CS 318 Principles of Operating Systems

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Lecture 8: Deadlock

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Slides adapted from Geoff Voelker’s lectures
Synchronization is a live gun – we can easily shoot ourselves in the foot
- Incorrect use of synchronization can block all processes
- You have likely been intuitively avoiding this situation already

If one process tries to access a resource that a second process holds, and vice-versa, they can never make progress

We call this situation **deadlock**, and we’ll look at:
- Definition and conditions necessary for deadlock
- Representation of deadlock conditions
- Approaches to dealing with deadlock
Deadlock is a problem that can arise:
- When processes compete for access to limited resources
- When processes are incorrectly synchronized

Definition:
- Deadlock exists among a set of processes if every process is waiting for an event that can be caused only by another process in the set.
mutex_t m1, m2;
void p1(void *ignored) {
    lock(m1);
    lock(m2);
    /* critical section */
    unlock(m2);
    unlock(m1);
}
void p2(void *ignored) {
    lock(m2);
    lock(m1);
    /* critical section */
    unlock(m1);
    unlock(m2);
}
Deadlock Example

• Can you have deadlock w/o mutexes?

• Same problem with condition variables
  - Suppose resource 1 managed by $c_1$, resource 2 by $c_2$
  - A has 1, waits on $c_2$, B has 2, waits on $c_1$

• Or have combined mutex/condition variable deadlock:
  - lock (a); lock (b); while (!ready) wait (b, c); unlock (b); unlock (a);
  - lock (a); lock (b); ready = true; signal (c); unlock (b); unlock (a);

• One lesson: dangerous to hold locks when crossing abstraction barriers!
  - i.e., lock (a) then call function that uses condition variable
Deadlocks w/o Computers

• Real issue is *resources* & how required

• E.g., bridge only allows traffic in one direction
  - Each section of a bridge can be viewed as a resource.
  - If a deadlock occurs, it can be resolved if one car backs up (preempt resources and rollback).
  - Several cars may have to be backed up if a deadlock occurs.
  - Starvation is possible.
Conditions for Deadlock

1. Mutual exclusion – At least one resource must be held in a non-sharable mode
2. Hold and wait – There must be one process holding one resource and waiting for another resource
3. No preemption – Resources cannot be preempted (critical sections cannot be aborted externally)
4. Circular wait – There must exist a set of processes \([P_1, P_2, P_3, \ldots, P_n]\) such that \(P_1\) is waiting for \(P_2\), \(P_2\) for \(P_3\), etc.

• All of 1–4 necessary for deadlock to occur

• Two approaches to dealing with deadlock:
  - Pro-active: prevention
  - Reactive: detection + corrective action
Prevent by Eliminating One Condition

1. **Mutual exclusion**
   - Buy more resources, split into pieces, or virtualize to make "infinite" copies
   - Threads: threads have copy of registers = no lock

2. **Hold and wait**
   - Wait on all resources at once (must know in advance)

3. **No preemption**
   - Physical memory: virtualized with VM, can take physical page away and give to another process!

4. **Circular wait**
   - Single lock for entire system: (problems?)
   - Partial ordering of resources (next)
• **View system as graph**
  - Processes and Resources are nodes
  - Resource Requests and Assignments are edges

• **Process:**

• **Resource with 4 instances:**

• $P_i$ requesting $R_j$:

• $P_i$ holding instance of $R_j$: 
Example Resource Allocation Graph
Resource Allocation Graph with Deadlock
Is This Deadlock?
Cycles and Deadlock

- If graph has no cycles $\Rightarrow$ no deadlock

- If graph contains a cycle
  - Definitely deadlock if only one instance per resource (waits-for graph (WFG))
  - Otherwise, maybe deadlock, maybe not

- Prevent deadlock with partial order on resources
  - e.g., always acquire mutex $m_1$ before $m_2$
  - Usually design locking discipline for application this way
Dealing With Deadlock

• There are four approaches for dealing with deadlock:
  - Ignore it – how lucky do you feel?
  - Prevention – make it impossible for deadlock to happen
  - Avoidance – control allocation of resources
  - Detection and Recovery – look for a cycle in dependencies
Deadlock Avoidance

• **Avoidance**
  - Provide information in advance about what resources will be needed by processes to guarantee that deadlock will not happen
  - System only grants resource requests if it knows that the process can obtain all resources it needs in future requests
  - Avoids circularities (wait dependencies)

• **Tough**
  - Hard to determine all resources needed in advance
  - Good theoretical problem, not as practical to use
Banker’s Algorithm

• The Banker’s Algorithm is the classic approach to deadlock avoidance for resources with multiple units

1. Assign a **credit limit** to each customer (process)
   - Maximum credit claim must be stated in advance

2. Reject any request that leads to a **dangerous state**
   - A dangerous state is one where a sudden request by any customer for the full credit limit could lead to deadlock
   - A recursive reduction procedure recognizes dangerous states

3. In practice, the system must keep resource usage well below capacity to maintain a **resource surplus**
   - Rarely used in practice due to low resource utilization
Detection and Recovery

- **Detection and recovery**
  - If we don’t have deadlock prevention or avoidance, then deadlock may occur
  - In this case, we need to detect deadlock and recover from it

- **To do this, we need two algorithms**
  - One to determine whether a deadlock has occurred
  - Another to recover from the deadlock

- **Possible, but expensive (time consuming)**
  - Implemented in VMS
  - Run detection algorithm when resource request times out
Deadlock Detection

• Detection
  - Traverse the resource graph looking for cycles
  - If a cycle is found, preempt resource (force a process to release)

• Expensive
  - Many processes and resources to traverse

• Only invoke detection algorithm depending on
  - How often or likely deadlock is
  - How many processes are likely to be affected when it occurs
Once a deadlock is detected, we have two options...

1. Abort processes
   - Abort all deadlocked processes
     • Processes need to start over again
   - Abort one process at a time until cycle is eliminated
     • System needs to rerun detection after each abort

2. Preempt resources (force their release)
   - Need to select process and resource to preempt
   - Need to rollback process to previous state
   - Need to prevent starvation
Deadlock Summary

- Deadlock occurs when processes are waiting on each other and cannot make progress
  - Cycles in Resource Allocation Graph (RAG)

- Deadlock requires four conditions
  - Mutual exclusion, hold and wait, no resource preemption, circular wait

- Four approaches to dealing with deadlock:
  - Ignore it – Living life on the edge
  - Prevention – Make one of the four conditions impossible
  - Avoidance – Banker’s Algorithm (control allocation)
  - Detection and Recovery – Look for a cycle, preempt or abort
Next time…

• Read Chapter 15, 16, 18