Scheduling

Main Points

- Scheduling policy: what to do next, when there are multiple threads ready to run
  - Or multiple packets to send, or web requests to serve, or …
- Definitions
  - response time, throughput, predictability
- Uniprocessor policies
  - FIFO, round robin, optimal
  - multilevel feedback as approximation of optimal
- Multiprocessor policies
  - Affinity scheduling, gang scheduling
- Queueing theory
  - Can you predict/improve a system's response time?

Example

- You manage a web site, that suddenly becomes wildly popular. Do you?
  - Buy more hardware?
  - Implement a different scheduling policy?
  - Turn away some users? Which ones?
- How much worse will performance get if the web site becomes even more popular?

Definitions

- Task/Job
  - User request: e.g., mouse click, web request, shell command, …
- Latency/response time
  - How long does a task take to complete?
- Throughput
  - How many tasks can be done per unit of time?
- Overhead
  - How much extra work is done by the scheduler?
- Fairness
  - How equal is the performance received by different users?
- Predictability
  - How consistent is the performance over time?

More Definitions

- Workload
  - Set of tasks for system to perform
- Preemptive scheduler
  - If we can take resources away from a running task
- Work-conserving
  - Resource is used whenever there is a task to run
  - For non-preemptive schedulers, work-conserving is not always better
- Scheduling algorithm
  - takes a workload as input
  - decides which tasks to do first
  - Performance metric (throughput, latency) as output
  - Only preemptive, work-conserving schedulers to be considered

First In First Out (FIFO)

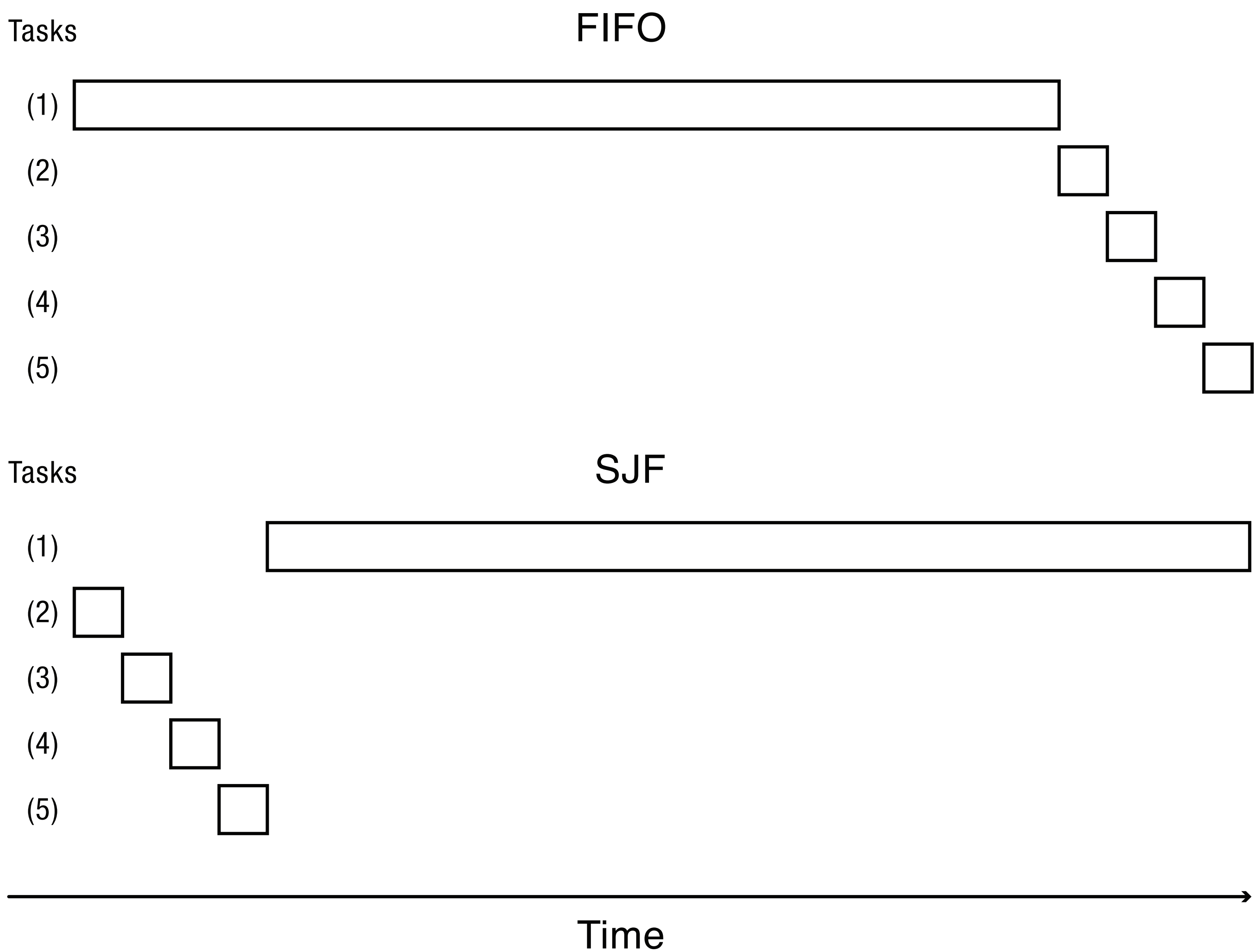
- Schedule tasks in the order they arrive
  - Continue running them until they complete or give up the processor
- Example: memcached
  - Facebook cache of friend lists, …
- On what workloads is FIFO particularly bad?

Shortest Job First (SJF)

- Always do the task that has the shortest remaining amount of work to do
  - Often called Shortest Remaining Time First (SRTF)

- Suppose we have five tasks arrive one right after each other, but the first one is much longer than the others
  - Which completes first in FIFO? Next?
  - Which completes first in SJF? Next?

FIFO vs. SJF



Question

- Claim: SJF is optimal for average response time
  - Why?

- Does SJF have any downsides?

Question

- For what workloads is FIFO optimal?
- Pessimal?

