

# **Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) Systems Programming and Concurrency ECE252 Laboratory Manual**

by

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# Preface

## Who Should Read This Lab Manual?

This lab manual is written for students who are taking Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) Systems Programming and Concurrency course ECE252 in the University of Waterloo.

## What is in This Lab Manual?

The first purpose of this document is to provide the descriptions of each laboratory project. The second purpose of this document is a quick reference guide of the relevant development tools for completing laboratory projects. This manual is divided into three parts.

Part I describes the lab administration policies

Part II is a set of course laboratory projects as follows.

- Lab1: Introduction to systems programming in Linux computing environment
- Lab2: Multi-threaded concurrency programming with blocking I/O
- Lab3: Inter-process communication and concurrency control
- Lab4: Parallel web crawling
- Lab5: Single-threaded concurrency programming with asynchronous I/O

Part III is a quick reference guide of the Linux software development tools. We will be using Ubuntu 18.04 LTS operating system. Materials in this part needs to be self-studied before lab starts. The main topics are as follows.

- Linux hardware environment
- Editors
- Compiler
- Debugger

- Utility to automate build
- Utility for version control

## Acknowledgments

We are grateful that Professor Patrick Lam shared his ECE459 projects with us. Eric praetzel has provided continuous IT support, which makes the Linux computing environment available to our students.

We would like to sincerely thank our students who took ECE254 and ECE459 courses in the past few years. They provided constructive feedback every term to make the manual more useful to address problems that students would encounter when working on each lab assignment.



# **Part I**

## **Lab Administration**

# Lab Administration Policy

## Group Lab Policy

- **Group Size.** All labs are done in a group of *two*. A size of three is only considered in a lab section that has an odd number of students and only one group is allowed to have a size of three. All group of three requests are processed on a first-come first-served basis. A group size of one is not permitted except that your group is split up. There is no workload reduction if you do the labs individually. Everyone in the group normally gets the same mark. The Learn at URL <http://learn.uwaterloo.ca> is used to signup for groups. *The lab group signup is due by 10:00pm on the Second Friday of the academic term.* Late group sign-up is not accepted and will result in losing the entire lab sign-up mark, which is 2% of the total lab grade.
- **Group Split-up.** If you notice workload imbalance, try to solve it as soon as possible within your group or split-up the group as the last resort. Group split-up is only allowed once. You are allowed to join a one member group after the split-up. But you are not allowed to split up from the newly formed group again. There is one grace day deduction penalty to be applied to each member in the old group. We highly recommend everyone to stay with your group members as much as possible, for the ability to do team work will be an important skill in your future career. Please choose your lab partners carefully. A copy of the code and documentation completed before the group split-up will be given to each individual in the group.
- **Group Split-up Deadline.** To split from your group for a particular lab, you need to notify the lab instructor in writing and sign the group split-up form (see Appendix). Lab $n$  ( $n=1,2,3,4$ ) group split-up form needs to be submitted to the lab instructor by 4:30pm Thursday in the week that Lab $n$  has scheduled lab sessions. If you are late to submit the split-up form, then you need to finish Lab $n$  as a group and submit your split-up form during the week where Lab $(n+1)$  has scheduled sessions and split starting from Lab $(n+1)$ .

Deliverable	Weight	Lab Session Week	Deadline
Group Sign-up	2%	N/A	10:00 pm Friday in Week 2
LAB 1	18%	Week 3	10:00 pm Wednesday in Week 4
LAB 2	20%	Week 5	10:00 pm Friday in Week 6
LAB 3	20%	Weeks 8	10:00 pm Wednesday in Week 9
LAB 4	20%	Week 10	10:00 pm Wednesday in Week 11
LAB 5	20%	Week 12	10:00 pm Last day of lecture

Table 0.1: Project Deliverable Weight of the Lab Grade, Scheduled Lab Sessions and Deadlines.

## Lab Assignments Grading and Deadline Policy

Labs are graded by lab TAs based on the rubric listed in each lab. The weight of each lab towards your final lab grade is listed in Table 0.1.

- **Lab Assignment Preparation and Due Dates.** Students are required to prepare the lab well before they come to the scheduled lab session. *Pre-lab deliverable for each lab is due before the scheduled lab session starts.* During the scheduled lab session, we either provide in lab help or conduct lab assignment evaluation or do both at the same time.

The detailed deadlines of post-lab deliverables are displayed in Table 0.1.

- **Lab Assignment Late Submissions.** Late submission is accepted within five days after the deadline of the lab. No late submission is accepted five days after the lab deadline. There are five grace days <sup>1</sup> that can be used for some post-lab deliverables late submissions <sup>2</sup>. A group split-up will consume one grace day. After all grace days are consumed, a 10% per day late submission penalty will be applied. However if it is five days after the lab deadline, no late submission is accepted.
- **Lab Re-grading.** To initiate a re-grading process, contact the grading TA in charge first. The re-grading is a rigid process. The entire lab will be re-graded. Your new grades may be lower, unchanged or higher than the original grade received. If you are still not satisfied with the grades received after the re-grading, escalate your case to the lab instructor to request a review and the lab instructor will finalize the case.

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<sup>1</sup>Grace days are calendar days. Days in weekends are counted.

<sup>2</sup>A post-lab deliverable that does not accept a late submission will be clearly stated in the lab assignment description. Normally grace days are for lab reports. Labs whose evaluation involves demonstrations do not accept late submissions of the code.

## Lab Repeating Policy

For a student who repeats the course, labs need to be re-done with a new lab partner. Simply turning in the old lab code is not allowed. We understand that the student may choose a similar route to the solution chosen last time the course was taken. However it should not be identical. The labs will be done a second time, we expect that the student will improve the older solutions. Also the new lab partner should be contributing equally, which will also lead to differences in the solutions.

Note that the policy is course specific to the discretion of the course instructor and the lab instructor.

## Lab Assignments Solution Internet Policy

It is not permitted to post your lab assignment solution source code or lab report on the internet freely for public to access. For example, it is not acceptable to host a public repository on GitHub that contains your lab assignment solutions. A warning with instructions to take the lab assignment solutions off the internet will be sent out upon the first offence. If no action is taken from the offender within twenty-four hours, then a lab grade zero will automatically be assigned to the offender.

## Seeking Help Outside Scheduled Lab Hours

- **Discussion Forum.** We recommend students to use the Piazza discussion forum to ask the teaching team questions instead of sending individual emails to lab teaching staff. For questions related to lab projects, our target response time is one business day before the deadline of the particular lab in question <sup>3</sup>. *There is no guarantee on the response time to questions of a lab that passes the submission deadline.*
- **Office Hours.** The Learn system calendar gives the office hour details.
- **Appointments.** Students can also make appointments with lab teaching staff should their problems are not resolved by discussion forum or during office hours. The appointment booking is by email.

To make the appointment efficient and effective, when requesting an appointment, please specify three preferred times and roughly how long the appointment needs to be. On average, an appointment is fifteen minutes per project group. Please also summarize the main questions to be asked in your appointment requesting email. If a question requires teaching staff to look at a

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<sup>3</sup>Our past experiences show that the number of questions spike when deadline is close. The teaching staff will not be able to guarantee one business day response time when workload is above average, though we always try our best to provide timely response.

code fragment, please bring a laptop with necessary development software installed.

