threads CSE 333 Winter 2021

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Process

A process is a program in execution

- A process is associated with an address space
- A process provides isolation

Virtual Address Space





Single Threaded Process

- A process is a program in execution
- A process contains one or more threads of execution

CPU Core

registers



Multi-Threaded Process

Virtual Address Space



Multi-Threaded Process

- Execution of a thread may be suspended due to:
 - Having done a blocking call
 - e.g., read()
 - The OS assigning fewer cores to a process than it has threads



Virtual Address Space



C++ and Threads

- Every C++ program starts with a single main thread that begins execution in main()
- Additional threads can be created as std::thread objects
- A new thread starts execution by calling a method provided as an argument to the thread constructor
- The new thread terminates when it returns from that method

Creating Threads



Join-ing Threads Join: One thread waits for another to terminate main thread

A program **must not terminate** while there are any joinable threads

int main(int argc, char *argv[])



Detach-ing Threads

Detach: Indicate that join() will never be called on this thread



Performance and Threads

- It is tempting to think of threads as a mechanism for parallel execution
 - Parallel: the goal is to obtain a result quicker
 - Sometimes threads simplify program structure: concurrency
- Because a single thread can use only a single core, to use more than one core at a time there must be threads
 - That doesn't necessarily mean your code has to manage them...
- The relationship between number of threads and performance is complicated
 - more threads => more potential parallelism
 - more parallelism => more contention
 - more threads => more thread management overhead

Example Parallel Code

```
std::array<int,10000000> global array;
void init array (decltype(global array.size()) start, decltype(global array.size()) end) {
 if (end > global array.size()) end = global array.size();
 std::cout << std::this thread::get id() << ": " << start << " -- " << end << std::endl;</pre>
 for (decltype(start) i=start; i<end; ++i)</pre>
  global_array[i] = i;
}
                                                              Initialize an array of 100,000,000 ints
int main (int argc, char *argv[])
 if (argc != 2) usage(argv[0]);
 auto N threads = atol(argv[1]);
 if (N threads <= 0) usage(argv[0]);
 auto stride = (global array.size() + N threads - 1) / N threads;
 decltype(stride) start = 0;
 std::vector<std::thread> threads;
 for (int i=0; i<N_threads; ++i) {</pre>
   threads.push back(std::thread(init array, start, start+stride));
   start += stride;
 std::cout << "synchronizing all threads...\n";</pre>
 for (auto& th : threads) th.join();
 return 0;
}
```

Speedup

- * S(n) = T(1) / T(n), where
 - S(n) is the speedup using n threads
 - T(k) is the elapsed time required to complete using k threads
- Ideal S(n) == n
 - S(n) is normally less than n
 - Sometimes much less...
 - It's not impossible for it to be greater than n

Measured Speedup on attu4

- * Xeon E5-2670 v3
- 12 cores, 24 threads



Example Parallel Code Total CPU Time



Threads for Concurrency

- Sometimes the code needs to do a number of largely separate tasks, each of which is nice represented as a single thread of control
- In some of these cases, threads need to make blocking system calls
 - If there's only one thread, the application is completely inert when that one thread blocks on a system call (e.g., read)
- Threads for concurrency are about making it easier to write the program

Example Concurrent Application



- Main thread creates two threads
- One sits in a loop accepting connections
 - it then sits in a loop reading from connection and writing back to connection
- The other sits in a loop reading from stdin and writing to stdout
- The main thread join's the two threads it has created, and then exits

Main thread code

```
bool done = false;
```

```
int main(int argc, char const *argv[])
{
    int server_fd;
    try
      {
        server_fd = make_server_socket(PORT);
    }
    catch (std::exception &e)
    {
        std::cout << e.what() << std::endl;
        exit (1);
    }
}</pre>
```

```
std::thread network_thread(accept_connection, server_fd);
std::thread keyboard_thread(read_keyboard);
```

```
network_thread.join();
close(server_fd);
```

```
keyboard_thread.join();
```

```
return 0;
```

}

Keyboard (stdin/stdout) thread code

```
void read_keyboard()
{
    char buffer[1024];
    while ( fgets(buffer, 1023, stdin) ) {
        printf("stdin: %s", buffer);
        if ( !strcmp(buffer, "q\n") )
            break;
    }
    done = true;
    std::cout << "--- Keyboard thread exiting" << std::endl;
}</pre>
```

EOF from keyboard can shut down the app. (The app cannot be shut down from its network connection.)

