Lecture 05: Condvars and Semaphores

CS343 – Operating Systems

Branden Ghena – Fall 2024

Some slides borrowed from:
Stephen Tarzia (Northwestern), and Shivaram Venkataraman (Wisconsin)

Northwestern

Administrivia

- PCLab is out and ready to work on
  - Some of this week's material is relevant
  - But you can totally get started right now

  - About 25% of the class has already made commits to Github

Today’s Goals

- Understand how we can apply locks to gain correctness and maintain performance
  - Counter

- Signaling between threads to enforce ordering
  - Condition Variables
  - Semaphores

Review: Locks/Mutexes

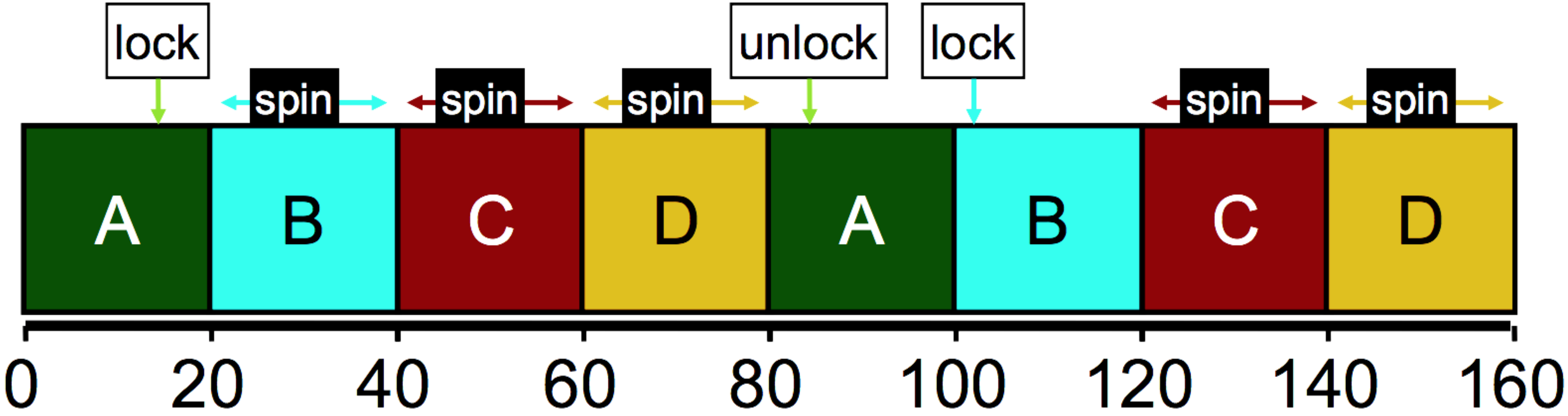
- Simple mutual exclusion primitive

- Init(), Acquire()/Lock(), Release()/Unlock()

- Implementations trade complexity, fairness, and performance
  - Spinlocks
  - Ticket locks
  - Yielding locks
  - Queueing locks

Ticket lock still wastes time spinning

- B, C, and D are "busy waiting"
  - Might be occupying an entire core in multicore
- Scheduler is fairly scheduling all threads, but ignorant of locks
- Idea: can we skip threads that are waiting on a lock?