Please note that teaching staff will not debug student's program for the student. Debugging is part of the exercise of finishing a programming assignment. Teaching staff will be able to demonstrate how to use the debugger and provide case specific debugging tips. Teaching staff will not give direct solution to a lab assignment. Guidances and hints will be provided to help students to find the solution by themselves.

## **Lab Facility After Hour Access Policy**

After hour access to the lab will be given to the class when we start to use the Keil boards in lab. However please be advised that the after hour access is a privilege. Students are required to keep the lab equipment and furniture in good conditions to maintain this privilege.

No food or drink is allowed in the lab. Please be informed that you may share the lab with other classes. When resources become too tight, certain cooperation is required such as taking turns to use the stations in the lab.

# **Part II**

## **Lab Projects**

# Lab 1

## Introduction to Systems Programming in Linux Computing Environment

### 1.1 Introduction

#### 1.1.1 Objectives

This lab is to introduce system programming in a general Linux Development Environment at ECE Department. After finishing this lab, students will be able to

- apply basic Linux commands to interact with the Linux system through shell;
- apply standard Linux C programming tools for system programming and
- create a program to interact with Linux file systems by applying the relevant system and library calls.

#### 1.1.2 Topics

Concretely, the lab will cover the following topics:

- Basic Linux commands
- C programming toolchain including `gcc`, `make`, and `ddd`
- Linux manual pages
- Linux system calls and file I/O library calls to traverse a directory and perform read/write operations on selected files.

## 1.2 Starter Files

The starter files are on GitHub at url: <http://github.com/yqh/ece252/tree/master/lab1/starter>. It contains the following sub-directories where we have example code and image files to help you get started:

- the `cmd_arg` demonstrates how to capture command line input arguments;
- the `images` contains some image files;
- the `ls` demonstrates how to list all files under a directory and obtain file types;
- the `png_util` provides a set of utility functions to process a PNG image file; and
- the `pointer` demonstrates how to use pointers to access a C structure.

Using the code in the starter files is permitted and will not be considered as plagiarism.

## 1.3 Pre-lab Preparation

Read the Introduction to ECE Linux Programming Environment supplementary material in Part III Chapter 1.

## 1.4 Basic Linux Commands Exercises

These in-lab exercises are to practice some basic commands on Linux.

1. Use the MobaXterm to login onto `eceubuntu.uwaterloo.ca`. You are now inside the Linux shell and in your home directory. The home directory usually has a path name in the format of `/home/username`, where `username` normally is your UWID. For example, a user with UWID of `jsmith` has a home directory of `/home/jsmith`.
2. Use the `pwd` command to print the full filename of the current working directory. You should see your home directory name printed on the screen. For example: `/home/jsmith`.
3. Use the `echo $HOME` command to print your home directory path name. You will notice that the output matches the `pwd` output of exercise 2.
4. Use the `env` command to list all the environment variables and their values. Note that `HOME` is one of the many environment variables.
5. One important environment variable is `PATH`. It specifies a set of directories the system searches for executable programs. Use `echo $PATH` to see your `PATH` environment variable setting.



6. Execute command `which ls` to locate the directory the `ls` command is in. You will notice the directory is listed in `PATH` environment variable. When you issue a command and get an error message of “command not found”, it means the command cannot be found after searching all the directories listed in `PATH` environment variable. A commonly seen error is that a command in your current working directory gives you “command not found” error. This is normally due to the fact that the current working directory `.` or `./` is not in the `PATH`. Consequently you need to add the path to the command name for the system to know where the command is. For example `./a.out` tells the system to run the command `a.out` located in the current working directory.
7. Use the `ls` command to list all files in your current working directory.
8. Read the online manual of the `ls` command by issuing `man ls` command to the shell. Find out from the manual what options `-l`, `-a` and `-la` do. Execute the `ls` command with these three options and see the execution results.
9. Create a directory as the work space of labs under your home directory. Name the newly created directory as `labs`. Read the man page of the command `mkdir` to see how to do it.
10. Change directory to the newly create directory of `labs`. Read the man page of command `cd` to find out how to change directory.
11. Clone the ece252 lab repository by using the command:  
`git clone https://github.com/yqh/ece252.git` .  
A new directory named `ece252` will be created. It has lab manual and starter code of ECE252 labs.
12. Read the man page of the `find` command by issuing `man find` command to the shell. Read what the `-name` option does. Use `find` with the `-name` option to find all the files with `.png` file extension in the `$HOME/labs/ece252` directory.
13. Change directory to where the `WEEF_1.png` is. Use `file WEEF_1.png` command to obtain the file type and image properties such as dimensions and bit depth.
14. Use `file` command to obtain the file type information of `Disguise.png`. You should see that this is not an image file though the file extension is `.png`. Use a text editor to open the file and see the contents. This exercise is to show you that the `file` command does not obtain the file type information based on the file extension. It looks into the contents of file to extract the file type information <sup>1</sup>.

---

<sup>1</sup>A file has a magic number to indicate its type. The magic number is a sequence of bytes usually appearing near the beginning of the file. The `file` command checks the magic number. The PNG file's magic number is 89 50 4E 47 in hexadecimal, which is `.PNG` in ASCII.

## 1.5 Lab Assignment

### 1.5.1 Problem statement

You are given a directory under which some files are PNG images and some files are not. The directory may contain nested sub-directories<sup>2</sup>. All valid PNG images under the given directory are horizontal strips of a bigger whole image. They all have the same width. The height of each image might be different. The PNG images have the naming convention of `*_N.png`, where `N` is the image strip sequence number and `N=0, 1, 2, . . .`. However a file with `.png` or `.PNG` extension may not be a real PNG image file. You need to locate all the real PNG image files under the given directory first. Then you will concatenate these horizontal strip images sequentially based on the sequence number in the file name to restore the original whole image. The sequence number indicates the order the image should be concatenated from top to bottom. For example, file `img_1.png` is the first horizontal strip and `img_2.png` is the second horizontal strip. To concatenate these two strips, the pixel data in `img_1.png` should be followed immediately by the pixel data in `img_2.png` file. Figure 1.1 illustrates the concatenation order.

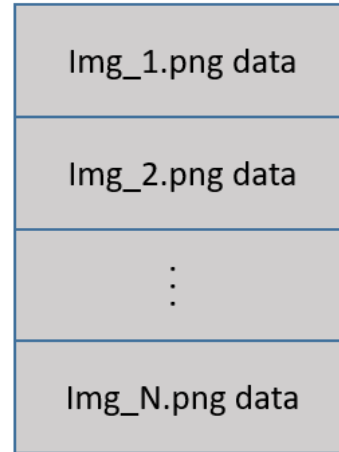


Figure 1.1: Image Concatenation Illustration

To solve the problem, first you will create a tool named `findpng` to search the given directory hierarchy to find all the real PNG files under it. Secondly you will create an image data concatenation tool named `catpng` to concatenate pixel data of a set of PNG files to form a single PNG image file. The `catpng` only processes PNG images with the same width in dimension.

### 1.5.2 The `findpng` command

The expected behaviour of the `findpng` is given in the following manual page of the command.

---

<sup>2</sup>A nested sub-directory is a sub-directory that may contain many layers of sub-directories.

## Man page of findpng

### NAME

**findpng** - search for PNG files in a directory hierarchy

### SYNOPSIS

**findpng** DIRECTORY

### DESCRIPTION

Search for PNG files under the directory tree rooted at DIRECTORY and return the search results to the standard output. The command does not follow symbolic links.