Network thread code (Part 1)

```
void accept connection(int server fd)
 int new socket, addrlen, valread;
                                                      Can't kill this thread from another
 struct sockaddr_in address;
                                                      thread, so it has to wake up from
 char buffer[1024] = \{0\};
                                                      waiting for a connection every so
                                                      often. (Every 5 seconds here.)
 struct timeval timeout;
 timeout.tv sec = 5;
 timeout.tv_usec = 0;
 if (setsockopt (server_fd, SOL_SOCKET, SO_RCVTIMEO, (char *)&timeout,
          sizeof(timeout)) < 0)</pre>
   perror("setsockopt failed");
   return;
```

Network thread code (Part 2)

```
while(!done)
  new socket = accept(server fd, (struct sockaddr *)&address,(socklen t*)&addrlen);
  if (new socket < 0)
                                                                          Wake up regularly to check
     if (errno == EAGAIN || errno == EWOULDBLOCK) 🔺
                                                                         done flag.
       std::cout << "Network thread continuing..." << std::endl;</pre>
       continue;
     std::cout << std::strerror(errno) << std::endl;</pre>
     perror("accept failed");
     return;
  std::cout << "--- Have network connection" << std::endl;</pre>
  while ( (valread = read( new_socket , buffer, 1024)) > 0 )
                                                                      This code blocks indefinitely if
     send(new socket, buffer, valread, 0);
                                                                      connected and the other end
     printf("network: %s", buffer);
                                                                      doesn't send anything.
                                                                      Maybe...
  close(new socket);
  std::cout << "--- Network connection closed" << std::endl;</pre>
std::cout << "--- Network thread exiting" << std::endl;</pre>
```

Threads for Concurrency Summary: Pro's

- We used many threads for concurrency because it simplified the programming model
 - Each thread represented a largely independent computation
 - The state of the computation (thread) was reflected "in the usual way" – in the call stack of the thread
 - The computations involved high latency operations
 - We addressed the high latency operation using blocking calls
 - Rather than "polling"
 - Overall efficiency is good because one thread blocking doesn't interfere with the progress of other thread
 - Have the possibility for physical parallelism (use more than one core)

Threads for Concurrency: Con's

- When the per-thread computations aren't so independent, probably have race conditions that must be addressed
 - We'll look at this a bit in a bit
 - For now, read this as "when computations aren't entirely independent, we need synchronization, and that is a new level of complexity and difficult bugs"
- It's hard to know how many threads to use
 - Too many results in high thread management overhead
 - Too few results in insufficient concurrency and resultant delays

An Alternative: Event-Driven Execution

- It isn't inherent in the idea, but typically this implies using only a single thread
 - Minimal thread management overhead
 - No race conditions
- Instead of one thread per blocking call (e.g., socket or file read), a single thread waits for any of them to become available
- Having available data is one example of "an event"
 - Events can be logical/software induced Java Observer/Observable
- * A handler routine is called when an event happens
- Program execution is a succession of events firing (asynchronously) and event handlers being invoked

An Alternative: Event-Driven Execution

- Often the code that knows how to accept event handler registrations, wait for an event, and invoke the appropriate handler is infrastructure
 - E.g., Windows message loop, Java Observer/Observable, any number of language runtimes
- The application is (largely) composed of a set of handlers
- C++ does not have a generally accepted event infrastructure
- In the examples I'll show you, I've built a crude one as part of the app

Concurrent vs. Event-Driven

Concurrent socket file handler handler Echo network network (socket) (socket) Арр Event Manager stdout stdin stdout stdin

Event-Driven

Event-Driven App Code: main()



Event-Driven App Code: file handler



Event-Driven App Code: socket handler

```
/* Callback for listener socket */
void accept_connection(int server_fd)
{
    int new_socket, addrlen;
    struct sockaddr_in address;
```

```
new_socket = accept(server_fd, (struct sockaddr *)&address,(socklen_t*)&addrlen);
if ( new_socket < 0 )
  throw std::runtime_error("accept failed");</pre>
```

```
listener.RegisterStream(new_socket, read_socket);
}
```

Event-Driven App Code: client socket handler

```
/* Callback for reading from a connected socket */
void read socket(int client socket)
 char buffer[1024] = \{0\};
 int n read = recv( client socket , buffer, 1023, MSG DONTWAIT);
 if (n read > 0)
   send(client socket, buffer, n read, 0);
   buffer[n read] = '0';
   printf("From network stream: %s", buffer);
 else if ( n read == 0 )
   listener.UnregisterStream(client socket);
 else if (/* n read < 0 */ errno != EWOULDBLOCK )
    throw std::runtime error("Socket not ready for recv?");
}
```

