IP Addresses, DNS

CSE 333 Spring 2025

Instructor: Hal Perkins

Teaching Assistants:

Hannah Hempstead
Lainey Jeon
Hannah Jiang
Irene Lau
Nathan Li
Leanna Nguyen
Janani Raghavan
Deeksha Vatwani
Yiqing Wang
Jennifer Xu

Lecture Outline

- Network Programming
  - Sockets API
  - Network Addresses
  - DNS Lookup

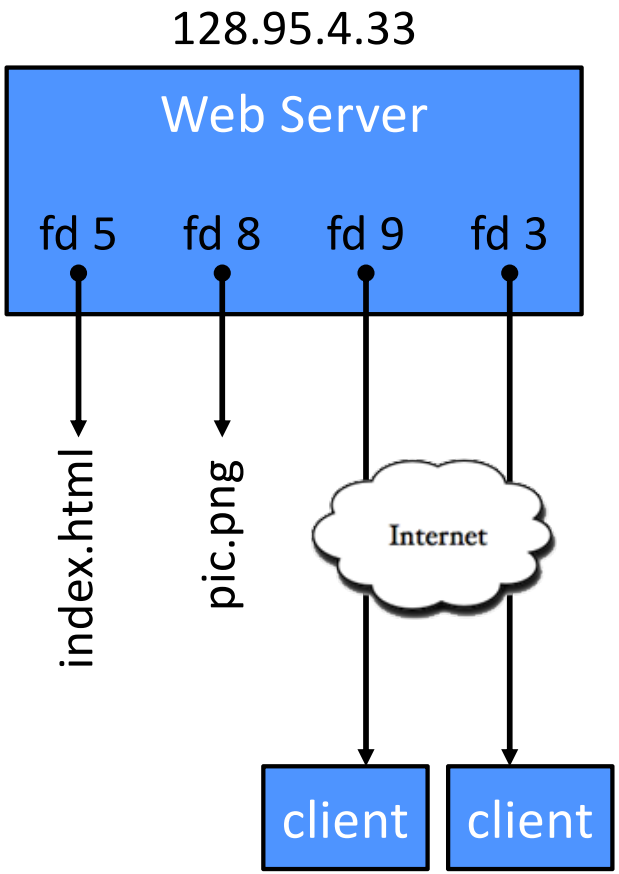
Files and File Descriptors

- Remember `open()`, `read()`, `write()`, and `close()`?
  - POSIX system calls for interacting with files
  - `open()` returns a file descriptor
    - An integer that represents an open file
    - This file descriptor is then passed to `read()`, `write()`, and `close()`
  - Inside the OS, the file descriptor is used to index into a table that keeps track of any OS-level state associated with the file, such as the file position

Networks and Sockets

- UNIX likes to make *all* I/O look like file I/O
  - You use `read()` and `write()` to communicate with remote computers over the network!
  - A file descriptor use for network communications is called a socket
  - Just like with files:
    - Your program can have multiple network channels open at once
    - You need to pass a file descriptor to `read()` and `write()` to let the OS know which network channel to use

File Descriptor Table



OS's File Descriptor Table for the Process

File Descriptor	Type	Connection
0	pipe	stdin (console)
1	pipe	stdout (console)
2	pipe	stderr (console)
3	TCP socket	local: 128.95.4.33:80 remote: 44.1.19.32:7113
5	file	index.html
8	file	pic.png
9	TCP socket	local: 128.95.4.33:80 remote: 102.12.3.4:5544

Types of Sockets

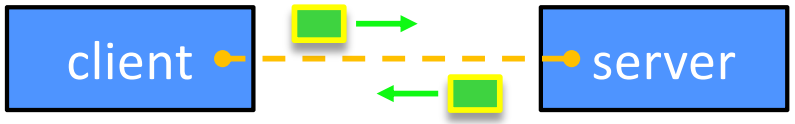
- Stream sockets
  - For connection-oriented, point-to-point, reliable byte streams
    - Using TCP, STCP, or other stream transports
- Datagram sockets
  - For connection-less, one-to-many, unreliable packets
    - Using UDP or other packet transports
- Raw sockets
  - For layer-3 communication (raw IP packet manipulation)