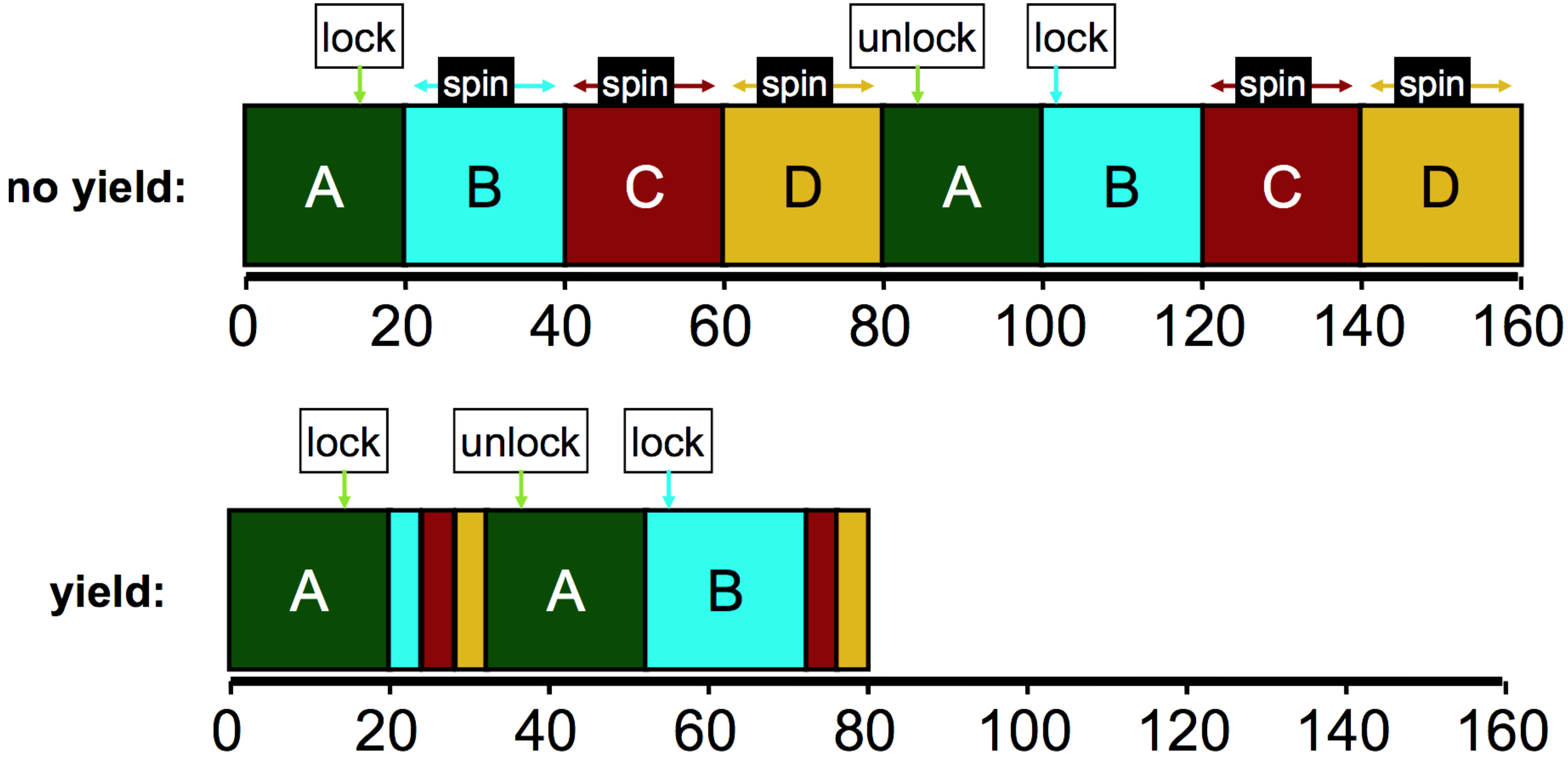


Yield timeslice when not yet ready

- Yield syscall unschedules the current thread
  - sched_yield() in POSIX API
  - Gives the user process *just a little* control over the scheduler
- In acquire(), yield after checking condition
- Might delay thread response time in multicore scenario

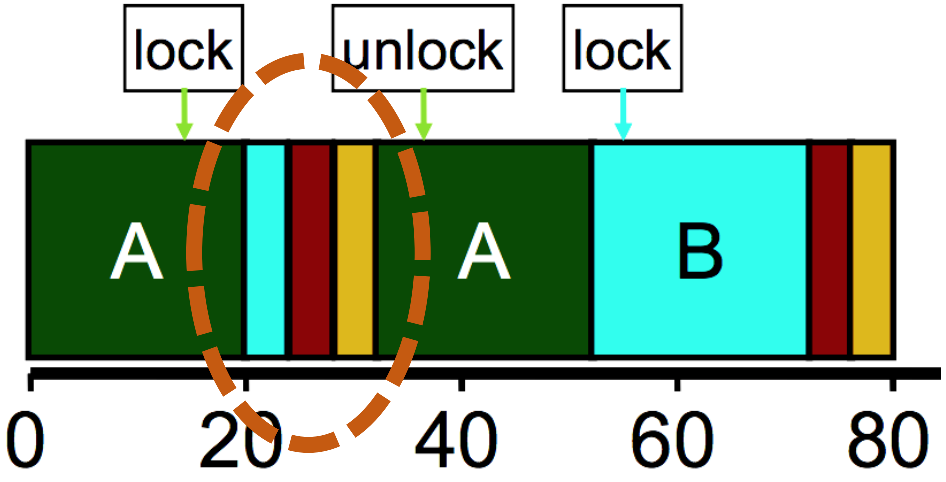
```
void mutex_lock(lock_t* mutex) {
    int myturn = atomic_fetch_and_add(&(mutex->ticket), 1); // take a ticket
    while (mutex->turn != myturn) {
        sched_yield(); // not ready yet
    }
}
```

Yielding reduces busy-waiting



How much does yielding improve things?

- Performance better with yield(), but still doing a lot of unnecessary context switches



- Wasted CPU cycles
  - Without yield(): O(threads*timeslice)
  - With yield(): O(threads*context_switch)
  - Timeslice ~1 ms, Context switch: ~1 μs

- Still expensive if we expect many threads to be contending over the lock

Building a blocking lock

- A more performant solution requires cooperation between thread’s locks and the OS scheduler to block threads

- If a thread cannot acquire the lock, it instead makes a system call informing the OS that it is blocked on the lock resource

- When a thread releases the lock, it makes a system call to notify the OS that it can wake one thread waiting on that resource

- Operation needs OS support
    - Solaris: Park/Unpark
    - Linux: implemented as part of Futex -> used for Pthread Mutex implementation!

Spinning versus Blocking

- Each approach is better under different circumstances

- **Single core systems**
  - If waiting process is scheduled, then process holding lock is not
  - Waiting process should *always* yield its time

- **Multicore systems**
  - If waiting process is scheduled, then process holding lock could also be
  - Spin or block depends how long until the lock is released
    - If the lock is released quickly, spin wait
    - If the lock is released slowly, block
    - Where quick and slow are relative to context-switch cost

Two-phase waiting

- Problem: we can't always know how long the wait will be
  - Programmer might know…
  - Library definitely can't know

- One common compromise:
  - Spin lock for a little while, and then give up and block
  - Example: Linux Native POSIX Thread Library (NPTL)
    - Check the lock at least *three* times before blocking with Futex

Summary on lock implementations

- Spinlocks
- Ticket locks
- Yielding locks
- Queueing locks
  - Pthread Mutex on Linux (implemented via Futex, see hidden slide)

- Sophisticated locks are more fair and do not waste processor time "busy waiting"
- But also have unnecessary context-switch overhead if the lock is only briefly and rarely held