App Code Summary

- The app is basically a set of event handlers
 - There is a setup phase that registers the handlers
 - Then the app sits in the event handler infrastructure calling handlers as events happen
 - Works beautifully when handling an event is independent of everything else that has or will happen...
- Reminder: single threaded execution, so no race conditions

- select() is a somewhat deprecated call whose input is a list of file descriptors
 - select() blocks until any one (or more) of the file descriptors indicates it "is ready"
 - has input to read, and/or is capable of accepting new output to write
 - select() returns an indication of which file descriptors are ready
 - plus it can do more, so look at the man page if you want to know more
- The modern version is poll()
- Despite that, you're hear the term "select loop" that's the heart of the event handler infrastructure

Some details have been left out to fit this on the slide.

typedef std::function<void(int)> SLCallback;

class StreamListener {

public:

/* n_fds is the maximum number of file descriptors the listener is configured to monitor */
StreamListener(unsigned int n_fds = 10) : max_fds_(n_fds) {...}
~StreamListener();

bool RegisterStream(int fd, SLCallback event_callback, SLCallback destroy_callback=CloseFd); bool UnregisterStream(int fd);

```
void run();
/* tells run to return */
void done() { ... }
```

private:

```
static void CloseFd(int fd) { close(fd); }
```

```
std::map<int, std::pair<SLCallback, SLCallback>> listener;
unsigned int max_fds_;
```

};





Accessing the Example Code

- attu:/cse/courses/cse333/21wi/public/concurrency/
- attu:/cse/courses/cse333/21wi/public/event-driven/
- Note: there are known bugs having to do with robustness and error detection/resolution
- Make sure to include the pthread library in the build:
 g++ -std=c++17 –g –Wall *.cc –l pthread

Bonus Topic: The Problem, In Real Life (approximately)

- You order dinner delivered to your front door
- How do you know when it arrives?
- You can
 - Stand at the front door and wait
 - Do something else, but go to the door every once in a while and check
 - If it's not there you can go back inside, or
 - If it's not there you can just wait because you have nothing better to do
 - Arrange for the delivery person to text you when your dinner arrives
 - Train your dog to wait at the door for your dinner (but now you're waiting for the dog, so you have the same problem)
 - Note: If your dog could eat your dinner for you that would solve the waiting problem

Key: synchronous single-threaded | asynchronous | multi-threaded

Long Latency Operations

- When your code calls read(), it stops executing until something has been read (or an error has occurred or EOF has occurred or a signal is received or...)
- Why?
- It can be useful to think of long-latency operations as having two distinct sub-operations
 - start
 - done
- Why?

Long Latency Operation Completion Detection

- How can the originator of the operation know when it has completed?
- Depends on how execution is done
 - Synchronous execution the thread originating the operation doesn't run again until the operation finishes
 - Asynchronous execution the thread originating the operation continues running
- Depends on how notification is done
 - Synchronous notification the initiating thread takes some action to check whether the operation has completed
 - Asynchronous notification a method is registered to be run when completion occurs, and then is run when completion occurs
 - No notification

Procedure Call Semantics: Sync / Sync

- Synchronous Execution / Synchronous Notification
 - Example: procedure call
 - calling thread carries out the long latency work (procedure execution)
 - Example: (blocking) read()
 - operating system suspends execution of calling thread until data is available to be read
 - Continuing execution == operation has finished
- This is the simplest model for programmers
- "Remote Procedure Call" (RPC) is a(ny) network protocol whose semantics are those of local procedure call

Polling: Async / Sync

- A invoking thread starts an operation and then goes on executing without waiting for operation to complete
- The operation sets some state (e.g., a variable) to indicate when it has completed
- The invoking thread checks the state variable whenever it feels like
 - Could be in a tight "polling loop" (doing nothing but checking)
 - Could check "every once in a while" (every 5 msec., every 10 sec., once per day, ...)
- Polling mostly make sense for operations whose latency (time to completion) is predictable

Polling: Example

- First of all, you should feel very uneasy if you find yourself writing code that does polling!
 - In most circumstances, there's some better (more efficient/simpler) solution
- Example: sockets
 - you can set a network socket to be "non-blocking"
 - When you perform a read() operation on it, you get an answer back immediately
 - The answer might be the data you wanted
 - Otherwise the answer is an error (EWOULDBLOCK)
 - Either way, your thread continues running and can do whatever you want

Join: Async / Sync

- Threads:
 - create a thread (as a C++ std::thread object, say, th), which causes it to start running
 - th.join() suspends the calling thread until thread th terminates
- Processes
 - fork() a process. You get back the new (child) process's process id (pid)
 - wait(pid) to wait for it to terminate
 - The difference between
 - emacs myfile.txt
 - emacs myfile.txt &

