Quality of Service for Packet Networks

Real-Time and Embedded Systems (M)

Lecture 17

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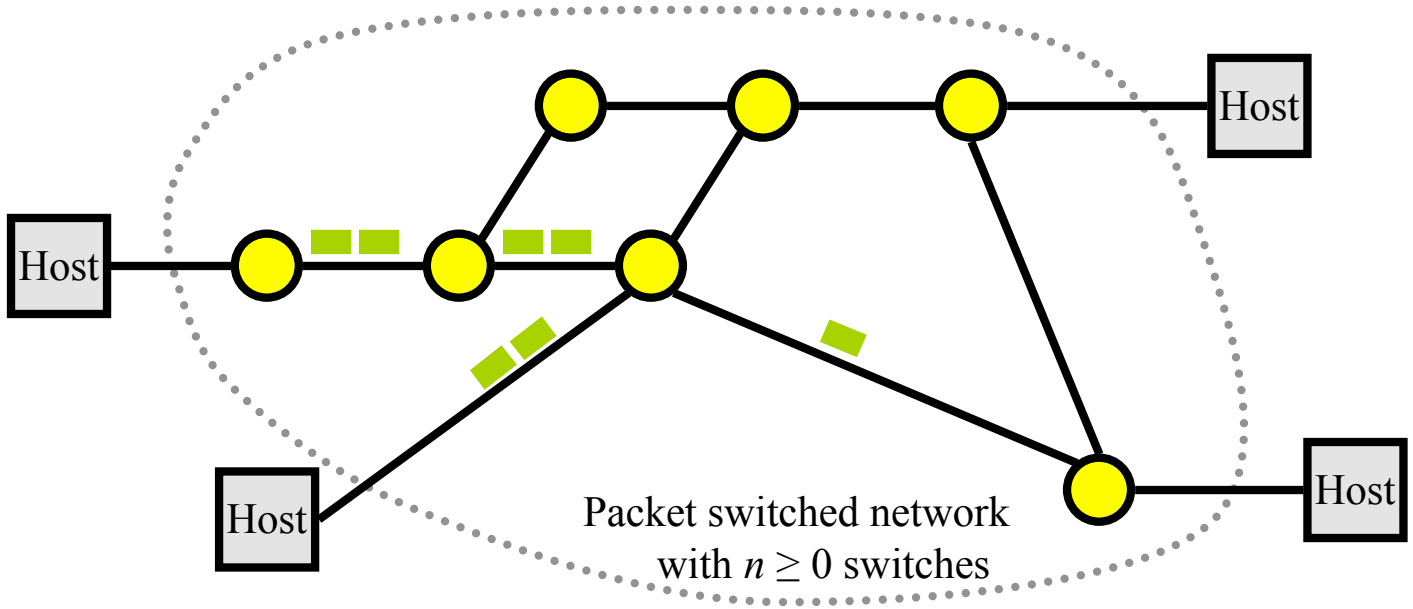
Lecture Outline

- Best effort versus enhanced services
- Queuing disciplines
  - Weighted fair queuing and variants
  - Weighted round robin
- Resource reservation protocols
  - RSVP

- Material corresponds to parts of chapters 7 and 11 of Liu's book

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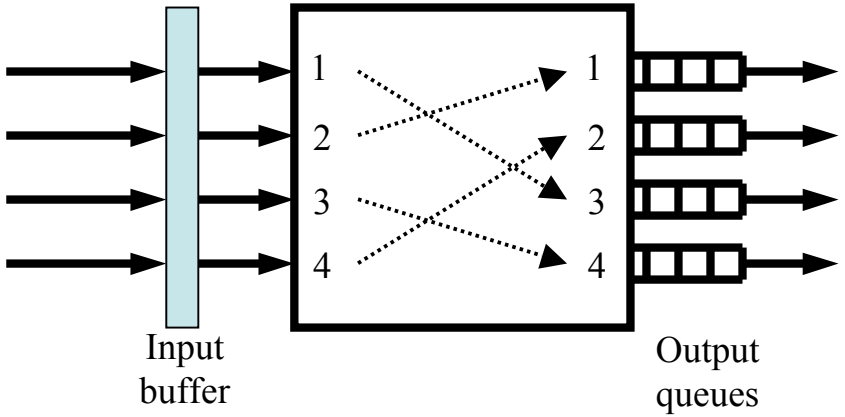
Model of Packet Switched Networks