Outline

- **Applying Locks**
- Ordering with Condition Variables
- Semaphores

Review: Need to enforce mutual exclusion on critical sections

```c
#include <stdio.h>
#include <pthread.h>

static volatile int counter = 0;
static const int LOOPS = 1e9;

void* mythread(void* arg) {
  printf("%s: begin\n", (char*)arg);
  for (int i=0; i<LOOPS; i++) {
    counter++;
  }
  printf("%s: done\n", (char*)arg);
  return NULL;
}
```

```c
int main(int argc, char* argv[]) {
  pthread_t p1, p2;
  printf("main: begin (counter = %d)\n", counter);
  pthread_create(&p1, NULL, mythread, "A");
  pthread_create(&p2, NULL, mythread, "B");

  // wait for threads to finish
  pthread_join(p1, NULL);
  pthread_join(p2, NULL);
  printf("main: done with both (counter = %d, goal was %d)\n", counter, 2*LOOPS);
  return 0;
}
```

Broken concurrency can actually performance too!

When iterating one billion times:

Single-threaded counter: 3.850 seconds

Multithreaded no-lock counter: 4.700 seconds (Broken!)

- Why is the no-lock multithreaded version so slow?
  - Not 100% certain
  - Likely something to do with hardware memory/cache consistency

Naively locked counter example

```
static volatile int counter = 0;
static const int LOOPS = 1e9;
static pthread_mutex_t lock;

void* mythread(void* arg) {
  printf("%s: begin\n", (char*)arg);
  for (int i=0; i<LOOPS; i++) {
    pthread_mutex_lock(&lock);
    counter++;
    pthread_mutex_unlock(&lock);
  }
  printf("%s: done\n", (char*)arg);
  return NULL;
}
```

```
int main(int argc, char* argv[]) {
  pthread_t p1, p2;
  pthread_mutex_init(&lock, 0);
  printf("main: begin (counter = %d)\n", counter);
  pthread_create(&p1, NULL, mythread, "A");
  pthread_create(&p2, NULL, mythread, "B");

  // wait for threads to finish
  pthread_join(p1, NULL);
  pthread_join(p2, NULL);
  printf("main: done with both (counter = %d, goal
was %d)\n", counter, 2*LOOPS);
  return 0;
}
```

Problem: locking overhead decreases performance

When iterating one billion times:

Single-threaded counter:	3.850 seconds
Multithreaded no-lock counter:	4.700 seconds (Broken!)
Naïve-locked counter:	80.000 seconds (Correct…)

- Formerly loop contained 3 instructions (mov, add, mov)

- Now it has
  - Two function calls
  - Multiple instructions inside of those
  - Possibly even interaction with the OS…
  - 3 instructions -> 60 instructions

Simple mutual exclusion: one big lock

- Simple solution "one big lock"
  - Find all the function calls that interact with shared memory
  - Lock at the start of each function call and unlock at the end

- Essentially, no concurrent access
  - Correct but poor performance
  - If you've forgotten all of this years from now, "one big lock" will still work

Counter example with big lock technique

code posted with last lecture on canvas

```
static volatile int counter = 0;
static const int LOOPS = 1e9;
static pthread_mutex_t lock;

void* mythread(void* arg) {
  pthread_mutex_lock(&lock);
  printf("%s: begin\n", (char*)arg);
  for (int i=0; i<LOOPS; i++) {
    counter++;
  }
  printf("%s: done\n", (char*)arg);
  pthread_mutex_unlock(&lock);
  return NULL;
}
```

```
int main(int argc, char* argv[]) {
  pthread_t p1, p2;
  pthread_mutex_init(&lock, 0);
  printf("main: begin (counter = %d)\n", counter);
  pthread_create(&p1, NULL, mythread, "A");
  pthread_create(&p2, NULL, mythread, "B");

  // wait for threads to finish
  pthread_join(p1, NULL);
  pthread_join(p2, NULL);
  printf("main: done with both (counter = %d, goal
was %d)\n", counter, 2*LOOPS);
  return 0;
}
```

Problem: locking decreases performance

Single-threaded counter:	3.850 seconds
Multithreaded no-lock counter:	4.700 seconds (Broken!)
Naïve-locked counter:	80.000 seconds
Big lock counter:	3.895 seconds

- Big lock technique basically returned us to single-threaded execution time (and single-threaded implementation)
  - But non-critical section code could still run in parallel

Reducing lock overhead

- We want to enable parallelism, but deal with less lock overhead
  - Need to increase the amount of work done when not locked
  - Goal: lots of parallel work per lock/unlock event

- "Sloppy" updates to global state
  - Keep local state that is operated on
  - Occasionally synchronize global state with current local state

- Counter example
  - Keep a local counter for each thread (not shared memory)
  - Add local counter to global counter periodically

Sloppy counter example

code posted with last lecture on canvas

```
static volatile int counter = 0;
static const int LOOPS = 1e9;
static pthread_mutex_t lock;

void* mythread(void* arg) {
  int sloppy_count = 0;
  printf("%s: begin\n", (char*)arg);
  for (int i=0; i<LOOPS; i++) {
    sloppy_count++;
    if (i%1000 == 0) {
        pthread_mutex_lock(&lock);
        counter += sloppy_count;
        pthread_mutex_unlock(&lock);
        sloppy_count = 0;
    }
  }
```

```
int main(int argc, char* argv[]) {
  pthread_t p1, p2;
  pthread_mutex_init(&lock, 0);
  printf("main: begin (counter = %d)\n", counter);
  pthread_create(&p1, NULL, mythread, "A");
  pthread_create(&p2, NULL, mythread, "B");

  // wait for threads to finish
  pthread_join(p1, NULL);
  pthread_join(p2, NULL);
  printf("main: done with both (counter = %d, goal
was %d)\n", counter, 2*LOOPS);
  return 0;
}
```

Offscreen Tail condition: don't forget to update "counter" again when the for loop is complete!

