Exceptional Control Flow: Exceptions and Processes

CS 485G-006: Systems Programming

Lectures 24–26: 28 Mar–1 Apr 2016

Today

- **Exceptional Control Flow**
- Exceptions
- Processes
- Process Control

Control Flow

- **Processors do only one thing:**
  - From startup to shutdown, a CPU simply reads and executes (interprets) a sequence of instructions, one at a time
  - This sequence is the CPU's *control flow* (or *flow of control*)

Physical control flow

Time

<startup>
$inst_1$
$inst_2$
$inst_3$
…
$inst_n$
<shutdown>

Altering the Control Flow

- **Up to now: two mechanisms for changing control flow:**
  - Jumps and branches
  - Call and return

  React to changes in ***program state***

- **Insufficient for a useful system:**
  Difficult to react to changes in *system state*
  - Data arrives from a disk or a network adapter
  - Instruction divides by zero
  - User hits Ctrl-C at the keyboard
  - System timer expires

- **System needs mechanisms for "exceptional control flow"**

Exceptional Control Flow

- **Exists at all levels of a computer system**
- **Low level mechanisms**
  - 1. **Exceptions (interrupts, traps, faults, and aborts)**
    - Change in control flow in response to a system event (i.e., change in system state, bad instruction, …)
    - Implemented using combination of hardware and OS software
    - Handled by the OS (the kernel)
- **Higher level mechanisms**
  - 2. **Process context switch**
    - Implemented by OS software and hardware timer
  - 3. **Signals**
    - Implemented by OS software
  - 4. **Nonlocal jumps**: `setjmp()` and `longjmp()`
    - Implemented by C runtime library

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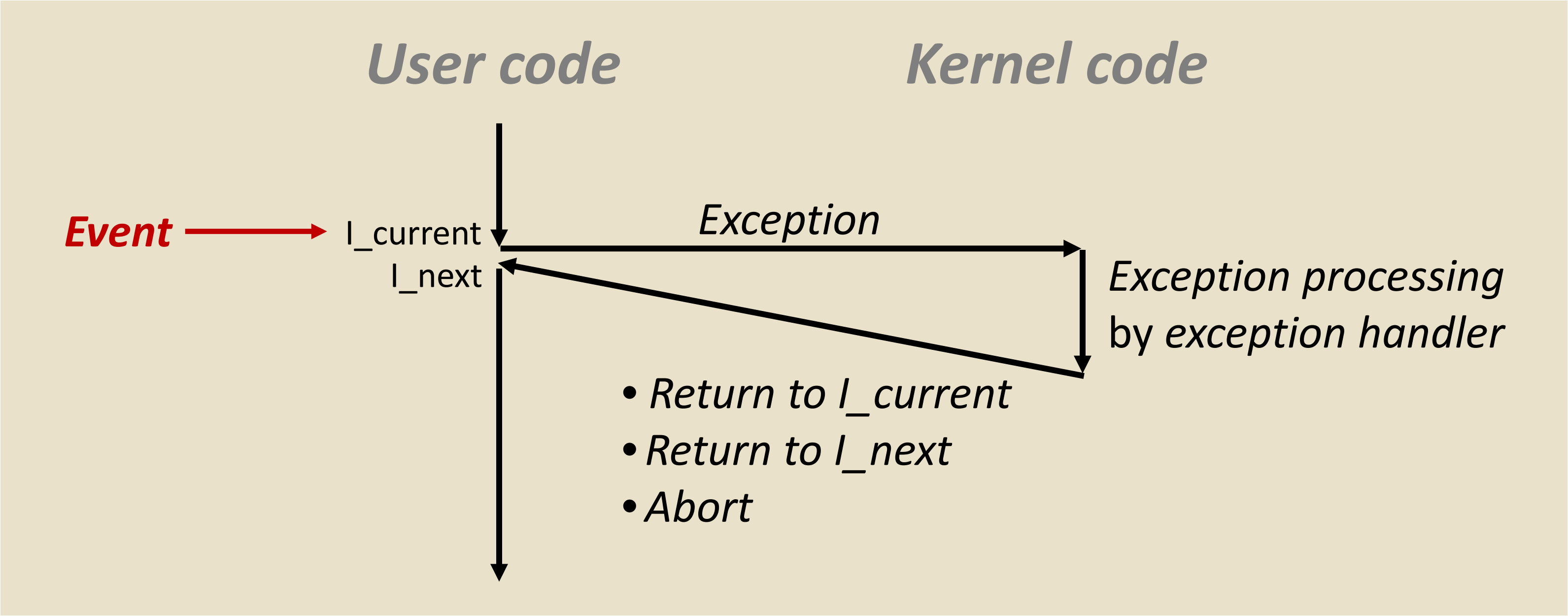
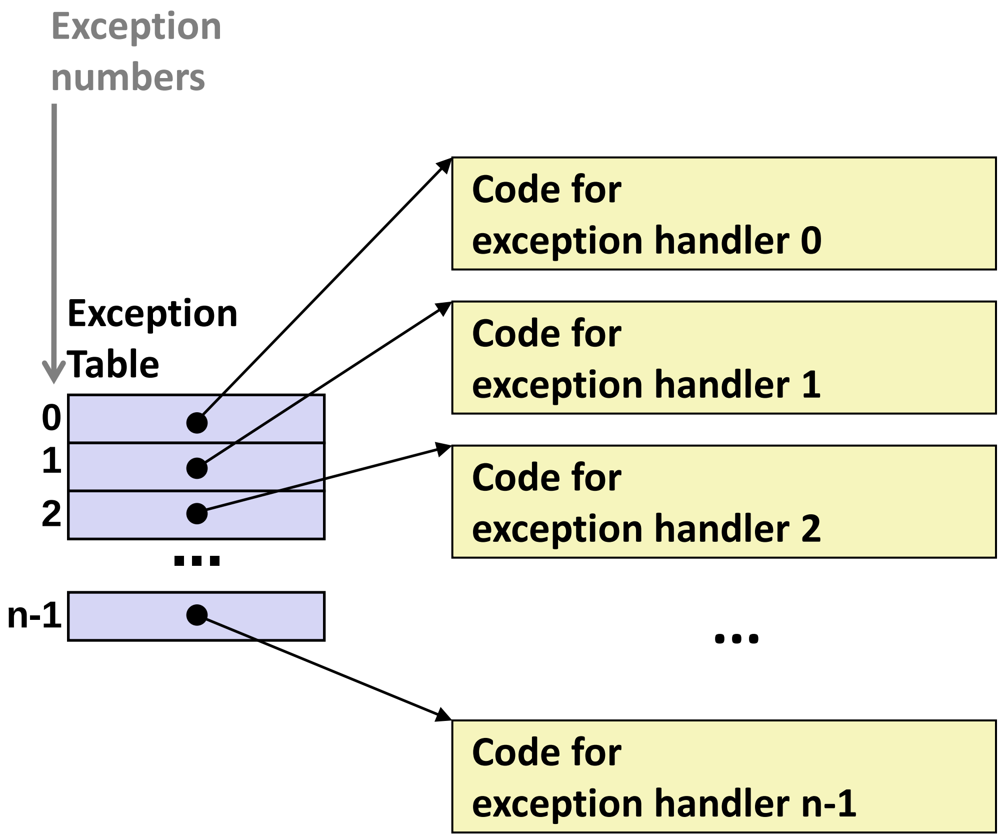
Exceptions

- **An *exception* is a transfer of control to the OS *kernel* in response to some *event* (i.e., change in processor state)**
  - Kernel is the memory-resident part of the OS
  - Examples of events: Divide by 0, arithmetic overflow, page fault, I/O request completes, typing Ctrl-C



Exception Tables



- Each type of event has a unique exception number k
- k = index into exception table (a.k.a. interrupt vector)
- Handler k is called each time exception k occurs

Asynchronous Exceptions (Interrupts)

- **Caused by events external to the processor**
  - Indicated by setting the processor's *interrupt pin*
  - Handler returns to "next" instruction
- **Examples:**
  - Timer interrupt
    - Every few ms, an external timer chip triggers an interrupt
    - Used by the kernel to take back control from user programs
  - I/O interrupt from external device
    - Hitting Ctrl-C at the keyboard
    - Arrival of a packet from a network
    - Arrival of data from a disk

Synchronous Exceptions

- **Caused by events that occur as a result of executing an instruction:**
  - ***Traps***
    - Intentional
    - Examples: ***system calls***, breakpoint traps, special instructions
    - Returns control to "next" instruction
  - ***Faults***
    - Unintentional but possibly recoverable
    - Examples: page faults (recoverable), protection faults (unrecoverable), floating point exceptions
    - Either re-executes faulting ("current") instruction or aborts
  - ***Aborts***
    - Unintentional and unrecoverable
    - Examples: illegal instruction, parity error, machine check
    - Aborts current program