### OUTPUT FORMAT

The output of search results is a list of PNG file relative path names, one file pathname per line. The order of listing the search results is not specified. If the search result is empty, then output "findpng: No PNG file found".

### EXAMPLES

**findpng .**

Find PNG of the current working directory. A non-empty search results might look like the following:

```
./lab1/sandbox/new_bak.png
./lab1/sandbox/t1.png
./png_img/rgba_scanline.png
./png_img/v1.png
```

An empty search result will look like the following:

```
findpng: No PNG file found
```

## Searching PNG files under a given directory

UNIX file system is organized as a tree. A file has a type. Three file types that this assignment will deal with are regular, directory and symbolic link. A PNG file is a regular file. A directory is a directory file. A link created by `ls -n` is a symbolic link. Read the section 2 of `stat()` family system calls man page for information about other file types. The `ls/ls_ctype.c` in the starter code gives a sample program to determine the file type of a given file.

To search all the files under a given directory and its subdirectories, one needs to traverse the given directory tree to its leaf nodes. The library call of `opendir()` returns a directory stream for `readdir()` to read each entry in a directory. One needs to call `closedir()` to close the directory stream once operations on it are completed. The control flow is to go through each entry in a directory and check the file type. If it is a regular file, then further check whether it is a PNG file by comparing the first 8 bytes with the PNG file header bytes (see Section 1.5.3). If it is a directory file, then you need to go to check files under the sub-directory and repeat what you did in the parent directory. The `chdir()` family system calls change a working directory. The `ls/ls_fname.c` in the starter code gives a sample program that lists all file entries of a given directory.

Always check the man page of the system calls and library calls for detailed information.

### 1.5.3 The catpng command

The expected behaviour of the `catpng` is given in the following manual page of the command.

#### Man page of the catpng

##### NAME

**catpng** - concatenate PNG images vertically to a new PNG named all.png

##### SYNOPSIS

**catpng** [PNG\_FILE]...

##### DESCRIPTION

Concatenate PNG\_FILE(s) vertically to all.png, a new PNG file.

## OUTPUT FORMAT

The concatenated image is output to a new PNG file with the name of `all.png`.

## EXAMPLES

```
catpng ./img1.png ./png/img2.png
```

Concatenate the listed PNG images vertically to `all.png`.

## File I/O

There are two sets of functions for file I/O operations under Linux. At system call level, we have the *unbuffered I/O* functions: `open`, `read`, `write`, `lseek` and `close`. At library call level, we have standard I/O functions: `fopen`, `fread`, `fwrite`, `fseek` and `fclose`. The library is built on top of unbuffered I/O functions. It handles details such as buffer allocation and performing I/O in optimal sized chunks to minimize the number of `read` and `write` usage, hence is recommended to be used for this lab.

The `fopen` returns a FILE pointer given a file name and the mode. A PNG image file is a binary file, hence when you call `fopen`, use mode `"rb"` for reading and `"wb+"` for reading and writing, where the `"b"` indicates it is a binary file that we are opening. Read the man page of `fopen` for more mode options.

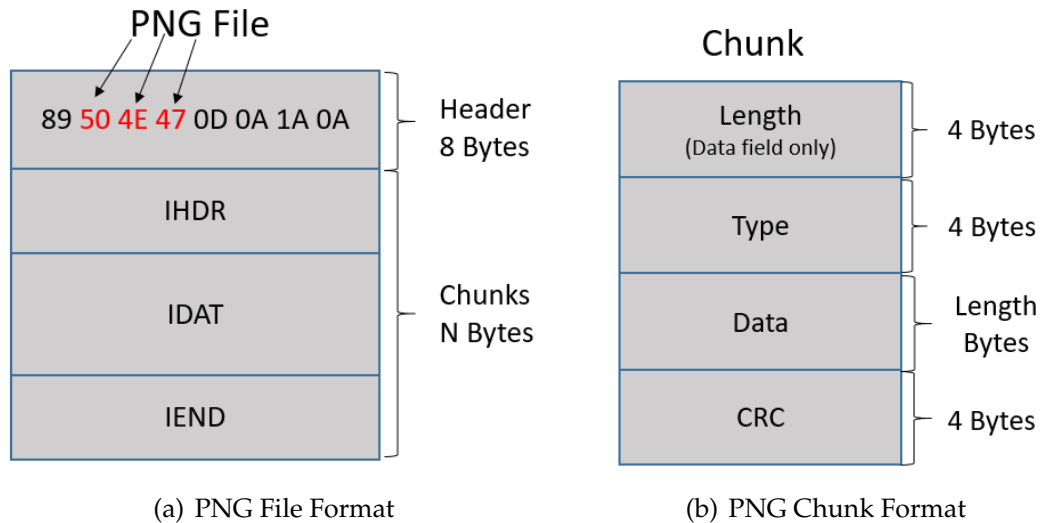
After the file is opened, use `fread` to read the number of bytes from the stream pointed by the FILE pointer returned by `fopen`. Each opened file has an internal state of file position indicator. The file position indicator sets to the beginning of the file when it is just opened. The `fread` operation will advance the file position indicator by the number of bytes that has been read from the file. The `fseek` sets the file position indicator to the user specified location. The `fwrite` writes user specified number of bytes to the stream pointed by the FILE pointer. The file position indicator also advances by the number of bytes that has been written. It is important to call `fclose` to close the file stream when I/O operations are finished. Failure to do so may result in incomplete files.

The man pages of the standard I/O library is the main reference for details including function prototypes and how to use them.

## PNG File Format

In order to finish this assignment, one need to have some understanding of the png file format and how an image is represented in the file. One way to store an image is to use an array of coloured dots referred to as *pixels*. A row of pixels within an image is called a *scanline*. Pixels are ordered from left-to-right within each scanline.

Scanlines appear top-to-bottom in the pixel array. In this assignment, each pixel is represented as four 8-bit<sup>3</sup> unsigned integers (ranging from 0 to 255) that specify the red, green, blue and alpha intensity values. This encoding is often referred to as the RGBA encoding. RGB values specify the colour and the alpha value specifies the opacity of the pixel. The size of each pixel is determined by the number of bits per pixel. The dimensions of an image is described in terms of horizontal and vertical pixels.



PNG stands for “Portable Network Graphics”. It is a computer file format for storing, transmitting and displaying images[1]. A PNG file is a binary file. It starts with an 8-byte header followed by a series of chunks. You will notice the second, third and fourth bytes are the ASCII code of ‘P’, ‘N’ and ‘G’ respectively (see Figure 1.2(a)).

The first chunk is the IHDR chunk, which contains meta information of the image such as the dimensions of the pixels. The last chunk is always the IEND chunk, which marks the end of the image datastream. In between there is at least one IDAT chunk which contains the compressed filtered pixel array of the image. There are other types chunks that may appear between IHDR chunk and IEND chunk. For all the PNG files we are dealing with in this assignment, we use the format that only has one IHDR chunk, one IDAT chunk and one IEND chunk (see Figure 1.2(a)).

Each chunk consists of four parts. A four byte length field, a four byte chunk type code field, the chunk data field whose length is specified in the chunk length field, and a four byte CRC (Cyclic Redundancy Check) field (see Figure 1.2(b)).