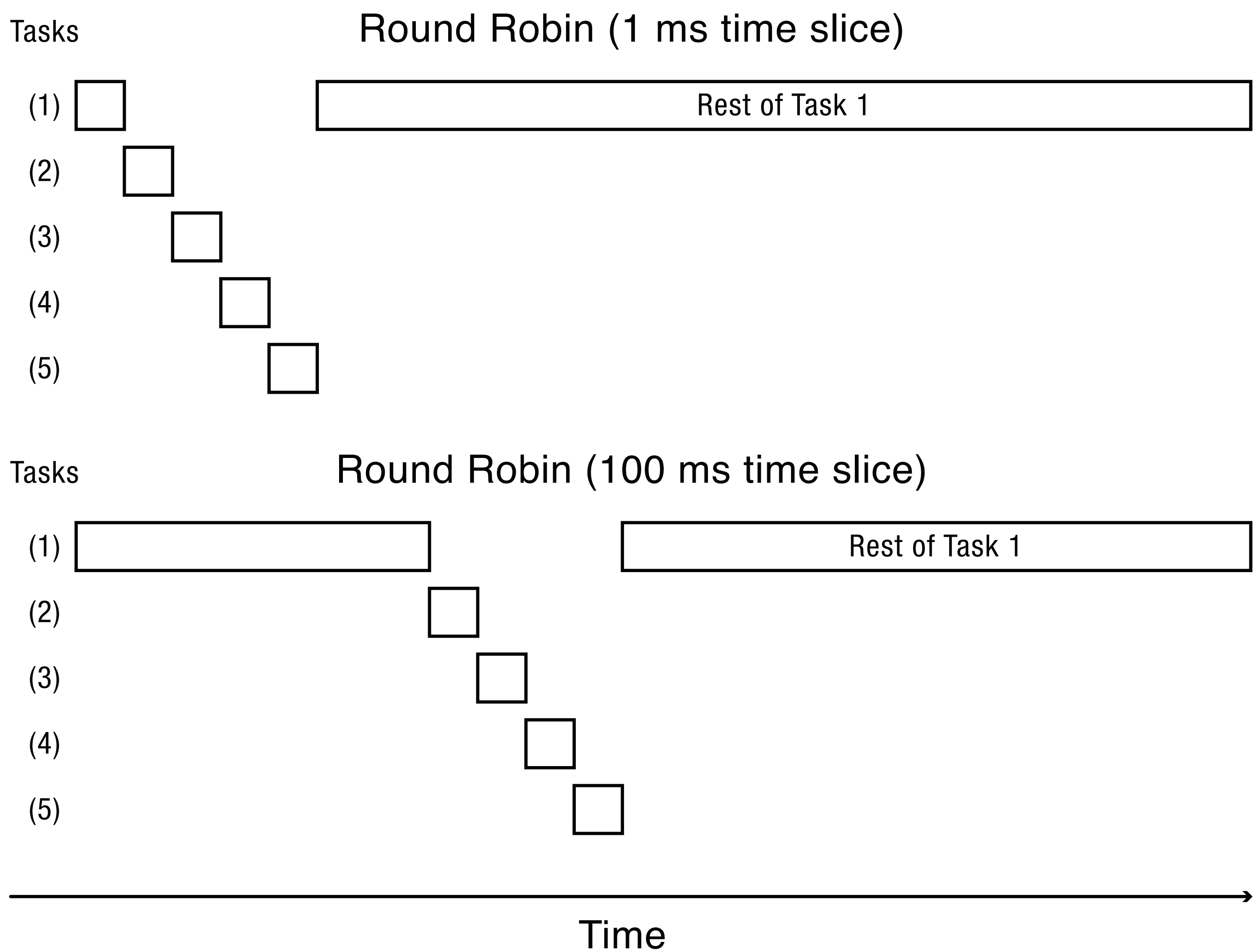
Starvation and Sample Bias

- Suppose you want to compare FIFO and SJF
  - Create some infinite sequence of arriving tasks
  - Stop at some point
  - Compute average response time as the average for completed tasks
- Is this valid or invalid?

Round Robin

- Each task gets resource for a fixed period of time (time quantum)
  - If task doesn't complete, it goes back in line
- Need to pick a time quantum
  - What if time quantum is too long?
    - Infinite?
  - What if time quantum is too short?
    - One instruction?

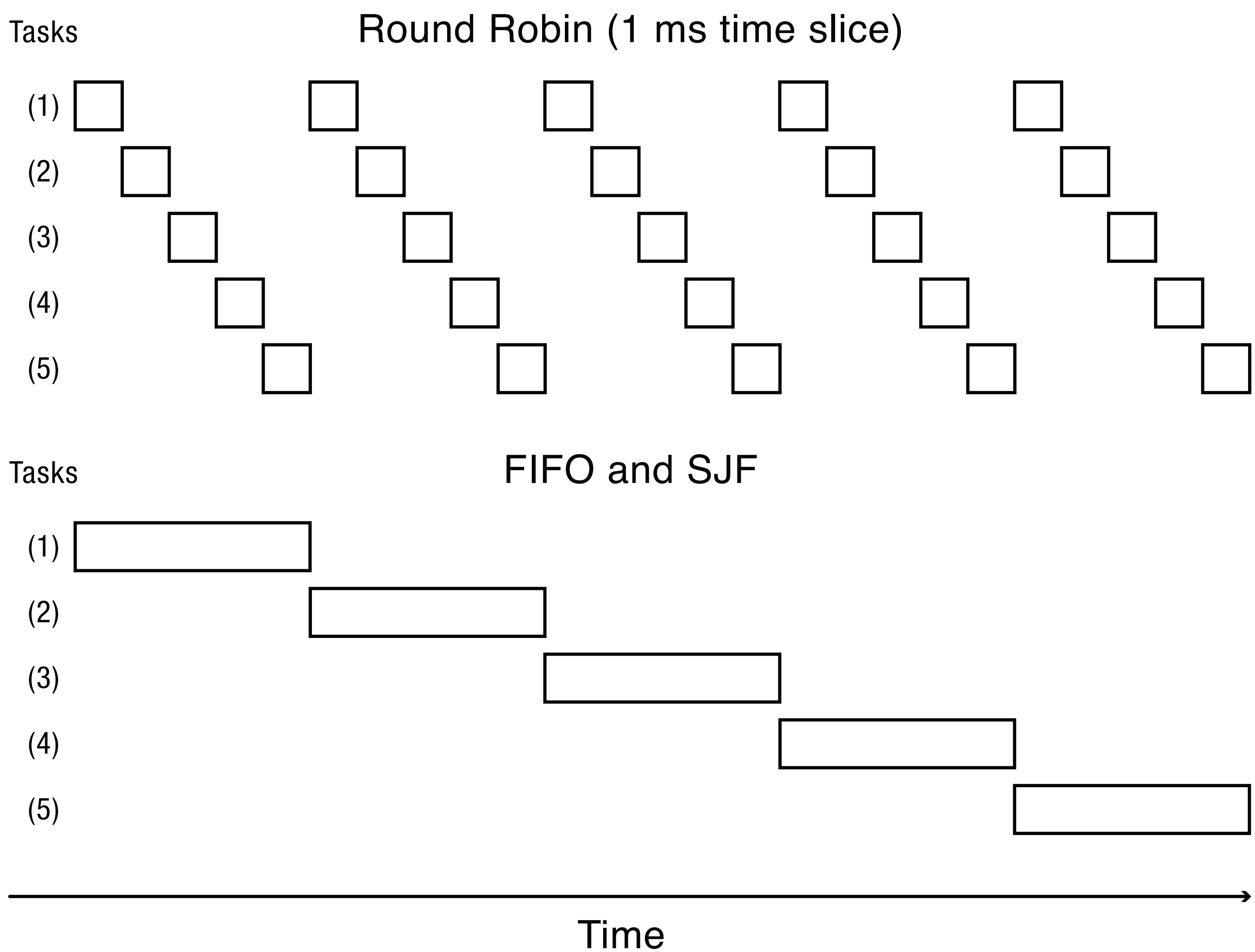
Round Robin


Tasks
Round Robin (1 ms time slice)
(1)
Rest of Task 1
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)
Tasks
Round Robin (100 ms time slice)
(1)
Rest of Task 1
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)
Time

Round Robin vs. FIFO

- Assuming zero-cost time slice, is Round Robin always better than FIFO?

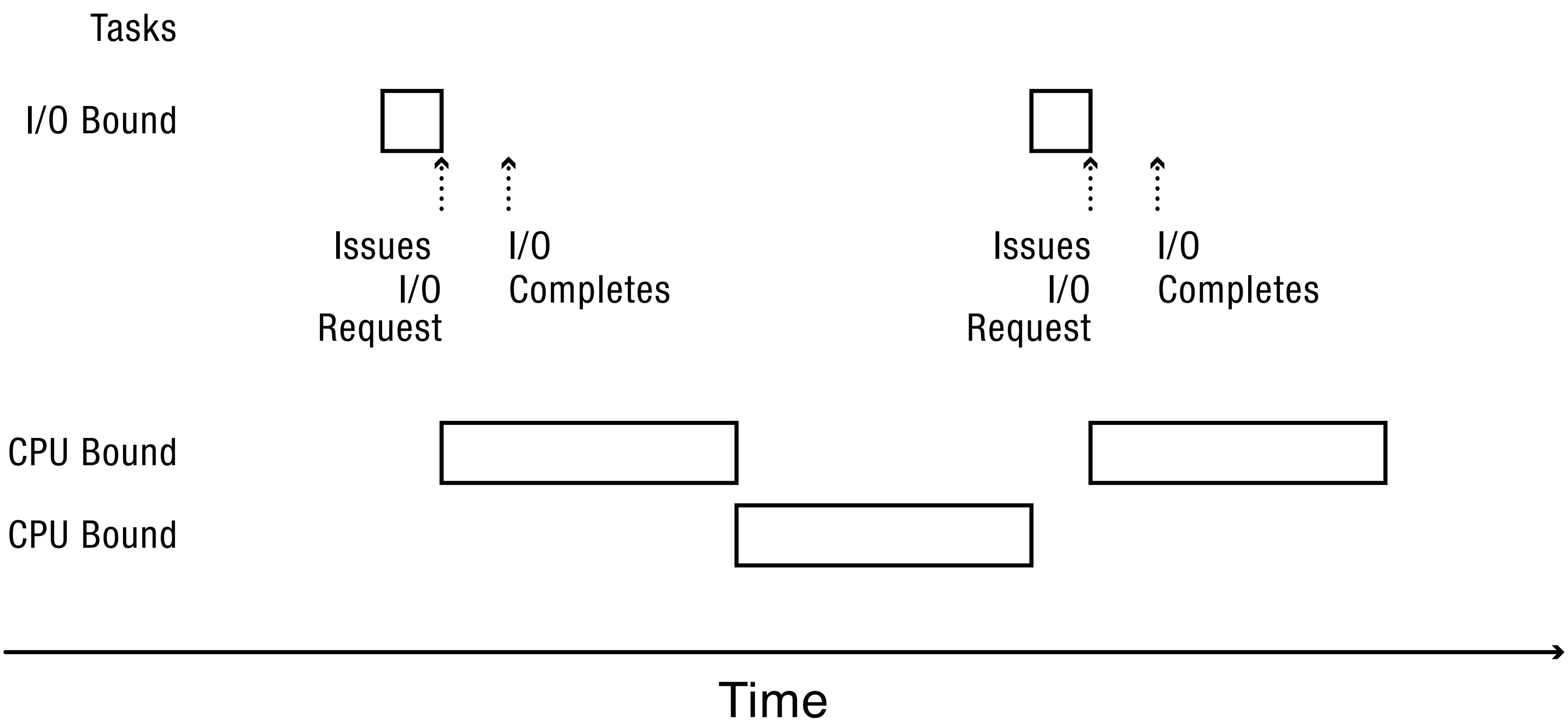
Round Robin vs. FIFO



Round Robin vs. Fairness

- Is Round Robin always fair?

