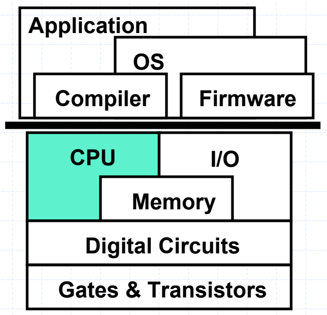
CIS 501
Introduction To Computer Architecture

Unit 12: Multithreading

This Unit: Multithreading (MT)



- Why multithreading (MT)?
  - Utilization vs. performance
- Three implementations
  - Coarse-grained MT
  - Fine-grained MT
  - Simultaneous MT (SMT)
- MT for reliability
  - Redundant multithreading
- Multithreading for performance
  - Speculative multithreading

Readings

- H+P
  - Chapter 6.9

Performance And Utilization

- Performance (IPC) important
- Utilization (actual IPC / peak IPC) important too

- Even moderate superscalars (e.g., 4-way) not fully utilized
  - Average sustained IPC: 1.5–2 → <50% utilization
    - Mis-predicted branches
    - Cache misses, especially L2
    - Data dependences

- **Multi-threading (MT)**
  - Improve utilization by multi-plexing multiple threads on single CPU
  - One thread cannot fully utilize CPU? Maybe 2, 4 (or 100) can

Latency vs Throughput

- **MT trades (single-thread) latency for throughput**
  - – Sharing processor degrades latency of individual threads
  - + But improves aggregate latency of both threads
  - + Improves utilization
- Example
  - Thread A: individual latency=10s, latency with thread B=15s
  - Thread B: individual latency=20s, latency with thread A=25s
  - Sequential latency (first A then B or vice versa): 30s
  - Parallel latency (A and B simultaneously): 25s
  - – MT slows each thread by 5s
  - + But improves total latency by 5s
- **Different workloads have different parallelism**
  - SpecFP has lots of ILP (can use an 8-wide machine)
  - Server workloads have TLP (can use multiple threads)

MT Implementations: Similarities

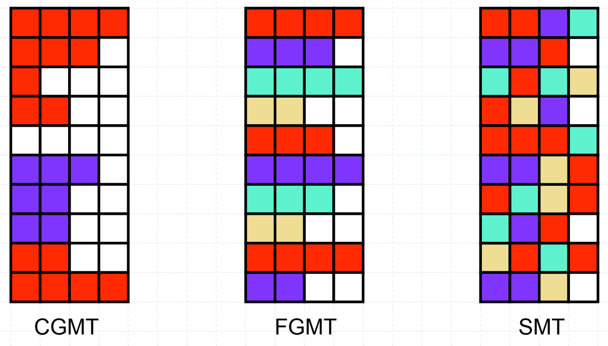
- How do multiple threads share a single processor?
  - Different sharing mechanisms for different kinds of structures
  - Depend on what kind of state structure stores
- **No state**: ALUs
  - Dynamically shared
- **Persistent hard state (aka "context")**: PC, registers
  - Replicated
- **Persistent soft state**: caches, bpred
  - Dynamically partitioned (like on a multi-programmed uni-processor)
    - TLBs need thread ids, caches/bpred tables don't
  - Exception: **ordered "soft" state** (BHR, RAS) is replicated
- **Transient state**: pipeline latches, ROB, RS
  - Partitioned … somehow

MT Implementations: Differences

- Main question: **thread scheduling policy**
  - When to switch from one thread to another?
- Related question: **pipeline partitioning**
  - How exactly do threads share the pipeline itself?
- Choice depends on
  - What kind of latencies (specifically, length) you want to tolerate
  - How much single thread performance you are willing to sacrifice
- Three designs
  - Coarse-grain multithreading (CGMT)
  - Fine-grain multithreading (FGMT)
  - Simultaneous multithreading (SMT)

The Standard Multithreading Picture

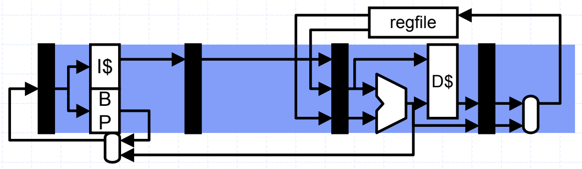
- Time evolution of issue slots
  - Color = thread