The length field stores the length of the data field in bytes. PNG file uses *big endian* byte order, which is the network byte order. When we process any PNG data that is more than one byte such as the length field, we need to convert the network byte order to host order before doing arithmetic. The `ntohl()` and `htonl()` library

<sup>3</sup>Formally, we say the image has a bit depth of 8 bits per sample.

calls convert a 32 bit unsigned integer from network order to host order and vice versa respectively.

The chunk type code consists four ASCII character. IHDR, IDAT and IEND are the three chunk type code that this assignment involves with.

The data field contains the data bytes appropriate to the chunk type. This field can be of zero length.

The CRC field calculates on the proceeding bytes in the type and data fields of the chunk. Note that the length field is not included in the CRC calculation.

The IHDR chunk data field has a fixed length of 13 bytes and they appear in the order as shown in Table 1.1. Width and height are four-byte unsigned integers giving the image dimensions in pixels. You will need these two values to complete this assignment. Bit depth gives the number of bits per sample. In this assignment, all images have a bit depth of 8. Colour type defines the PNG image type. All png images in this assignment have a colour type of 6, which is truecolor with alpha (i.e. RGBA image). The image pixel array data are filtered to prepare for the next step of compression. The Compression method and Filter method bytes encode the methods used. Both only have 0 values defined in the current standard. The Interlace method indicates the transmission order of the image data. 0 (no interlace) and 1 (Adam7 interlace) are the only two defined. In this assignment, all PNG images are non-interlaced. Table 1.1 Value column gives the typical IHDR values the PNG images you will be processing.

Name	Length	Value
Width	4 bytes	N/A
Height	4 bytes	N/A
Bit depth	1 byte	8
Colour type	1 byte	6
Compression method	1 byte	0
Filter method	1 byte	0
Interlace method	1 byte	0

Table 1.1: IHDR data field and value

The IDAT chunk data field contains compressed filtered pixel data. For each scanline, first an extra byte is added at the very beginning of the pixel array to indicate the filter method used. Filtering is for preparing the next step of compression. For example, if the raw pixel scanline is 4 bytes long, then the scanline after applying filter will be 5 bytes long. This added one byte per scanline will help to achieve better compression result. After all scanlines have be filtered, then the data are compressed according to the compression method encoded in IHDR chunk. The compressed data stream conforms to the zlib 1.0 format.

The IEND chunk marks the end of the PNG datastream. It has an empty data field.

## Concatenate the pixel data

To concatenate two horizontal image strips, the natural way of thinking is to start with the pixel array of each image and then concatenate the two pixel arrays vertically. Then we apply the filter to each scanline. Lastly we compress the filtered pixel array to fill the data field of the new IDAT chunk of the concatenated image. However a simpler way exists. We can start with the filtered pixel data of each image and then concatenate the two chunks of filtered pixel data arrays vertically, then apply the compression method to generate the data field of the new IDAT chunk.

How do we get filtered pixel data from a PNG IDAT chunk? Recall that the data field in IDAT chunk is compressed data that conforms to zlib format 1.0. We can use zlib functions to uncompress(i.e. inflate) the data. The `mem_inf` in the starter code takes in memory compressed(i.e. deflated) data as input and returns the uncompressed data to a another memory location. For each IDAT chunk you want to concatenate, call this function and stack the returned data in the order you wish and then you have the concatenated filtered pixel array. To create an IDAT chunk, we need to compress the filtered pixel data. The `mem_def` function in the starter code uses the zlib to compress (i.e. deflate) the input in memory data and return the deflated data. The `png_util` directory in the starter code demos how to use the aforementioned two functions.

To create a new PNG for the concatenated images, IHDR chunk also needs to have the new dimension information of the new PNG file. The rest of the fields of IHDR chunk can be kept the same as one of the PNG files to be concatenated. In this assignment, we assume that `catpng` can only process PNG files whose IHDR chunks only differ in the height field. So the new image will have a different height field, the rest of fields are the same as the input images.

## 1.6 Deliverables

### 1.6.1 Pre-lab deliverables

There is no pre-lab deliverable.

### 1.6.2 Post-lab Deliverables

The following are the steps to create your post-lab deliverable submission.

- Create a directory and name it `lab1`.
- Put the entire source code with a Makefile under the directory `lab1`. The Makefile default target includes `catpng` and `lspng`. That is command `make` should generate the aforementioned two executable files. We also expect that



command `make clean` will remove the object code and the default target. That is the `.o` files and the two executable files should be removed.

- Use `zip` command to zip up the contents of `lab1` directory and name it `lab1.zip`. We expect `unzip lab1.zip` will produce a `lab1` sub-directory in the current working directory and under the `lab1` sub-directory is your source code and the Makefile.

Submit the `lab1.zip` file to Lab1 Dropbox in Learn.

## 1.7 Marking Rubric

Points	Description
10	Makefile correctly builds and cleans
35	Implementation of <code>lspng</code>
55	Implementation of <code>catpng</code>

Table 1.2: Lab1 Marking Rubric

Table [1.2](#) shows the rubric for marking the lab.

## Lab 2

# Multi-threaded Programming with Blocking I/O

### 2.1 Objectives

This lab is to learn about and gain practical experience in multi-threaded programming in a general Linux environment. A single-thread implementation using blocking I/O to request a resource across the network is provided. Students are asked to reduce the latency of this operation by sending out multiple requests simultaneously to different machines by using the `pthread` library. After this lab, students will have a good understanding of

- how to design and implement a multi-threaded program by using the `pthread` library; and
- the role multi-threading plays in reducing the latency of a program.

### 2.2 Starter Files

The starter files are on GitHub at url: <http://github.com/yqh/ece252/tree/master/lab2/starter>. It contains the following sub-directories where we have example code to help you get started:

- the `cURL` demonstrates how to use cURL to fetch an image segment from the lab web server;
- the `fn_ptr` demonstrates how C function pointers work;
- the `getopt` demonstrates how to parse command line options;
- the `pthread` demonstrates how to create two threads where each thread takes multiple input parameters and return multiple values; and

- the [times](#) provides helper functions to profile program execution times.

Using the code in the starter files is permitted and will not be considered as plagiarism.

## 2.3 Pre-lab Preparation

Build the starter code and run the executables. Work through the code and understand what they do and how they work. Finish the pre-lab deliverable (see Section [2.6.1](#)).

## 2.4 Lab Assignment

### 2.4.1 Problem Statement

In the previous lab, a set of horizontal strips of a whole PNG image file were stored on a disk and you were asked to restore the whole image from these strips. In this lab, the horizontal image segments are on the web. I have three  $400 \times 300$  pictures (whole images) on three web servers. When you ask a web server to send you a picture, the web server crops the picture into fifty  $400 \times 6$  equally sized horizontal strips<sup>1</sup>. The web server assigns a sequence number to each strip from top to bottom starting from 0 and increments by 1<sup>2</sup>. Then the web server sleeps for a random time and then sends out a random strip in a simple PNG format that we assumed in lab1. That is the horizontal strip PNG image segment consists one IHDR chunk, one IDAT chunk and one IEND chunk. The PNG segment is an 8-bit RGBA/color image (see Table [1.1](#) for details). The web server uses an HTTP response header that includes the sequence number to tell you which strip it sends to you. The HTTP response header has the format of "X-Ece252-Fragment:  $M$ " where  $M \in [0, 49]$ . To request a random horizontal strip of picture  $N$ , where  $N \in [1, 3]$ , use the following URL: `http://machine:2520/image?img=N`, where

machine is one of the following:

- `ece252-1.uwaterloo.ca`,
- `ece252-2.uwaterloo.ca`, and
- `ece252-3.uwaterloo.ca`.