Stream Sockets

- Typically used for client-server communications
  - Client: An application that establishes a connection to a server
  - Server: An application that receives connections from clients
  - Can also be used for other forms of communication like peer-to-peer

1) Establish connection:

2) Communicate:

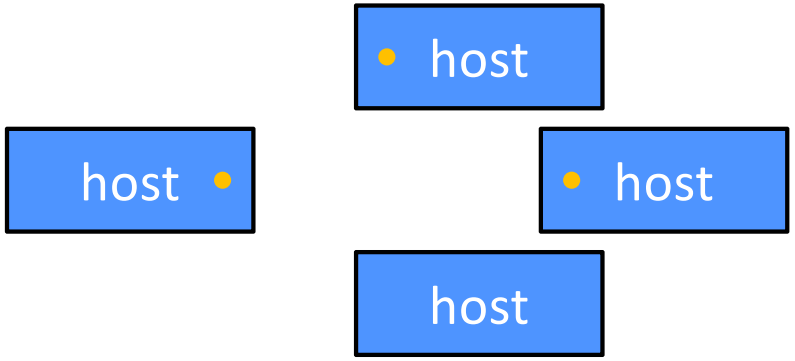


3) Close connection:

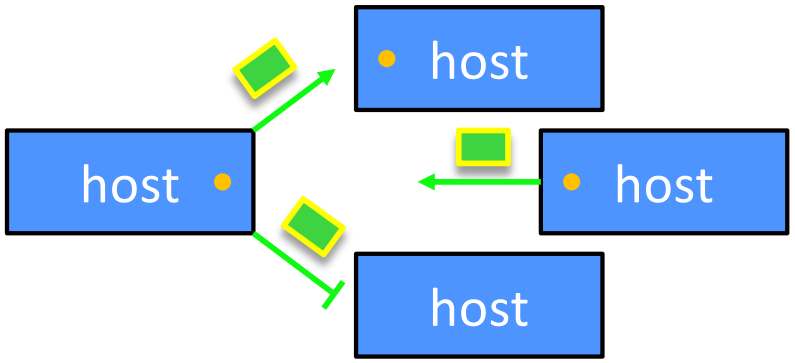
Datagram Sockets

- Often used as a building block
  - No flow control, ordering, or reliability, so used less frequently
  - *e.g.* streaming media applications or DNS lookups

1) Create sockets:



2) Communicate:



The Sockets API

- Berkeley sockets originated in 4.2BSD Unix (1983)
  - It is the standard API for network programming
    - Available on most OSs
  - Written in C

- POSIX Socket API
  - A slight update of the Berkeley sockets API
    - A few functions were deprecated or replaced
    - Better support for multi-threading was added

Socket API: Client TCP Connection

- We'll start by looking at the API from the point of view of a client connecting to a server over TCP

- There are five steps:
  1) Figure out the IP address and port to which to connect
  2) Create a socket
  3) Connect the socket to the remote server
  4) `read()` and `write()` data using the socket
  5) Close the socket

Step 1: Figure Out IP Address and Port

- Several parts:
  - Network addresses
  - Data structures for address info
  - DNS - Doman Name System – finding IP addresses

IPv4 Network Addresses

- An IPv4 address is a **4-byte** tuple
  - For humans, written in "dotted-decimal notation"
  - *e.g.* 128.95.4.1 (`80:5f:04:01` in hex)

- IPv4 address exhaustion
  - There are $2^{32} \approx 4.3$ billion IPv4 addresses
  - There are ≈ 8.2 billion people in the world (2025)
  - Last unassigned IPv4 addresses allocated during 2011 to 2019 in various parts of the world

IPv6 Network Addresses

- An IPv6 address is a **16-byte** tuple
  - Typically written in "hextets" (groups of 4 hex digits)
    - Can omit leading zeros in hextets
    - Double-colon replaces consecutive sections of zeros
  - *e.g.* `2d01:0db8:f188:0000:0000:0000:0000:1f33`
    - Shorthand: `2d01:db8:f188::1f33`
  - Transition is still ongoing
    - IPv4-mapped IPv6 addresses
      - 128.95.4.1 mapped to `::ffff:`128.95.4.1 or `::ffff:805f:401`
    - This unfortunately makes network programming more of a headache ☹