Problem: locking decreases performance

Single-threaded counter:	3.850 seconds
Multi-threaded no-lock counter:	4.700 seconds (Broken!)
Naïve-locked counter:	80.000 seconds
Big lock counter:	3.895 seconds
Sloppy lock (synchronize every 100):	2.150 seconds
Sloppy lock (synchronize every 10000):	1.472 seconds
Sloppy lock (synchronize every 1000000):	1.478 seconds
Sloppy lock (synchronize every 1000000000):	1.500 seconds

- Optimal for this counter example will be synchronizing once, when entirely finished with the local sum

Break + Open Question

- Avoiding data races is challenging
- Synchronization means we’re running some code in parallel anyways

- **Is concurrency worth it? What kinds of problems work best?**

Break + Open Question

- Avoiding data races is challenging
- Synchronization means we're running some code in parallel anyways

- **Is concurrency worth it? What kinds of problems work best?**
  - Problems that do not share data will still be HUGE wins!
    - No (or few) data races. Big concurrency performance gains.
    - Such problems are termed: *embarrassingly parallel*
      - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Embarrassingly_parallel#Examples

Outline

- Applying Locks
- **Ordering with Condition Variables**
- Semaphores

Requirements for sensible concurrency

- **Mutual exclusion**
  - Prevents corruption of data manipulated in critical sections
  - Atomic instructions → Locks → Concurrent data structures

- **Ordering** (B runs after A)
  - By default, concurrency leads to a lack of control over ordering
  - We can use mutex'd variables to control ordering, but it's inefficient:
    - `while(!myTurn) sleep(1);`

  - We would like cooperating threads to be able to signal each other.
    - Park/unpark and futex could be used solve this problem
    - But we want a higher-level abstraction

Barriers for all-or-nothing synchronization

- Barriers create synchronization points in the program
  - **All** threads must reach barrier before **any** thread continues

- pthread_barrier_init(barrier_t)
- pthread_barrier_wait(barrier_t)

- Use case: neural network processing
  - Spawn a pool of threads
  - Each thread handles a portion of the input data
  - Collect results from all threads at the end of the layer
  - Distribute results to appropriate threads for next layer

Basic Signaling with Condition Variable (condvar)

- Queue of waiting threads
  - Combine with a **flag** and a **mutex** to synchronize threads

- wait(condvar_t, lock_t)
  - Lock must be held when wait() is called
  - Puts the caller to sleep AND releases lock (atomically)
  - When awoken, reacquires lock before returning

- signal(condvar_t)
  - Wake a single waiting thread (if any are waiting)
  - Do nothing if there are no waiting threads
  - Called while holding the lock
    - (but the newly woken thread won’t leave their wait() until they get the lock)

Waiting for a thread to finish

```
pthread_t p1, p2;

// create child threads
pthread_create(&p1, NULL, mythread, "A");
pthread_create(&p2, NULL, mythread, "B");

...

// join waits for the child threads to finish
thr_join(p1, NULL);
thr_join(p2, NULL);

return 0;
```

How to implement join?

CV for child wait

- Must use mutex to protect "done" flag and condvar
  - Done flag tracks the event
  - Condvar is used for ordering
  - Mutex protects both!

```
int done  = 0;
pthread_mutex_t m = PTHREAD_MUTEX_INITIALIZER;
pthread_cond_t c  = PTHREAD_COND_INITIALIZER;

void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}

void *child(void *arg) {
    printf("child\n");
    thr_exit();
    return NULL;
}

void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    printf("parent: begin\n");
    pthread_t p;
    Pthread_create(&p, NULL, child, NULL);
    thr_join();
    printf("parent: end\n");
    return 0;
}
```

CV for child wait

- Must use mutex to protect "done" flag and condvar
- **Parent** calls thr_join()
  - wait()'s until done==1

```
int done  = 0;
pthread_mutex_t m = PTHREAD_MUTEX_INITIALIZER;
pthread_cond_t c  = PTHREAD_COND_INITIALIZER;

void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}

void *child(void *arg) {
    printf("child\n");
    thr_exit();
    return NULL;
}

void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    printf("parent: begin\n");
    pthread_t p;
    Pthread_create(&p, NULL, child, NULL);
    thr_join();
    printf("parent: end\n");
    return 0;
}
```

CV for child wait

- Must use mutex to protect "done" flag and condvar

- **Parent** calls thr_join()
  - wait()'s until done==1

- **Child** calls thr_exit()
  - sets done to 1
  - calls signal()
  - unlocks mutex

```c
int done  = 0;
pthread_mutex_t m = PTHREAD_MUTEX_INITIALIZER;
pthread_cond_t c  = PTHREAD_COND_INITIALIZER;

void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}

void *child(void *arg) {
    printf("child\n");
    thr_exit();
    return NULL;
}

void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    printf("parent: begin\n");
    pthread_t p;
    Pthread_create(&p, NULL, child, NULL);
    thr_join();
    printf("parent: end\n");
    return 0;
}
```

Check your understanding: why doesn't this work?