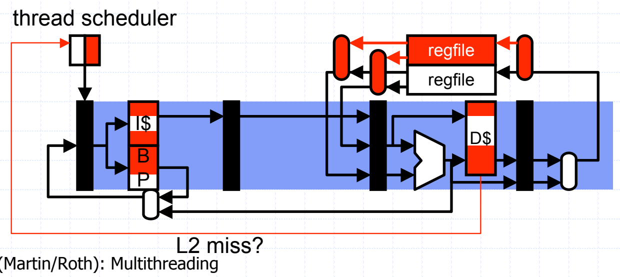
Coarse-Grain Multithreading (CGMT)

- **Coarse-Grain Multi-Threading (CGMT)**
  - + Sacrifices very little single thread performance (of one thread)
  - – Tolerates only long latencies (e.g., L2 misses)
  - Thread scheduling policy
    - Designate a "preferred" thread (e.g., thread A)
    - Switch to thread B on thread A L2 miss
    - Switch back to A when A L2 miss returns
  - Pipeline partitioning
    - None, flush on switch
    - – Can't tolerate latencies shorter than twice pipeline depth
    - Need short in-order pipeline for good performance
  - Example: IBM Northstar/Pulsar

CGMT



- CGMT
  - Does this picture look familiar?

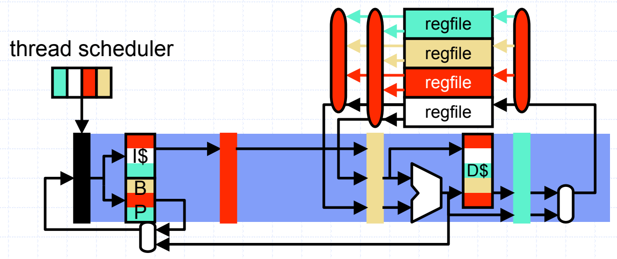


Fine-Grain Multithreading (FGMT)

- **Fine-Grain Multithreading (FGMT)**
  - – Sacrifices significant single thread performance
  - + Tolerates all latencies (e.g., L2 misses, mispredicted branches, etc.)
  - Thread scheduling policy
    - Switch threads every cycle (round-robin), L2 miss or no
  - Pipeline partitioning
    - Dynamic, no flushing
    - Length of pipeline doesn't matter
  - – Need a lot of threads
  - Extreme example: Denelcor HEP
    - So many threads (100+), it didn't even need caches
    - Failed commercially
  - Not popular today
    - Many threads → many register files

Fine-Grain Multithreading

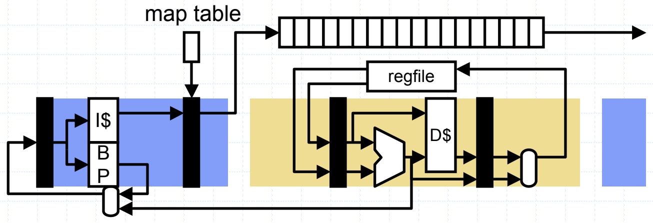
- FGMT
  - (Many) more threads
  - Multiple threads in pipeline at once



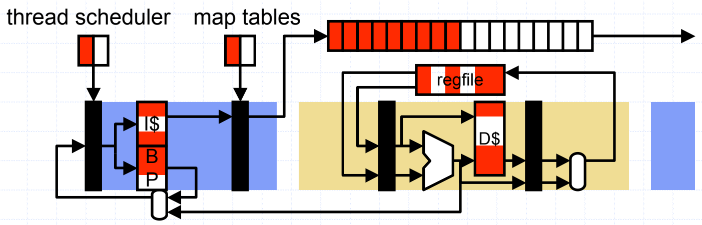
Simultaneous Multithreading (SMT)

- Can we multithread an out-of-order machine?
  - Don't want to give up performance benefits
  - Don't want to give up natural tolerance of D$ (L1) miss latency
- **Simultaneous multithreading (SMT)**
  - + Tolerates all latencies (e.g., L2 misses, mispredicted branches)
  - ± Sacrifices some single thread performance
  - Thread scheduling policy
    - Round-robin (just like FGMT)
  - Pipeline partitioning
    - Dynamic, hmmm…
  - Example: Pentium4 (hyper-threading): 5-way issue, 2 threads
  - Another example: Alpha 21464: 8-way issue, 4 threads (canceled)

Simultaneous Multithreading (SMT)



- SMT
  - Replicate map table, share physical register file



Issues for SMT

- Cache interference
  - General concern for all MT variants
  - Can the working sets of multiple threads fit in the caches?
  - Shared memory SPMD threads help here
    - + Same insns → share I$
    - + Shared data → less D$ contention
    - MT is good for "server" workloads
  - To keep miss rates low, SMT might need a larger L2 (which is OK)
    - Out-of-order tolerates L1 misses
- Large map table and physical register file
  - #mt-entries = (**#threads** * #arch-regs)
  - #phys-regs = (**#threads** * #arch-regs) + #in-flight insns