System Calls

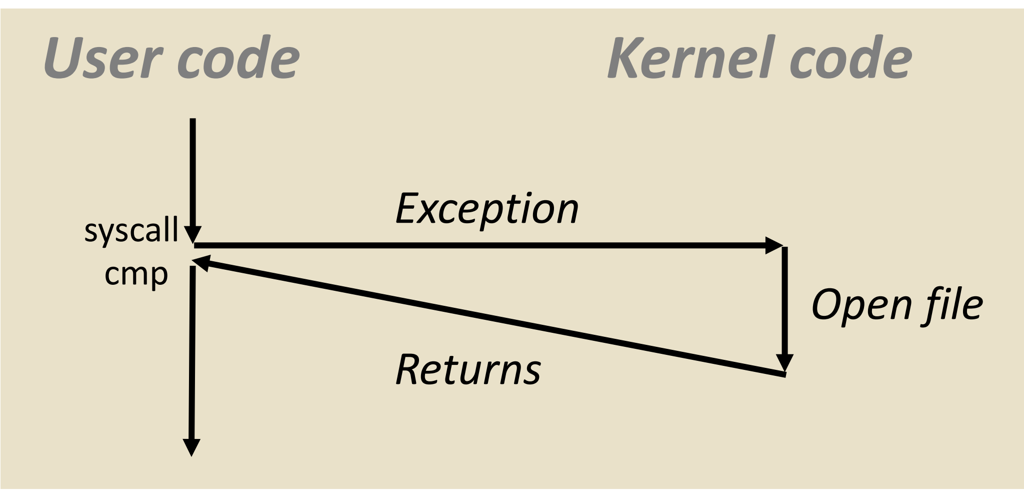
- **Each x86-64 system call has a unique ID number**
- **Examples:**

Number	*Name*	*Description*
0	`read`	Read file
1	`write`	Write file
2	`open`	Open file
3	`close`	Close file
4	`stat`	Get info about file
57	`fork`	Create process
59	`execve`	Execute a program
60	`_exit`	Terminate process
62	`kill`	Send signal to process

System Call Example: Opening File

- User calls: **`open(filename, options)`**
- Calls **`__open`** function, which invokes system call instruction **`syscall`**

```
00000000000e5d70 <__open>:
...
e5d79:   b8 02 00 00 00      mov  $0x2,%eax  # open is syscall #2
e5d7e:   0f 05               syscall         # Return value in %rax
e5d80:   48 3d 01 f0 ff ff   cmp  $0xfffffffffffff001,%rax
...
e5dfa:   c3                  retq
```



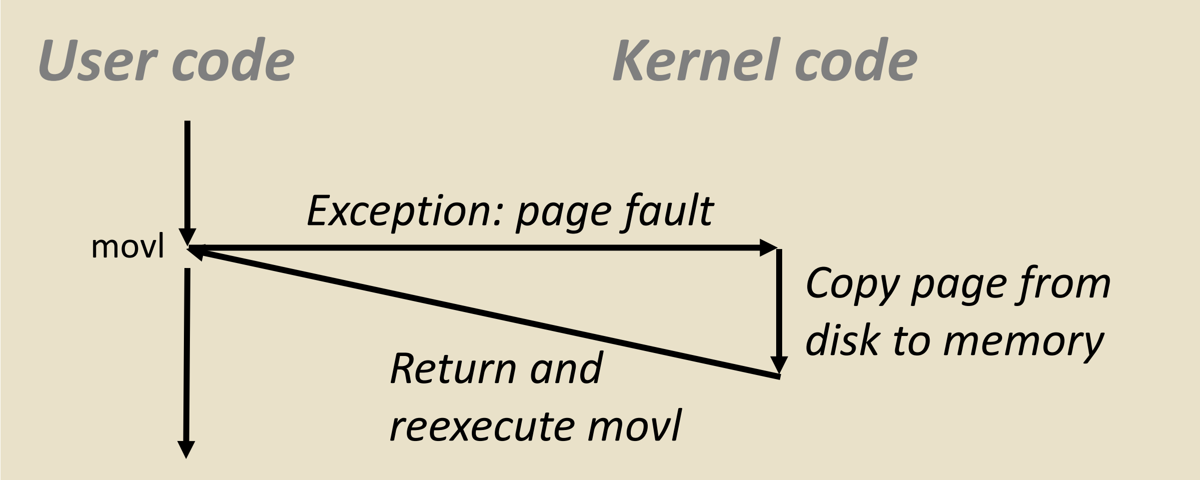
- `%rax` contains syscall number
- Other arguments in `%rdi`, `%rsi`, `%rdx`, `%r10`, `%r8`, `%r9`
- Return value in `%rax`
- Negative value is an error corresponding to negative `errno`

Fault Example: Page Fault

- User writes to memory location
- That portion (page) of user's memory is currently on disk

```
int a[1000];
main ()
{
    a[500] = 13;
}
```

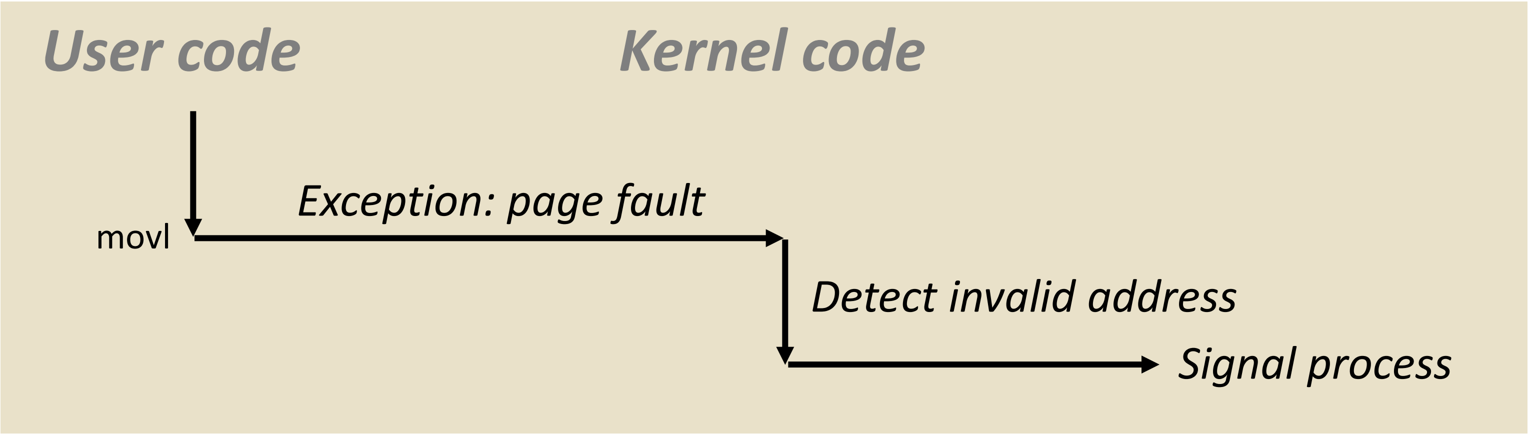
```
80483b7:      c7 05 10 9d 04 08 0d   movl   $0xd,0x8049d10
```



Fault Example: Invalid Memory Reference

```
int a[1000];
main ()
{
    a[5000] = 13;
}
```

```
80483b7:      c7 05 60 e3 04 08 0d   movl   $0xd,0x804e360
```



- Sends **SIGSEGV** signal to user process
- User process exits with "segmentation fault"