For example, when you request data from the following URL:

`http://ece252-1.uwaterloo.ca:2520/image?img=1`,

---

<sup>1</sup>Each image segment will have a size less than 8KB.

<sup>2</sup>The first horizontal strip has a sequence number of 0, the second strip has a sequence number of 1. The sequence number increments by 1 from top to bottom and the last strip has a sequence number of 49.

you may receive a random horizontal strip of picture 1. Assume this random strip you receive is the third horizontal strip (from top to bottom of the original picture), the received HTTP header will contain "X-Ece52-Fragment: 2". The received data will be the image segment in PNG format. You may use the browser to view a random horizontal strip of the PNG image the server sends. You may notice the same URL displays a different image strip every time you hit enter to refresh the page. Each strip has the same dimensions of  $400 \times 6$  pixels and is in PNG format.

Your objective is to request all horizontal strips of a picture from the server and then concatenate these strips to restore the original picture. Because every time the server sends a random strip, if you use a loop to keep requesting a random strip from a server, you may notice that you may receive the same strip multiple times before you receive all the fifty distinct strips. Due to the randomness, it will take a variable amount of time to get all the strips you need to restore the original picture.

## 2.4.2 Requirements

Use the `pthread` library, design and implement a threaded program to request all image segments from a web server by using blocking I/O and concatenate these segments together to form the whole image.

The provided starter code `main_write_header_cb.c` under `cURL` directory is a single-threaded implementation which uses `libcurl` blocking I/O function `curl_easy_perform()` to fetch one random horizontal strip of picture 1 from one of the web servers into memory and then output the received image segment to a PNG file. Your program should repeatedly fetch the image strips until you have them all. Recall because every time you get a random strip, the amount of time to get all the fifty distinct strips of a picture varies.

A very inefficient approach is to use a single-threaded loop to keep fetching until you get all fifty distinct strips of a picture and paste them together. You will notice the blocking I/O operation is the main cause of the latency. Your program will be blocked while each time waiting for the `curl_easy_perform()` to finish. One way to reduce the latency of this operation is to send out multiple blocking I/O requests simultaneously (to different machines) by using `pthread`. You will use this approach to reduce the latency in this lab <sup>3</sup>.

Your program should create as many threads as specified by the user command line input, and distribute the work among the three provided servers. Make sure all of your library (standard `glibc` and `libcurl`) calls are *thread-safe* (for `glibc`, e.g. `man 3 printf` to look at the documentation). Name your executable as `paster`. The behaviour of the command `paster` is given in the following section.

The provided three pictures on the server are for you to test your program. Your program should work for all these pictures. You may want to reuse part of your lab1 code to paste the received image segments together.

---

<sup>3</sup>Asynchronous I/O is another method to reduce the latency and we will explore it in lab5.

## 2.4.3 Man page of paster

### NAME

**paster** - pasting downloaded png files together by using multiple threads and blocking I/O through libcurl.

### SYNOPSIS

**paster** [OPTION]...

### DESCRIPTION

Retrieve all horizontal image segments of picture 1 from <http://ece252-1.uwaterloo.ca:2520/image?img=1> and paste all distinct segments received from top to bottom in the order of the image segment sequence number. Output the pasted image to disk and name it output.png.

**-t=NUM**

create NUM threads simultaneously requesting random image segments from multiple lab web servers. When this option is not specified, assumes a single-threaded implementation.

**-n=NUM**

request a random image segment of picture NUM from the web server. Default value is set to 1.

### OUTPUT FORMAT

The concated image is output to a PNG file with the name of output.png.

### EXAMPLES

```
paster -t 6 -n 2
```

Use 6 threads to simultaneously download all image segments of picture 2 from multiple web servers and concatenate these segments to restore picture 2. Output the concatenated picture to disk and name it output.png.

## 2.5 Programming Tips

### 2.5.1 The libcurl API

Though the image segment download code using `libcurl` is provided, familiarize yourself with the `libcurl` API will help you understand the provided code. The `libcurl` documentation URL is <https://curl.haxx.se/libcurl>. The man page of each function in the `libcurl` API can be found at URL <https://curl.haxx.se/libcurl/c/allfuncs.html>.

Note the provided example `cURL` code downloads the received image segment to memory and then output the data in memory to a PNG file. The output to a PNG file is just to make it easier for you to view the downloaded image segment to help you understand the example code. However your `paster` program does not need to output each segment received to a file. An efficient way (i.e. without unnecessary file I/O) is to directly use the received image segment data in memory instead of outputting the data to a file first and then reading the data back from file into memory.

#### Thread Safety

`Libcurl` is thread safe but there are a few exceptions. The man page of `libcurl-thread(3)` (see <https://curl.haxx.se/libcurl/c/threadsafe.html>) is the ultimate reference. We re-iterate key points from `libcurl` manual that are relevant to this lab are as follows:

- The same `libcurl` handle should not be shared in multiple threads.
- The `libcurl` is thread safe but does not have internal thread synchronization mechanism. You will need to take care of the thread synchronization.

### 2.5.2 The pthreads API

The `pthread(7)` man page gives an overview of POSIX threads and should be read. The SEE ALSO section near the bottom of the man page lists functions in the API. The man pages of `pthread_create(3)`, `pthread_join(3)` and `pthread_exit(3)` provide detailed information of how to create, join and terminate a thread.

#### The pthread Memory Leak Bug

There is a known memory leak bug related to `pthread_exit()`. Please refer to [https://bugzilla.redhat.com/show\\_bug.cgi?id=483821](https://bugzilla.redhat.com/show_bug.cgi?id=483821) for details. Using `return()` instead of `pthread_exit()` will avoid the memory leak bug.

## 2.6 Deliverables

### 2.6.1 Pre-lab deliverables

Create a single-threaded implementation of the `paster` command. The following are the steps to create your pre-lab deliverable submission.

- Create a directory and name it `lab2-pre`.
- Put the entire source code with a Makefile under the directory `lab2-pre`. The Makefile default target is `paster`. That is command `make` should generate the `paster` executable file. We also expect that command `make clean` will remove the object code and the default target. That is the `.o` files and the two executable files should be removed.
- Use `zip` command to zip up the contents of `lab2` directory and name it `lab2-pre.zip`. We expect `unzip lab2-pre.zip` will produce a `lab2-pre` sub-directory in the current working directory and under the `lab2-pre` sub-directory is your source code and the Makefile.

Submit the `lab2-pre.zip` file to Lab2 Dropbox in Learn.

### 2.6.2 Post-lab Deliverables

Create a multi-threaded implementation of the `paster` command. The following are the steps to create your post-lab deliverable submission.

- Create a directory and name it `lab2`.
- Put the entire source code with a Makefile under the directory `lab2`. The Makefile default target is `paster`. That is command `make` should generate the `paster` executable file. We also expect that command `make clean` will remove the object code and the default target. That is the `.o` files and the two executable files should be removed.
- Use `zip` command to zip up the contents of `lab2` directory and name it `lab2.zip`. We expect `unzip lab2.zip` will produce a `lab2` sub-directory in the current working directory and under the `lab2` sub-directory is your source code and the Makefile.