Mixed Workload



Max-Min Fairness

- How do we balance a mixture of repeating tasks:
  - Some I/O bound, need only a little CPU
  - Some compute bound, can use as much CPU as they are assigned
- One approach: maximize the minimum allocation given to a task
  - If any task uses less than an equal share, schedule the smallest of these first
  - Split the remaining time using max-min
  - If all remaining tasks use at least equal share, split evenly

Multi-level Feedback Queue (MFQ)

- Goals:
  - Responsiveness
  - Low overhead
  - Starvation freedom
  - Some tasks are high/low priority
  - Fairness (among equal priority tasks)
- Not perfect at any of them!
  - Used in Linux (and probably Windows, MacOS)

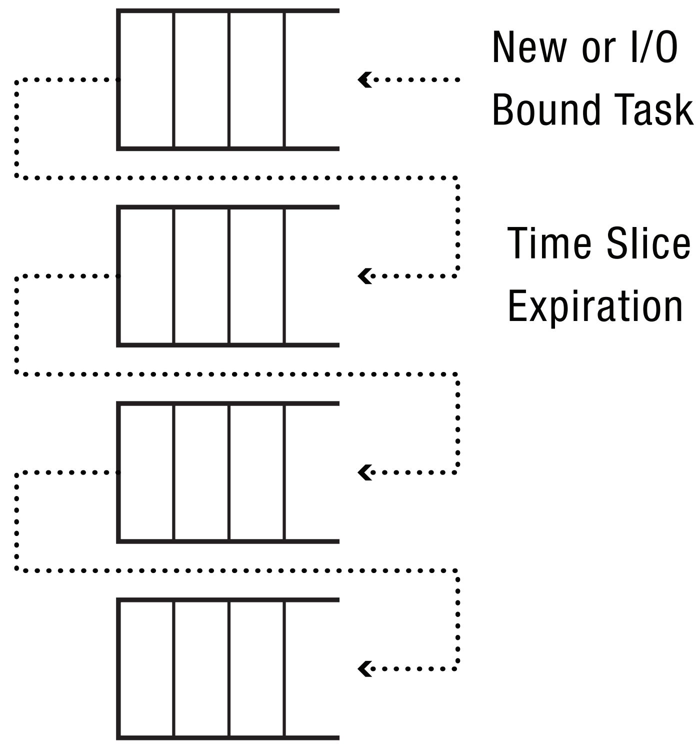
MFQ

- Set of Round Robin queues
  - Each queue has a separate priority
- High priority queues have short time slices
  - Low priority queues have long time slices
- Scheduler picks first thread in highest priority queue
- Tasks start in highest priority queue
  - If time slice expires, task drops one level

MFQ

Priority	Time Slice (ms)
1	10
2	20
3	40
4	80

Round Robin Queues



Uniprocessor Summary (1)

- FIFO is simple and minimizes overhead.
- If tasks are variable in size, then FIFO can have very poor average response time.
- If tasks are equal in size, FIFO is optimal in terms of average response time.
- Considering only the processor, SJF is optimal in terms of average response time.
- SJF is pessimal in terms of variance in response time.

Uniprocessor Summary (2)

- If tasks are variable in size, Round Robin approximates SJF.
- If tasks are equal in size, Round Robin will have very poor average response time.
- Tasks that intermix processor and I/O benefit from SJF and can do poorly under Round Robin.

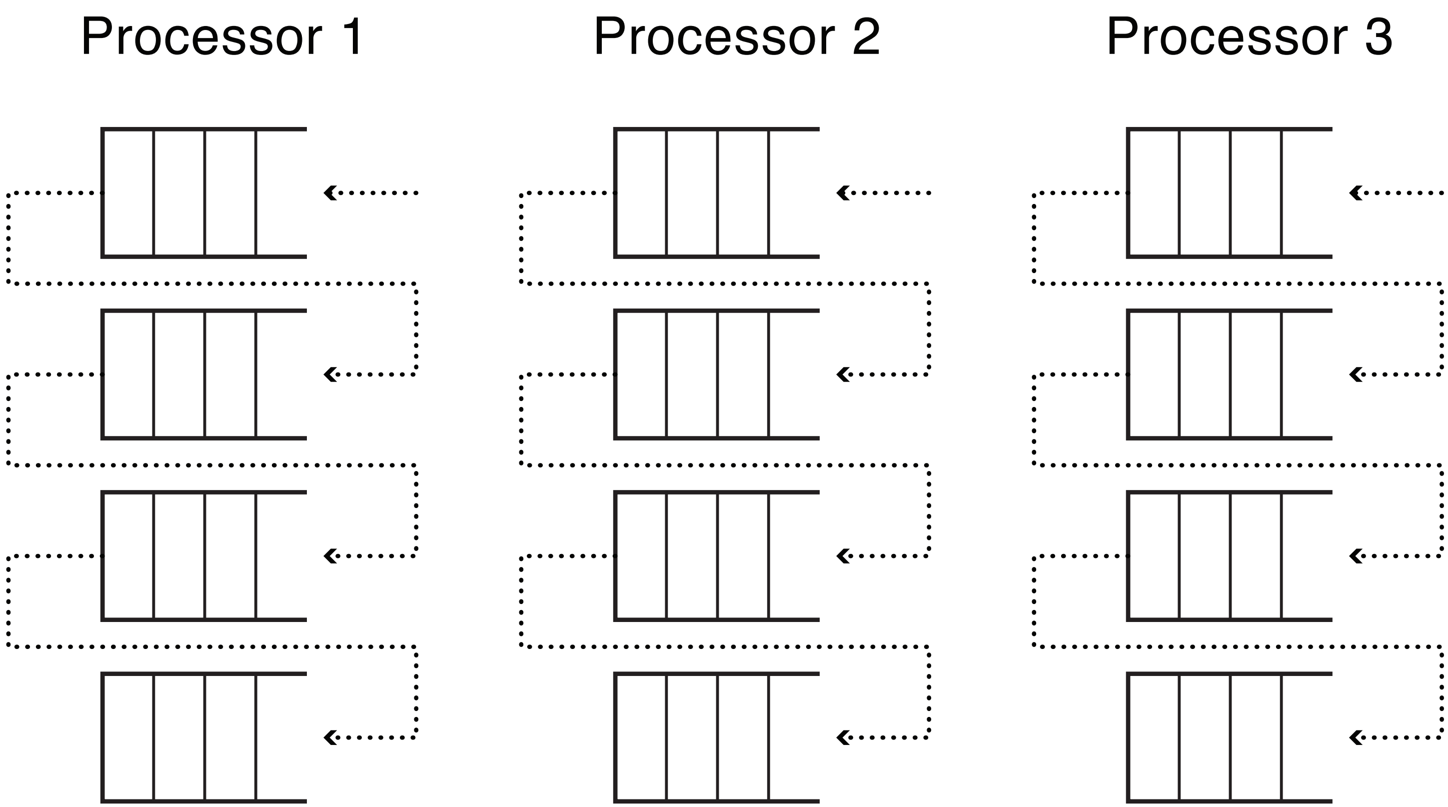
Uniprocessor Summary (3)

- Max-min fairness can improve response time for I/O-bound tasks.
- Round Robin and Max-min fairness both avoid starvation.
- By manipulating the assignment of tasks to priority queues, an MFQ scheduler can achieve a balance between responsiveness, low overhead, and fairness.