SMT Resource Partitioning

- How are ROB/MOB, RS partitioned in SMT?
  - Depends on what you want to achieve
- **Static partitioning**
  - Divide ROB/MOB, RS into T static equal-sized partitions
  - + Ensures that low-IPC threads don't starve high-IPC ones
    - Low-IPC threads stall and occupy ROB/MOB, RS slots
  - – Low utilization
- **Dynamic partitioning**
  - Divide ROB/MOB, RS into dynamically resizing partitions
  - Let threads fight for amongst themselves
  - + High utilization
  - – Possible starvation
  - ICOUNT: fetch policy prefers thread with fewest in-flight insns

Power Implications of MT

- Is MT (of any kind) power efficient?
  - Static power? Yes
    - Dissipated regardless of utilization
  - Dynamic power? Less clear, but probably yes
    - Highly utilization dependent
    - Major factor is additional cache activity
    - Some debate here
  - Overall? Yes
    - Static power relatively increasing

MT for Reliability

- Can multithreading help with reliability?
  - Design bugs/manufacturing defects? No
  - Gradual defects, e.g., thermal wear? No
  - Transient errors? Yes
- **Staggered redundant multithreading (SRT)**
  - Run two copies of program at a slight stagger
  - Compare results, difference? Flush both copies and restart
  - – Significant performance overhead
  - Have already seen better ways of doing this (DIVA)

SMT vs. CMP

- If you wanted to run multiple threads would you build a…
  - Chip multiprocessor (CMP): multiple separate pipelines?
  - A multithreaded processor (SMT): a single larger pipeline?
- **Both will get you throughput on multiple threads**
  - CMP will be simpler, possibly faster clock
  - SMT will get you better performance (IPC) on a single thread
    - SMT is basically an ILP engine that converts TLP to ILP
    - CMP is mainly a TLP engine
- **Again, do both**
  - Sun's Niagara (UltraSPARC T1)
  - 8 processors, each with 4-threads (coarse-grained threading)
  - 1Ghz clock, in-order, short pipeline (6 stages or so)
  - Designed for power-efficient "throughput computing"

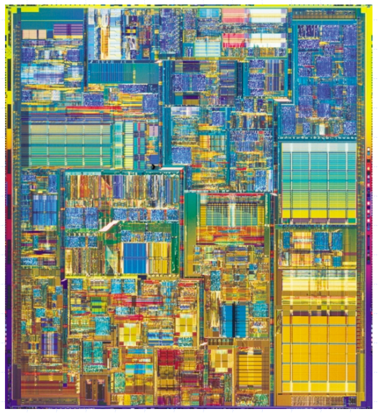
Research: Speculative Multithreading

- **Speculative multithreading**
  - Use multiple threads/processors for ILP
  - Speculatively parallelize sequential loops
    - CMP processing elements (called PE) arranged in logical ring
    - Compiler or hardware assigns iterations to consecutive PEs
    - Hardware tracks logical order to detect mis-parallelization
  - Techniques for doing this on non-loop code too
  - Effectively chains ROBs of different processors into one big ROB
    - Global commit "head" travels from one PE to the next
    - Mis-parallelization flushes entire PEs
  - Also known as split-window or "Multiscalar"
  - Not commercially available yet, but maybe not far off

Multithreading Summary

- Latency vs. throughput
- Partitioning different processor resources
- Three multithreading variants
  - Coarse-grain: no single-thread degradation, but long latencies only
  - Fine-grain: other end of the trade-off
  - Simultaneous: fine-grain with out-of-order
- Multithreading vs. chip multiprocessing

CIS501 Summary



- Remember this from lecture 1?
  - Intel Pentium4
- At a high level
  - You know how this works now!

CIS501 Summary: Pentium 4

- Pentium 4 specifications: what do each of these mean?
  - Technology
    - 55M transistors, 0.90 μm CMOS, 101 mm^2, 3.4 GHz, 1.2 V
  - Performance
    - 1705 SPECint, 2200 SPECfp
  - ISA
    - X86+MMX/SSE/SSE2/SSE3 (X86 translated to RISC uops inside)
  - Memory hierarchy
    - 64KB 2-way insn trace cache, 16KB D$, 512KB–2MB L2
    - MESI-protocol coherence controller, processor consistency
  - Pipeline
    - 22-stages, dynamic scheduling/load speculation, MIPS renaming
    - 1K-entry BTB, 8Kb hybrid direction predictor, 16-entry RAS
    - 2-way hyper-threading