

Problem M3.8: Multithreading [?? Hours]

This problem evaluates the effectiveness of multithreading using a simple database benchmark. The benchmark searches for an entry in a linked list built from the following structure, which contains a key, a pointer to the next node in the linked list, and a pointer to the data entry.

```
struct node {
    int key;
    struct node *next;
    struct data *ptr;
}
```

The following MIPS code shows the core of the benchmark, which traverses the linked list and finds an entry with a particular key. Assume MIPS has no delay slots.

```

;
; R1: a pointer to the linked list
; R2: the key to find
;
loop: LW      R3, 0(R1)  ; load a key
      LW      R4, 4(R1) ; load the next pointer
      SEQ     R3, R3, R2 ; set R3 if R3 == R2
      BNEZ   R3, End    ; found the entry
      ADD    R1, R0, R4
      BNEZ   R1, Loop   ; check the next node
End:
; R1 contains a pointer to the matching entry or zero
if      ; not found
```

We run this benchmark on a single-issue in-order processor. The processor can fetch and issue (dispatch) one instruction per cycle. If an instruction cannot be issued due to a data dependency, the processor stalls. Integer instructions take one cycle to execute and the result can be used in the next cycle. For example, if SEQ is executed in cycle 1, BNEZ can be executed in cycle 2. We also assume that the processor has a perfect branch predictor with no penalty for both taken and not-taken branches.

Problem M3.8.A

Assume that our system does not have a cache. Each memory operation directly accesses main memory and takes 100 CPU cycles. The load/store unit is fully pipelined, and non-blocking. After the processor issues a memory operation, it can continue executing instructions until it reaches an instruction that is dependent on an outstanding memory operation. How many cycles does it take to execute one iteration of the loop in steady state?

Problem M3.8.B

Now we add zero-overhead multithreading to our pipeline. A processor executes multiple threads, each of which performs an independent search. Hardware mechanisms schedule a thread to execute each cycle.

In our first implementation, the processor switches to a different thread every cycle using fixed round robin scheduling (similar to CDC 6600 PPU's). Each of the N threads executes one instruction every N cycles. What is the **minimum** number of threads that we need to fully utilize the processor, i.e., execute one instruction per cycle?

Problem M3.8.C

How does multithreading affect throughput (number of keys the processor can find within a given time) and latency (time the processor takes to find an entry with a specific key)? Assume the processor switches to a different thread every cycle and is fully utilized. Check the correct boxes.

	Throughput	Latency
Better		
Same		
Worse		

Problem M3.8.D

We change the processor to only switch to a different thread when an instruction cannot execute due to data dependency. What is the minimum number of threads to fully utilize the processor now? Note that the processor issues instructions in-order in each thread.

Problem M3.9: Multithreaded architectures [?? Hours]

The program we will use is listed below. (In all questions, you should assume that arrays **A**, **B** and **C** do not overlap in memory.)

```
C code  
  
for (i=0; i<328; i++) {  
    A[i] = A[i] * B[i];  
    C[i] = C[i] + A[i];  
}
```

In this problem, we will analyze the performance of our program on a multi-threaded architecture. Our machine is a single-issue, in-order processor. It switches to a different thread every cycle using fixed round robin scheduling. Each of the N threads executes one instruction every N cycles. We allocate the code to the threads such that every thread executes every N th iteration of the original C code (each thread increments i by N).

Integer instructions take 1 cycle to execute, floating point instructions take 4 cycles and memory instructions take 3 cycles. All execution units are fully pipelined. If an instruction cannot issue because its data is not yet available, it inserts a bubble into the pipeline, and retries after N cycles.

Below is our program in assembly code for this machine.

```
loop: ld f1, 0(r1)      ; f1 = A[i]  
      ld f2, 0(r2)      ; f2 = B[i]  
      fmul f4, f2, f1    ; f4 = f1 * f2  
      st f4, 0(r1)      ; A[i] = f4  
      ld f3, 0(r3)      ; f3 = C[i]  
      fadd f5, f4, f3    ; f5 = f4 + f3  
      st f5, 0(r3)      ; C[i] = f5  
      add r1, r1, 4      ; i++  
      add r2, r2, 4  
      add r3, r3, 4  
      add r4, r4, -1  
      bnez r4, loop     ; loop
```

Problem M3.9.A

What is the minimum number of threads this machine needs to remain fully utilized issuing an instruction every cycle for our program? Explain.

Problem M3.9.B

What will be the peak performance in flops/cycle for this program? Explain briefly.

Problem M3.9.C

Can we reach peak performance running this program using fewer threads by rearranging the instructions? Explain briefly.

Problem M3.10: Multithreading [?? Hours]

Consider a single-issue in-order multithreading processor that is similar to the one described in Problem M3.8.

Each cycle, the processor can fetch and issue one instruction that performs any of the following operations.

- **load/store: 12-cycle latency (fully pipelined)**
- **integer add: 1-cycle latency**
- **floating-point add: 5-cycle latency (fully pipelined)**
- **branch: no delay slots, 1-cycle latency**

The processor **does not have a cache**. Each memory operation directly accesses main memory. If an instruction cannot be issued due to a data dependency, the processor stalls. We also assume that the processor has a perfect branch predictor with no penalty for both taken and not-taken branches.

Your job is to analyze the processor utilizations for the following two thread-switching implementations.

Fixed Switching: the processor switches to a different thread every cycle using fixed round-robin scheduling. Each of the N threads executes an instruction every N cycles.

Data-dependent Switching: the processor only switches to a different thread when an instruction cannot execute due to a data dependency.

Each thread executes the following MIPS code.

```
loop: L.D      F2, 0(R1)    ; load data into F2
      ADDI    R1, R1, 4    ; bump source pointer
      FADD   F3, F3, F2    ; F3 = F3 + F2
      BNE    F2, F4, loop  ; continue if F2 != F4
```

Problem M3.10.A

What is the minimum number of threads that we need to fully utilize the processor for each implementation?

Fixed Switching: _____ Thread(s)

Data-dependent Switching: _____ Thread(s)

Problem M3.10.B

What is the minimum number of threads that we need to fully utilize the processor for each implementation if we change the **load/store latency to 1-cycle (but keep the 5-cycle floating-point add)**?

Fixed Switching: _____ **Thread(s)**

Data-dependent Switching: _____ **Thread(s)**

Problem M3.10.C

Consider a **Simultaneous Multithreading (SMT)** machine with limited hardware resources. Circle the following hardware constraints that can limit the total number of threads that the machine can support. For the item(s) that you circle, briefly describe the minimum requirement to support N threads.

(A) Number of Functional Units

(B) Number of Physical Registers

(C) Data Cache Size

(D) Data Cache Associativity