Virtual Memory III

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Today’s Topics

- What if the physical memory becomes full?
  - Page replacement algorithms

- How to manage memory among competing processes?

- Advanced virtual memory techniques
  - Shared memory
  - Copy on write
  - Memory-mapped files
Page Replacement (1)

- **Page replacement**
  - When a page fault occurs, the OS loads the faulted page from disk into a page frame of memory.
  - At some point, the process has used all of the page frames it is allowed to use.
  - When this happens, the OS must **replace** a page for each page faulted in.
    - It must evict a page to free up a page frame.
  - The **page replacement algorithm** determines how this is done.
Evicting the best page

- The goal of the replacement algorithm is to reduce the fault rate by selecting the best victim page to remove.
- The best page to evict is the one never touched again.
  - as process will never again fault on it.
- “Never” is a long time, so picking the page closest to “never” is the next best thing
  - Belady’s proof: Evicting the page that won’t be used for the longest period of time minimizes the number of page faults.
Belady’s Algorithm

- **Optimal page replacement**
  - Replace the page that will not be used for the longest time in the future.
  - Has the lowest fault rate for any page reference stream.
  - Problem: have to predict the future
  - Why is Belady’s useful? – Use it as a yardstick!
    - Compare other algorithms with the optimal to gauge room for improvement.
    - If optimal is not much better, then algorithm is pretty good, otherwise algorithm could use some work.
    - Lower bound depends on workload, but random replacement is pretty bad.
FIFO (1)

• **First-In First-Out**
  - Obvious and simple to implement
    - Maintain a list of pages in order they were paged in
    - On replacement, evict the one brought in longest time ago
  - Why might this be good?
    - Maybe the one brought in the longest ago is not being used.
  - Why might this be bad?
    - Maybe, it’s not the case.
    - We don’t have any information either way.
  - FIFO suffers from “Belady’s Anomaly”
    - The fault rate might increase when the algorithm is given more memory.
FIFO (2)

- **Example: Belady’s anomaly**
  - Reference string: 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 5, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
  - 3 frames: 9 faults
    - Frames: 1, 2, 3
    - Reference: 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 5
    - Faults: 9
  - 4 frames: 10 faults
    - Frames: 1, 2, 3, 4
    - Reference: 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4
    - Faults: 10

![FIFO Example](image)
Least Recently Used

- LRU uses reference information to make a more informed replacement decision.
  - Idea: past experience gives us a guess of future behavior.
  - On replacement, evict the page that has not been used for the longest time in the past.
  - LRU looks at the past, Belady’s wants to look at future.

- Implementation
  - Counter implementation: put a timestamp
  - Stack implementation: maintain a stack

- Why do we need an approximation?
**LRU (2)**

- **Approximating LRU**
  - Many LRU approximations use the PTE reference (R) bit.
    - R bit is set whenever the page is referenced (read or written)
  - **Counter-based approach**
    - Keep a counter for each page.
    - At regular intervals, for every page, do:
      - If R = 0, increment the counter (hasn’t been used)
      - If R = 1, zero the counter (has been used)
      - Zero the R bit
    - The counter will contain the number of intervals since the last reference to the page.
    - The page with the largest counter is the least recently used.
  - **Some architectures don’t have a reference bit.**
    - Can simulate reference bit using the valid bit to induce faults.
Second Chance (1)

- **Second chance or LRU clock**
  - FIFO with giving a second chance to a recently referenced page.
  - Arrange all of physical page frames in a big circle (clock).
  - A clock hand is used to select a good LRU candidate.
    - Sweep through the pages in circular order like a clock
    - If the R bit is off, it hasn’t been used recently and we have a victim.
      - If the R bit is on, turn it off and go to next page.
  - Arm moves quickly when pages are needed.
    - Low overhead if we have plenty of memory.
    - If memory is large, “accuracy” of information degrades.
When a page fault occurs, the page the hand is pointing to is inspected. The action taken depends on the R bit:
- $R = 0$: Evict the page
- $R = 1$: Clear R and advance hand
NRU or enhanced second chance

- Use R (reference) and M (modify) bits
  - Periodically, (e.g., on each clock interrupt), R is cleared, to distinguish pages that have not been referenced recently from those that have been.
Algorithm
- Removes a page at random from the lowest numbered nonempty class.
- It is better to remove a modified page that has not been referenced in at least one clock tick than a clean page that is in heavy use.
- Used in Macintosh.

