Administrivia

- (None.)

Evolution of Operating Systems, Recap

- Increasing hardware capability.
- Increasing o/s functionality and complexity — from simple program loader to complex multitasking system.
- Parallels between evolution of mainframe o/s and PC o/s.
Operating System Functionality

- Provide a “virtual machine”:
  - Filesystem abstraction — files, directories, ownership, access rights, etc.
  - Process abstraction — “process” is a name for one of a collection of “things happening at the same time” (in effect if not in fact), including:
    * In batch systems, user “jobs”, plus input/output spooling.
    * In timesharing system, interactive users.
    * In PC o/s, concurrently-executing tasks.
      Here too, idea of ownership / access rights.

- Manage resources (probably on behalf of multiple users/applications):
  - Memory.
  - CPU cycles (one or more CPUs).
  - I/O devices.

Overview of Hardware

- Simplified view of hardware (as it appears to programmers) — processor(s), memory, I/O devices, bus.

- (See figure, p. 21.)
Processors

- "Instruction set" of primitive operations — load/store, arithmetic/logical operations, control flow.
- Basic CPU cycle — fetch instruction, decode, execute.
- Registers — "local memory" for processor; general-purpose registers for arithmetic and other operations, special registers (program counter, stack pointer, program status word (PSW)).
- Now consider what additional features would make it easier to write an operating system . . .

Interrupt Mechanism

- Very useful to have a way to interrupt current processing when an unexpected or don't-know-when event happens — error occurs (e.g., invalid operation), I/O operation completes.
- On interrupt, goal is to save enough of current state to allow us to restart current activity later:
  - Save old value of program counter.
  - Disable interrupts.
  - Transfer control to fixed location ("interrupt handler" or "interrupt vector") — normally o/s code that saves other registers, re-enables interrupts, decides what to do next, etc.
- Usually have a TRAP instruction for generating interrupt.
- Could you write an o/s without this?
Dual-Mode Operation, Privileged Instructions

- Useful to have mechanism to keep application programs from doing things that should be reserved for o/s.
- Usual approach — in hardware, define two modes for processor (supervisor and user), privileged instructions.
  - Privileged instructions — things only o/s should do, e.g., enable/disable interrupts.
  - Bit in PSW indicates supervisor mode (o/s only, privileged instructions okay) or user mode (application programs, privileged instructions not allowed).
  - When to switch modes? when o/s starts application program, when application program requests o/s services, on error.
- Could you write an o/s without this?

Memory Protection

- Very useful to have a way to give each process (including o/s) its own variables that other processes can’t alter.
- Usual approach — provide a hardware mechanism such that attempting to access memory out of ranges generates exception/interrupt; several ways, including:
  - Limit each process to a range of memory locations; hold starting and ending addresses in special registers.
  - Partition memory into blocks, give each block a numeric key, give each process a key, and only allow processes to access blocks if keys match.
- Could you write an o/s without this?
Timer

- Useful to have a way to set a timer / “alarm clock” — e.g., to get control back if application program enters infinite loop.
- Usual approach — hardware features that tracks real time and can be set to interrupt CPU.

Memory Hierarchy

- In a perfect world — fast, big, cheap, as permanent as desired.
- In this world — hierarchy of types, from fast but expensive to slow but cheap: registers, cache, RAM, magnetic disk, magnetic tape. (See picture, p. 24.)
- Note also — some types volatile, some non-volatile.
Program Relocation

- At the machine-instruction level, references to memory are in terms of an absolute number. Compilers/assemblers can generate these only by making assumption about where program will reside in memory.
- In the very early days, programs started at 0, so no problem. Now they hardly ever do, so we need a way to relocate programs — when loaded, or “on the fly”.
- “On the fly” relocation uses MMU (memory management unit) — which can provide both program relocation and memory protection. Logically between CPU and memory, physically usually part of CPU. A simple scheme — base and limit registers (described in text). When do values in them need to change?

I/O Devices

- What they provide (from the user’s perspective):
  - Non-volatile storage (disks, tapes).
  - Connections to outside world (keyboards, microphones, screens, etc., etc.).
- Distance between hardware and “virtual machine” is large here, so usually think in terms of:
  - Layers of s/w abstraction (as with other parts of o/s).
  - Layers of h/w abstraction too: most devices attached via controller, which provides a h/w layer of abstraction (e.g., “IDE controller”).
I/O Basics

- CPU communicates with device controller by reading/writing device registers; device controller communicates with device.
- Memory-mapped I/O versus I/O instructions.
- Polling versus interrupts.
- Functionality for a particular device packaged as “device driver”.
- I/O in application programs — make system call.
- Recap: application program $\rightarrow$ system call (to o/s) $\rightarrow$ device driver $\rightarrow$ device controller $\rightarrow$ device

Minute Essay

- I once had a learning experience about “how DOS is different from a real o/s”. Summary version: A program using pointers (possibly uninitialized) caused the whole machine to lock up and need to be power-cycled.

What do you think went wrong?