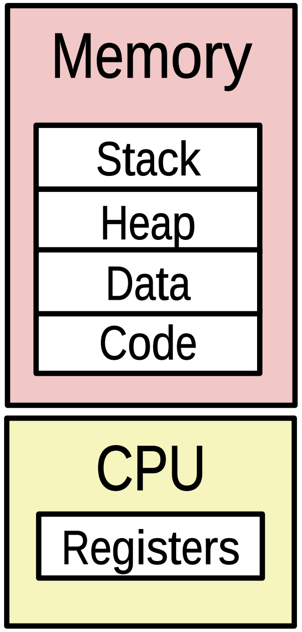
Today

- Exceptional Control Flow
- Exceptions
- **Processes**
- Process Control

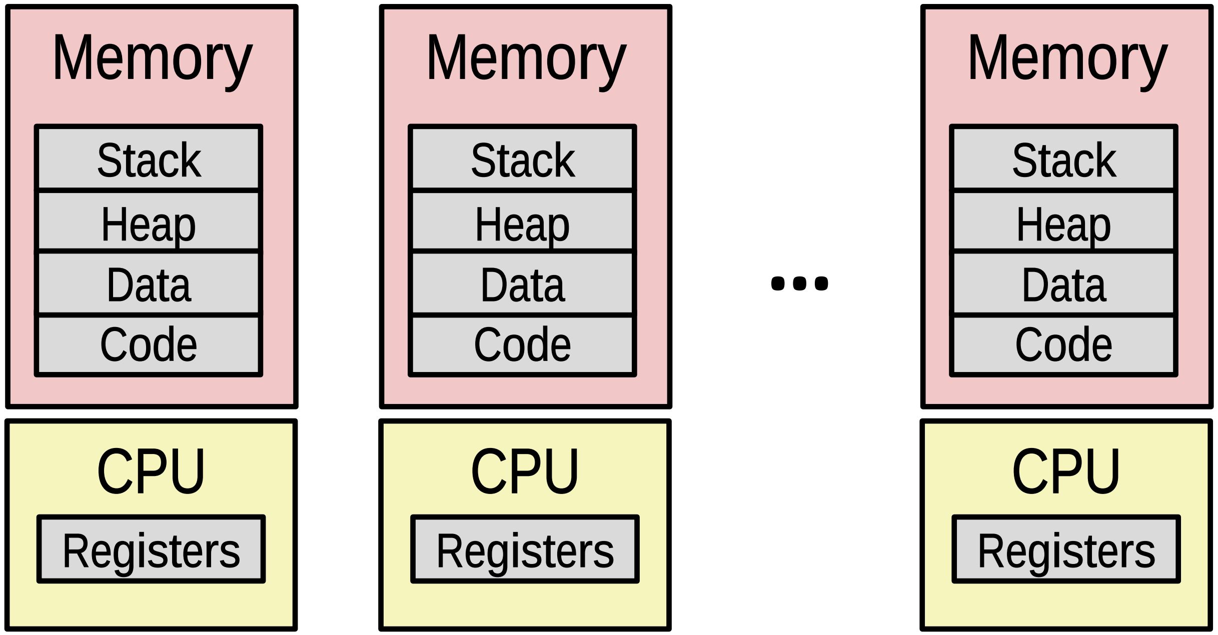
Processes

- **Definition: A *process* is an instance of a running program.**
  - One of the most profound ideas in computer science
  - Not the same as “program” or “processor”

- **Process provides each program with two key abstractions:**
  - ***Logical control flow***
    - Each program seems to have exclusive use of the CPU
    - Provided by kernel mechanism called *context switching*
  - ***Private address space***
    - Each program seems to have exclusive use of main memory.
    - Provided by kernel mechanism called *virtual memory*



Multiprocessing: The Illusion



- **Computer runs many processes simultaneously**
  - Applications for one or more users
    - Web browsers, email clients, editors, …
  - Background tasks
    - Monitoring network & I/O devices

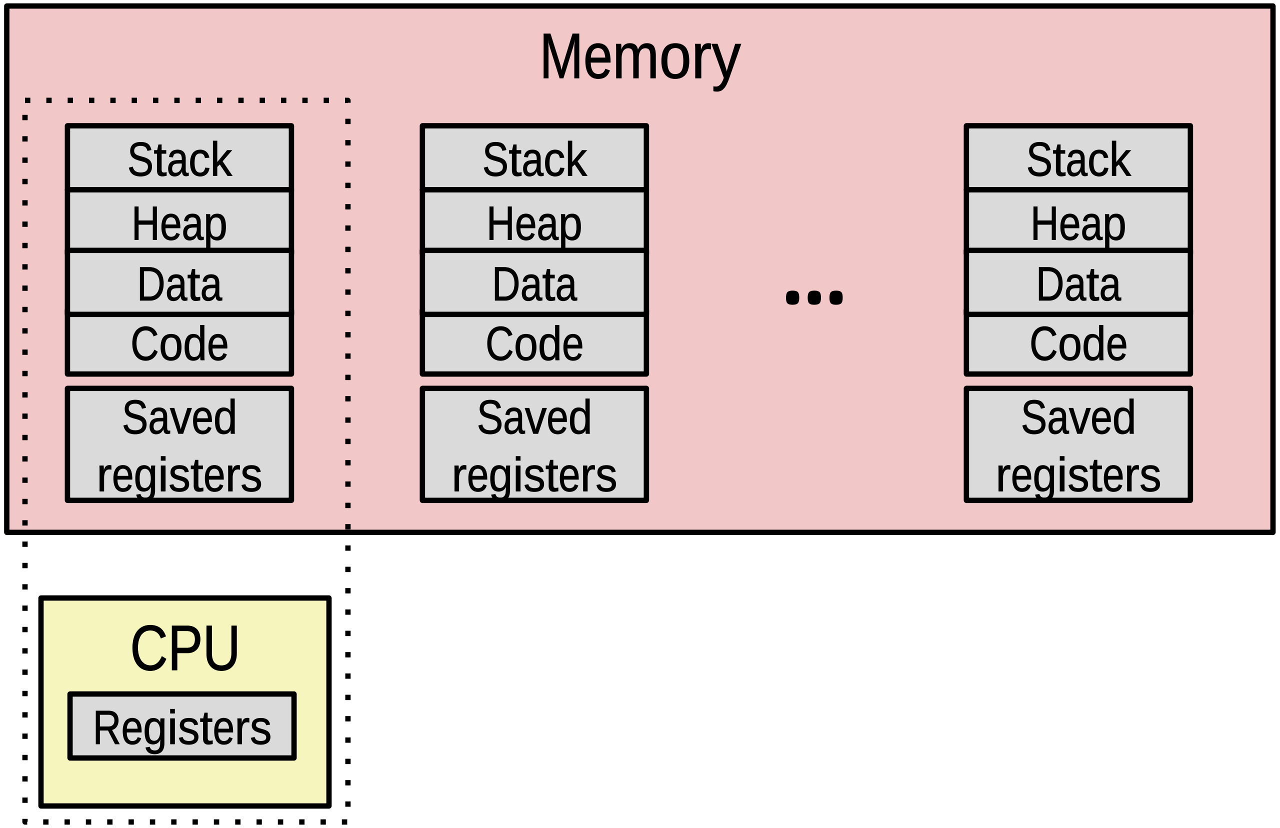
Multiprocessing Example

```
xterm
Processes: 123 total, 5 running, 9 stuck, 109 sleeping, 611 threads        11:47:07
Load Avg: 1.03, 1.13, 1.14  CPU usage: 3.27% user, 5.15% sys, 91.56% idle
SharedLibs: 576K resident, 0B data, 0B linkedit.
MemRegions: 27958 total, 1127M resident, 35M private, 494M shared.
PhysMem: 1039M wired, 1974M active, 1062M inactive, 4076M used, 18M free.
VM: 280G vsize, 1091M framework vsize, 23075213(1) pageins, 5843367(0) pageouts.
Networks: packets: 41046228/11G in, 66083096/77G out.
Disks: 17874391/349G read, 12847373/594G written.

PID    COMMAND      %CPU TIME     #TH  #WQ  #PORT #MREG RPRVT  RSHRD  RSIZE  VPRVT  VSIZE
99217- Microsoft Of 0.0  02:28.34 4    1    202   418   21M    24M    21M    66M    763M
99051  usbmuxd      0.0  00:04.10 3    1    47    66    436K   216K   480K   60M    2422M
99006  iTunesHelper 0.0  00:01.23 2    1    55    78    728K   3124K  1124K  43M    2429M
84286  bash         0.0  00:00.11 1    0    20    24    224K   732K   484K   17M    2378M
84285  xterm        0.0  00:00.83 1    0    32    73    656K   872K   692K   9728K  2382M
55939- Microsoft Ex 0.3  21:58.97 10   3    360   954   16M    65M    46M    114M   1057M
54751  sleep        0.0  00:00.00 1    0    17    20    92K    212K   360K   9632K  2370M
54739  launchdadd   0.0  00:00.00 2    1    33    50    488K   220K   1736K  48M    2409M
54737  top          6.5  00:02.53 1/1  0    30    29    1416K  216K   2124K  17M    2378M
54719  automountd   0.0  00:00.02 7    1    53    64    860K   216K   2184K  53M    2413M
54701  ocspd        0.0  00:00.05 4    1    61    54    1268K  2644K  3132K  50M    2426M
54661  Grab         0.6  00:02.75 6    3    222+  389+  15M+   26M+   40M+   75M+   2556M+
54659  cookied      0.0  00:00.15 2    1    40    61    3316K  224K   4088K  42M    2411M
53818  mdworker     0.0  00:01.67 4    1    52    91    7628K  7412K  16M    48M    2438M
50878  mdworker     0.0  00:11.17 3    1    53    91    2464K  6148K  9976K  44M    2434M
50410  xterm        0.0  00:00.13 1    0    32    73    280K   872K   532K   9700K  2382M
50078  emacs        0.0  00:06.70 1    0    20    35    52K    216K   88K    18M    2392M
```