Advantages
- Easy to understand.
- Moderately efficient to implement.
- Gives a performance that, while certainly not optimal, may be adequate.
**LFU (1)**

- **Counting-based page replacement**
  - A software counter is associated with each page.
  - At each clock interrupt, for each page, the R bit is added to the counter.
    - The counters denote how often each page has been referenced.

- **Least frequently used (LFU)**
  - The page with the smallest count will be replaced.
  - (cf.) Most frequently used (MFU) page replacement
    - The page with the largest count will be replaced
    - Based on the argument that the page with the smallest count was probably just brought in and has yet to be used.
  - It never forgets anything.
    - A page may be heavily used during the initial phase of a process, but then is never used again
### Aging

- The counters are shifted right by 1 bit before the R bit is added to the leftmost.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>R bits for pages 0-5, clock tick 0</th>
<th>R bits for pages 0-5, clock tick 1</th>
<th>R bits for pages 0-5, clock tick 2</th>
<th>R bits for pages 0-5, clock tick 3</th>
<th>R bits for pages 0-5, clock tick 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
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<td>11000000</td>
<td>11100000</td>
<td>11110000</td>
<td>01111000</td>
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<td>01100000</td>
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<td>01000000</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10000000</td>
<td>01000000</td>
<td>10100000</td>
<td>01010000</td>
<td>00101000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) (b) (c) (d) (e)
Allocation of Frames

- **Problem**
  - In a multiprogramming system, we need a way to allocate physical memory to competing processes.
    - What if a victim page belongs to another process?
    - How to determine how much memory to give to each process?
  - **Fixed space algorithms**
    - Each process is given a limit of pages it can use.
    - When it reaches its limit, it replaces from its own pages.
    - **Local replacement**: some process may do well, others suffer.
  - **Variable space algorithms**
    - Processes’ set of pages grows and shrinks dynamically.
    - **Global replacement**: one process can ruin it for the rest (Linux)
Thrashing (1)

Thrashing

- What the OS does if page replacement algorithms fail.
- Most of the time is spent by an OS paging data back and forth from disk.
  - No time is spent doing useful work.
  - The system is overcommitted.
  - No idea which pages should be in memory to reduce faults.
  - Could be that there just isn’t enough physical memory for all processes.

- Possible solutions
  - Swapping – write out all pages of a process
  - Buy more memory.
Thrashing (2)

![Graph showing CPU utilization vs. degree of multiprogramming with thrashing point indicated.]
Working Set Model (1)

- **Working set**
  - A working set of a process is used to model the dynamic locality of its memory usage.
    - i.e., working set = set of pages process currently “needs”
    - Peter Denning, 1968.
  - **Definition**
    - \( WS(t,w) = \{ \text{pages } P \text{ such that } P \text{ was referenced in the time interval } (t, t-w) \} \)
    - \( t \): time, \( w \): working set window size (measured in page references)
  - A page is in the working set only if it was referenced in the last \( w \) references.
Working Set Model (2)

- Working set size (WSS)
  - The number of pages in the working set
    - The number of pages referenced in the interval \( (t, t-w) \)
  - The working set size changes with program locality.
    - During periods of poor locality, more pages are referenced.
    - Within that period of time, the working set size is larger.
  - Intuitively, working set must be in memory to prevent heavy faulting (thrashing).
  - Controlling the degree of multiprogramming based on the working set:
    - Associate parameter “wss” with each process.
    - If the sum of “wss” exceeds the total number of frames, suspend a process.
    - Only allow a process to start if its “wss”, when added to all other processes, still fits in memory.
    - Use a local replacement algorithm within each process.
Working Set Model (3)

- **Working set page replacement**
  - Maintaining the set of pages touched in the last k references is expensive.
  - Approximate the working set as the set of pages used during the past time interval.
    - Measured using the current virtual time: the amount of CPU time a process has actually used.
  - Find a page that is not in the working set and evict it.
    - Associate the “Time of last use (Tlast)” field in each PTE.
    - A periodic clock interrupt clears the R bit.
    - On every page fault, the page table is scanned to look for a suitable page to evict.
      - If R = 1, timestamp the current virtual time (Tlast ← Tcurrent).
      - If R = 0 and (Tcurrent – Tlast) > τ, evict the page.
      - Otherwise, remember the page with the greatest age.
Working Set Model (4)

