CS 423
Operating System Design: MP3 Walkthrough
Purpose of MP3

- **Understand** the Linux virtual to physical page mapping and page fault rate.
- **Design** a lightweight tool that can profile page fault rate.
- **Implement** the profiler tool as a Linux kernel module.
- **Learn** how to use the kernel-level APIs for character devices, vmalloc(), and mmap().
• Performance gap between memory and disk
  – Registers: ~1ns
  – DRAM: 50-150ns
  – Disk: ~10ms, hundreds times slower than memory!

• Performance of the virtual memory system plays a major role in the overall performance of the Operating System

• Inefficient VM replacement of pages
  – Bad performance for user-level programs
  – Increasing the response time
  – Lowering the throughput
Page Fault

• Page Fault is a trap to the software raised by the hardware when:
  – A program accesses a page that is mapped in the Virtual address space but not loaded in the Physical memory

• In general, OS tries to handle the page fault by bringing the required page into physical memory.

• The hardware that detects a Page Fault is the Memory Management Unit of the processor

• However, if there is an exception (e.g. illegal access like accessing null pointer) that needs to be handled, OS takes care of that
Page Fault

- **Major page fault**
  - Handled by using a disk I/O operation
  - Memory mapped file
  - Page replacement / Cold Pages
  - **Expensive as they add to disk latency**

- **Minor page fault**
  - Handled without using a disk I/O operation
  - `malloc()`, `copy_on_write()`, `fork()`
• Major Page Fault are much more expensive. How much?
  – HDD average rotational latency : 3ms
  – HDD average seek time: 5ms
  – Transfer time from HDD: 0.05ms/page
    • Total time for bringing in a page = 8ms= 8,000,000ns
  – Memory access time: 200ns
  – Thus, Major Page Fault is 40,000 times slower
MP3 Overview

- Work Process 1 (100MB)
- Work Process 2 (10MB)
- Work Process 3 (1GB)
- Monitor Process

Linux Kernel

MP3 Profiler Kernel Module

Disk

Post-Mortem Analysis
• Major page fault

• Minor page fault

• CPU utilization
  – Calculated as a rate
    • For task $T$: $U_T = \frac{cpu \text{ time}_T}{wall \text{ time}} = \frac{stime_T + utime_T}{jiffies}$
    • stime: Time spent in kernel space
    • utime: Time spent in user space
Thrashing
• **Accuracy of Measurement**
  – Many profiling operations are needed in a short time interval.

• **Copy to user space causes a significant performance overhead**

• **Solution: Use Shared Memory**
Memory Map

- Virtual Addr.
  - 4GB: Profiler Buffer
  - 3GB
  - 0GB

- Physical Addr.
  - mmap()

- Virtual Addr.
  - 4GB: Profiler Buffer
  - 3GB
  - 0GB

- vmalloc()
  - “PG_reserved”
• A character device driver is used as a control interface of the shared memory
  – Map Shared Memory (i.e., mmap()): To map the profiler buffer memory allocated in the kernel address space to the virtual address space of a requesting user-level process

• Shared memory
  – Normal memory access: Used to deliver profiled data from the kernel to user processes
• Three types interfaces between the OS kernel module and user processes:
  – a Proc file
  – a character device driver
  – a shared memory area
• Proc filesystem entry (/proc/mp3/status)
  – **Register**: Application to notify its intent to monitor its page fault rate and utilization.
    - ‘R <PID>’
  – **Deregister**: Application to notify that the application has finished using the profiler.
    - ‘U <PID>’
  – **Read Registered Task List**: To query which applications are registered.
    - Return a list with the PID of each application
• **Work program** *(given for case studies)*
  – A single threaded user-level application with three parameters: 
    *memory size, locality pattern, and memory access count* per iteration
    • Allocates a request size of virtual memory space (e.g., up to 1GB)
    • Accesses them with a certain locality pattern (i.e., random or temporal locality) for a requested number of times
    • The access step is repeated for 20 times.
  – Multiple instances of this program can be created (i.e., forked) simultaneously.
Monitor application is also given

- Requests the kernel module to map the kernel-level profiler buffer to its user-level virtual address space (i.e., using `mmap()`).
  - This request is sent by using the character device driver created by the kernel module.

- The application reads profiling values (i.e., major and minor page fault counts and utilization of all registered processes).

- By using a pipe, the profiled data is stored in a regular file.
  - So that these data are plotted and analyzed later.
Deferring Work

- It is common in kernel code to defer part of the work
  - E.g. Interrupt handler code
    - Some or all interrupts are disabled when handling it
    - While handling one, we might lose new interrupts
    - So, make the handling as fast as possible
      - Top half
      - Bottom half

- Better performance because:
  - Quick response to interrupts
  - By deferring non-time-sensitive part of the work to later
Work Queue

• Bottom-half mechanism used to defer work
• Work queues run in process context.
  – Work queues can sleep, invoke the scheduler, and so on.
  – The kernel schedules bottom halves running in work queues.

• The work queue execute user’s bottom half as a specific function, called a **work queue handler** or simply a work function.

• Linux provides a common work queue but you can also initialize your own
In order to create a work queue, you need to:

- Call the `create_workqueue()` function
- Which returns a `workqueue_struct` reference

```
struct workqueue_struct *create_workqueue( name );
```

It can later be destroyed by calling the `destroy_workqueue()` function

```
void destroy_workqueue( struct workqueue_struct * );
```
The work to be added to the queue is
- Defined by struct work_Struct
- Initialized by calling the INIT_WORK() function
  - \texttt{INIT\_WORK(struct work\_struct *work, func)};

Now that the work is initialized, it can be added to the work queue by calling one of the following:
- \texttt{int queue\_work(struct workqueue\_struct *wq, struct work\_struct *work)};
- \texttt{int queue\_delayed\_work(struct workqueue\_struct *wq, struct work\_struct *work, unsigned long delay)};
• **Flush_work():** to flush a particular work and block until the work is complete
  
  – `int flush_work( struct work_struct *work );`

• **Flush_workqueue():** similar to flush_work() but for the whole work queue
  
  – `int flush_workqueue( struct workqueue_struct *wq );`
Creating/Destroying a Work Queue

- **Cancel_work()**: to cancel a work that is not already executing in a handler
  - The function will terminate the work in the queue
  - Or block until the callback is finished (if the work is already in progress in the handler)
  - `int cancel_work_sync( struct work_struct *work );`

- **Work_Pending()**: to find out whether a work item is pending or not
  - `work_pending( work );`
Character Device Driver

• Initialize data structure
  – `void cdev_init(struct cdev *cdev, struct file_operations *fops);`

• Add to the kernel
  – `int cdev_add(struct cdev *dev, dev_t dev, unsigned int count);`

• Delete from the kernel
  – `void cdev_del(struct cdev *dev);`
static int my_open(struct inode *inode, struct file *filp);

static struct file_operations my_fops = {
    .open = my_open,
    .release = my_release,
    .mmap = my_mmap,
    .owner = THIS_MODULE,
};
• Gets Page Frame Number
  – `pfn = vmalloc_to_pfn(virt_addr);`

• Maps a virtual page to a physical frame
  – `remap_pfn_range(vma, start, pfn, PAGE_SIZE, PAGE_SHARED);`
  (see http://www.makelinux.net/ldd3/chp-15-sect-2)
More Questions?

- Office hours
- Piazza