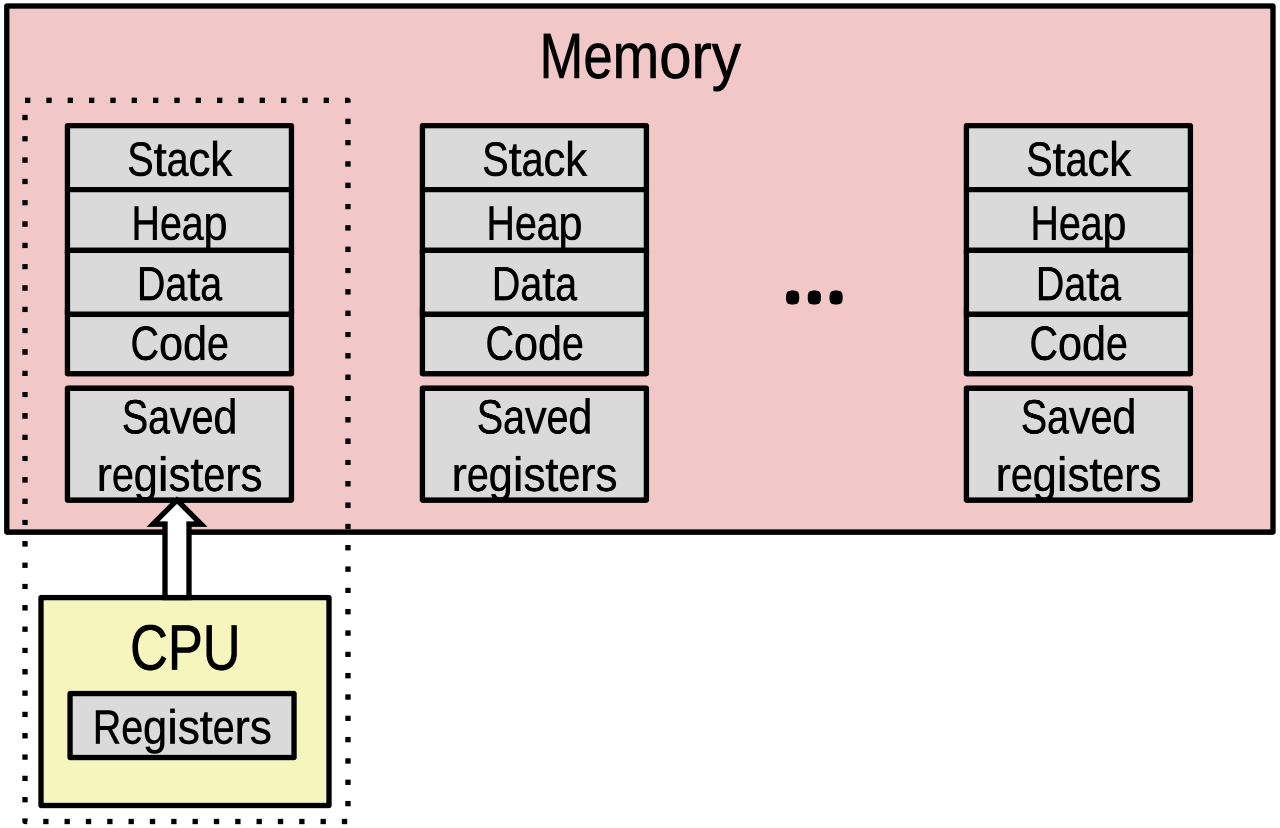
- **Running program "top" on Mac**
  - System has 123 processes, 5 of which are active
  - Identified by Process ID (PID)

Multiprocessing: The (Traditional) Reality



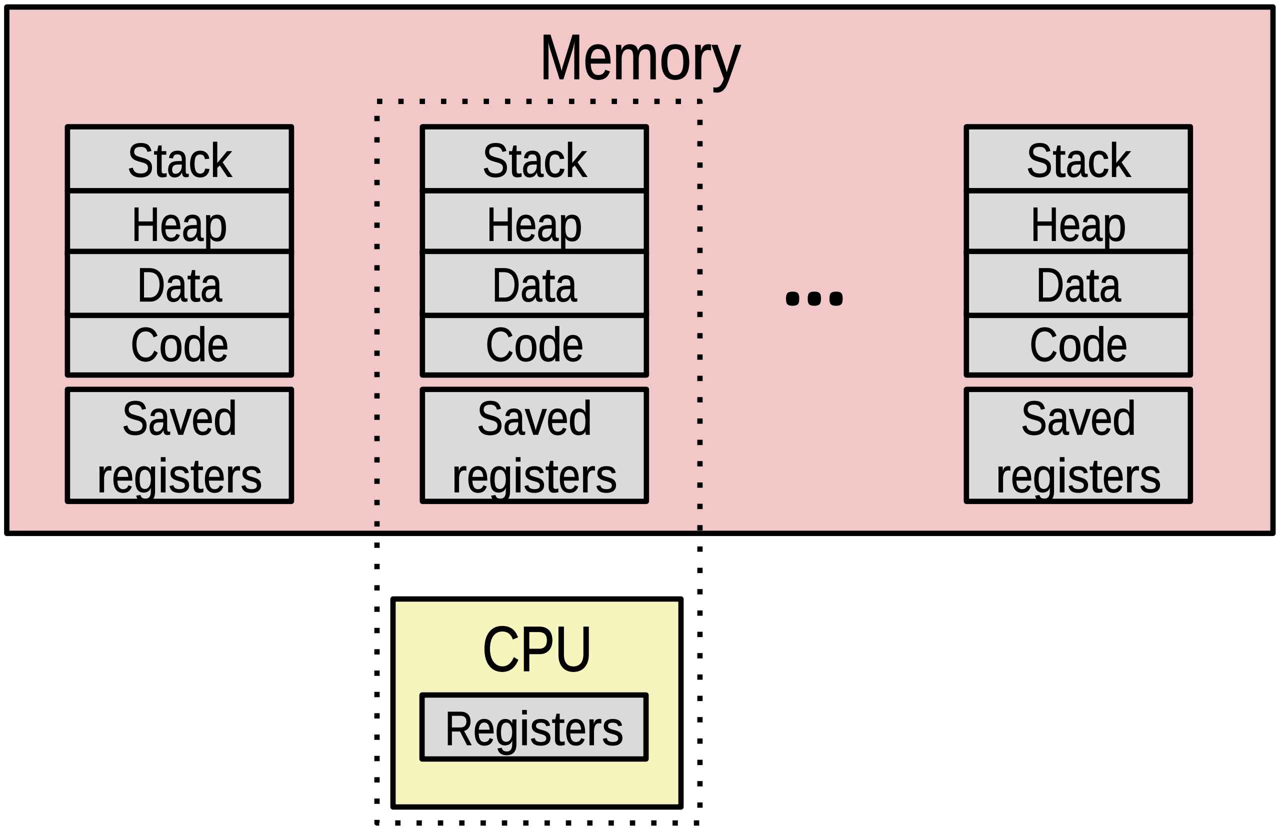
- **Single processor executes multiple processes concurrently**
  - Process executions interleaved (multitasking)
  - Address spaces managed by virtual memory system (later in course)
  - Register values for nonexecuting processes saved in memory