Submit the `lab2.zip` file to Lab2 Dropbox in Learn.

## 2.7 Marking Rubric

Table [2.1](#) shows the rubric for marking the lab.

Points	Description
5	pre-lab Makefile correctly builds and cleans
25	Implementation of single-threaded <code>paster</code>
5	post-lab Makefile correctly builds and cleans
65	Implementation of multi-threaded <code>paster</code>

Table 2.1: Lab2 Marking Rubric



## **Part III**

# **Software Development Environment Quick Reference Guide**

# Chapter 1

## Introduction to ECE Linux Programming Environment

### 1.1 ECE Linux Servers

There are a group of Linux Ubuntu servers that are open to ECE undergraduate students. The machines are listed at url: <https://ece.uwaterloo.ca/Nexus/arbeau/clients>. To access one of the machines, we recommend to use the alias name of `eceubuntu.uwaterloo.ca`, which will direct the user to the most lightly loaded machine at the time of login.

To access these machines from off campus. One way is to use the [campus VPN](#). Another way is to first connect to `ecelinux4.uwaterloo.ca` or `eceterm.uwaterloo.ca` and then connect to other Linux servers from there. Note that the `ecelinux4` should not be used for computing jobs, it is for accessing other Linux servers on campus.

### 1.2 Connecting to Linux servers

A terminal client software that supports secure shell (ssh) will allow you to remotely connect to the Linux servers. MobaXterm is a convenient application that not only supports ssh, but also has a built-in X server that allows one to run Graphical User Interface (GUI) applications from the Linux servers.

Use the File Explorer to navigate to `Q:\eng\ece\Util` folder, scroll down until you find the MobaXterm icon and double click it (see Figure C1). The MobaXterm window will pop up. There is a grey rectangular button labelled “Start local terminal” in the middle (see Figure C2). Click this button.

Then a terminal session starts. You will need to use the command line `ssh` command to connect to the Linux server. Use your UWID and password to login. The

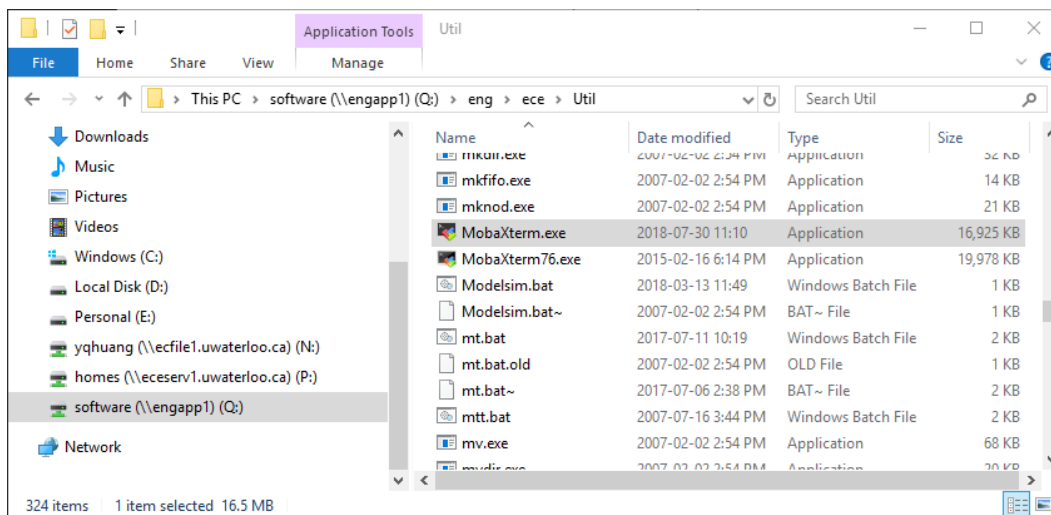


Figure C1: MobaXterm Path on ECE Nexus Windows 10 Machines.

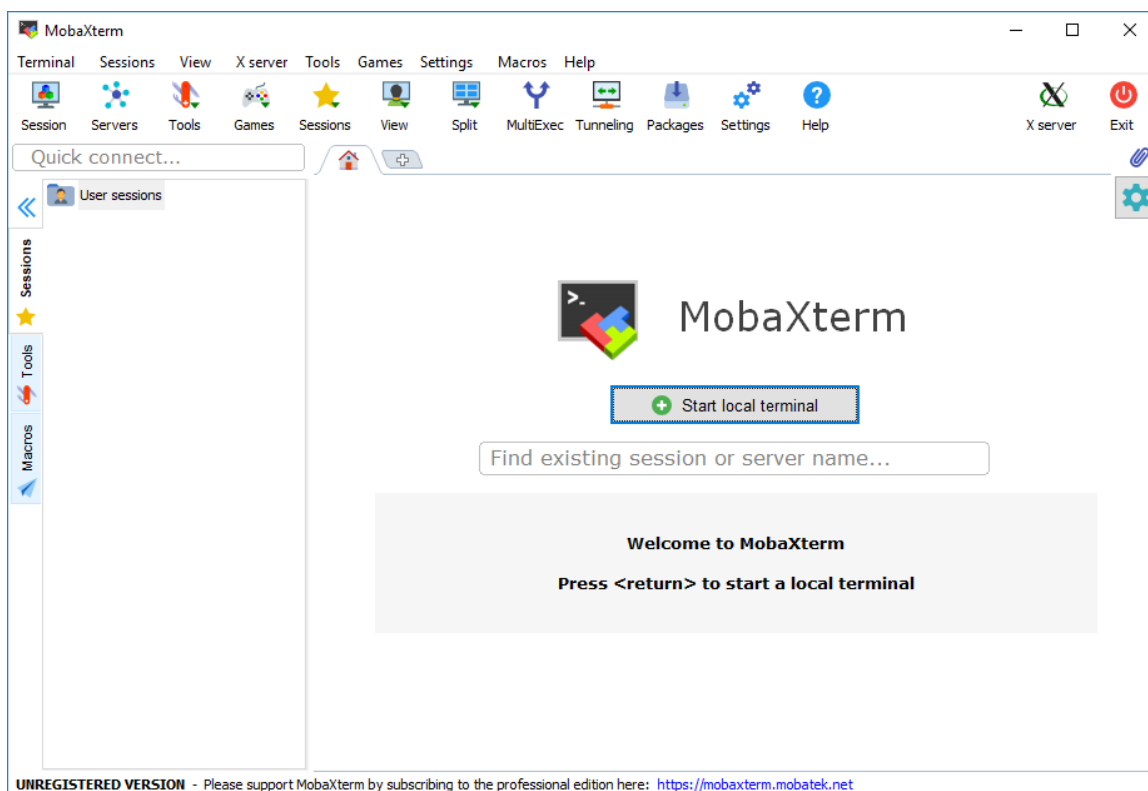


Figure C2: MobaXterm Welcome Page.

syntax of the command is as follows:

```
ssh -XY <UWID>@eceubuntu.uwaterloo.ca
```

See Figure C3 for reference.