Incorrect Code

Child

```
void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}

void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

Parent

Correct Code

```
void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

Consider if an ordering exists that would lead to incorrect behavior

- Lock means that only one critical section will run at a time

Buggy attempts to wait for a child, no flag

Incorrect Code

Child

```
void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

Parent

```
void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

Correct Code

```
void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

Without *done* variable:

1) The child could run first and signal
2) Before the parent starts waiting for the child
3) Parent waits forever…

Check your understanding: is a lock necessary?

Incorrect Code

Child

```
void thr_exit() {
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
}
```

Parent

```
void thr_join() {
    if (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c);
}
```

Correct Code

```
void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

What could go wrong?

- Without the lock, these lines could be interleaved in any way

Buggy attempts to wait for a child, no mutex

Incorrect Code

Child

```
void thr_exit() {
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
}
```

Parent

```
void thr_join() {
    if (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c);
}
```

Correct Code

```
void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

Without the lock:

1) Parent could see done == 0 and enter the if statement
2) Child could then exit, setting done to 1 and signaling
3) Parent then calls wait (missed the signal) and waits forever

Always use a loop to check the flag variable

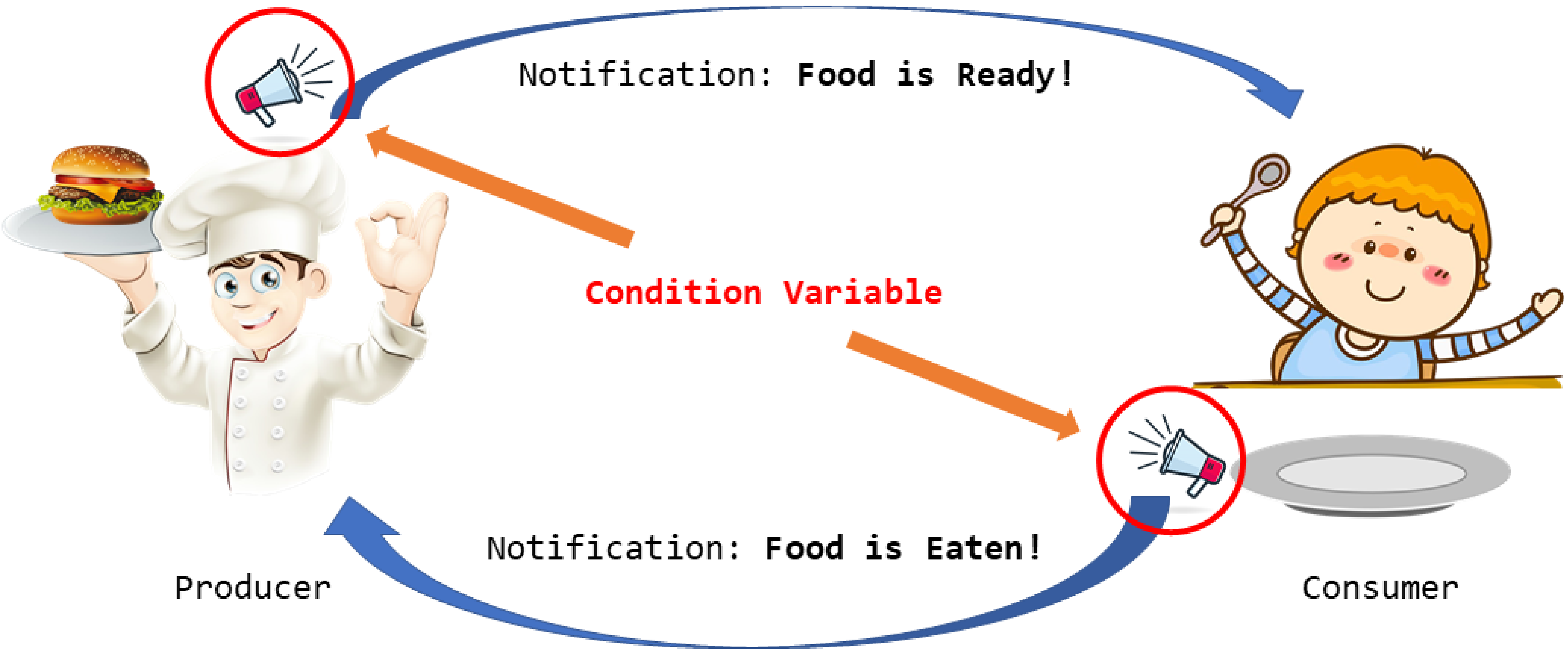
- It’s possible for the thread to wake up from a wait, but the resource is not available!

```
void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

- Maybe another thread took the resource first
  - Another thread could run and claim it before the woken thread is scheduled

- Maybe a *spurious wakeup* occurred
  - Often other sources can cause wakeups to occur
    - Signals or Interrupts usually
  - Makes the implementation of condvar simpler, and we need to double-check the flag anyways, so it doesn’t matter

Classical concurrency problem: Producer-Consumer



Produce/Consumer Example Details

- We have multiple producers and multiple consumers that communicate with a shared queue (FIFO buffer).
  - Concurrent queue allows work to happen asynchronously.
  - Buffer has finite size (does not dynamically expand)

- Two operations:
  - ***Put***, which should block (wait) if the buffer is **full**.
  - ***Get***, which should block (wait) if the buffer is **empty**.

- This is more complex than a (linked-list-based) concurrent queue because of the finite size and waiting.
- Example scenario: request queue in a multi-threaded web server.