Multiprocessor Scheduling

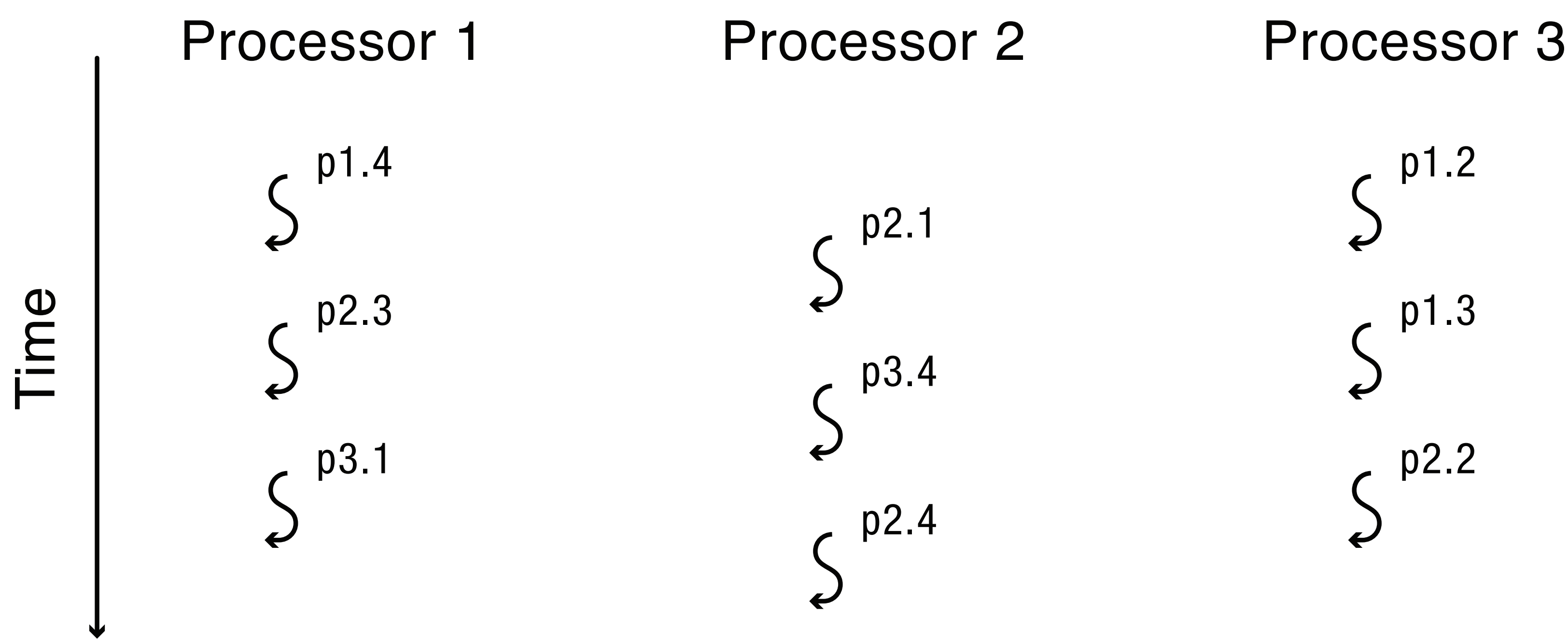
- What would happen if we used MFQ on a multiprocessor?
  - Contention for scheduler spinlock
  - Cache slowdown due to ready list data structure pinging from one CPU to another
  - Limited cache reuse: thread's data from last time it ran is often still in its old cache

Per-Processor Multi-level Feedback: Affinity Scheduling



Scheduling Parallel Programs

Oblivious: each processor time-slices its ready list independently of the other processors