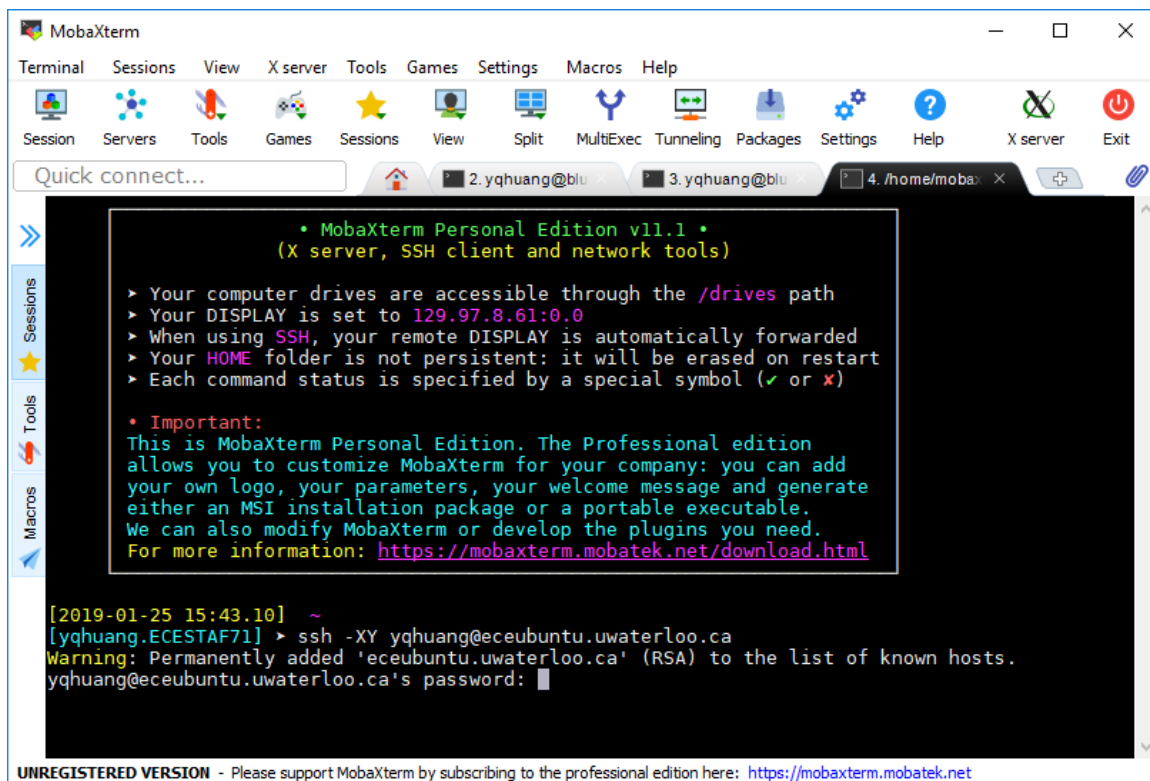


Figure C3: MobaXterm Welcome Page.

All your ECE Linux account files are accessible through P Drive on Nexus machines (See Figure C4). The P Drive is only accessible within campus network. Mapping the Linux account as a network drive off campus is not supported due to security reasons.

## 1.3 Basic Software Development Tools

To develop a program, there are three important steps. First, a program is started from source code written by programmers. Second, the source code is then compiled into object code, which is a binary. Non-trivial project normally contains more than one source file. Each source file is compiled into one object code and the linker would finally link all the object code to generate the final target, which is the executable that runs. The steps of compiling and linking are also known as building a target. It is very rare that the target will run perfectly the first time it is built. Most of time we need to fix defects and bugs in the code and this is the third step. The debugger is a tool to help you identify the bug and fix it. Table C1 shows the key steps in programming work flow and example tools provided by a general purpose Linux operating system.

Most of you probably are more familiar with a certain Integrated Development

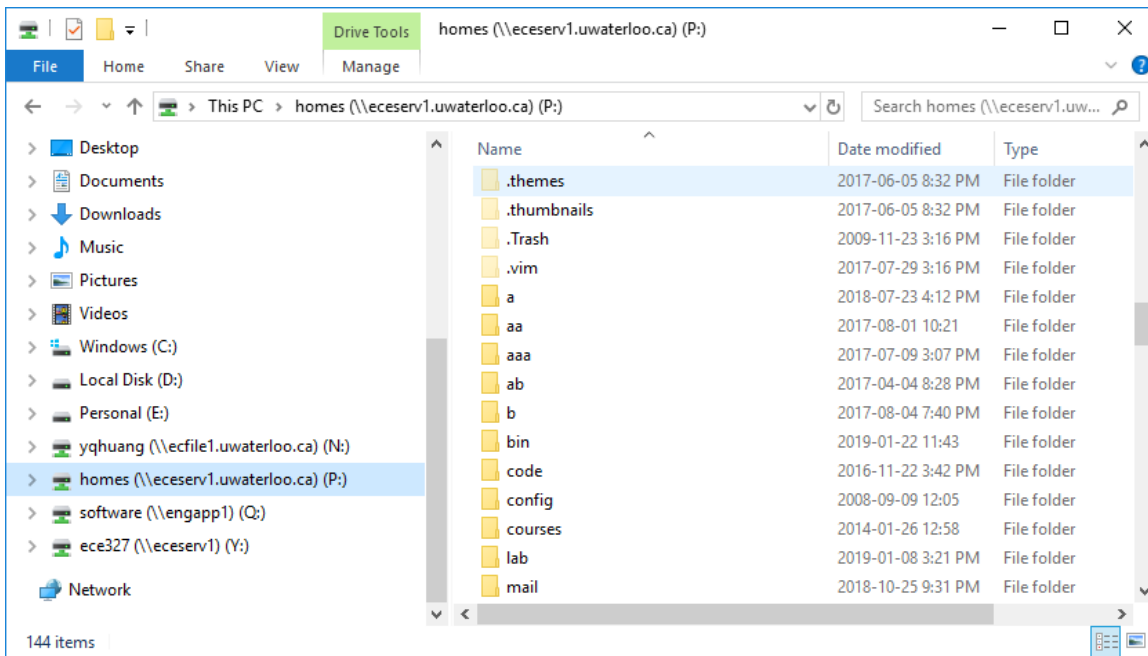


Figure C4: Linux files on P drive, a network mapped drive.

Task	Tool	Examples
Editing the source code	Editor	vi, emacs
Compiling the source code	Compiler	gcc
Debugging the program	Debugger	gdb, ddd

Table C1: Programming Steps and Tools

Environment (IDE) which integrates all these tools into a single environment. For example Eclipse and Visual Studio. A different approach is to select a tool in each programming step and build your own tool chain. Many seasoned Linux programmers build their own tool chains. A few popular tools are introduced in the following subsections.

### 1.3.1 Editor

Some editors are designed to better suit programmers' needs than others. The *vi* (*vim* and *gvim* belong to the *vi* family) and *emacs* (*xemacs* belongs to emacs family) are the two most popular editors for programming purposes.

Two simple notepad editors *pico* and *nano* are also available for a simple editing job. These editors are not designed for programming activity. To use one of them to write your first *Hello World* program is fine though.