Managing the buffer

```
int buffer[MAX];
int fill  = 0;
int use   = 0;
int count = 0;

void put(int value) {
    buffer[fill] = value;
    fill = (fill + 1) % MAX;
    count++;
}

int get() {
    int tmp = buffer[use];
    use = (use + 1) % MAX;
    count--;
    return tmp;
}
```

- A simple implementation of a circular buffer that stores data in a fixed-size array.
- ***fill*** is the index of the tail
- ***use*** is the index of the head
- ***count*** is the number of items

This simple implementation assumes:

- Concurrency is managed elsewhere
- It will overwrite data if we try to put more than MAX elements.

Managing the concurrency

```
cond_t empty, fill;
mutex_t mutex;

void *producer(void *arg) {
    int i;
    for (i = 0; i < loops; i++) {
        Pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
        while (count == MAX)
            Pthread_cond_wait(&empty, &mutex);
        put(i);
        Pthread_cond_signal(&fill);
        Pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
    }
}

void *consumer(void *arg) {
    int i;
    for (i = 0; i < loops; i++) {
        Pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
        while (count == 0)
            Pthread_cond_wait(&fill, &mutex);
        int tmp = get();
        Pthread_cond_signal(&empty);
        Pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
        printf("%d\n", tmp);
    }
}
```

- Always acquire ***mutex***
  - Must use same mutex in both functions
- Use ***two condvars***

Managing the concurrency

```
cond_t empty, fill;
mutex_t mutex;

void *producer(void *arg) {
    int i;
    for (i = 0; i < loops; i++) {
        Pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
        while (count == MAX)
            Pthread_cond_wait(&empty, &mutex);
        put(i);
        Pthread_cond_signal(&fill);
        Pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
    }
}

void *consumer(void *arg) {
    int i;
    for (i = 0; i < loops; i++) {
        Pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
        while (count == 0)
            Pthread_cond_wait(&fill, &mutex);
        int tmp = get();
        Pthread_cond_signal(&empty);
        Pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
        printf("%d\n", tmp);
    }
}
```

- Always acquire ***mutex***
    - Must use same mutex in both functions
- Use ***two condvars***
- Producer waits on **empty** while the buffer is full
    - Producer signals **fill** after `put`

Managing the concurrency

```
cond_t empty, fill;
mutex_t mutex;

void *producer(void *arg) {
    int i;
    for (i = 0; i < loops; i++) {
        Pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
        while (count == MAX)
            Pthread_cond_wait(&empty, &mutex);
        put(i);
        Pthread_cond_signal(&fill);
        Pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
    }
}

void *consumer(void *arg) {
    int i;
    for (i = 0; i < loops; i++) {
        Pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
        while (count == 0)
            Pthread_cond_wait(&fill, &mutex);
        int tmp = get();
        Pthread_cond_signal(&empty);
        Pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
        printf("%d\n", tmp);
    }
}
```

- Always acquire ***mutex***
  - Must use same mutex in both functions
- Use ***two condvars***

- Producer waits on **empty** while the buffer is full
  - Producer signals **fill** after `put`

- Consumer waits on **fill** while the buffer is empty
  - Consumer signals empty after `get`

Managing the concurrency

```
cond_t empty, fill;
mutex_t mutex;

void *producer(void *arg) {
    int i;
    for (i = 0; i < loops; i++) {
        Pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
        while (count == MAX)
            Pthread_cond_wait(&empty, &mutex);
        put(i);
        Pthread_cond_signal(&fill);
        Pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
    }
}

void *consumer(void *arg) {
    int i;
    for (i = 0; i < loops; i++) {
        Pthread_mutex_lock(&mutex);
        while (count == 0)
            Pthread_cond_wait(&fill, &mutex);
        int tmp = get();
        Pthread_cond_signal(&empty);
        Pthread_mutex_unlock(&mutex);
        printf("%d\n", tmp);
    }
}
```

- Always acquire ***mutex***
  - Must use same mutex in both functions
- Use ***two condvars***
- Producer waits on **empty** while the buffer is full
  - Producer signals **fill** after `put`
- Consumer waits on **fill** while the buffer is empty
  - Consumer signals empty after `get`
- Loops re-check count condition after breaking out of wait, to check that there really is a resource

Broadcast makes more complex conditions possible

- Recall that *signal* wakes one waiting thread (FIFO)
  - But there are times when threads are not all equivalent
  - The signal may not be serviceable by any of the threads

- For example, consider memory allocation/free requests
  - An allocation can only be serviced by free of >= size

- **`pthread_cond_broadcast`** wakes all threads
  - This approach may be inefficient, but it may be necessary to ensure progress