Linux Socket Addresses

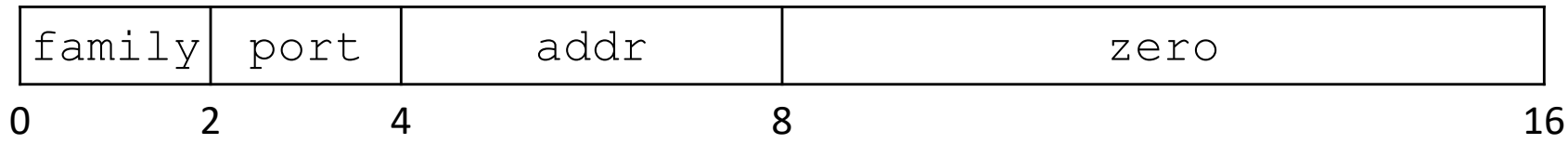
- Structures, constants, and helper functions available in `#include <arpa/inet.h>`
- Addresses stored in network byte order (big endian)
- Converting between host and network byte orders:
  - `uint32_t htonl(uint32_t hostlong);`
  - `uint32_t ntohl(uint32_t netlong);`
    - 'h' for host byte order and 'n' for network byte order
    - Also versions with 's' for short (`uint16_t`)
- How to handle both IPv4 and IPv6?
  - Use C structs for each, but make them somewhat similar
  - Use defined constants to differentiate when to use each: `AF_INET` for IPv4 and `AF_INET6` for IPv6
    - (Crude way to fake inheritance-like behavior in languages without it)

IPv4 Address Structures

```
// IPv4 4-byte address
struct in_addr {
  uint32_t s_addr;              // Address in network byte order
};

// An IPv4-specific address structure
struct sockaddr_in {
  sa_family_t    sin_family;    // Address family: AF_INET
  in_port_t      sin_port;      // Port in network byte order
  struct in_addr sin_addr;      // IPv4 address
  unsigned char  sin_zero[8];   // Pad out to 16 bytes
};
```

`struct sockaddr_in`:

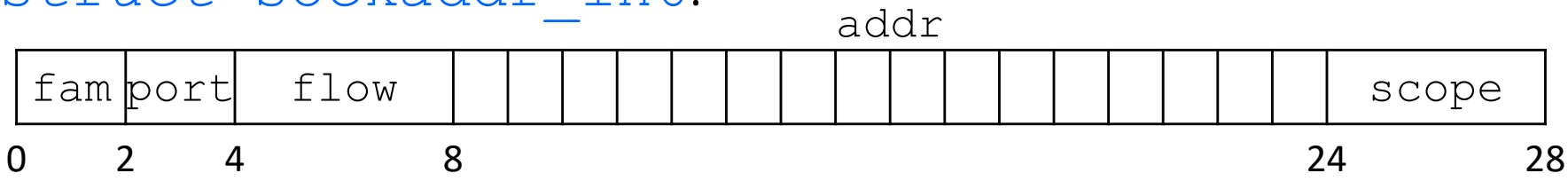


IPv6 Address Structures

```
// IPv6 16-byte address
struct in6_addr {
  uint8_t s6_addr[16];          // Address in network byte order
};

// An IPv6-specific address structure
struct sockaddr_in6 {
  sa_family_t     sin6_family;    // Address family: AF_INET6
  in_port_t       sin6_port;      // Port number
  uint32_t        sin6_flowinfo;  // IPv6 flow information
  struct in6_addr sin6_addr;      // IPv6 address
  uint32_t        sin6_scope_id;  // Scope ID
};
```

struct sockaddr_in6:



Generic Address Structures

```
// A mostly-protocol-independent address structure.
// Pointer to this is parameter type for socket system calls.
struct sockaddr {
  sa_family_t sa_family;    // Address family (AF_* constants)
  char        sa_data[14];  // Socket address (size varies
                            // according to socket domain)
};

// A structure big enough to hold either IPv4 or IPv6 structs
struct sockaddr_storage {
  sa_family_t ss_family;    // Address family

  // padding and alignment; don't worry about the details
  char __ss_pad1[_SS_PAD1SIZE];
  int64_t __ss_align;
  char __ss_pad2[_SS_PAD2SIZE];
};
```

- Commonly create `struct sockaddr_storage`, then pass pointer cast as `struct sockaddr*` to **`connect`**()

Address Conversion

- `int inet_pton(int af, const char* src, void* dst);`
  - Converts human-readable string representation ("**p**resentation") to **n**etwork byte ordered address
  - Returns 1 (success), 0 (bad `src`), or -1 (error)

genaddr.cc

```
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <arpa/inet.h>

int main(int argc, char **argv) {
  struct sockaddr_in sa;     // IPv4
  struct sockaddr_in6 sa6;   // IPv6

  // IPv4 string to sockaddr_in (192.0.2.1 = C0:00:02:01).
  inet_pton(AF_INET, "192.0.2.1", &(sa.sin_addr));

  // IPv6 string to sockaddr_in6.
  inet_pton(AF_INET6, "2001:db8:63b3:1::3490", &(sa6.sin6_addr));

  return EXIT_SUCCESS;
}
```

Address Conversion

- ```
  const char* inet_ntop(int af, const void* src,
                        char* dst, socklen_t size);
  ```
  - Converts network addr in `src` into buffer `dst` of size `size`