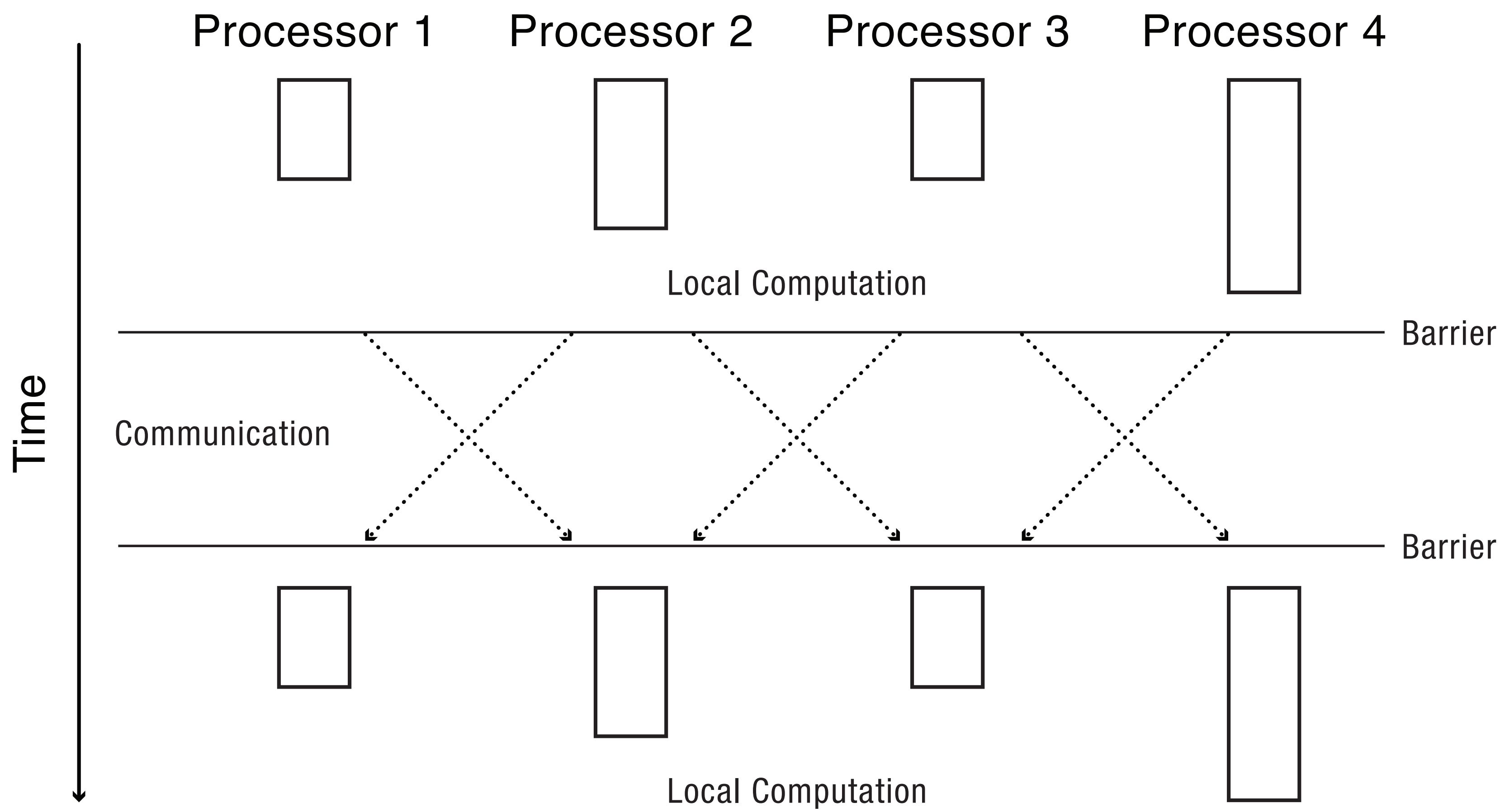


px.y = Thread y in process x

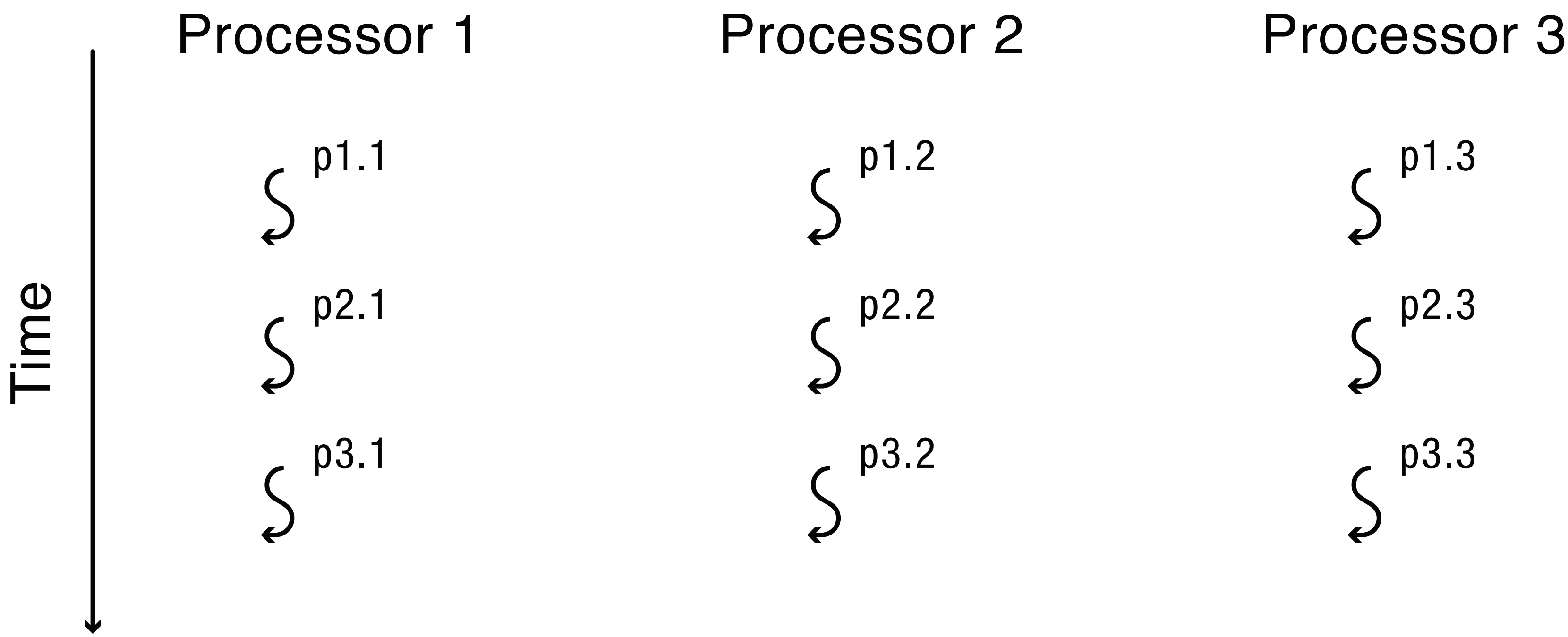
Scheduling Parallel Programs

- What happens if one thread gets time-sliced while other threads from the same program are still running?
  - Assuming program uses locks and condition variables, it will still be correct
  - What about performance?

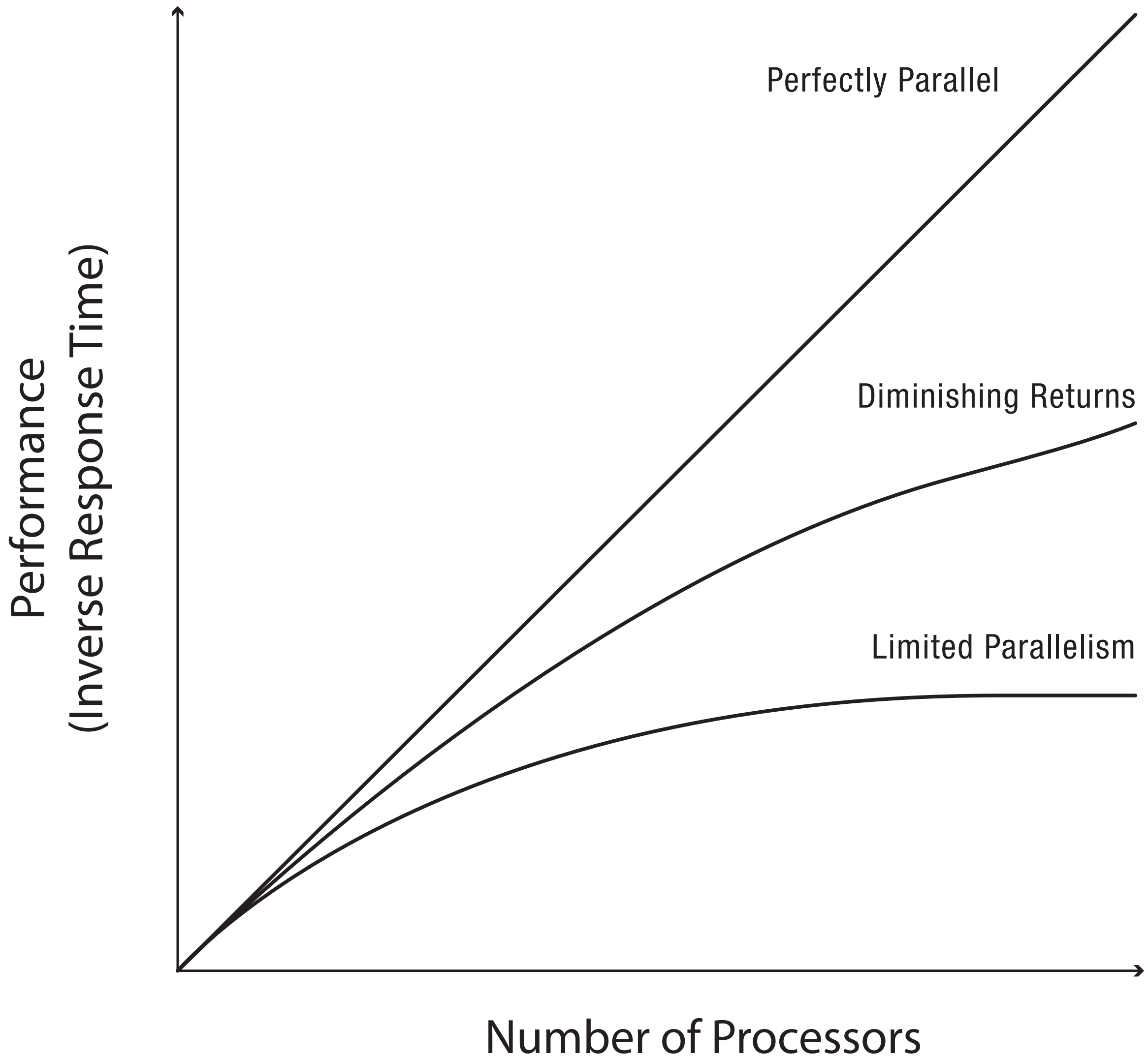
Bulk Synchronous Parallel Program



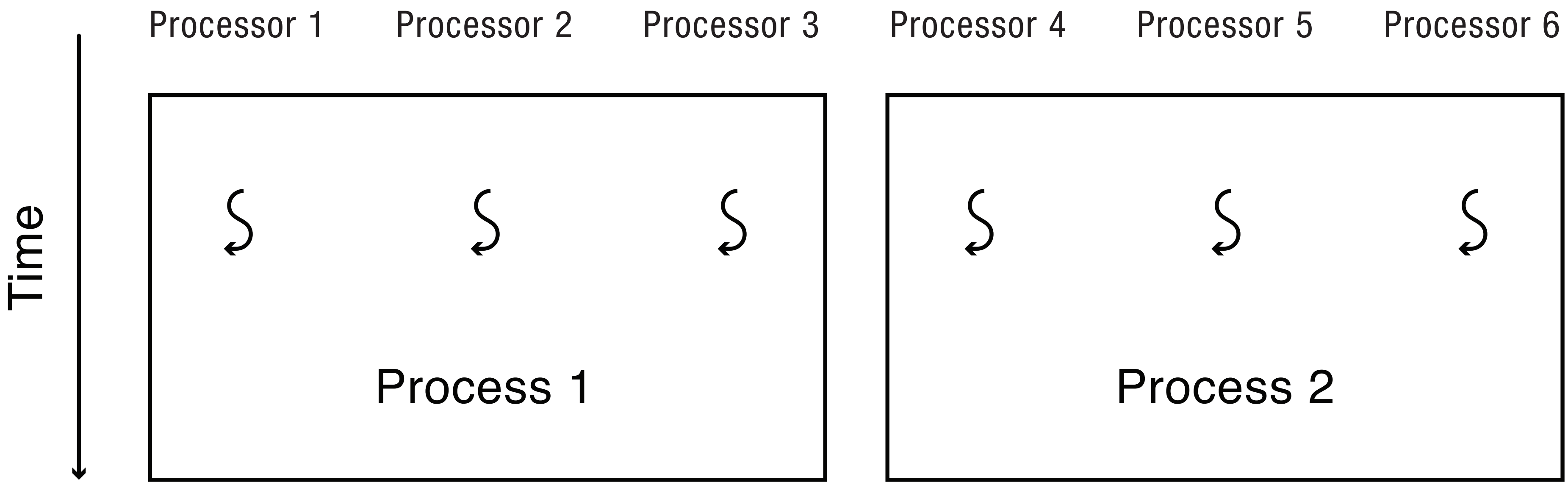
Gang Scheduling



px.y = Thread y in process x


Perfectly Parallel
Diminishing Returns
Limited Parallelism
Performance
(Inverse Response Time)
Number of Processors

