Distributed Systems

08. Mutual Exclusion & Election Algorithms

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• Techniques to coordinate execution among processes
  – One process may have to wait for another
  – Shared resource (e.g. critical section) may require exclusive access
Centralized Systems

• Achieve mutual exclusion via:
  – Test & set in hardware
  – Semaphores
  – Messages (inter-process)
  – Condition variables
Distributed Mutual Exclusion

• Assume there is agreement on how a resource is identified
  – Pass the identifier with requests
  – e.g., \texttt{lock(“printer”)}, \texttt{lock(“table:employees”)},
    \texttt{lock(“table:employees;row:15”)}

• Goal:
  Create an algorithm to allow a process to request and obtain exclusive access to a resource that is available on the network.
Categories of algorithms

• Centralized
  – A process can access a resource because a central coordinator allowed it to do so

• Token-based
  – A process can access a resource if it is holding a token permitting it to do so

• Contention-based
  – An process can access a resource via distributed agreement
Centralized algorithm

• Mimic single processor system
• One process elected as coordinator

1. **Request** resource
2. Wait for response
3. **Receive grant**
4. *access resource*
5. **Release resource**

![Diagram](image_url)
Centralized algorithm

- If another process claimed resource:
  - Coordinator does not reply until release
  - Maintain queue
    - Service requests in FIFO order
Centralized algorithm

Benefits

• Fair: All requests processed in order
• Easy to implement, understand, verify

Problems

• Process cannot distinguish being blocked from a dead coordinator
• Centralized server can be a bottleneck
Token Ring algorithm

• Assume known group of processes
  – Some ordering can be imposed on group
  – Construct logical ring in software
  – Process communicates with neighbor
Token Ring algorithm

• Initialization
  – Process 0 gets token for resource R

• Token circulates around ring
  – From \( P_i \) to \( P_{(i+1) \mod N} \)

• When process acquires token
  – Checks to see if it needs to enter critical section
  – If no, send ring to neighbor
  – If yes, access resource
    • Hold token until done
Token Ring algorithm

Your turn

P₀

P₁

P₂

P₃

P₄

P₅
Token Ring algorithm

Your turn

P₀
P₁
P₂
P₃
P₄
P₅
Token Ring algorithm

Your turn

P₀, P₁, P₂, P₃, P₄, P₅
Token Ring algorithm

Your turn
Token Ring algorithm

Your turn

P₀ → P₁ → P₂ → P₃ → P₄ → P₅

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Token Ring algorithm

Your turn

P₀ → P₁ → P₂ → P₃ → P₄ → P₅

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Token Ring algorithm

Your turn

P₀
P₁
P₂
P₃
P₄
P₅
Token Ring algorithm

P₀

P₁

P₂

P₃

P₄

P₅

Your turn
Token Ring algorithm summary

- Only one process at a time has token
  - Mutual exclusion guaranteed

- Order well-defined (but not necessarily first-come, first-served)
  - Starvation cannot occur
  - Lack of FCFS ordering may be undesirable sometimes

- If token is lost (e.g., process died)
  - It will have to be regenerated
  - Detecting loss may be a problem
    *(is the token lost or in just use by someone?)*
Lamport’s Mutual Exclusion

• Each process maintains request queue
  – Queue contains **mutual exclusion requests**
  – Messages are sent reliably and in FIFO order
  – Each message is time stamped with totally ordered Lamport timestamps
    • Ensures that each timestamp is unique
    • Every node can make the same decision by comparing timestamps
  – Queues are sorted by message timestamps
Lamport’s Mutual Exclusion

Request a critical section:
- Process $P_i$ sends $\text{request}(i, T_i)$ to all nodes
  - … and places request on its own queue
- When a process $P_j$ receives a request:
  - It returns a timestamped $\text{ack}$
  - Places the request on its request queue

Enter a critical section (accessing resource):
- $P_i$ has received acks from everyone
- $P_i$’s request has the earliest timestamp in its queue

Release a critical section:
- Process $P_i$ removes its request from its queue
- sends $\text{release}(i, T_i)$ to all nodes
- Each process now checks if its request is the earliest in its queue
  - If so, that process now has the critical section

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Time stamp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$P_4$</td>
<td>1021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$P_8$</td>
<td>1022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$P_1$</td>
<td>3944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$P_6$</td>
<td>8201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$P_{12}$</td>
<td>9638</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample request queue
Identical at each process
Lamport’s Mutual Exclusion

• $N$ points of failure

• A lot of messaging traffic
  – Requests & releases are sent to the entire group

• Not great … but demonstrates that a fully distributed algorithm is possible
Ricart & Agrawala algorithm