After you finish editing the C source code, give the file name an extension of *.c*. Listing 1.1 is the source code of printing "Hello World!" to the screen.

```
#include <stdio.h>
#include <stdlib.h>

int main()
{
    printf("Hello World!\n");
    exit(0);
}
```

Listing 1.1: HelloWorld C source Code

### 1.3.2 C Compiler

The source code then gets fed into a compiler to become an executable program. The GNU project C and C++ compiler is *gcc*. To compile the HelloWorld source code in Listing 1.1, type the following command at the prompt:

```
gcc helloworld.c+
```

You will notice that a new file named `a.out` is generated. This is the executable generated from the source code. To run it, type the following command at the prompt and hit Enter.

```
./a.out
```

The result is “Hello World!” appearing on the screen.

You can also instruct the compiler to name the executable another name instead of the default `a.out`. The `-o` option in *gcc* allows one to name the executable a name. For example, the following command will generate an executable named “`helloworld.out`”.

```
gcc helloworld.c -o helloworld.out
```

although there is no requirement that the name ends in `.out`.

### 1.3.3 Debugger

The GNU debugger *gdb* is a command line debugger. Many GUI debugger uses *gdb* as the back-end engine. One GNU GUI debugger is *ddd*. It has a powerful data display functionality.

GDB needs to read debugging information from the binary in order to be able to help one to debug the code. The `-g` option in `gcc` tells the compiler to produce such debugging information in the generated executable. In order to use `gdb` to debug our simple HelloWorld program, we need to compile it with the following command:

```
gcc -g helloworld.c -o helloworld.out
```

The following command calls `gdb` to debug the `helloworld.out`

```
gdb helloworld.out
```

This starts a `gdb` session. At the `(gdb)` prompt, you can issue `gdb` command such as `b main` to set up a break point at the entry point of `main` function. The `l` lists source code. The `n` steps to the next statement in the same function. The `s` steps into a function. The `p` prints a variable value provided you supply the name of the variable. Type `h` to see more `gdb` commands.

Compared to `gdb` command line interface, the `ddd` GUI interface is more user friendly and easy to use. To start a `ddd` session, type the command

```
ddd
```

and click `File` → `Open Program` to open an executable such as `helloworld.out`. You will then see `gdb` console in the bottom window with the source window on top of the `gdb` console window. You could see the value of variables of the program through the data window, which is on top of the source code window. Select `View` → to toggle all these three windows.

## 1.4 More on Development Tools

For any non-trivial software project, it normally contains multiple source code files. Developers need tools to manage the project build process. Also project normally are done by several developers. A version control tool is also needed.

### 1.4.1 How to Automate Build

`Make` is an utility to automate the build process. Compilation is a cpu-intensive job and one only wants to re-compile the file that has been changed when you build a target instead of re-compile all source file regardless. The `make` utility uses a `Makefile` to specify the dependency of object files and automatically recompile files that has been modified after the last target is built.

In a Makefile, one specifies the targets to be built, what prerequisites the target depends on and what commands are used to build the target given these prerequisites. These are the *rules* contained in Makefile. The Makefile has its own syntax. The general form of a Makefile rule is:

```
target ...: prerequisites ...
    recipe
    ...
    ...
```

One important note is that each recipe line starts with a TAB key rather than white spaces. To build a target, use command `make` followed by the target name or omit the target name to default to the first target in the Makefile. For example

```
make
```

will build your lab starter code.

Listing 1.2 is our first attempt to write a very simple Makefile.

```
helloworld.out: helloworld.c
    gcc -o helloworld.out helloworld.c
```

Listing 1.2: Hello World Makefile: First Attempt

The following command will generate the `helloworld.out` executable file.

```
make helloworld.out
```

Our second attempt is to break the single line `gcc` command into two steps. First is to *compile* the source code into object code `.o` file. Second is to *link* the object code to one final executable binary. Listing 1.3 is our second attempted version of Makefile.

```
helloworld.out: helloworld.o
    gcc -o helloworld.out helloworld.o
helloworld.o: helloworld.c
    gcc -c helloworld.c
```

Listing 1.3: Hello World Makefile: Second Attempt

When a project contains multiple files, separating object code compilation and linking stages would give a clear dependency relationship among code. Assume that we now need to build a project that contains two source files `src1.c` and `src2.c` and we want the final executable to be named as `app.out`. Listing 1.4 is a typical example Makefile that is closer to what you will see in the real world.



```

all: app.out
app.out: src1.o src2.o
    gcc -o app.out src1.o src2.o
src1.o: src1.c
    gcc -c src1.c
src2.o: src2.c
    gcc -c src2.c
clean:
    rm *.o app.out

```

Listing 1.4: A More Real Makefile: First Attempt

We also have added a target named *clean* so that `make clean` will clean the build.

So far we have seen the Makefile contains *explicit rules*. Makefile can also contain *implicit rules*, *variable definitions*, *directives* and *comments*. Listing 1.5 is a Makefile that is used in the real world.

```

1 # Makefile to build app.out
2 CC=gcc
3 CFLAGS=-Wall -g
4 LD=gcc
5 LDFLAGS=-g
6
7 OBJS=src1.o src2.o
8
9 all: app.out
10 app.out: $(OBJS)
11     $(LD) $(CFLAGS) $(LDFLAGS) -o $@ $(OBJS)
12 .c.o:
13     $(CC) $(CFLAGS) -c $<
14 .PHONY: clean
15 clean:
16     rm -f *.o *.out

```

Listing 1.5: A Real World Makefile

Line 1 is a comment. Lines 2 – 7 are variable definitions. Line 12 is an implicit rule to generate .o file for each .c file. See <http://www.gnu.org/software/make/manual/make.html> to explore more of makefile.

## 1.4.2 Version Control Software

We use Git version control software. It is installed both on the Linux servers and Nexus windows machines. If you decide to use GitHub to host your repository,

please make sure it is a *private* one. Go to <http://github.com/edu> to see how to obtain five private repositories for two years on GitHub for free.

### 1.4.3 Integrated Development Environment

Eclipse with C/C++ Plug-in has been installed on all ECE Linux servers. Type the following command to bring up the eclipse frontend.

```
/opt/eclipse64/eclipse
```

This eclipse is not the same as the default eclipse under `/usr/bin` directory. You may find running eclipse over network performs poorly at home though. It depends on how fast your network speed is.

If you have Linux operating system installed on your own personal computer, then you can download the eclipse with C/C++ plugin from the eclipse web site and then run it from your own local computer. However you should always make sure the program will also work on ecelinux machines, which is the environment TAs would be using to test your code.

## 1.5 Man Page

Linux provides manual pages. You can use the command `man` followed by the specific command or function you are interested in to obtain detailed information.

Man pages are grouped into sections. We list frequently used sections here:

- Section 1 contains user commands.
- Section 2 contains system calls
- Section 3 contains library functions
- Section 7 covers conventions and miscellany.

To specify which section you want to see, provide the section number after the `man` command. For example,

```
man 2 stat
```

shows the system call `stat` man page. If you omit the 2 in the command, then it will return the command `stat` man page.

You can also use `man -k` or `apropos` followed by a string to obtain a list of man pages that contain the string. The Whatis database is searched and now run `man whatis` to see more details of `whatis`.

# **Appendix A**

## **Forms**

Lab administration related forms are given in this appendix.

### ECE252 Request to Leave a Project Group Form

Name:	
Quest ID:	
Student ID:	
Lab Assignment ID	
Group ID:	
Name of Other Group Members:	

Provide the reason for leaving the project group here:

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Bibliography

- [1] Greg Roelofs. *PNG: The Definitive Guide*. O'Reilly & Associates, Inc., Sebastopol, CA, USA, 1999.