Multiprocessing: The (Traditional) Reality



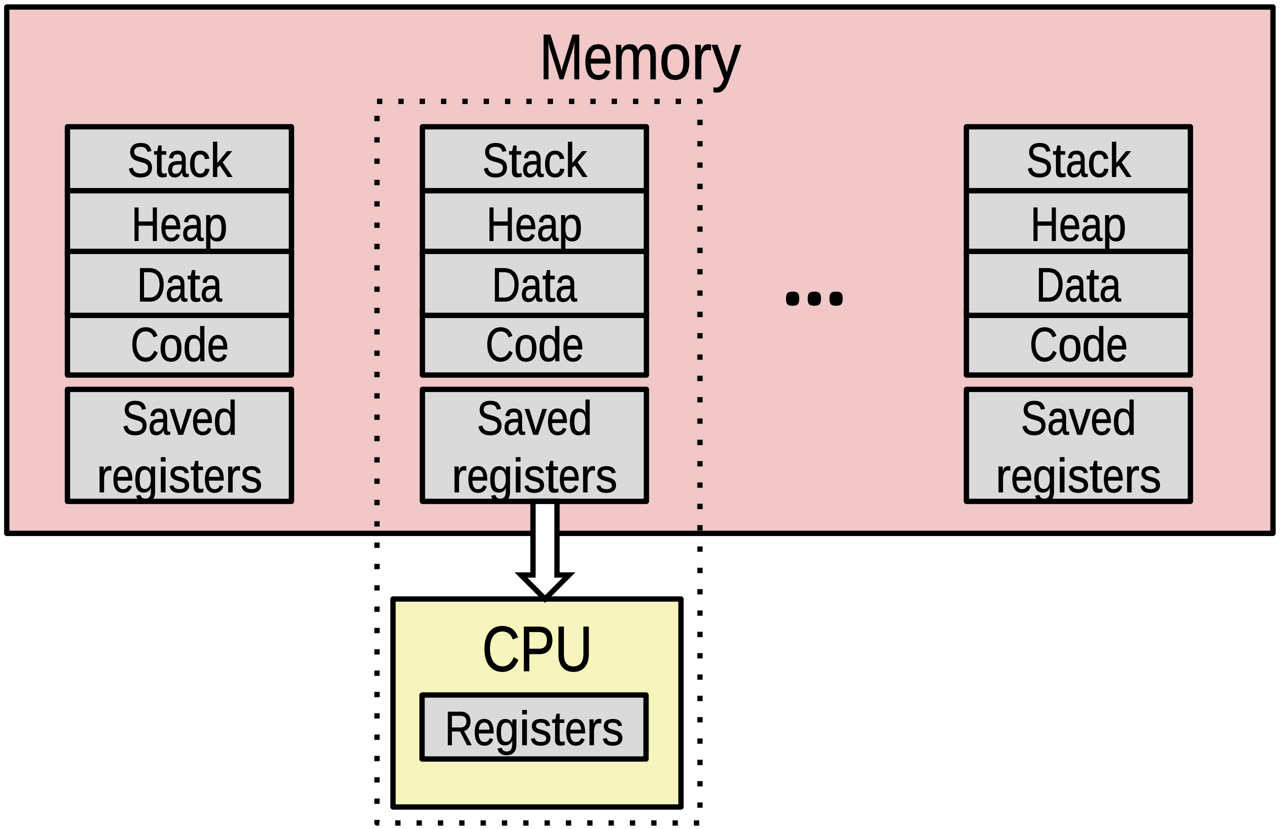
- **Save current registers in memory**

Multiprocessing: The (Traditional) Reality



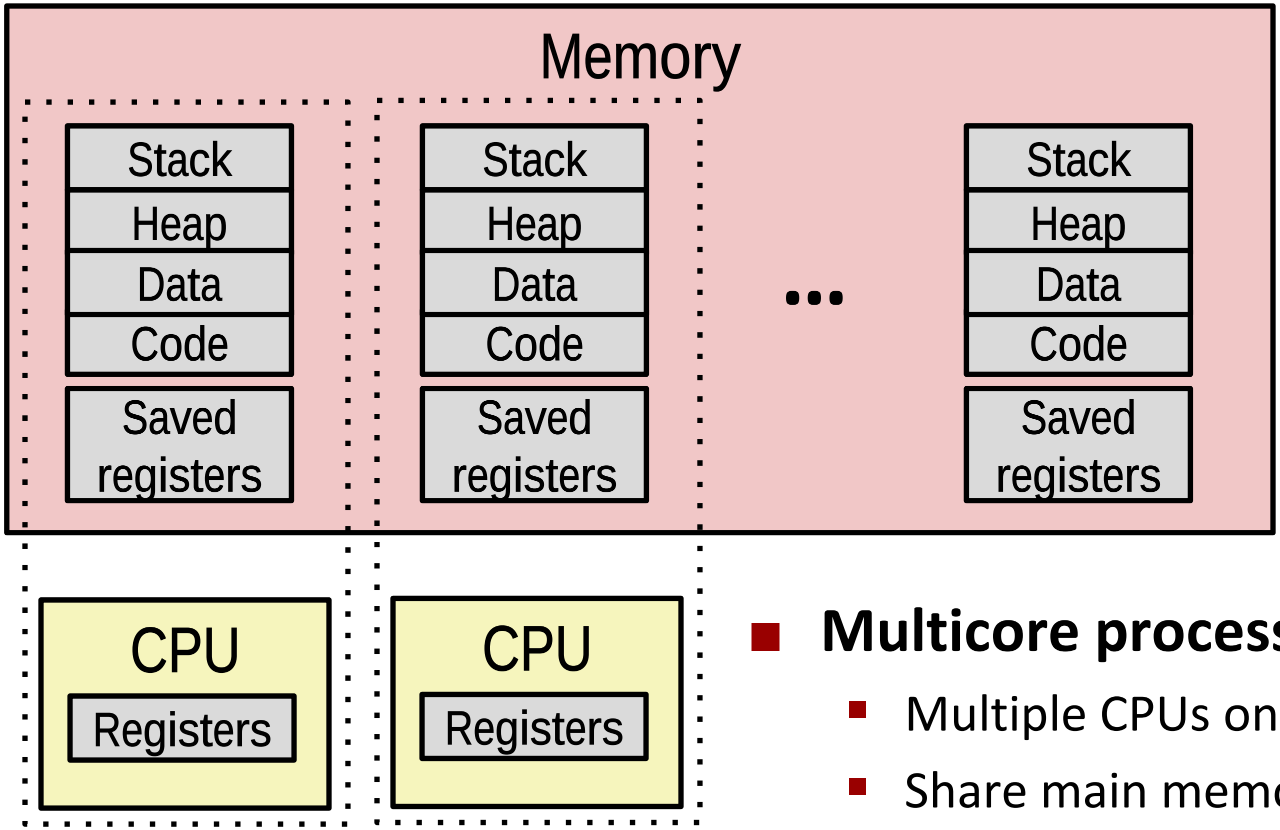
- **Schedule next process for execution**

Multiprocessing: The (Traditional) Reality



- **Load saved registers and switch address space (context switch)**

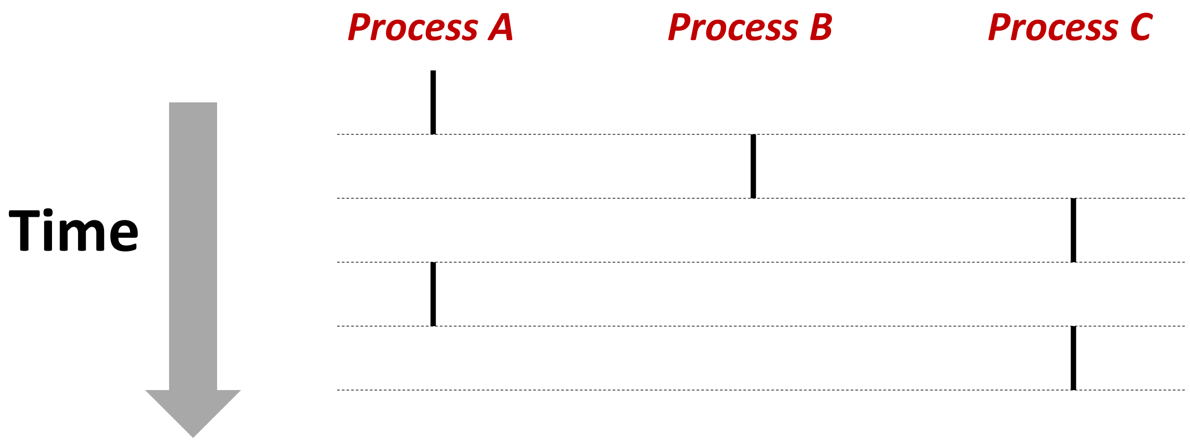
Multiprocessing: The (Modern) Reality



- **Multicore processors**
  - Multiple CPUs on single chip
  - Share main memory (and some of the caches)
  - Each can execute a separate process
    - Scheduling of processors onto cores done by kernel

Concurrent Processes

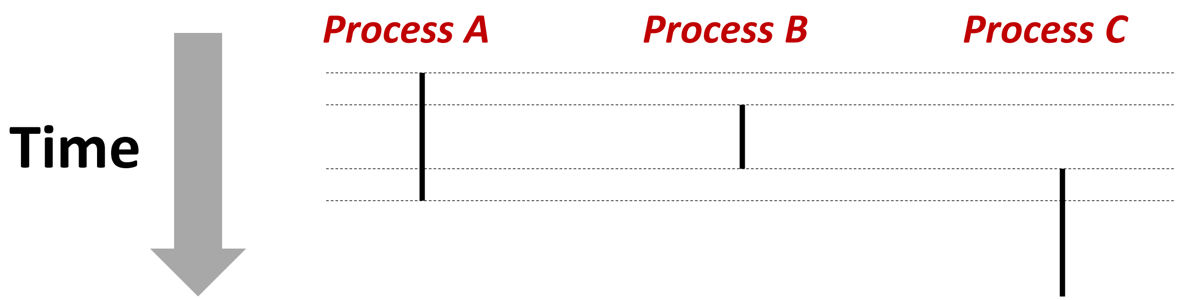
- **Each process is a logical control flow.**
- **Two processes *run* *concurrently* (*are concurrent)* if their flows overlap in time**
- **Otherwise, they are *sequential***
- **Examples (running on single core):**
  - Concurrent: A & B, A & C
  - Sequential: B & C