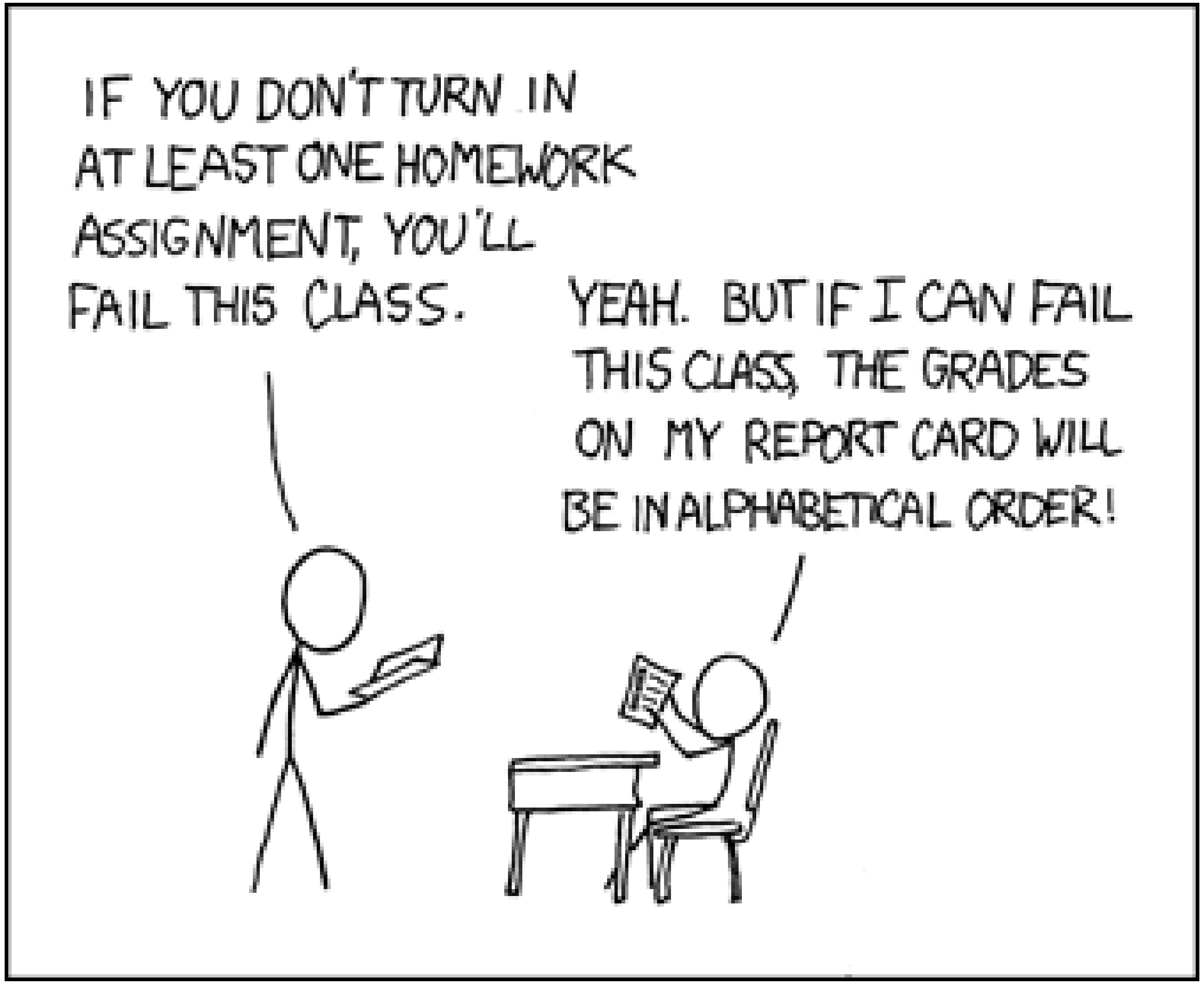
Condition Variable: rules of thumb

- Shared state determines if condition is true or not
  - Check the state in a while loop before waiting on condvar

- Use a mutex to protect:
  - The shared state on which condition is based, and
  - Operations on the condvar itself

- Use different condvars for different conditions
  - Sometimes, **`cond_broadcast()`** helps if you can’t find an elegant solution using **`cond_signal()`**

Break + xkcd (not relevant, just funny)



https://xkcd.com/336/

Outline

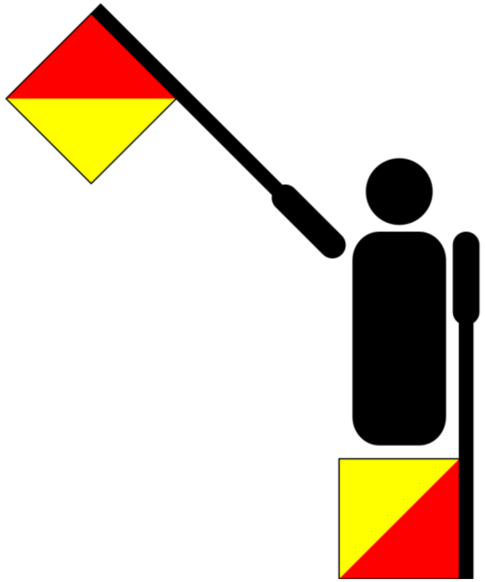
- Applying Locks
- Ordering with Condition Variables
- **Semaphores**

Generalizing Synchronization

- Condvars have no state or lock, just a waiting queue
  - The rest is handled by the programmer

- Semaphores are a generalization of condvars and locks
  - Includes internal (locked) state
  - Sometimes this makes them more complicated, sometimes simpler

Semaphores (by Edsger Dijkstra, 1965)



- Keeps an internal integer value that determines what happens to a calling thread
- Init(val)
  - Set the initial internal value
  - Value cannot otherwise be directly modified
- Up/Signal/Post/V() (from Dutch *verhogen* "increase")
  - Increase the value. If there is a waiting thread, wake one.
- Down/Wait/Test/P() (from Dutch *proberen* "to try")
  - Decrease the value. Wait if the value is negative.

Dijkstra invented Dijkstra's Algorithm!