Async / synch

- When you start some operation asynchronously, there will almost aways be two things you can do to check on its completion status
 - "wait" (or some other name): suspend my execution until the operation has finished
 - "test" (or some other name): return an indication of whether or not it has finished, but don't block me no matter what

Example using C++ futures/async

- Synch/Synch
 - procedure call
- Asynch / Synch
 - wait
 - poll
- Plus bonus features (and C++ qualitative review)

{

}

Example App

int main(int argc, char *argv[])

<start delay_sub(args); <do no work or do some work> <obtain result from delay_sub()>

Execution Scenarios:

- procedure call
- async / sync where main waits
- async / sync where result is ready when main asks for it
- polling

```
int delay_sub(args)
```

{

<do some work that takes a while> return value;

C++ features

- std::async, std::future
- std::this_thread
- time std::chrono
- function object
- method chaining
- friend function

A Design Issue

- I want to print log messages indicating what each "thread" is doing
- I want to print elapsed time with each message
- I want syntax something like this:
 LOG() << "Main thread start operation(0, 1, 2)" << std::endl; to produce output like this:
 0.0000410800 -- Main thread start operation(0, 1, 2)

IntervalTimer Utility Class

```
class IntervalTimer
{
  public:
    IntervalTimer() { reset(); }
    IntervalTimer& reset()
    {
      start_ = std::chrono::steady_clock::now();
      return *this;
    }
    private:
    std::chrono::time_point<std::chrono::steady_clock> start_;
    friend std::ostream& operator<<(std::ostream&, IntervalTimer&);
};
std::ostream& operator<<(std::ostream& os, IntervalTimer &timer)</pre>
```

```
std::chrono::duration<float> elapsed_time = std::chrono::steady_clock::now() - timer.start_;
os << elapsed_time.count();
return os;
```

```
}
```

{

Logger Utility Class

```
class Logger
ſ
public:
Logger(std::ostream& os) : os_(os) {}
 std::ostream& operator()()
   os_ << std::fixed << std::setprecision(10) << timer_ << " -- ";</pre>
   return os ;
 Logger& reset()
   timer_.reset();
   return *this;
 std::ostream& ostream()
   return os_;
  }
private:
 std::ostream& os_;
 IntervalTimer timer_;
};
```

```
delay_sub()
```

```
int delay_sub(int x, int y, int z)
{
LOG() << "delay_sub thread (" << std::this_thread::get_id() << ") sleeping for 5 seconds" << std::endl;
std::this_thread::sleep_for(std::chrono::seconds(5)); // never do this!
LOG() << "delay_sub thread awake" << std::endl;
if ( x+y+z < 0 )
throw std::runtime_error("Result is negative!");
return x+y+z;
}</pre>
```

Main: procedure call

LOG.reset()() << "Procedure call test" << std::endl; LOG() << "Main thread (" << std::this_thread::get_id() << ") start operation(0, 1, 2)" << std::endl; wait_val = delay_sub(0, 0, 0); LOG() << "Main thread got value: " << wait_val << std::endl;</pre>

0.0000045240 -- Procedure call test 0.0000432160 -- Main thread (140487854065472) start operation(0, 1, 2) 0.0000488950 -- delay_sub thread (140487854065472) sleeping for 5 seconds 5.0001621246 -- delay_sub thread awake 5.0001931190 -- Main thread got value: 0

Main: async / synch (wait)

LOG.ostream() << std::endl; LOG.reset()() << "First wait test" << std::endl; LOG() << "Main thread (" << std::this_thread::get_id() << ") start operation(0, 1, 2)" << std::endl; std::future<int> v1 = std::async(&delay_sub, 0, 1, 2); LOG() << "Main thread sleeping for 2 seconds" << std::endl; std::this_thread::sleep_for(std::chrono::seconds(2)); LOG() << "Main thread get()" << std::endl; wait_val = v1.get(); LOG() << "Main thread got value: " << wait_val << std::endl;

0.000001100 -- First wait test 0.000050920 -- Main thread (140487854065472) start operation(0, 1, 2) 0.0002516000 -- Main thread sleeping for 2 seconds 0.0002674270 -- delay_sub thread (140487836149504) sleeping for 5 seconds 2.0003676414 -- Main thread get() 5.0004024506 -- delay_sub thread awake 5.0005426407 -- Main thread got value: 3