User View of Concurrent Processes

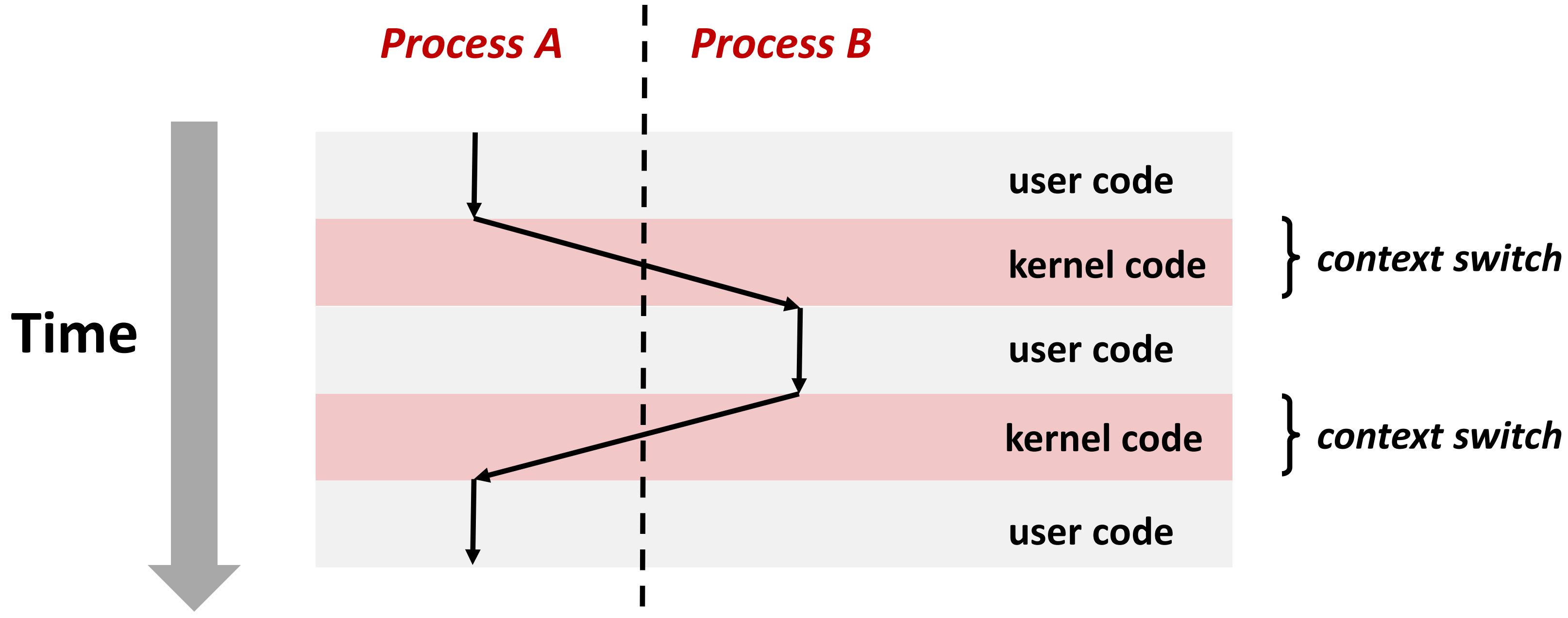
- **Control flows for concurrent processes are physically disjoint in time**

- **However, we can think of concurrent processes as running in parallel with each other**



Context Switching

- **Processes are managed by a shared chunk of memory-resident OS code called the *kernel***
  - Important: the kernel is not a separate process, but rather runs as part of some existing process.
- **Control flow passes from one process to another via a *context switch***



Today

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System Call Error Handling

- **On error, Linux system-level functions typically return -1 and set global variable `errno` to indicate cause.**
- **Hard and fast rule:**
  - You must check the return status of every system-level function
  - Only exception is the handful of functions that return `void`
- **Example:**

```
if ((pid = fork()) < 0) {
    fprintf(stderr, "fork error: %s\n", strerror(errno));
    exit(0);
}
```

Error-reporting functions

- **Can simplify somewhat using an *error-reporting function*:**

```
void unix_error(char *msg) /* Unix-style error */
{
   fprintf(stderr, "%s: %s\n", msg, strerror(errno));
   exit(0);
}
```

```
if ((pid = fork()) < 0)
   unix_error("fork error");
```

Obtaining Process IDs

- `pid_t getpid(void)`
  - Returns PID of current process
- `pid_t getppid(void)`
  - Returns PID of parent process

Creating and Terminating Processes

From a programmer's perspective, we can think of a process as being in one of three states

- **Running**
  - Process is either executing, or waiting to be executed and will eventually be *scheduled* (i.e., chosen to execute) by the kernel
- **Stopped**
  - Process execution is *suspended* and will not be scheduled until further notice (next lecture when we study signals)
- **Terminated**
  - Process is stopped permanently

Terminating Processes

- **Process becomes terminated for one of three reasons:**
  - Receiving a signal whose default action is to terminate (next lecture)
  - Returning from the `main` routine
  - Calling the `exit` function

- **`void exit(int status)`**
  - Terminates with an *exit status* of `status`
  - Convention: normal return status is 0, nonzero on error
  - Another way to explicitly set the exit status is to return an integer value from the main routine

- **`exit` is called once but never returns.**

Creating Processes

- ***Parent process*** **creates a new running** ***child process*** **by calling `fork`**

- **`int fork(void)`**
  - Returns 0 to the child process, child's PID to parent process
  - Child is *almost* identical to parent:
    - Child get an identical (but separate) copy of the parent's virtual address space.
    - Child gets identical copies of the parent's open file descriptors
    - Child has a different PID than the parent

- **`fork` is interesting (and often confusing) because it is called *once* but returns *twice***

fork Example

```
int main()
{
    pid_t pid;
    int x = 1;

    pid = Fork();
    if (pid == 0) {  /* Child */
        printf("child : x=%d\n", ++x);
            exit(0);
    }

    /* Parent */
    printf("parent: x=%d\n", --x);
    exit(0);
}
```

fork.c

```
linux> ./fork
parent: x=0
child : x=2
```

- **Call once, return twice**
- **Concurrent execution**
  - **Can't predict execution order of parent and child**
- **Duplicate but separate address space**
  - **`x` has a value of 1 when fork returns in parent and child**
  - **Subsequent changes to `x` are independent**
- **Shared open files**
  - **`stdout` is the same in both parent and child**

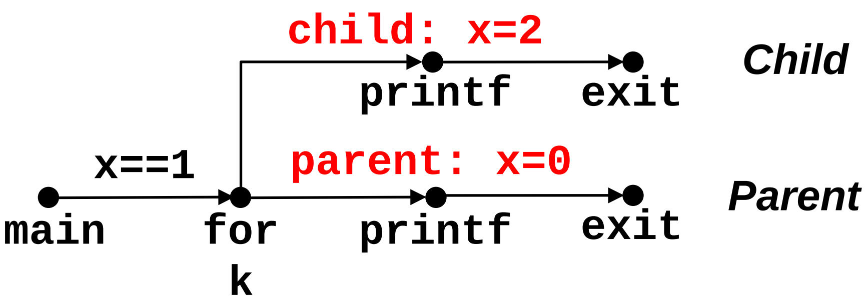
Modeling `fork` with Process Graphs

- **A *process graph* is a useful tool for capturing the partial ordering of statements in a concurrent program:**
  - Each vertex is the execution of a statement
  - a -> b means a happens before b
  - Edges can be labeled with current value of variables
  - `printf` vertices can be labeled with output
  - Each graph begins with a vertex with no inedges
- **Any *topological sort* of the graph corresponds to a feasible total ordering.**
  - Total ordering of vertices where all edges point from left to right

Process Graph Example

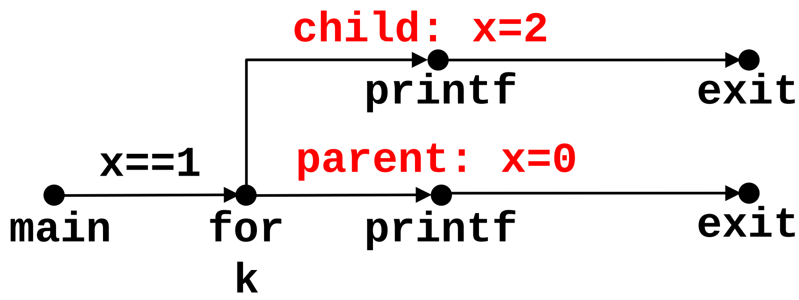
```
int main()
{
    pid_t pid;
    int x = 1;

    pid = Fork();
    if (pid == 0) {  /* Child */
        printf("child : x=%d\n", ++x);
                exit(0);
    }

    /* Parent */
    printf("parent: x=%d\n", --x);
    exit(0);
}
```

fork.c

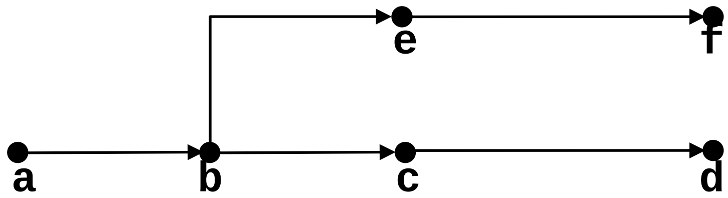


Interpreting Process Graphs

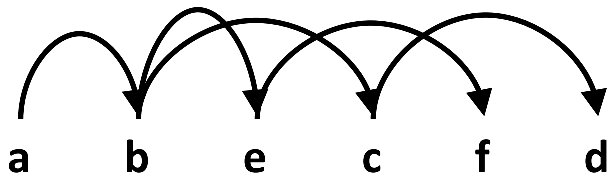
- Original graph:



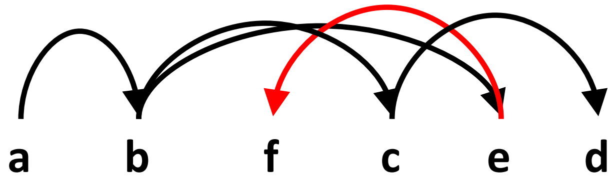
- Relabled graph:



Feasible total ordering:



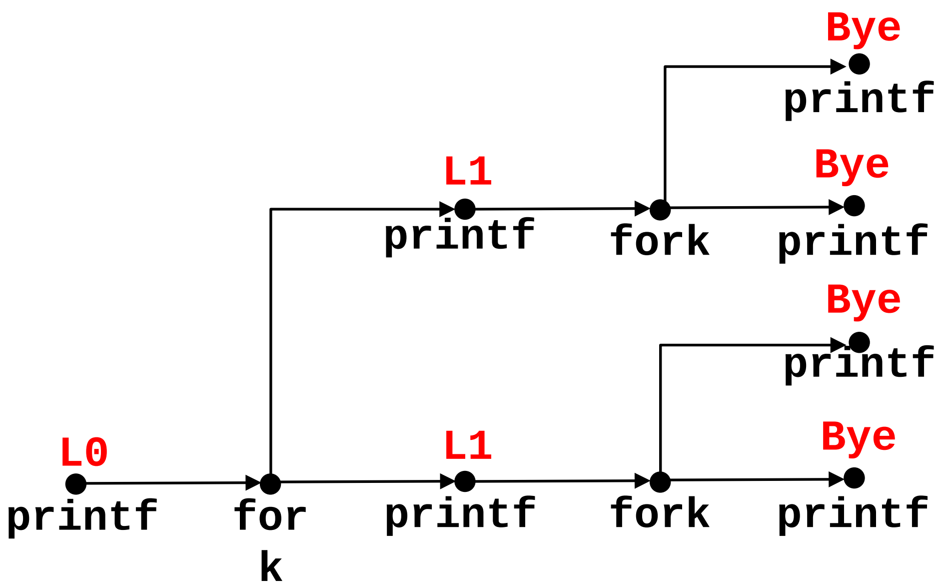
Infeasible total ordering:



`fork` Example: Two consecutive `fork`s

```
void fork2()
{
    printf("L0\n");
    fork();
    printf("L1\n");
    fork();
    printf("Bye\n");
}
```

forks.c



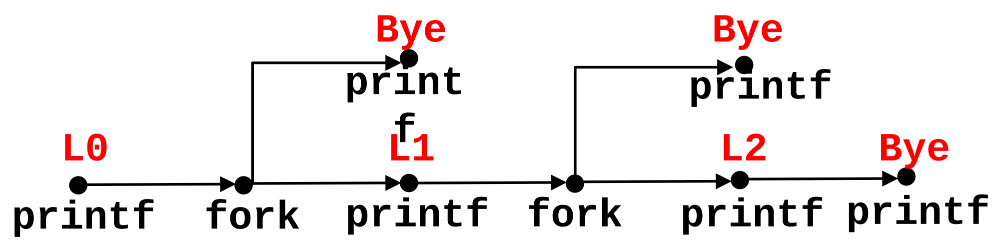
Feasible output:
L0
L1
Bye
Bye
L1
Bye
Bye

Infeasible output:
L0
Bye
L1
Bye
L1
Bye
Bye

fork Example: Nested forks in parent

```
void fork4()
{
    printf("L0\n");
    if (fork() != 0) {
        printf("L1\n");
        if (fork() != 0) {
            printf("L2\n");
        }
    }
    printf("Bye\n");
}
```

forks.c



Feasible output:

L0
L1
Bye
Bye
L2
Bye

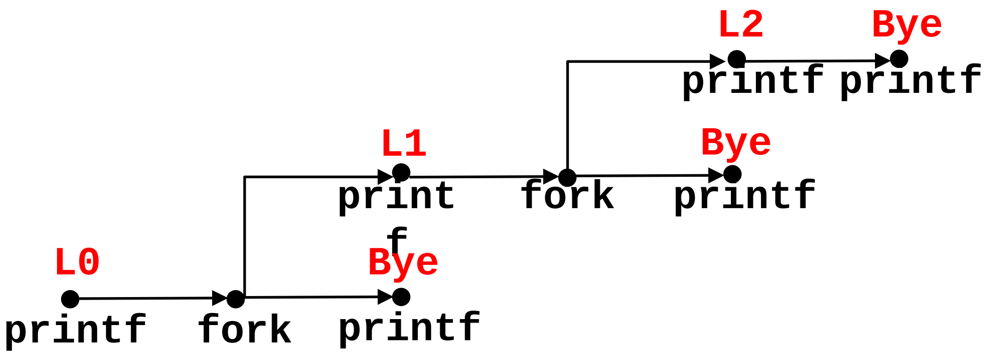
Infeasible output:

L0
Bye
L1
Bye
Bye
L2

fork Example: Nested forks in children

```
void fork5()
{
    printf("L0\n");
    if (fork() == 0) {
        printf("L1\n");
        if (fork() == 0) {
            printf("L2\n");
        }
    }
    printf("Bye\n");
}
```

forks.c



Feasible output:
L0
Bye
L1
L2
Bye
Bye

Infeasible output:
L0
Bye
L1
Bye
Bye
L2

Reaping Child Processes

- **Idea**
  - When process terminates, it still consumes system resources
    - Examples: Exit status, various OS tables
  - Called a "zombie"
    - Living corpse, half alive and half dead
- **Reaping**
  - Performed by parent on terminated child (using `wait` or `waitpid`)
  - Parent is given exit status information
  - Kernel then deletes zombie child process
- **What if parent doesn't reap?**
  - If any parent terminates without reaping a child, then the orphaned child will be reaped by **`init`** process (pid == 1)
  - So, only need explicit reaping in long-running processes
    - e.g., shells and servers

Zombie Example

```
void fork7() {
    if (fork() == 0) {
        /* Child */
        printf("Terminating Child, PID = %d\n", getpid());
        exit(0);
    } else {
        printf("Running Parent, PID = %d\n", getpid());
        while (1)
            ; /* Infinite loop */
    }
}
```

forks.c

```
linux> ./forks 7 &
[1] 6639
Running Parent, PID = 6639
Terminating Child, PID = 6640
linux> ps
  PID TTY          TIME CMD
 6585 ttyp9    00:00:00 tcsh
 6639 ttyp9    00:00:03 forks
 6640 ttyp9    00:00:00 forks <defunct>
 6641 ttyp9    00:00:00 ps
linux> kill 6639
[1]    Terminated
linux> ps
  PID TTY          TIME CMD
 6585 ttyp9    00:00:00 tcsh
 6642 ttyp9    00:00:00 ps
```

- **ps** shows child process as "defunct" (i.e., a zombie)
- Killing parent allows child to be reaped by **init**

Non-terminating Child Example

```
void fork8()
{
    if (fork() == 0) {
        /* Child */
        printf("Running Child, PID = %d\n",
               getpid());
        while (1)
            ; /* Infinite loop */
    } else {
        printf("Terminating Parent, PID = %d\n",
               getpid());
        exit(0);
    }
}
```

forks.c

```
linux> ./forks 8
Terminating Parent, PID = 6675
Running Child, PID = 6676
linux> ps
  PID TTY          TIME CMD
 6585 ttyp9    00:00:00 tcsh
 6676 ttyp9    00:00:06 forks
 6677 ttyp9    00:00:00 ps
linux> kill 6676
linux> ps
  PID TTY          TIME CMD
 6585 ttyp9    00:00:00 tcsh
 6678 ttyp9    00:00:00 ps
```

- Child process still active even though parent has terminated
- Must kill child explicitly, or else will keep running indefinitely

`wait`: Synchronizing with Children

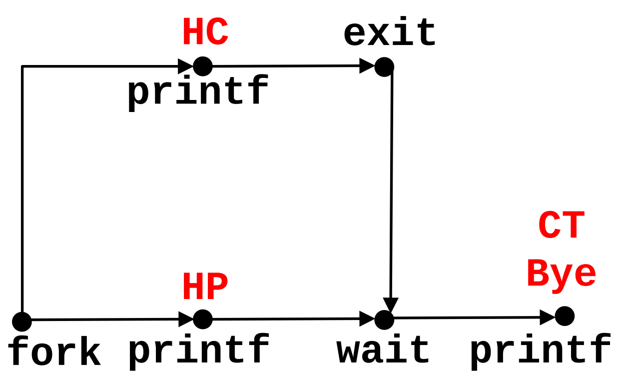
- **Parent reaps a child by calling the `wait` function**

- **`int wait(int *child_status)`**
  - Suspends current process until one of its children terminates
  - Return value is the **`pid`** of the child process that terminated
  - If **`child_status != NULL`**, then the integer it points to will be set to a value that indicates reason the child terminated and the exit status:
    - Checked using macros defined in `wait.h`
      - `WIFEXITED, WEXITSTATUS, WIFSIGNALED, WTERMSIG, WIFSTOPPED, WSTOPSIG, WIFCONTINUED`
      - See textbook for details

wait: Synchronizing with Children

```
void fork9() {
    int child_status;

    if (fork() == 0) {
        printf("HC: hello from child\n");
            exit(0);
    } else {
        printf("HP: hello from parent\n");
        wait(&child_status);
        printf("CT: child has terminated\n");
    }
    printf("Bye\n");
}
```

forks.c



Feasible output:
HC
HP
CT
Bye

Infeasible output:
HP
CT
Bye
HC

Another wait Example

- If multiple children completed, will take in arbitrary order
- Can use macros WIFEXITED and WEXITSTATUS to get information about exit status

```
void fork10() {
    pid_t pid[N];
    int i, child_status;

    for (i = 0; i < N; i++)
        if ((pid[i] = fork()) == 0) {
            exit(100+i); /* Child */
        }
    for (i = 0; i < N; i++) { /* Parent */
        pid_t wpid = wait(&child_status);
        if (WIFEXITED(child_status))
            printf("Child %d terminated with exit status %d\n",
                   wpid, WEXITSTATUS(child_status));
        else
            printf("Child %d terminate abnormally\n", wpid);
    }
}
```

forks.c

`waitpid`: Waiting for a Specific Process

- `pid_t waitpid(pid_t pid, int &status, int options)`
  - Suspends current process until specific process terminates
  - Various options (see textbook)