Also Semaphores and the *entire field of Concurrent Programming*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edsger_W._Dijkstra

Semaphores vs Condition Variables

- Semaphores
- ***Up/Post***: increase value and wake one waiting thread
- ***Down/Wait***: decrease value and wait if it's negative

- Condition Variables
- ***Signal***: wake one waiting thread
- ***Wait***: wait

- Compared to CVs, Semaphores add an integer value that controls when waiting is necessary
  - *Value* counts the quantity of a shared resource currently available
  - *Up* makes a resource available, *down* reserves a resource
  - Negative value **-X** means that **X** threads are waiting for the resource

Check your understanding: build a mutex

- How would we build a mutex out of a semaphore?

```
typdef struct {
  sem_t sem;
} lock_t;
init(lock_t* lock){

}
acquire(lock_t* lock) {

}
release(lock_t* lock) {

}
```

`sem_init(sem_t*, int initial)`
`sem_wait(sem_t*)`: Decrement, wait until value >= 0
`sem_post(sem_t*)`: Increment value then wake a single waiter

Check your understanding: build a mutex

- How would we build a mutex out of a semaphore?

```
typdef struct {
  sem_t sem;
} lock_t;
init(lock_t* lock){
  sem_init(&(lock->sem), 1);
}
acquire(lock_t* lock) {
  sem_wait(&(lock->sem));
}
release(lock_t* lock) {
  sem_post(&(lock->sem));
}
```

`sem_init(sem_t*, int initial)`
`sem_wait(sem_t*)`: Decrement, wait until value >= 0
`sem_post(sem_t*)`: Increment value then wake a single waiter

Explanation of semaphore mutex implementation

```
typdef struct {
  sem_t sem;
} lock_t;
init(lock_t* lock){
  sem_init(&(lock->sem), 1);
}
acquire(lock_t* lock) {
  sem_wait(&(lock->sem));
}
release(lock_t* lock) {
  sem_post(&(lock->sem));
}
```

- The semaphore value represents the number of resources available
  - For a lock, there is 1 available initially
- Acquiring the lock might give it to you immediately
  - Or it might wait
  - Multiple threads could be waiting
- Releasing the lock only occurs after acquiring and resets it to 1

Semaphores reduce effort for numerical conditions

Condition Variable

Child

```
void thr_exit() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    done = 1;
    Pthread_cond_signal(&c);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

Parent

```
void thr_join() {
    Pthread_mutex_lock(&m);
    while (done == 0)
        Pthread_cond_wait(&c, &m);
    Pthread_mutex_unlock(&m);
}
```

Semaphore

```
void thr_exit() {
    sem_post(&s);
}


void thr_join() {
    sem_wait(&s);
}

// somewhere before all of this
sem_init(&s, 0);
```

- Want parent to wait immediately so initialize to 0
- If child thread finishes first, semaphore increments to 1
- Resource: number of threads completed

Readers-Writers Problem

- Some resources don't need strict mutual exclusion, especially if they have many ***read-only*** accesses. (eg., a linked list)

- Any number of readers can be active simultaneously, but
- Writes must be mutually exclusive AND cannot happen during read

- API:
  - acquire_read_lock(), release_read_lock()
  - acquire_write_lock(), release_write_lock()

Reader-writer Lock

- “lock” semaphore used as a mutex

```
typedef struct _rwlock_t {
  sem_t lock;      // binary semaphore (basic lock)
  sem_t writelock; // used to allow ONE writer or MANY readers
  int   readers;   // count of readers reading in critical section
} rwlock_t;

void rwlock_init(rwlock_t *rw) {
  rw->readers = 0;
  sem_init(&rw->lock, 0, 1);
  sem_init(&rw->writelock, 0, 1);
}

void rwlock_acquire_readlock(rwlock_t *rw) {
  sem_wait(&rw->lock);
  rw->readers++;
  if (rw->readers == 1)
    sem_wait(&rw->writelock); // first reader acquires writelock
  sem_post(&rw->lock);
}

void rwlock_release_readlock(rwlock_t *rw) {
  sem_wait(&rw->lock);
  rw->readers--;
  if (rw->readers == 0)
    sem_post(&rw->writelock); // last reader releases writelock
  sem_post(&rw->lock);
}

void rwlock_acquire_writelock(rwlock_t *rw) {
  sem_wait(&rw->writelock);
}

void rwlock_release_writelock(rwlock_t *rw) {
  sem_post(&rw->writelock);
}
```

Reader-writer Lock

- “writelock” must be held during read to block writes or during write to block reads.

- During reads
  - Number of active readers is counted.
  - First/last reader handles acquiring/releasing writelock.

```c
typedef struct _rwlock_t {
  sem_t lock;      // binary semaphore (basic lock)
  sem_t writelock; // used to allow ONE writer or MANY readers
  int   readers;   // count of readers reading in critical section
} rwlock_t;

void rwlock_init(rwlock_t *rw) {
  rw->readers = 0;
  sem_init(&rw->lock, 0, 1);
  sem_init(&rw->writelock, 0, 1);
}

void rwlock_acquire_readlock(rwlock_t *rw) {
  sem_wait(&rw->lock);
  rw->readers++;
  if (rw->readers == 1)
    sem_wait(&rw->writelock); // first reader acquires writelock
  sem_post(&rw->lock);
}

void rwlock_release_readlock(rwlock_t *rw) {
  sem_wait(&rw->lock);
  rw->readers--;
  if (rw->readers == 0)
    sem_post(&rw->writelock); // last reader releases writelock
  sem_post(&rw->lock);
}

void rwlock_acquire_writelock(rwlock_t *rw) {
  sem_wait(&rw->writelock);
}

void rwlock_release_writelock(rwlock_t *rw) {
  sem_post(&rw->writelock);
}
```

Classical concurrency problems

- Note that this particular solution could starve writers
  - There might always be readers in the critical section

- Full solution to readers-writers problem with progress guarantee
  - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Readers%E2%80%93writers_problem

- Generally: try to map your problem to one of these solved problems
  - Producers/Consumers or Readers/Writers
  - There are MANY solutions to these problems available online

Outline

- Applying Locks
- Ordering with Condition Variables
- Semaphores