Space Sharing

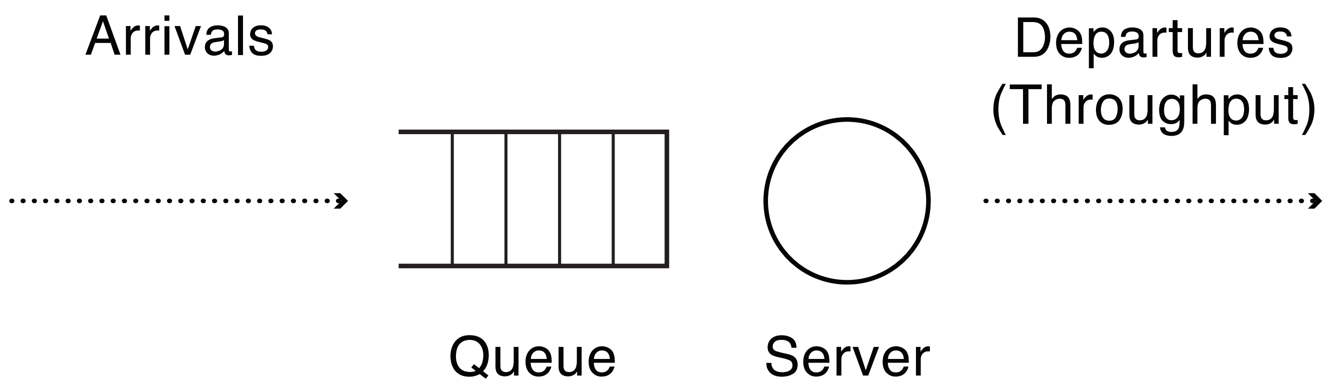


Scheduler activations: kernel informs user-level library as to # of processors assigned to that application, with upcalls every time the assignment changes

Queueing Theory

- Can we predict what will happen to user performance:
  - If a service becomes more popular?
  - If we buy more hardware?
  - If we change the implementation to provide more features?

Queueing Model



Assumption: average performance in a stable system, where the arrival rate (λ) matches the departure rate (μ)

Definitions

- Queueing delay (W): wait time
  - Number of tasks queued (Q)
- Service time (S): time to service the request
- Response time (R) = queueing delay + service time
- Utilization (U): fraction of time the server is busy
  - Service time * arrival rate (λ)
- Throughput (X): rate of task completions
  - If no overload, throughput = arrival rate

Little’s Law

$$N = X * R$$

N: number of tasks in the system

Applies to *any* stable system – where arrivals match departures.

Question

- Suppose a system has throughput (X) of 100 tasks/sec, and a mean response time (R) of 50 ms/task, how many tasks are in the system on average?

- If the server takes 5ms/task, what is its utilization?

- What is the average response time and average number of queued tasks?

Question

- From example:
  - X = 100 task/sec
  - R = 50 ms/task
  - S = 5 ms/task
  - W = 45 ms/task
  - Q = 4.5 tasks

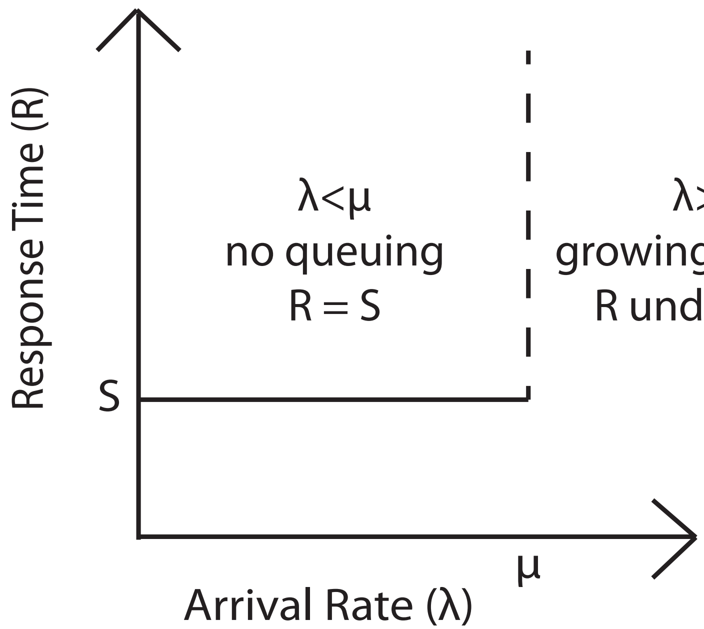
- Why is W = 45 ms and not 4.5 * 5 = 22.5 ms?
  - Hint: what if S = 10ms?

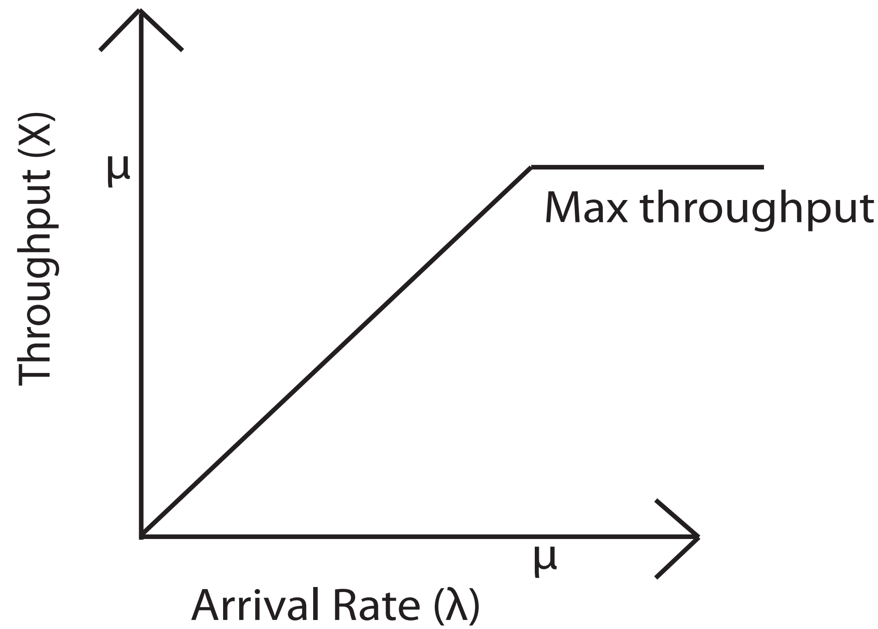
Queueing

- What is the best case scenario for minimizing queueing delay?
  - Keeping arrival rate, service time constant