Scan all pages examining R bit:
- if \( R = 1 \)
  - set time of last use to current virtual time
- if \( R = 0 \) and age > \( \tau \)
  - remove this page
- if \( R = 0 \) and age \( \leq \tau \)
  - remember the smallest time
Page Fault Frequency

- A variable space algorithm that uses a more ad-hoc approach.
  - Monitor the fault rate for each process.
  - If the fault rate is above a high threshold, give it more memory, so that it faults less (but not always – FIFO, Belady’s anomaly).
  - If the fault rate is below a low threshold, take away memory (again, not always).
- If the PFF increases and no free frames are available, we must select some process and suspend it.
PFF (2)

The diagram illustrates the relationship between page-fault rate and the number of frames in memory. As the number of frames increases, the page-fault rate decreases. Conversely, as the number of frames decreases, the page-fault rate increases. There is an upper bound and a lower bound for the page-fault rate. Increasing the number of frames reduces the page-fault rate, while decreasing the number of frames increases it.
Advanced VM Functionality

- Virtual memory tricks
  - Shared memory
  - Copy on write
  - Memory-mapped files
Shared Memory (1)

- **Shared memory**
  - Private virtual address spaces protect applications from each other.
  - But this makes it difficult to share data.
    - Parents and children in a forking Web server or proxy will want to share an in-memory cache without copying.
    - Read/Write (access to share data)
    - Execute (shared libraries)
  - We can use shared memory to allow processes to share data using direct memory reference.
    - Both processes see updates to the shared memory segment.
    - How are we going to coordinate access to shared data?
Shared Memory (2)

- **Implementation**
  - How can we implement shared memory using page tables?
    - Have PTEs in both tables map to the same physical frame.
    - Each PTE can have different protection values.
    - Must update both PTEs when page becomes invalid.
  - Can map shared memory at same or different virtual addresses in each process’ address space
    - Different: Flexible (no address space conflicts), but pointers inside the shared memory segment are invalid.
    - Same: Less flexible, but shared pointers are valid.
Copy On Write (1)

- **Process creation**
  - requires copying the entire address space of the parent process to the child process.
  - Very slow and inefficient!

- **Solution 1: Use threads**
  - Sharing address space is free.

- **Solution 2: Use vfork() system call**
  - vfork() creates a process that shares the memory address space of its parent.
  - To prevent the parent from overwriting data needed by the child, the parent’s execution is blocked until the child exits or executes a new program.
  - Any change by the child is visible to the parent once it resumes.
  - Useful when the child immediately executes exec().
Solution 3: Copy On Write (COW)

- Instead of copying all pages, create shared mappings of parent pages in child address space.
- Shared pages are protected as read-only in child.
  - Reads happen as usual
  - Writes generate a protection fault, trap to OS, and OS copies the page, changes page mapping in client page table, restarts write instruction
Memory-Mapped Files (1)

- **Memory-mapped files**
  - Mapped files enable processes to do file I/O using memory references.
    - Instead of open(), read(), write(), close()
  - `mmap()`: bind a file to a virtual memory region
    - PTEs map virtual addresses to physical frames holding file data
    - `<Virtual address base + N>` refers to offset N in file
  - Initially, all pages in mapped region marked as invalid.
    - OS reads a page from file whenever invalid page is accessed.
    - OS writes a page to file when evicted from physical memory.
    - If page is not dirty, no write needed.
Memory-Mapped Files (2)

- **Note:**
  - File is essentially backing store for that region of the virtual address space (instead of using the swap file).
  - Virtual address space not backed by “real” files also called “anonymous VM”.

- **Advantages**
  - Uniform access for files and memory (just use pointers)
  - Less copying
  - Several processes can map the same file allowing the pages in memory to be shared.

- **Drawbacks**
  - Process has less control over data movement.
  - Does not generalize to streamed I/O (pipes, sockets, etc.)
Summary (1)

- **VM mechanisms**
  - Physical and virtual addressing
  - Partitioning, Paging, Segmentation
  - Page table management, TLBs, etc.

- **VM policies**
  - Page replacement algorithms
  - Memory allocation policies

- **VM requires hardware and OS support**
  - MMU (Memory Management Unit)
  - TLB (Translation Lookaside Buffer)
  - Page tables, etc.
Summary (2)

- **VM optimizations**
  - Demand paging (space)
  - Managing page tables (space)
  - Efficient translation using TLBs (time)
  - Page replacement policy (time)

- **Advanced functionality**
  - Sharing memory
  - Copy on write
  - Mapped files