ESE532: System-on-a-Chip Architecture

Day 9: October 1, 2018
Real Time

Today

Real Time

- Demands
- Challenges
  - Algorithms
  - Architecture
- Disciplines to achieve

Message

- Real-Time applications demand different discipline from best-effort tasks
- Look more like synchronous circuits
- Can sequentialize, like processor
  - But must avoid/rethink typical general-purpose processor common-case optimizations

Real Time

- "Real" – refers to physical time
  - Connection to Real or Physical World
- Contrast with "virtual" or "variable" time
- Handles events with absolute guarantees on timing

Real-Time Tasks

- What timing guarantees might you like for the following tasks?
  - Push a fire button on a video game
    - Delay to recognize and shoots bullet
  - Turn steering wheel on a drive-by-wire car
    - Delay to recognized and car turns
  - Self-driving car detects an object in its path
    - Delay from object appearing to detection
  - Pacemaker stimulates your heart
  - Video playback (frame to frame delay)

Real-Time Guarantees

- Attention/processing within fixed interval
  - Sample new value every XX ms
  - Produce new frame every 30 ms
  - Both: schedule to act and complete action
- Bounded response time
  - Respond to keypress within 20 ms
  - Detect object within 100 ms
  - Return search results within 200 ms

Computer Response

- What do these things indicate?
  - When will the computer complete the task?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Windows_8_%2B_10_wait_cursor.gif
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:WaitCursor-300p.gif

Real-Time Reponse

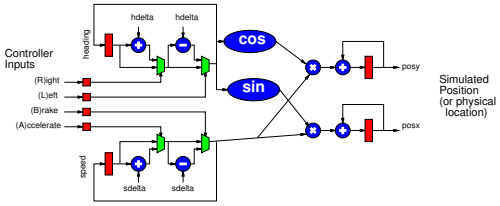
- What if your car gave you a spinning wait wheel for 5 seconds when you
  - Turned the wheel?
  - Stepped on the brakes?

Synchronous Circuit Model

- A simple synchronous circuit is a good "model" for real-time task
  - Run at fixed clock rate
  - Take input every "cycle"
  - Produce output every "cycle"
  - Complete computation between input and output
  - Designed to run at fixed-frequency
    - Critical path meets frequency requirement

Preclass 2

- Worst-case delay from (L)eft press to change in heading?
- Cycle rate could operate?



Historically

- Real-Time concerns grew up in EE
  - Because an analog circuit was the only way could meet frequency demands
  - …later a dedicated digital circuit…
- Applications
  - Signal processing, video, control, …

Technological Change

- Why not be satisfied with this answer today?
  - That is, for real-time task need dedicated synchronous circuit?
  - Hint: What does preclass 2b suggest?

Performance Scaling

- As circuit speeds increased
  - Can meet real-time performance demands with heavy sequentialization
- Circuit and processor clocks
  - from MHz to GHz
- Many real-time task rates unchanged
  - 44KHz audio, 33 frames/second video
- Even 100MHz processor
  - Can implement audio in a small fraction of its computational throughput capacity

HW/SW Co-Design

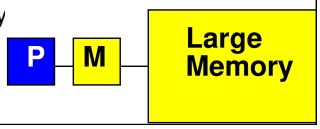
- Computer Engineers – know can implement anything as hardware or software
- Want freedom to move between hardware and software to meet requirements
  - Performance, costs, energy

Real-Time Challenge

- Meet real-time demands / guarantees
  - Economically using programmable architectures
- Sequentialize and share resources with deterministic, guaranteed timing

Processor Data Caches

- Traditional Processor Data Caches are a heuristic instance of this
  - Add a small memory local to the processor
    - It is fast, low latency
  - Store anything fetched from large/remote memory in local memory
    - Hoping for reuse in near future
  - On every fetch, check local memory before go to large memory

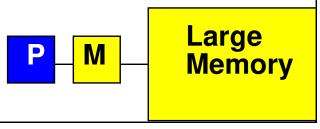


Processor Data Caches

- Demands more than a small memory
  - Need to sparsely store address/data mappings from large memory
  - Makes more area/delay/energy expensive than just a simple memory of capacity
- Don't need explicit data movement
- Cannot control when data moved/saved
  - Bad for determinism
- Limited ability to control what stays in small memory simultaneously

Processor Data Caches

- Traditional Processor Data Caches are a heuristic instance of this
  - Store anything fetched from large/remote memory in local memory
    - Hoping for reuse in near future
  - On every fetch, check local memory before go to large memory
  - Stall processor while waiting for data



Preclass 3: Processor Cache Timing

- Assume
  - cache miss (go to large memory) takes 10 cycles
  - Cache hit (small memory) takes 1
  - Start with empty cache
- Due to memory delay, how long to execute:

```
b=a[0]+a[1];
c=a[1]+a[2];
d=a[2]+a[0];
```

```
b=a[i]+a[j];
c=a[k]+a[l];
d=a[m]+a[n];
```