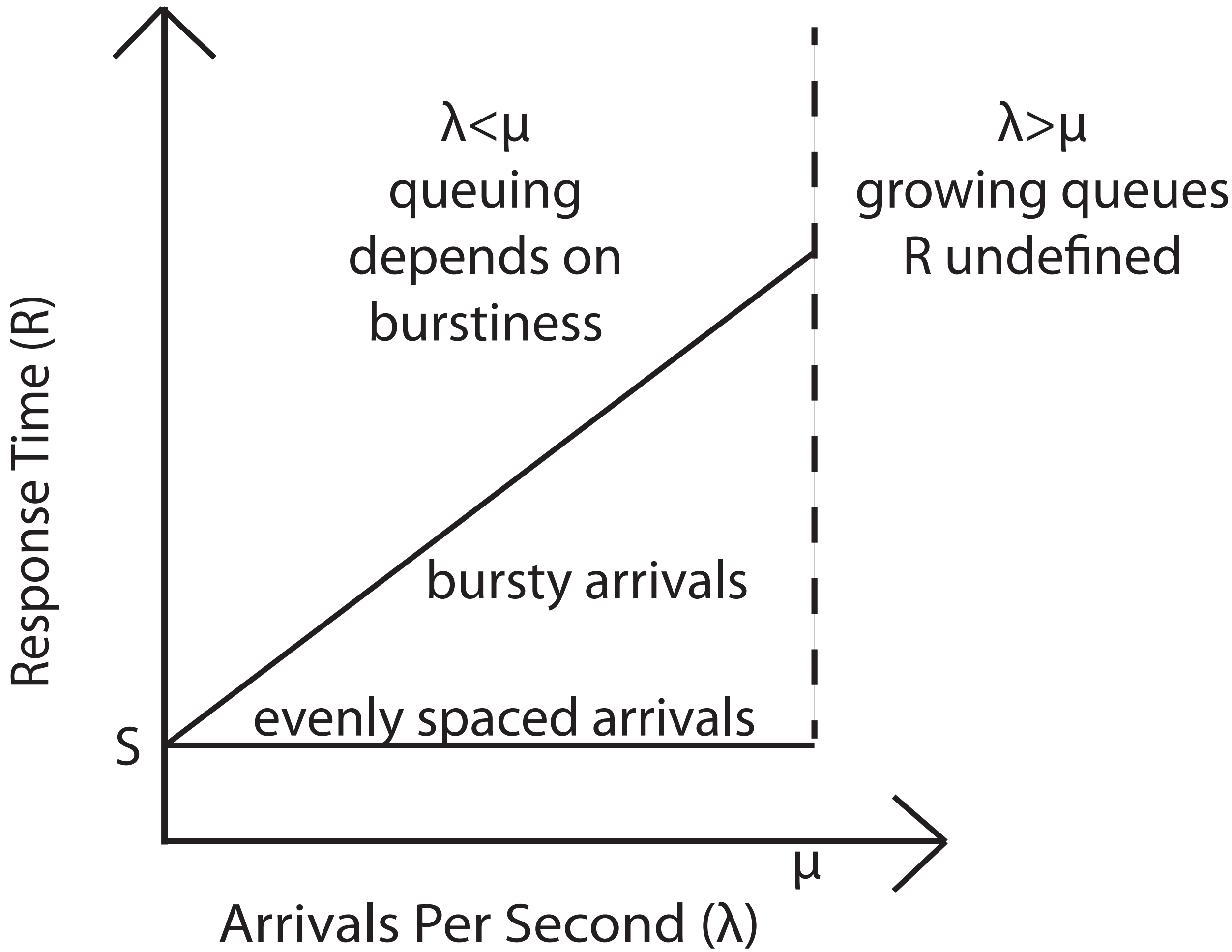
- What is the worst case scenario?

Queueing: Best Case





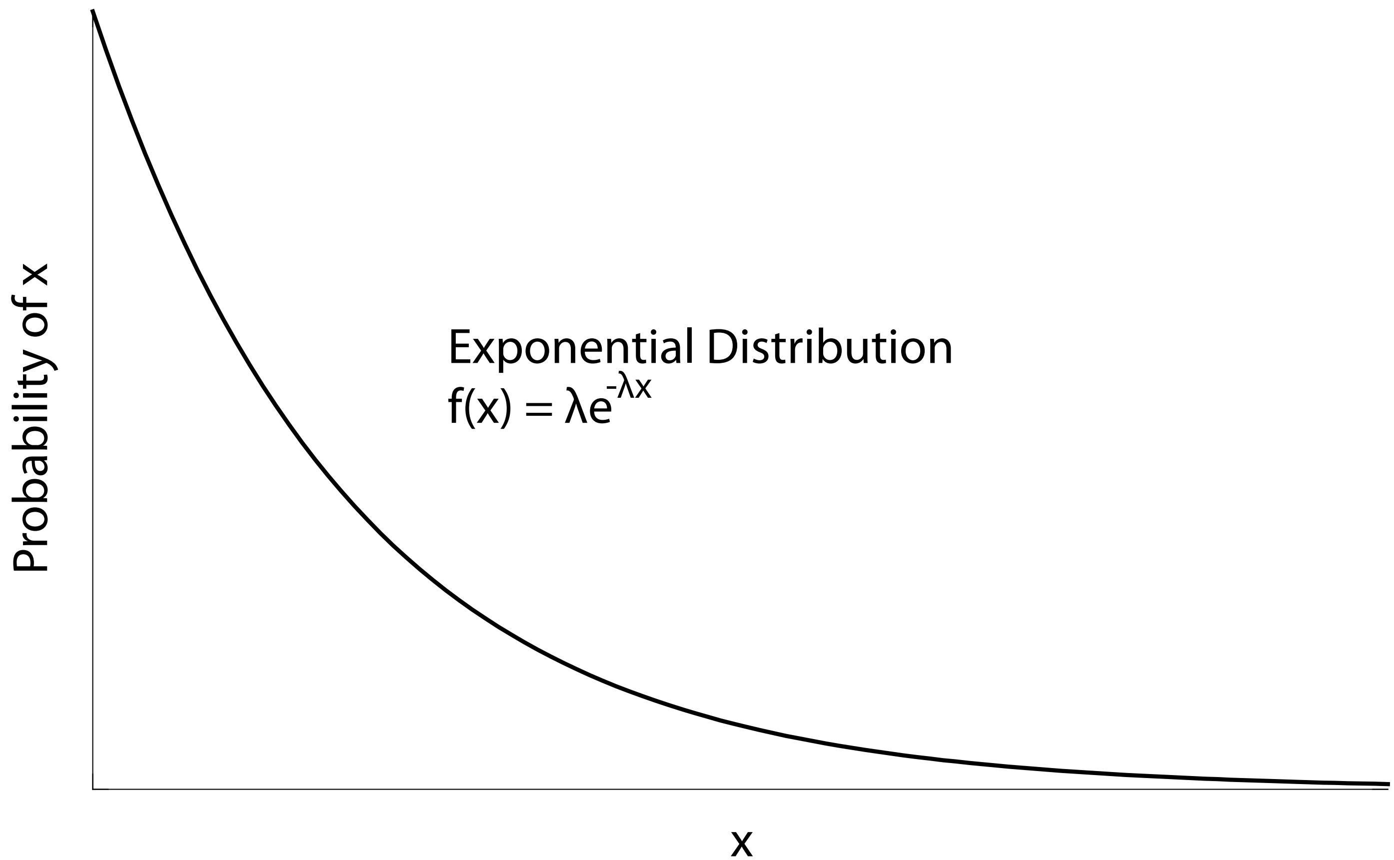
Response Time: Best vs. Worst Case



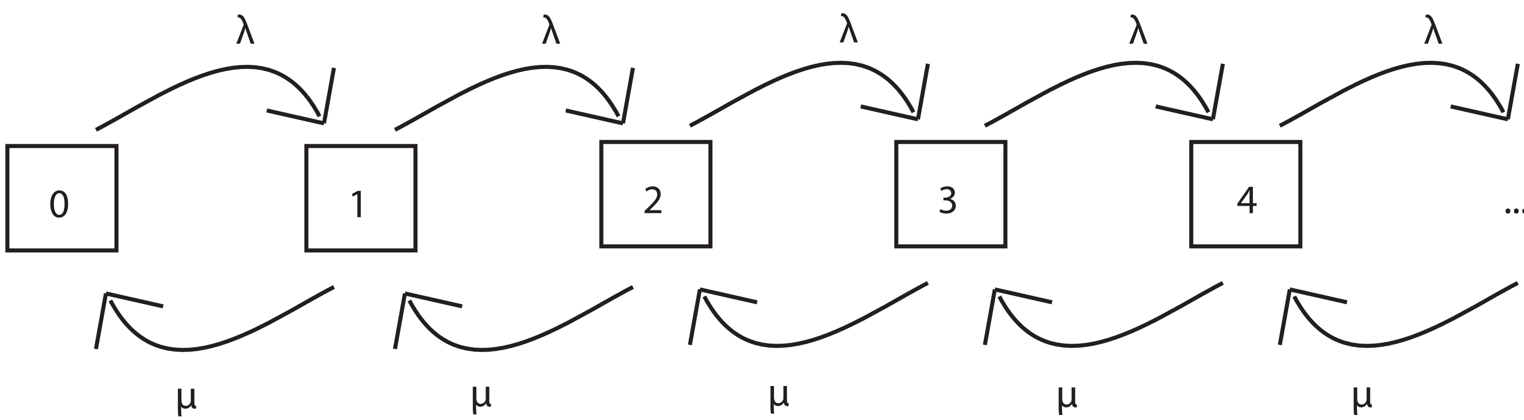
Queueing: Average Case?