Links have constant *propagation delay*

Switches queue packets for transmission if output link busy (additional variable delay)

Choice of *job scheduling algorithm* on the output link is critical for real time traffic

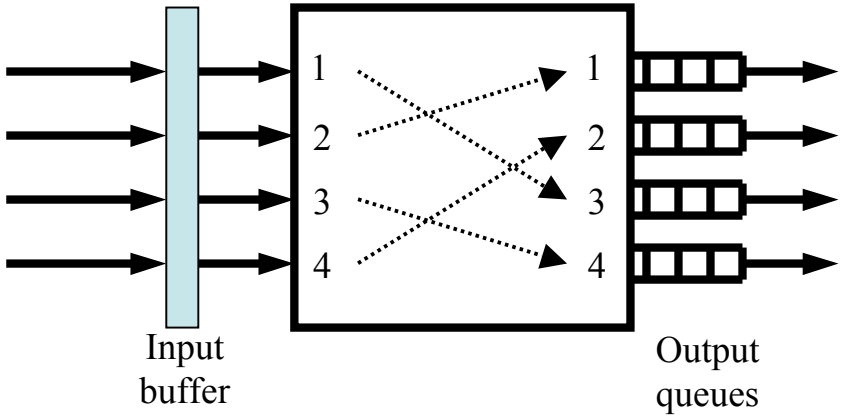


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Best Effort versus Enhanced Service

- Best effort networks use a single output queue for each link
  - FIFO with drop tail
  - FIFO with random drop (RED)

  and don't control the output queuing
- Uncontrolled best effort networks are inexpensive, but don't provide rate guarantees or control the jitter
- Enhanced service packet networks provide this control, and are better suited to real-time traffic
  - Packets in the output queues are scheduled for transmission to affect some policy, rather than in FIFO order



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How to Implement Enhanced Service?

- To schedule packets according to some policy, policy must be communicated to the network, and the network must perform admission control to ensure that policy constraints can be met
- Implies the network must implement:
  - A packet scheduling algorithm
    - To prioritise certain classes of traffic
    - To manage the output queues
  - Admission control
    - To determine if the signalled flows can be supported
  - A signalling protocol
    - To communicate the stream characteristics to the network
      - Flow specification
      - Required performance

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Service Disciplines for Enhanced Services

- The combination of scheduling algorithm and acceptance test is a *service discipline*
- Used to control jitter and packet rate
  - Ensure flows receive their *proportional fair share* of capacity
    - Rates controlled to allocate capacity proportionally, according to policy
    - Algorithms can be *rate allocating* or *rate controlled*
      - Rate controlled algorithms give each flow an allocated rate, and never let flows exceed their rate
      - Rate allocating algorithms give each flow an allocated rate, but let flows exceed their rate if there is spare capacity
    - Flows serviced regularly, to avoid starvation
  - Ensure *timing isolation* between flows
    - Partly as a side-effect of rate control
    - Some algorithms perform explicit jitter control, preserving the traffic pattern – inter-packet spacing – when forwarding traffic

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Priority Queuing Algorithms

- Two priority packet scheduling algorithms widely implemented:
  - Weighted fair queuing (WFQ)
  - Weighted round robin (WRR)

[See also lecture 8]

