

333 Section 9 SOLUTIONS - Concurrency and pthreads

1) Consider the following multithreaded program (in the original worksheet)...

Give three different possible outputs (there are many)

Here are a few

g = 6

g = 12

g = 7

g = 6

g = 7

g = 12

g = 12

g = 9

g = 11

g = 10

What are the possible final values of the global variable 'g'? (circle all possible)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15+

2. It's the payday! It's time for UW to pay each of the 333 TAs their monthly salary. Each of the bank accounts is inside the `bank_accounts[]` array and the person who is in charge of paying the TAs is a 333 student and decided to use pthreads to pay the TAs by adding 1000 into each bank account. Here is the program the student wrote:

```
// Assume all necessary libraries and header files are included
const int NUM_TAS = 10;

static int bank_accounts[NUM_TAS];
static pthread_mutex_t sum_lock;

void *thread_main(void *arg) {
    int *TA_index = reinterpret_cast<int*>(arg);

    pthread_mutex_lock(&sum_lock);
    bank_accounts[*TA_index] += 1000;
    pthread_mutex_unlock(&sum_lock);

    delete TA_index;
    return NULL;
}

int main(int argc, char** argv) {
    pthread_t thds[NUM_TAS];
    pthread_mutex_init(&sum_lock, NULL);

    for (int i = 0; i < NUM_TAS; i++) {
        int *num = new int(i);
        if (pthread_create(&thds[i], NULL, &thread_main, num) != 0) {
            /*report error*/
        }
    }

    pthread_mutex_destroy(&sum_lock);
    return 0;
}
```

a) Does the program increase the TAs' bank accounts correctly? Why or why not?

No its not correct. It needs to use `pthread_join` to wait for each thread to finish before exiting the main program. `pthread_exit()` might not be the best solution here. You want to check the return value of `join` to make sure the transaction applied rather than just exiting and trusting the threads to finish successfully. Gotta get those TA dolla's.

b) Could we implement this program using processes instead of threads? Why would or why wouldn't we want to do this?

We could, but doing so would require some way for the processes to communicate with each other so that the data structure can be "shared" (remember that inter-process communication can be difficult and time consuming). It is much easier to just use threads since each thread could directly access the data structure.

c) Assume that all the problems, if any, are now fixed. The student discovers that the program they wrote is kinda slow even though its a multithreaded program. Why might it be the case? And how would you fix that?

Because there is a lock over the entire bank account array, so only one thread can increase the value of one account at a time and there is no difference from incrementing each account sequentially. To fix this, we can have one lock per account so that multiple threads can increment the account at the same time. (With the current setup, we could also just not use a lock since we know that no thread will have a conflicting TA_index. For a more generalized program, it would be better to use the first answer.)

Exercise 3 (Bonus!)

Write a function called `ExtractRequestLine` that takes in a well-formatted HTTP request as a string and returns a map with the keys as `method`, `uri`, `version` and the values from the corresponding request.

Example Input:

```
"GET /index.html HTTP/1.1\r\nHost: www.mywebsite.com\r\nConnection: keep-alive\r\nUpgrade-Insecure-Requests: 1\r\n\r\n"
```

Map Returned:

```
{
  "method" : "GET"
  "uri"    : "/index.html"
  "version" : "HTTP/1.1"
}
```

```
#include <map>
#include <string>
#include <vector>
#include <boost/algorithm/string.hpp>

using std::map;
using std::string;
Using std::vector;

map<string, string> ExtractRequestLine(const string& request) {
    vector<string> lines;
    boost::split(lines, request, boost::is_any_of("\r\n"),
                 boost::token_compress_on);

    vector<string> components;
    string firstLine = lines[0];
    boost::split(components, firstLine, boost::is_any_of(" "),
                 boost::token_compress_on);

    map<string, string> res;
    res["method"] = components[0];
    res["uri"] = components[1];
    res["version"] = components[2];
    return res;
}
```