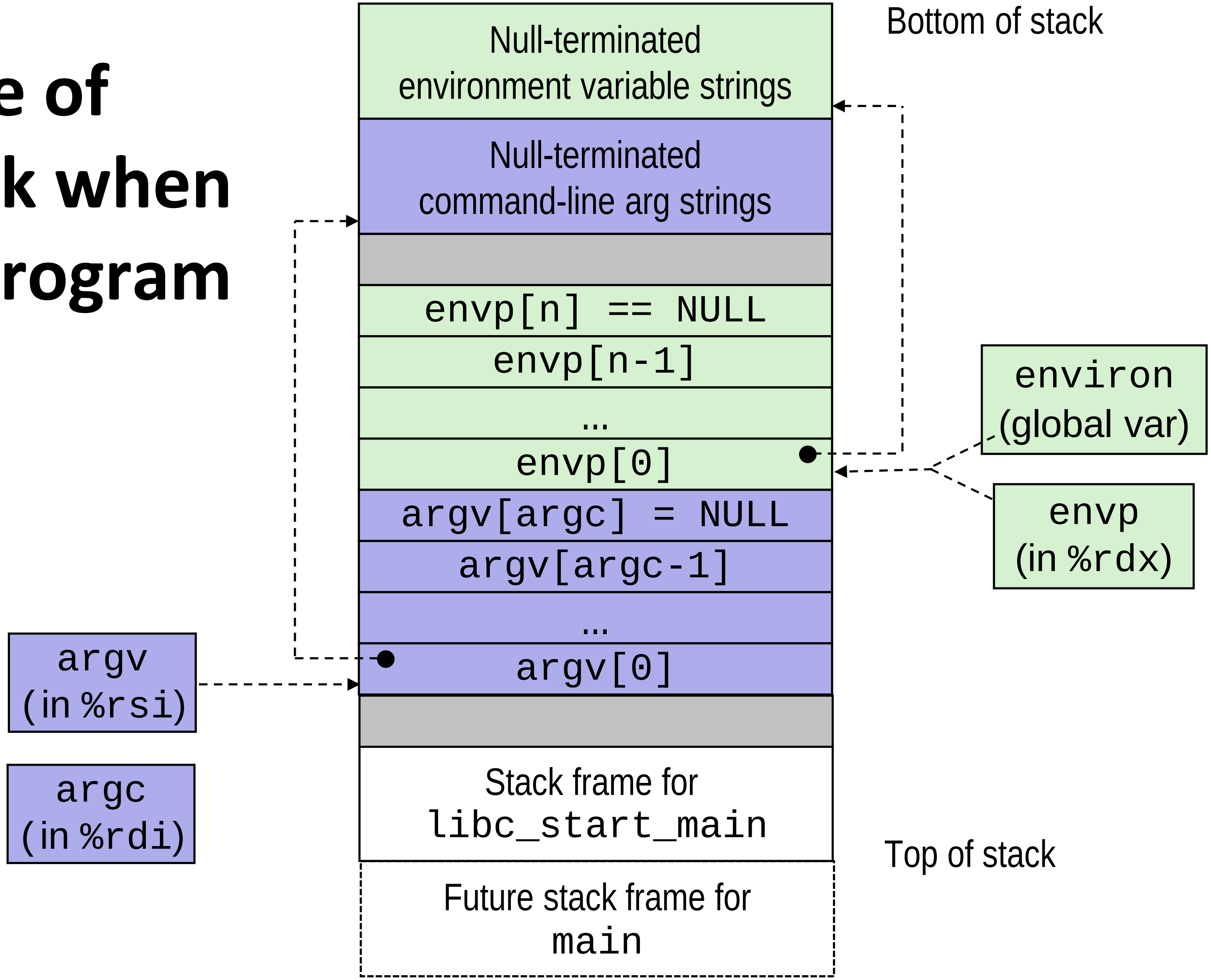
```
void fork11() {
    pid_t pid[N];
    int i;
    int child_status;

    for (i = 0; i < N; i++)
        if ((pid[i] = fork()) == 0)
            exit(100+i); /* Child */
    for (i = N-1; i >= 0; i--) {
        pid_t wpid = waitpid(pid[i], &child_status, 0);
        if (WIFEXITED(child_status))
            printf("Child %d terminated with exit status %d\n",
                   wpid, WEXITSTATUS(child_status));
        else
            printf("Child %d terminate abnormally\n", wpid);
    }
}
```

`forks.c`

`execve`: Loading and Running Programs

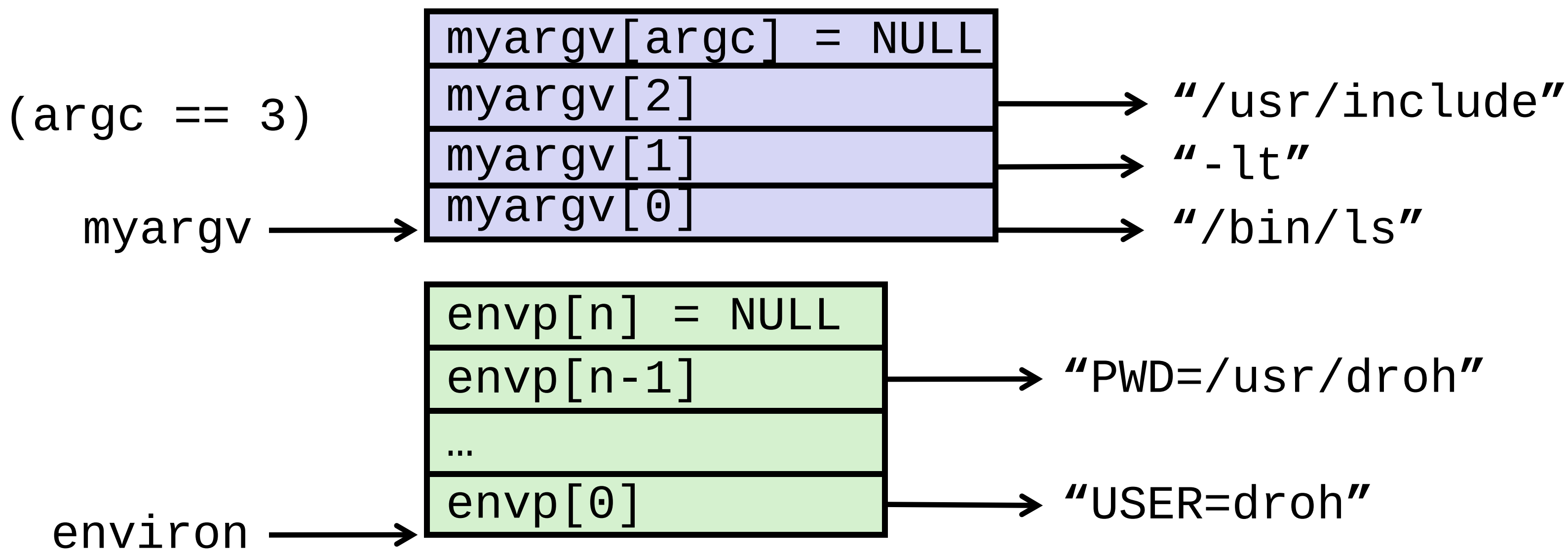
- **`int execve(char *filename, char *argv[], char *envp[])`**
- **Loads and runs in the current process:**
  - Executable file **`filename`**
    - Can be object file or script file beginning with `#!interpreter` (e.g., `#!/bin/bash`)
  - …with argument list **`argv`**
    - By convention **`argv[0]==filename`**
  - …and environment variable list **`envp`**
    - "name=value" strings (e.g., `USER=droh`)
    - `getenv, putenv, printenv`
- **Overwrites code, data, and stack**
  - Retains PID, open files and signal context
- **Called once and never returns**
  - …except if there is an error

Structure of the stack when a new program starts



execve Example

- **Executes `"/bin/ls –lt /usr/include"` in child process using current environment:**




```
if ((pid = Fork()) == 0) {   /* Child runs program */
    if (execve(myargv[0], myargv, environ) < 0) {
        printf("%s: Command not found.\n", myargv[0]);
        exit(1);
    }
}
```

Summary

- **Exceptions**
  - Events that require nonstandard control flow
  - Generated externally (interrupts) or internally (traps and faults)

- **Processes**
  - At any given time, system has multiple active processes
  - Only one can execute at a time on a single core, though
  - Each process appears to have total control of processor + private memory space

Summary (cont.)

- **Spawning processes**
  - Call `fork`
  - One call, two returns
- **Process completion**
  - Call `exit`
  - One call, no return
- **Reaping and waiting for processes**
  - Call `wait` or `waitpid`
- **Loading and running programs**
  - Call `execve` (or variant)
  - One call, (normally) no return