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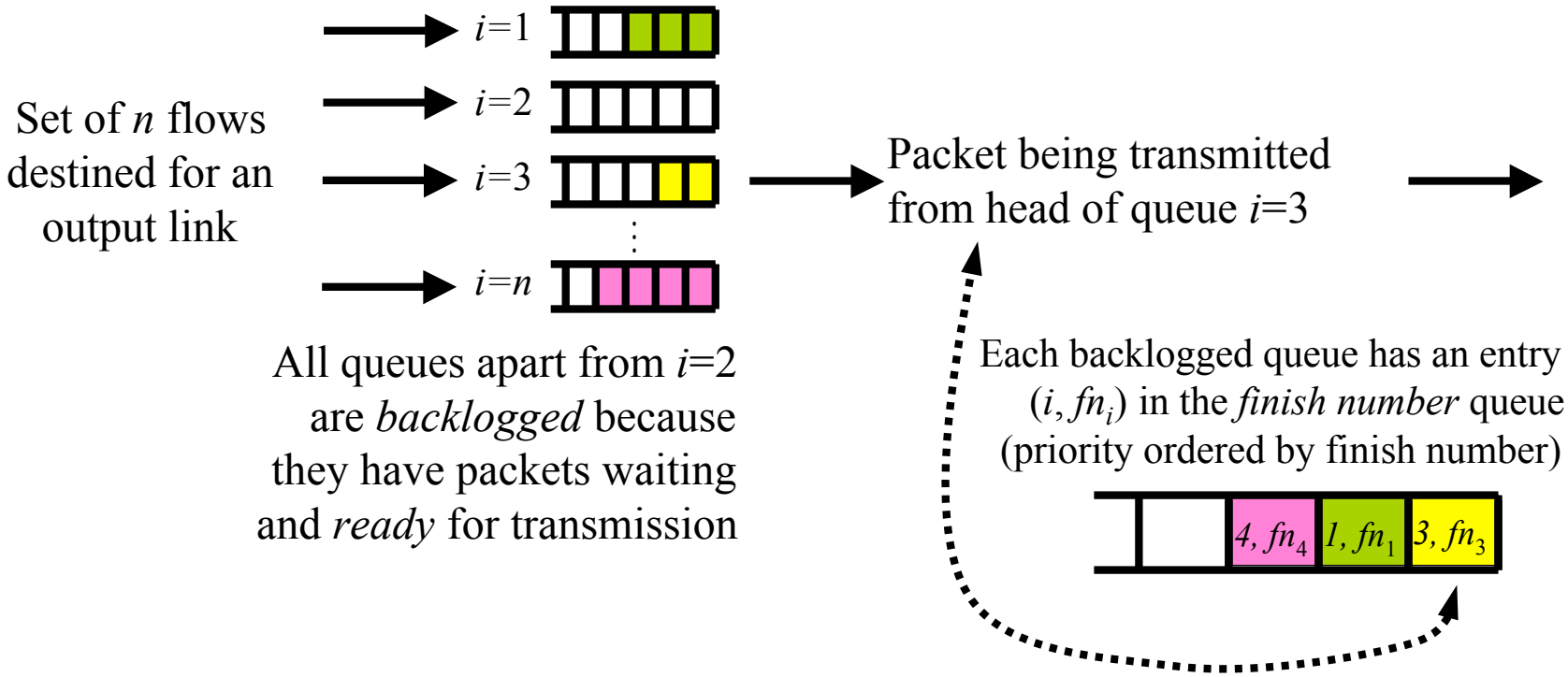
Weighted Fair Queuing

- "Packet-by-packet generalized processor-sharing algorithm"
  - A rate allocating service discipline; provides each flow with at least its proportional fair share of link capacity; isolates timing between flows
- Definitions:
  - A packet switch has several inputs, feeding to an output link shared by n established flows
    - Each flow, i, is allocated a fraction $\tilde{u}_i$ of the link
    - Total bandwidth allocated to all n connections is $U = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \tilde{u}_i$ where $U \leq 1$
    - Assume an acceptance test rejects connections that would cause requested bandwidth to exceed available bandwidth
  - Define the "finish number", fn_i, to represent job completion times
    - Used in definition of scheduling algorithm