genstring.cc

```
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <arpa/inet.h>

int main(int argc, char **argv) {
  struct sockaddr_in6 sa6;          // IPv6
  char astring[INET6_ADDRSTRLEN];   // IPv6

  // IPv6 string to sockaddr_in6.
  inet_pton(AF_INET6, "2001:0db8:63b3:1::3490", &(sa6.sin6_addr));

  // sockaddr_in6 to IPv6 string.
  inet_ntop(AF_INET6, &(sa6.sin6_addr), astring, INET6_ADDRSTRLEN);
  std::cout << astring << std::endl;

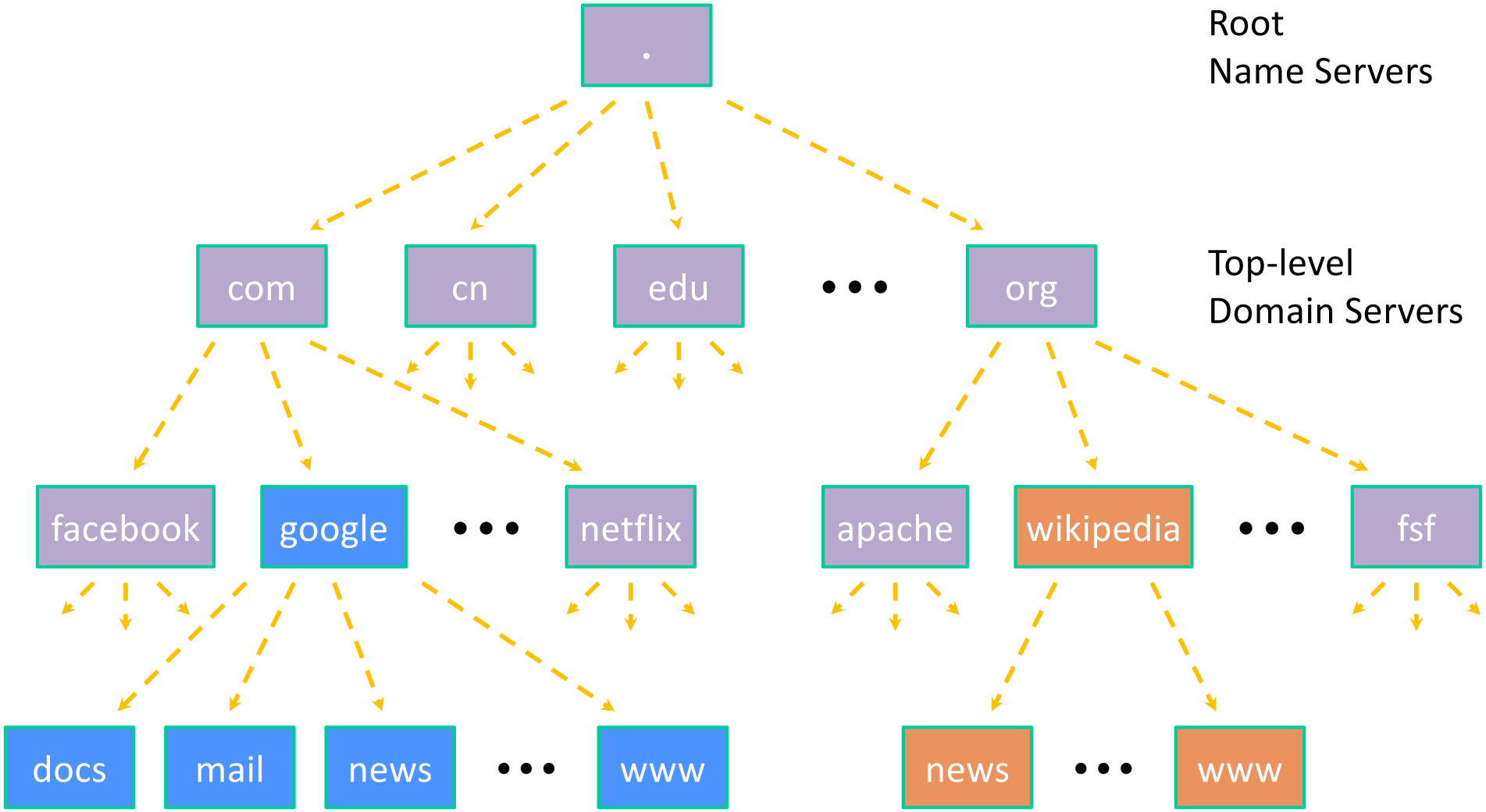
  return EXIT_SUCCESS;
}
```
```

Domain Name System

- People tend to use DNS names, not IP addresses
  - The Sockets API lets you convert between the two
  - It's a complicated process, though:
    - A given DNS name can have many IP addresses
    - Many different IP addresses can map to the same DNS name
      - An IP address will reverse map into at most one DNS name
    - A DNS lookup may require interacting with many DNS servers

- You can use the Linux program "`dig`" to explore DNS
  - `dig @server name type (+short)`
    - `server`: specific name server to query
    - `type`: `A` (IPv4), `AAAA` (IPv6), `ANY` (includes all types)

DNS Hierarchy



Resolving DNS Names

- The POSIX way is to use **`getaddrinfo()`**
  - A complicated system call found in `#include <netdb.h>`
  - ```
    int getaddrinfo(const char* hostname,
                    const char* service,
                    const struct addrinfo* hints,
                    struct addrinfo** res);
    ```
    - Tell **`getaddrinfo()`** which host and port you want resolved
      - String representation for host: DNS name or IP address
    - Set up a "`hints`" structure with constraints you want respected
    - **`getaddrinfo()`** gives you a list of results packed into an "`addrinfo`" structure/linked list
      - Returns 0 on success; returns negative number on failure
    - Free the `struct addrinfo` list later using **`freeaddrinfo()`**
    ```

getaddrinfo

- **`getaddrinfo()` arguments:**
  - `hostname` – domain name or IP address string
  - `service` – port # (*e.g.* `"80"`) or service name (*e.g.* `"www"`) or `NULL`/`nullptr`
  -
```
struct addrinfo {
  int      ai_flags;          // additional flags
  int      ai_family;         // AF_INET, AF_INET6, AF_UNSPEC
  int      ai_socktype;       // SOCK_STREAM, SOCK_DGRAM, 0
  int      ai_protocol;       // IPPROTO_TCP, IPPROTO_UDP, 0
  size_t   ai_addrlen;        // length of socket addr in bytes
  struct sockaddr* ai_addr;   // pointer to socket addr
  char*    ai_canonname;      // canonical name
  struct addrinfo* ai_next;   // can form a linked list
};
```
  - See `dnsresolve.cc`