Main: async / sync (wait) Part 2

LOG.ostream() << std::endl; LOG.reset()() << "Second wait test" << std::endl; LOG() << "Main thread (" << std::this_thread::get_id() << ") start operation(3, 4, 5)" << std::endl; auto v2 = std::async(delay_sub, 3, 4, 5); // this is an easier way to declare the std::future LOG() << "Main thread sleeping for 9 seconds" << std::endl; std::this_thread::sleep_for(std::chrono::seconds(9)); LOG() << "Main thread get()" << std::endl; wait_val = v2.get(); LOG() << "Main thread got value: " << wait_val << std::endl;

0.000001000 -- Second wait test 0.000039960 -- Main thread (140487854065472) start operation(3, 4, 5) 0.0000397140 -- Main thread sleeping for 9 seconds 0.0000452840 -- delay_sub thread (140487836149504) sleeping for 5 seconds 5.0001139641 -- delay_sub thread awake 9.0001583099 -- Main thread get() 9.0001926422 -- Main thread got value: 12

Main: async / sync (polling)

```
LOG.ostream() << std:: endl;
LOG.reset()() << "Polling test" << std::endl;
LOG() << "Main thread (" << std::this_thread::get_id() << ") start operation(6, 7, 8)" << std::endl;
auto v3 = std::async(delay_sub, 6, 7, 8);
while(1) {
    auto status = v3.wait_for(std::chrono::seconds(0));
    if ( status == std::future_status::ready)
        break;
LOG() << "Main thread sleeping for four seconds" << std::endl;
    std::this_thread::sleep_for(std::chrono::seconds(4));
    }
wait_val = v3.get();
LOG() << "Main thread got value: " << wait_val << std::endl;</pre>
```

0.000000800 -- Polling test 0.000031500 -- Main thread (140487854065472) start operation(6, 7, 8) 0.0000432180 -- Main thread sleeping for four seconds 0.0000984170 -- delay_sub thread (140487836149504) sleeping for 5 seconds 4.0001163483 -- Main thread sleeping for four seconds 5.0001783371 -- delay_sub thread awake 8.0002136230 -- Main thread got value: 21

C++ bonus material: delayed exception

```
LOG.ostream() << std::endl;

LOG.reset()() << "Exception test" << std::endl;

try {

LOG() << "Main thread (" << std::this_thread::get_id() << ") start operations(-1, -2, -3)" << std::endl;

v3 = std::async(delay_sub, -1, -2, -3);

LOG() << "Main thread sleeping for eight seconds" << std::endl;

std::this_thread::sleep_for(std::chrono::seconds(8));

int result = v3.get();

LOG() << "Exception test got result " << result << std::endl;

}

catch (std::exception &e) {

LOG() << "Exception: " << e.what() << std::endl;

}
```

0.000000800 -- Exception test 0.0000022680 -- Main thread (140487854065472) start operations(-1, -2, -3) 0.0000613190 -- Main thread sleeping for eight seconds 0.0000692290 -- delay_sub thread (140487836149504) sleeping for 5 seconds 5.0001440048 -- delay_sub thread awake 8.0001573563 -- Exception: Result is negative!

Computing Bonus Material: Signals

- What about async execution/ async notification?
 - What does it even mean?
 - Event-based programming (sort of)
- Signals
 - Process-level event handlers
 - The "events" are integers, most of which have well-known semantics
 - For instance, ctrl-C is a signal (SIGINT == 2)
- ✤ A process registers a signal handler method for a signal
- When the signal is sent/received, that method is invoked
- The signals I'll show allow one process to signal another process

signal.cc

int counter = 0;

```
void signal_handler(int signal)
{
  std::cout << std::endl
      << "Thread " << std::this_thread::get_id()
      << " caught signal: " << signal << std::endl
      << "counter = " << counter << std::endl;
}
int main()
{</pre>
```

```
std::cout << "Process id: " << getpid() << std::endl;</pre>
```

// Install a signal handler
std::cout << "Installing handler for " << SIGUSR1 << std::endl;
std::signal(SIGUSR1, signal handler);
</pre>

```
std::cout << "Thread " << std::this_thread::get_id() << " going into infinite loop." << std::endl;
for (unsigned int i=0; i>=0; i++) { counter++; }
```

```
return 0;
```

```
}
```

Example Execution

One Shell



Accessing the Example Code

- attu:/cse/courses/cse333/21wi/public/concurrency/
- attu:/cse/courses/cse333/21wi/public/event-driven/
- attu:/cse/courses/cse333/21wi/public/async/
- attu:/cse/courses/cse333/21wi/public/signal/
- Note: there are known bugs having to do with robustness and error detection/resolution
- Make sure to include the pthread library in the build:
 g++ -std=c++17 –g –Wall *.cc –l pthread