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WFQ: Packet Scheduling

- Each link of the packet switch is output buffered
- Output buffers conceptually comprise two sets of queues:
  - A set of FIFO queues for each of the *n* flows
  - A priority ordered shortest finish number (SFN) queue
- Entry at head of SFN queue indicates the FIFO queue to service



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WFQ: Packet Scheduling

- As a packet becomes ready on a FIFO queue, its finish number is calculated, and the SFN queue is updated
  - Currently transmitting packet never pre-empted, even if the finish number of the newly ready packet would place it at the head of the SFN queue
- When a packet completes transmission, it is removed from the head of the FIFO and SFN queues
  - If the FIFO queue is still backlogged, the SFN queue is updated with the finish number of the newly ready packet
  - The packet from the queue referenced by the entry at the head of the SFN queue begins transmission

- Key is the calculation of the finish number for each packet as it becomes ready on a backlogged queue

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WFQ: Finish Numbers

- Define:
  - The total bandwidth of all backlogged flows, U_b
  - The finish number of the link, FN
  - The current time, t, and the previous time, t_{-1}, when FN and U_b updated

- Computing the finish number when the link becomes active:
  - The link is idle: FN=0, U_b=0, t_{-1}=0 and all $fn_i = 0$
  - A packet of length e arrives on a flow assigned fraction $\tilde{u}_i$ of the link, and starts a link busy interval on link i
    - Compute $U_b = U_b + \tilde{u}_i$ and $fn_i = fn_i + e/\tilde{u}_i$
    - Set $t_{-1} = t$
    - Insert entry (fn_i, i) in the SFN queue
  - Intuition: finish number of the first packet set to transmission delay for the job, adjusted by the fraction of the link used

[cont'd]

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WFQ: Finish Numbers

- Computing subsequent finish numbers during link busy interval
  - If a packet arrives on a previously idle flow, i
    - Increment FN by $(t - t_{-1})/U_b$
    - Compute $fn_i = \max(FN, fn_i) + e/\tilde{u}_i$
    - Insert entry (fn_i, i) in the SFN queue
    - Set $t_{-1} = t$ and increment $U_b = U_b + \tilde{u}_i$
  - When the transmission of a packet on flow i completes
    - If the connection remains backlogged
      - Compute $fn_i = fn_i + e/\tilde{u}_i$ where e is the length of the newly ready packet
      - Insert entry (fn_i, i) in the SFN queue
    - If the connection becomes idle
      - Increment FN by $(t-t_{-1})/U_b$
      - Set $t_{-1} = t$ and decrement $U_b = U_b - \tilde{u}_i$
  - Intuition: finish number fn_i represents deadline when a packet on flow i will be transmitted

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WFQ: Properties

- Complex algorithm to calculate finish number, and determine the transmission order of packet – what is the benefit?

- Can control latency and jitter, can isolate traffic flows
  - Bounds on per-hop and end-to-end latency for traffic
  - Guaranteed network capacity

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WFQ: Per-Hop Latency

- Delay between time a packet becomes ready (when it reaches the head of the FIFO output queue) and when transmission completes is *latency*, L_i
  - Blocking time due to the WFQ algorithm itself, ignoring queuing delay

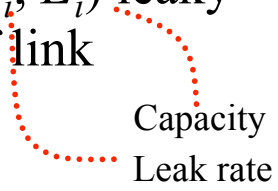
- It has been proved that $L_i < e_i/\tilde{u}_i + 1$
  where: e_i is the normalised maximum packet length,
  $\tilde{u}_i$ is the fraction of the link assigned to this flow
  - First term: time taken to transmit largest packet
  - Second term: blocking due to non pre-emptive schedule

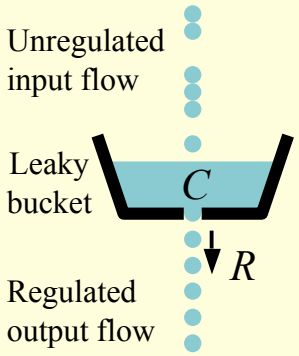
- Because of the rate control behaviour of WFQ, this bound is independent of other traffic on the output link