Observe

- Instructions on "General Purpose" processors take variable number of cycles

Preclass 4

- How many cycles?
  - sin, cos 100 cycles each
  - Assignments 1

```
old_sh=sh; old_ch=ch;
  if (!left || !right)
       {sh=old_sh;ch=old_ch;}
  else
       {sh=sine(heading);
        ch=cosine(heading);}
```


Preclass 5

- How many cycles?

```
sum=0;
for (i=0;i<32;i++) {
    sum+=(0-(b%2)) & a;
    b=b>>1;
    a=a<<1;
    }
```


Preclass 5

- How many cycles?

```
sum=0;
for (;b!=0;b=b>>1)  {
     if (b%2==1)
        sum+=a;
     a=a<<1;
}
```


Observe

- Data-dependent branching, looping
  - Means variable time for operations

Two Challenges

1. Architecture – Hardware have variable (data-dependent) delay
   - Esp. for General-Purpose processors
     - Instructions take different number of cycles
2. Algorithm – computational specification have variable (data-dependent) operations
   - Different number of instructions

$$Time = \sum_{i} Cycles(i)$$

Algorithm

- What programming constructs are data-dependent (variable delay)?

Programming Constructs

- Conditionals: if/then/else
- Loops without compile-time determined bounds
  - While with termination expressions
  - For with data-dependent bounds
- Data-dependent recursion
- Interrupts
  - I/O events, time-slice

Programming Constructs

- Dynamic Dataflow (from Day 5)
  - Variable rates
  - Switch/select operators

Architecture

- What processor constructs are variable delay?

Processor Variable Delay

- Caches
- Dynamic arbitration for shared resources
  - Bus, I/O, Crossbar output, memory, …
- Data hazards
- Data-dependent branching / branch delays
- Speculative issue
  - Out-of-Order, branch prediction

Hardware Architecture

- Some typical (371, 501) processor "optimizations" can cause variable delay
  - Caches
  - Common-case optimizations
  - Pipeline stalls

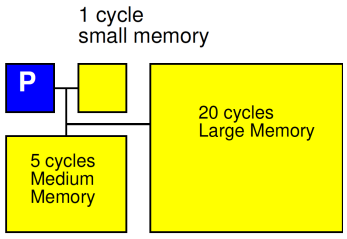
What can we do to make architecture more deterministic?

- Explicitly managed memory
- Eliminate Branching (too severe?)
- Unpipelined processors
- Fixed-delay pipelines
  - Offline-scheduled resource sharing
  - Multi-threaded
- Deadlines

Explicitly Managed Memory

- Make memory hierarchy visible
  - Use Scratchpad memories instead of caches
- Explicitly move data between memories
  - E.g. movement into local memory
- Already do for Register File in Processor
  - Load/store between memory and RF slot
  - …but don't do for memory hierarchy

Explicitly Managed Memory



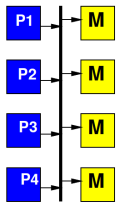
Offline Schedule Resource Sharing

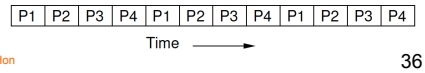
- Don't arbitrate
- Decide up-front when each shared resource can be used by each thread or processor
  - Simple fixed schedule
  - Detailed Schedule
- What
  - Memory bank, bus, I/O, network link, …

Time-Multiplexed Bus

Fixed by hardware master

- 4 masters share a bus
- Each master gets to make a request on the bus every 4th cycle
  - If doesn't use it, goes idle



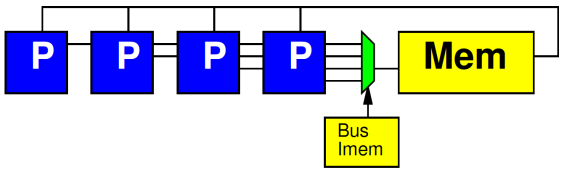


Time-Multiplexed Bus

- Regular schedule
- Fixed bus slot schedule of length N > masters
  - (probably a multiple)
- Assign owner for each slot
  - Can assign more slots to one
- E.g. N=8, for 4 masters
  - Schedule (1 2 1 3 1 2 1 4)

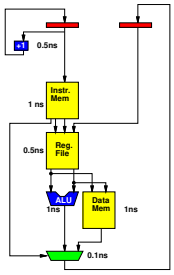
Fully Scheduled

- At extreme, fully schedule which tasks gets resource on each cycle



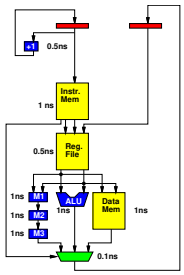
Simple Deterministic Processor

- No branching
- Unpipelined
- Every operation completes in fixed time
- Cycle time?