- What is average?
  - Gaussian: Arrivals are spread out, around a mean value
  - Exponential: arrivals are memoryless
  - Heavy-tailed: arrivals are bursty
- Can have randomness in both arrivals and service times

Exponential Distribution

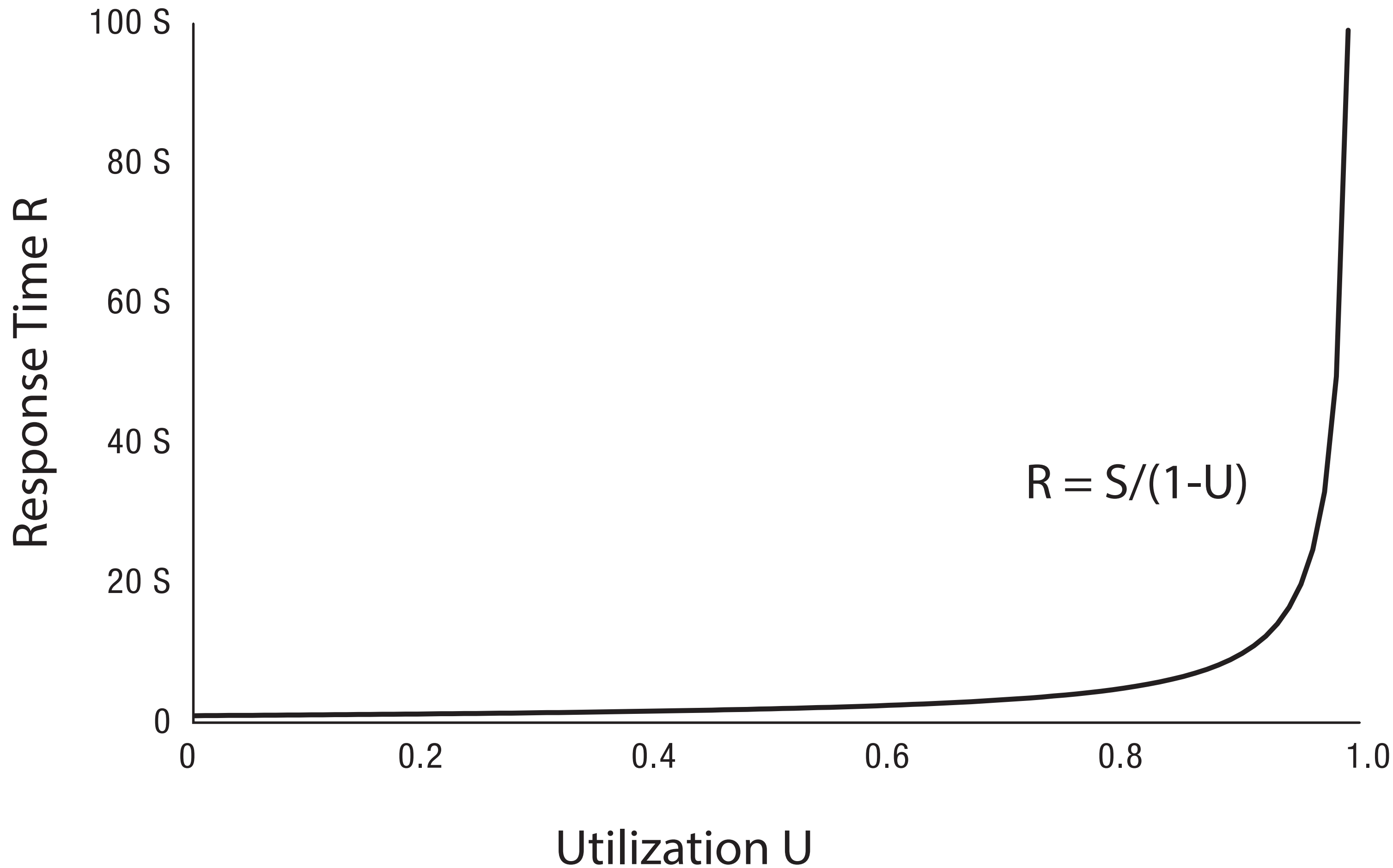


Exponential Distribution



Permits closed form solution to state probabilities, as function of arrival rate and service rate

Response Time vs. Utilization



Question

- Exponential arrivals: $R = S/(1-U)$
- If system is 20% utilized, and load increases by 5%, how much does response time increase?

- If system is 90% utilized, and load increases by 5%, how much does response time increase?

Variance in Response Time

- Exponential arrivals
  - Variance in R = S/(1-U)^2
- What if less bursty than exponential?
- What if more bursty than exponential?

What if Multiple Resources?

- Response time =

  Sum over all i

    Service time for resource i /

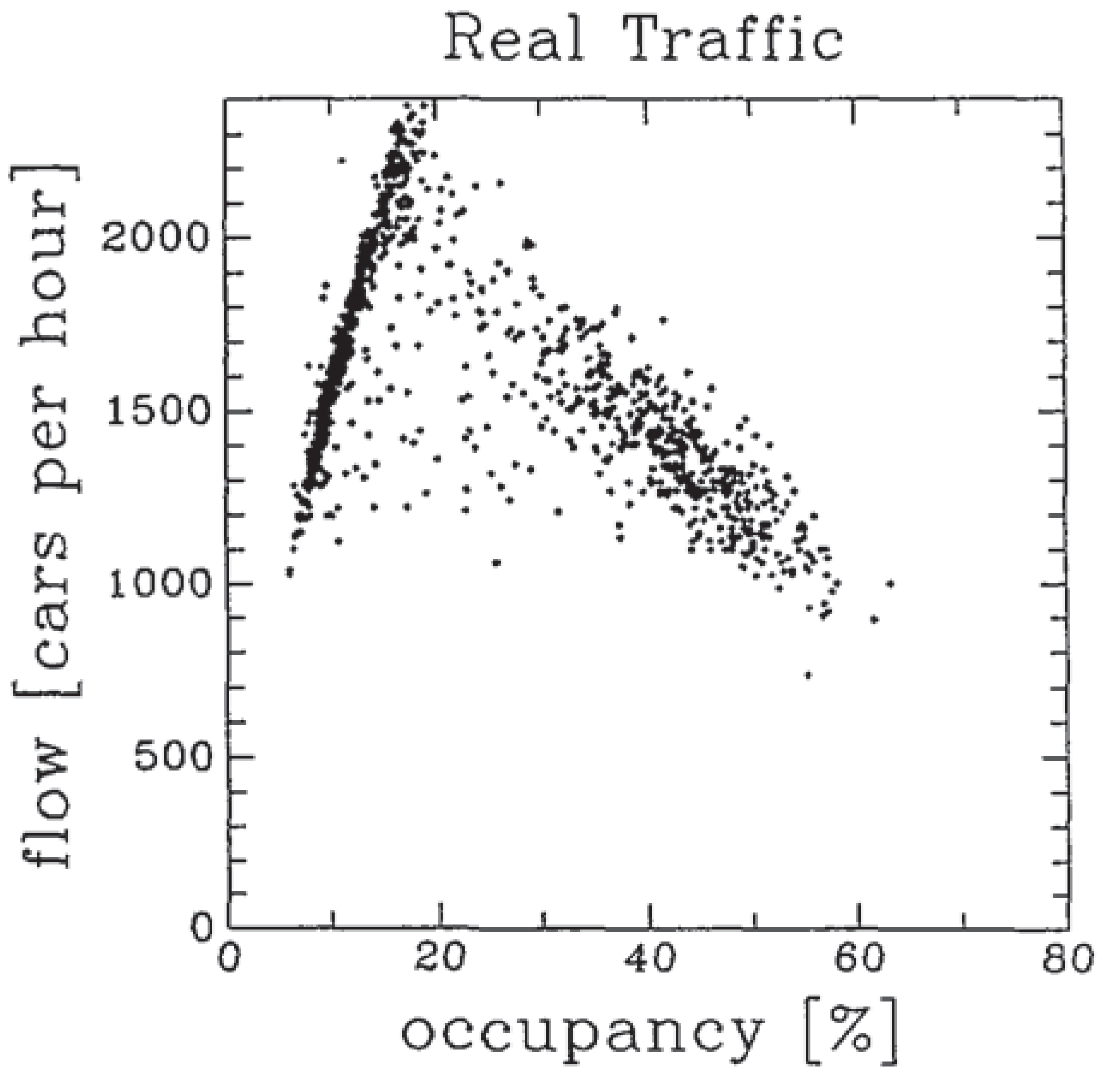
      (1 – Utilization of resource i)

- Implication
  - If you fix one bottleneck, the next highest utilized resource will limit performance

Overload Management

- What if arrivals occur faster than service can handle them
  - If do nothing, response time will become infinite
- Turn users away?
  - Which ones? Average response time is best if turn away users that have the highest service demand
  - Example: Highway congestion
- Degrade service?
  - Compute result with fewer resources
  - Example: CNN static front page on 9/11

Highway Congestion (measured)



Why Do Metro Buses Cluster?

- Suppose two Metro buses start 15 minutes apart
  - Why might they arrive at the same time?