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WFQ: Total Per-Hop Delay

- Total per-hop delay, $W_i(1)$, for a packet of length e is equal to the sum of latency, calculated previously, and queuing delay
- To predict queuing delay, you need to know arrival pattern
  - Queuing delay can be unbounded even if allocated bandwidth, $\tilde{u}_i$, equals the actual bandwidth of the flow, u_i, if no constraint on arrivals
  - But, can be proven that $W_i(1) = (E_i + e_i)/\tilde{u}_i + 1$ if arrivals fit a (u_i, E_i) leaky bucket constraint and flow allocated sufficient fraction $\tilde{u}_i \geq u_i$ of link
    - (Latency term) + E_i to represent queuing delay
    - Matches periodic, and many sporadic, isochronous flows





- Output data rate will not exceed R, irrespective of variation in the input rate (may be < R, if input is idle)
- Average input rate cannot exceed R, except for short term bursts of at most C packets; maximum number of packets entering the network in any given time, t, is $Rt + C$
- Useful for turning sporadic flows into periodic flows, if average rate of sporadic flow ≤ R, and bursts never cause bucket overflow

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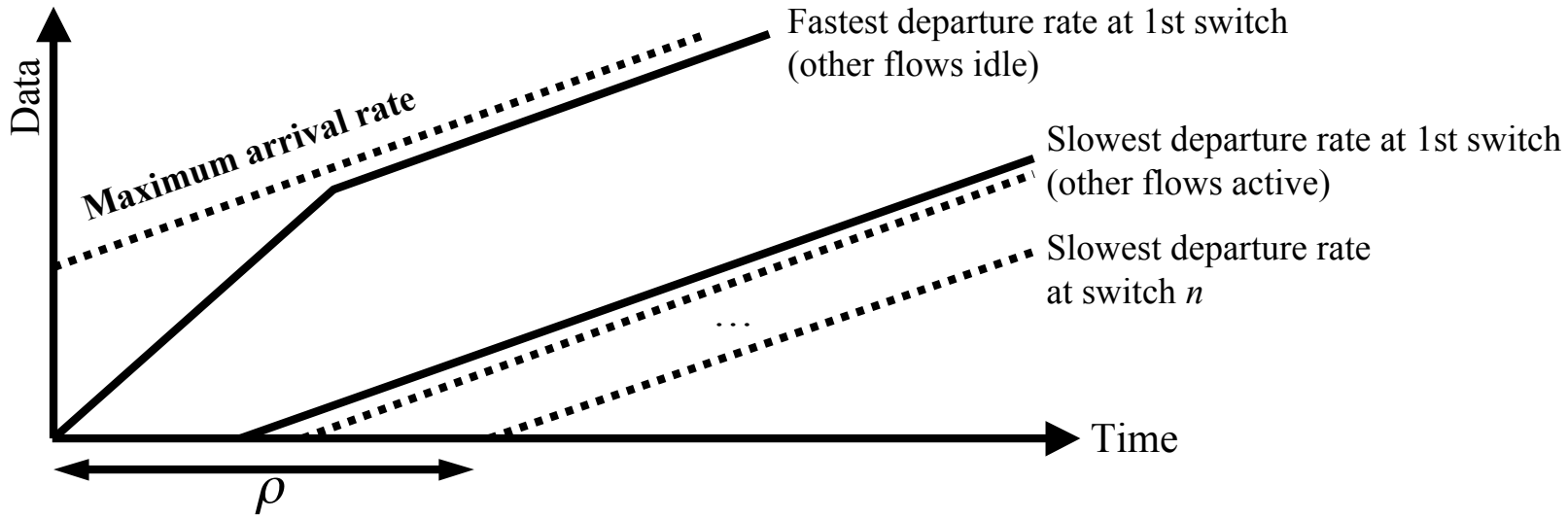
End-to-End Delay of WFQ

- If we know per-hop delay, can we model end-to-end delay?