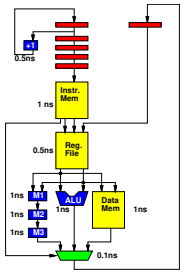
Simple Deterministic Processor with Multiplier

- No branching
- Unpipelined
- Every operation completes in fixed time
- Cycle time?
- What's unfortunate about this?



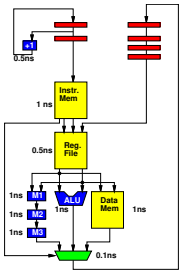
Simple Deterministic Processor with some Pipelining

- No branching
- Every operation completes in fixed time
- Retimed cycle time?
- How pipelines added change behavior?



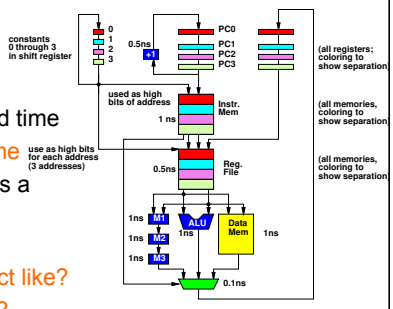
Simple Deterministic Pipelined Processor

- No branching
- Every operation completes in fixed time
- Retimed cycle time?
- How pipelines added change behavior?
  - Hint R1 value



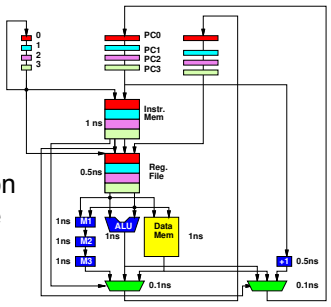
Multithreaded Processor

- No branching
- Every operation completes in fixed time
- Retimed cycle time
- Each PC (color) is a separate thread
- How interact?
- What does this act like?
- Compare unpipe?



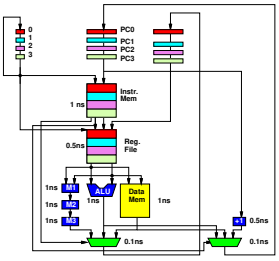
Branching?

- Could add branching
- Architecture deterministic
- Need to reason about variable timing from branching



Multithreaded Pipeline

- Non-real-time threads can share
- Timing of threads not impact each other
- Non-real-time threads take variable time
  - Not interfere with real-time thread slots



Deadline Instruction

- Deal with algorithmic (branching) variability
- Set a hardware counter for thread
- Demand counter reach 0 before thread allowed to continue at deadline instruction
- Model: fixed rate of attention
  - Stall if get there early
  - Similar to flip-flop on a logic path
    - Wait for clock edge to change or sample value
- Model: fixed execution time

WCET

- WCET – Worst-Case Execution Time
- Analysis when working with algorithms and architectures with data-dependent delay
  - Need to meet real time
  - Calculate the worst-case runtime of a task
    - Like calculating the critical path (but harder)
    - Worst-case delay of instructions
    - Worst-case path through code
    - Worst-case # loop iterations
  - Rationale for setting Deadlines
    - (like a cycle time)

Deterministic Pipelines

- Not how ARM, Intel (371, 501) processor are piplined
- Those include operations that make timing variable
  - dynamic data hazards, branch speculation
- Here, data becomes available after a predictable time
- Branches take effect at a fixed time
  - Likely delayed
- Schedule to delays to get correct data

Different Goals

Real-Time
- Willing to recompile to new hardware
- Want time on hardware predictable
- Willing to schedule for delays in particular hardware

General Purpose/Best Effort
- ISA fixed
- Want to run same assembly on different implementations
- Tolerate different delays for different hardware
- Run faster on newer, larger implementations

SoC Opportunity

- Can choose which resources are shared
- Can dedicate resources to tasks
- Isolate real-time tasks/portions of tasks from best-effort
  - Separate hardware/processors
  - Separate memories, network

Big Ideas:

- Real-Time applications demand different discipline from best-effort tasks
- Look more like synchronous circuits and hardware discipline
- Avoid or use care with variable delay programming constructs
- Can sequentialize, like processor
  - But must avoid/rethink typical processor common-case optimizations
  - Offline calculate static schedule for computation and sharing
    - Instead of dynamic arbitration, interlocks

Admin

- Wednesday/Day 10 reading on Canvas + Zynq Book
- We are here Wednesday
  - Do have office hours Monday, Tuesday
- Fall Break – Thursday and Friday
  - No Office Hours Thursday (10/4)
  - No HW due this Friday (10/5)
- HW5 due 10/12
  - Will involve some long Vivado HLS/SDSoC tool times