• Distributed algorithm using reliable multicast and logical clocks

• When a process wants to enter critical section:
  1. **Compose message** containing:
     • **Identifier** (machine ID, process ID)
     • **Name** of resource
     • **Timestamp** (e.g., totally-ordered Lamport)
  2. **Reliably multicast** request to all processes in group
  3. **Wait** until everyone gives permission
  4. **Enter** critical section / use resource
Ricart & Agrawala algorithm

• When process receives request:
  – If receiver not interested:
    • Send OK to sender
  – If receiver is in critical section
    • Do not reply; add request to queue
  – If receiver just sent a request as well: (*potential race condition*)
    • Compare timestamps on received & sent messages
    • Earliest wins
      • If receiver is loser, send OK
      • If receiver is winner, do not reply, queue it

• When done with critical section
  – Send OK to all queued requests
Ricart & Agrawala algorithm

• Not great either
  – $N$ points of failure
  – A lot of messaging traffic
  – Also demonstrates that a fully distributed algorithm is possible
Lamport vs. Ricart & Agrawala

• Lamport
  – Everyone responds (acks) … always – no hold-back
  – $3(N-1)$ messages
    • Request – ACK – Release
  – Process decides to go based on whether its request is the earliest in its queue

• Ricart & Agrawala
  – If you are in the critical section (or won a tie)
    • Don’t respond with an ACK until you are done with the critical section
  – $2(N-1)$ messages
    • Request – ACK
  – Process decides to go if it gets ACKs from everyone
Election algorithms
Elections

• Need one process to act as coordinator

• Processes have no distinguishing characteristics

• Each process can obtain a unique ID
Bully algorithm

• Select process with largest ID as coordinator

• When process P detects dead coordinator:
  – Send *election* message to all processes with higher IDs.
    • If nobody responds, P wins and takes over.
    • If any process responds, P’s job is done.
  – Optional: Let all nodes with lower IDs know an election is taking place.

• If process receives an election message
  – Send *OK* message back
  – Hold election (unless it is already holding one)
Bully algorithm

• A process announces victory by sending all processes a message telling them that it is the new coordinator.

• If a dead process recovers, it holds an election to find the coordinator.
Ring algorithm

- Ring arrangement of processes
- If any process detects failure of coordinator
  - Construct election message with process ID and send to next process
  - If successor is down, skip over
  - Repeat until a running process is located
- Upon receiving an election message
  - Process forwards the message, adding its process ID to the body
Ring algorithm

Eventually message returns to originator
  – Process sees its ID on list
  – Circulates (or multicasts) a **coordinator** message announcing coordinator
    • E.g. lowest numbered process
Ring algorithm

Election: \{P_2\}

Assume \(P_2\) discovers that the coordinator, \(P_0\), is dead.

\(P_2\) starts an election.
Ring algorithm

Election: \{P_2, P_3\}
Ring algorithm

Election: \{P_2, P_3, P_4\}

P_0

DEAD

P_5

P_1

P_2

P_3

P_4
Election: \{P_2, P_3, P_4, P_5\}

Fails: \(P_0\) is dead
Election: \( \{P_2, P_3, P_4, P_5\} \)

Skip to \( P_1 \)
Ring algorithm

Election: \{P_2, P_3, P_4, P_5, P_1\}
Ring algorithm

P₂ receives the election message that it initiated

P₂ now picks a leader (e.g., lowest or highest ID)

Because P₂ sees its ID at the head of the list, it know that this is the election that it started

We might have multiple concurrent elections. Everyone needs to pick the same leader. Here, we agree to pick the lowest ID in the list.

Election: {P₂, P₃, P₄, P₅, P₁}

Winner!

This is me!
P₂ announces the new coordinator to the group
Chang & Roberts Ring Algorithm

• Optimize the ring
  – Message always contains \textit{one} process ID
  – Avoid multiple circulating elections
  – If a process sends a message, it marks its state as a \textit{participant}

• Upon receiving an election message:
  
  If $\text{PID}(\text{message}) > \text{PID}(\text{process})$
    
    forward the message

  If $\text{PID}(\text{message}) < \text{PID}(\text{process})$
    
    replace PID in message with $\text{PID}(\text{process})$
    
    forward the new message

  If $\text{PID}(\text{message}) < \text{PID}(\text{process})$ AND process is \textit{participant}
    
    discard the message

  If $\text{PID}(\text{message}) == \text{PID}(\text{process})$
    
    the process is now the leader
Partitioning: Split Brain

• Network *partitioning* (segmentation)
  – **Split brain**
  – Multiple nodes may decide they’re the leader

• Dealing with partitioning
  – Insist on a majority → if no majority, the system will not function
  – Rely on alternate communication mechanism to validate failure
    • Redundant network, shared disk, serial line, SCSI

• We will visit this problem later!
The End