- Assume a homogeneous network:
  - A connection i with rate u_i traverses ρ switches
  - Traffic is initially shaped to match a (u_i, E_i) leaky bucket
  - Intermediate switches perform WFQ, but no traffic shaping
  - All links have the same capacity, and the connection is allocated the same fraction $\tilde{u}_i = u_i$ of bandwidth

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End-to-End Delay of WFQ



- Making worst case assumptions, maximum arrival rate at switch n is slowest departure rate at switch n-1
  - 1 unit of delay added due to non pre-emption at each hop

- Can derive $W_i(\rho) = \frac{E_i + \rho e}{\tilde{u}_i} + \rho$ when $\tilde{u}_i = u_i$

  (Same as per-hop delay, but adjusted for the number of hops ρ)

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End-to-End Delay of WFQ

- Generalise: output links may have different transmission rates
- For switch j traversed by flow i
  - Assume flow i satisfies a leaky bucket (λ_i, E_i) at the first hop
  - Assume flow i is allocated $u_i = \lambda_i$
  - Let $e_{\max}(i, j)$ denote time taken to transmit largest packet of all flows sharing the output link with connection i

- Can show that $W_i(\rho) = \frac{E_i + \rho e}{\lambda_i} + \sum_{j=1}^{\rho} e_{\max}(i, j)$

  - As before, but adjusted for non pre-emption delays of variable rate/size packets at each hop
- Can also show that, maximum jitter is $\frac{E_i}{\lambda_i} + \sum_{j=i}^{\rho} e_{\max}(i, j)$

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Weighted Fair Queuing: Summary

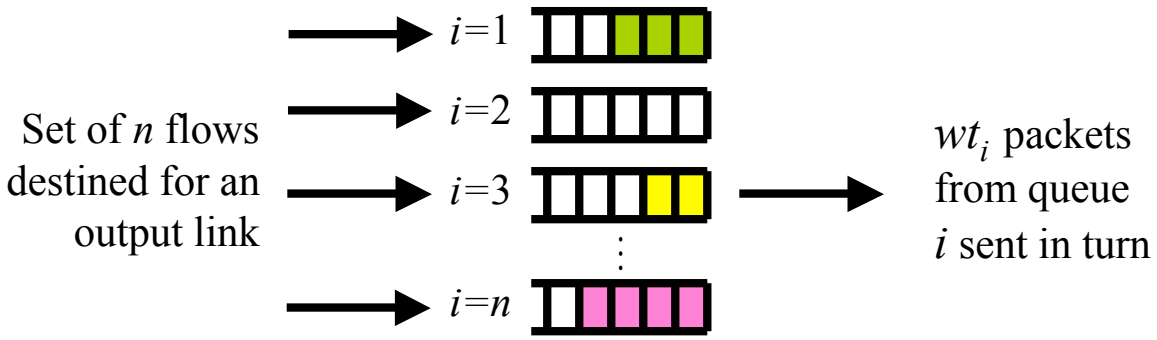
- A dynamic priority scheduling algorithms to ensure:
  - Each flow *i* gets at least a fraction u_i of the link bandwidth
  - Packets are scheduled fairly, and starvation is avoided
- Per-hop delay and end-to-end delay for a flow can be bounded, if the traffic pattern of the flow is known
  - Independent of the other flows in the network

- Compared to an uncontrolled packet network WFQ is complex, but can guarantee throughput, latency and jitter
  - Simplifies applications running on a WFQ network, since they can predict timing of message delivery

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Weighted Round Robin Scheduling

- In *round robin* scheduling, jobs are placed in a FIFO queue
  - The job at the head of the queue executes for one time slice
  - If it doesn't complete within the time slice, it is pre-empted and put at the back of the queue
  - There are n jobs in the queue, each job gets one slice every n time slots (that is, every *round*)
- A *weighted round robin* schedule extends this, to give each job i a weight wt_i
  - A job with weight wt_i executes for wt_i time slices each round
  - Length of the round equals $\sum_{i=1}^{n} wt_i$



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WRR Scheduling: Throughput Guarantees

- Assume constant bit rate, periodic, flows: $M_i = (p_i, e_i, D_i)$
  - Minimum inter-arrival time of messages p_i
  - Size of each message e_i
  - Maximum acceptable end-to-end delay D_i

- Each round, if more than wt_i packets are backlogged on queue i, then wt_i packets are transmitted
  - Each flow is guaranteed wt_i slots each round
  - Rate allocating: may send more, if nothing else to transmit
- A design parameter is RL the maximum number of slots per round
  - At all times $\sum_{i=1}^{n} wt_i \leq RL$
  - Each flow is guaranteed a share wt_i/RL of the link capacity
  - Provided that:
    - $RL < p_{\min}$ (where p_{min} is minimum p_i over all i)
    - $wt_i \geq e_i/(p_i/RL)$ (with appropriate rounding)

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WRR Scheduling: End-to-End Delay Bound

- Messages take at most e_i/wt_i rounds to complete
- Implies delay through first switch = $(e_i/wt_i)RL$
- At each subsequent switch, each round of packets arriving is sent in the next round
  - Implies one round delay at each hop

- Therefore, end-to-end delay for connection i with message size e_i assigned weigth wt_i passing through r switches is bounded by:

$$W_i \leq (e_i/wt_i + r - 1)RL$$

- Can also be shown that jitter can be bounded by

$$\text{jitter} < p_i - e_i + (r - 1)(RL - 1)$$

  for messages of size e_i with inter-arrival time of p_i

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WRR Scheduling: Connection Setup

- Why use a fixed round length *RL*?
- Too costly to change the round length each time a new flow is established
  - Would require adjusting weights for all pre-existing flows

- With a fixed *RL*, connection establishment becomes:
  - Pass parameters (p_i, e_i, D_i) to each hop router
  - At each hop, the scheduler computes the weight, wt_i, required to support the new flow
  - If the sum of existing weights < $RL - wt_i$ the flow is accepted at that hop
  - If all hops accept, the flow is established

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Weighted Round Robin Scheduling

- Flows are guaranteed capacity
- WRR scheduling is efficient to implement, since the scheduling decision is O(1)
  - Simply pick wt_i packets from the next queue

- End-to-end delay can be bounded
- Since the scheduler is rate allocating, jitter is not controlled but can be bounded

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Resource Reservation Protocols

- Throughout the discussion of queuing algorithms, we have assumed that the required rate allocation, $\tilde{u}_i$, is known at each switch
- In a real packet network, hosts must inform the routers of the flow characteristics and required rate
- Implies a *resource reservation protocol* is needed
- Several issues to consider:
  - Scalability and router state
  - Multicast communication
  - Heterogeneity of destinations
  - Dynamic membership
  - Relation to routing and admission control

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Case Study: RSVP

- A standard resource reservation protocol in the Internet is RSVP
- Basic operation:
  - Sources send periodic *path* messages, describing the flow
    - Create path state in intermediate routers
  - Receivers send *reservation* messages back towards the source
    - Cause intermediate routers to perform acceptance test and setup a resource reservation for the flow described by the path messages
    - May send a reject message to the receiver, if acceptance test fails
    - Reservations refreshed periodically by receivers
- Characteristics:
  - Soft state, for graceful failure
  - Receiver driven reservations support multicast

- Widely supported and available if you control the network, but not widely used in the public Internet

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Summary

- Why enhanced service is needed
- What is needed to support enhanced services
  - Queue discipline
  - Acceptance test
  - Signalling protocol
- Two approaches to implementing priority queuing
  - WFQ
  - WRR
  - Performance trade-off between the two approaches
- Brief pointer to RSVP

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