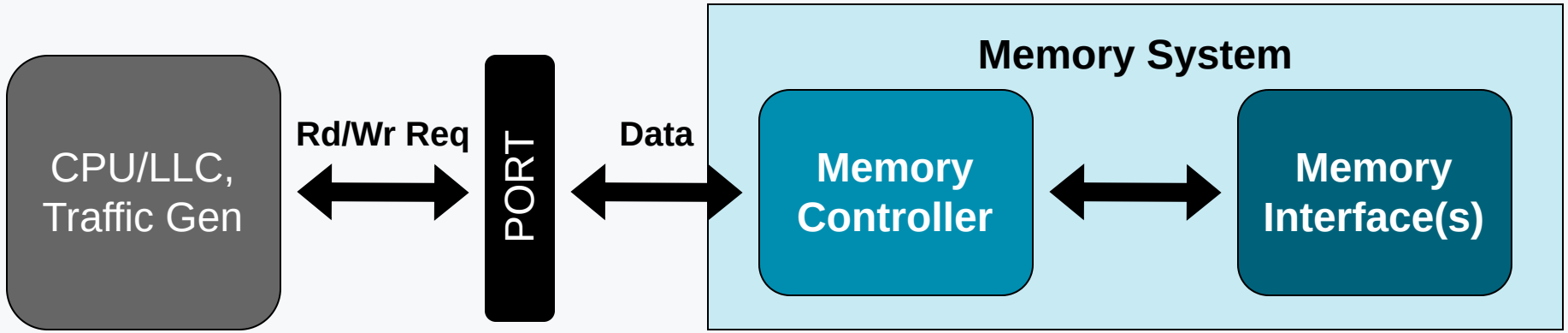
Modeling Memory in gem5

DRAM and other memory devices, too!

Memory System

gem5's memory system consists of two main components

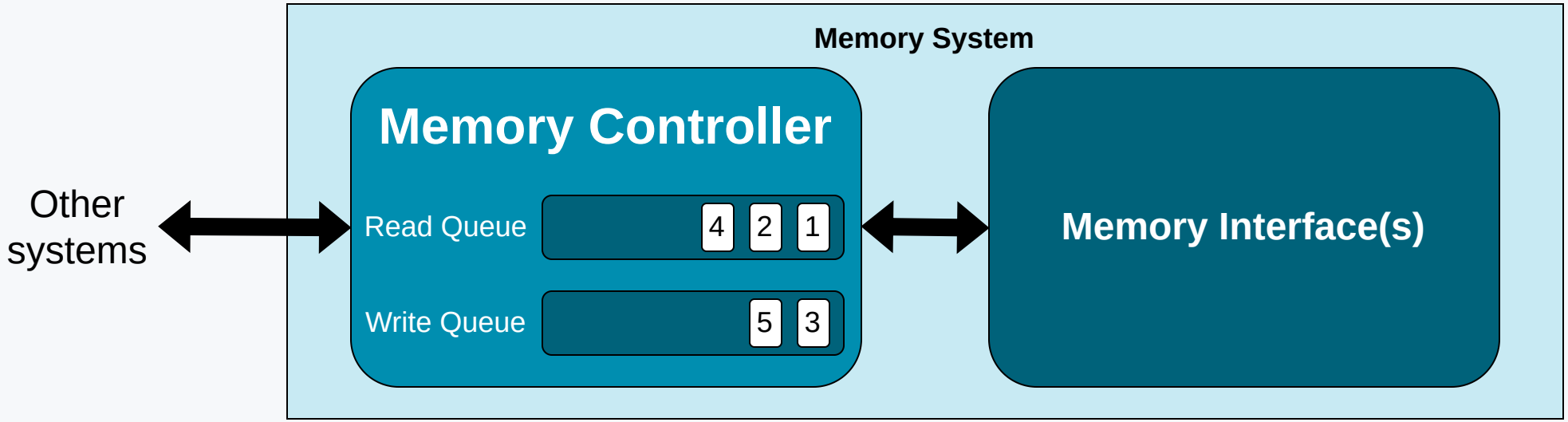
1. Memory Controller
2. Memory Interface(s)



Memory Controller

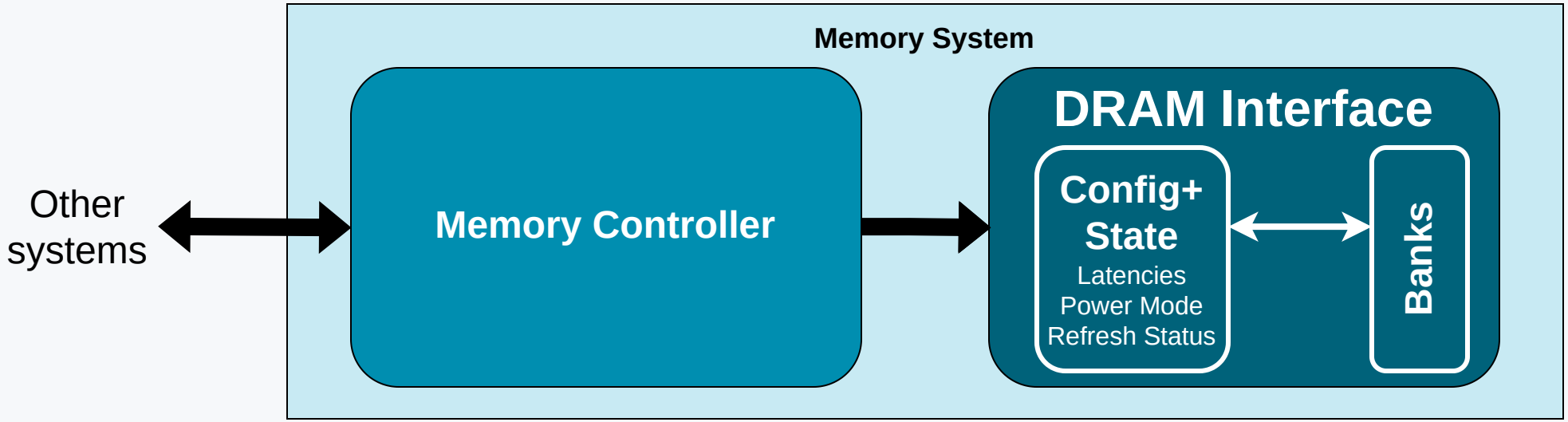
When `MemCtrl` receives packets...

1. Packets enqueued into the read and/or write queues
2. Applies **scheduling algorithm** (FCFS, FR-FCFS, ...) to issue read and write requests

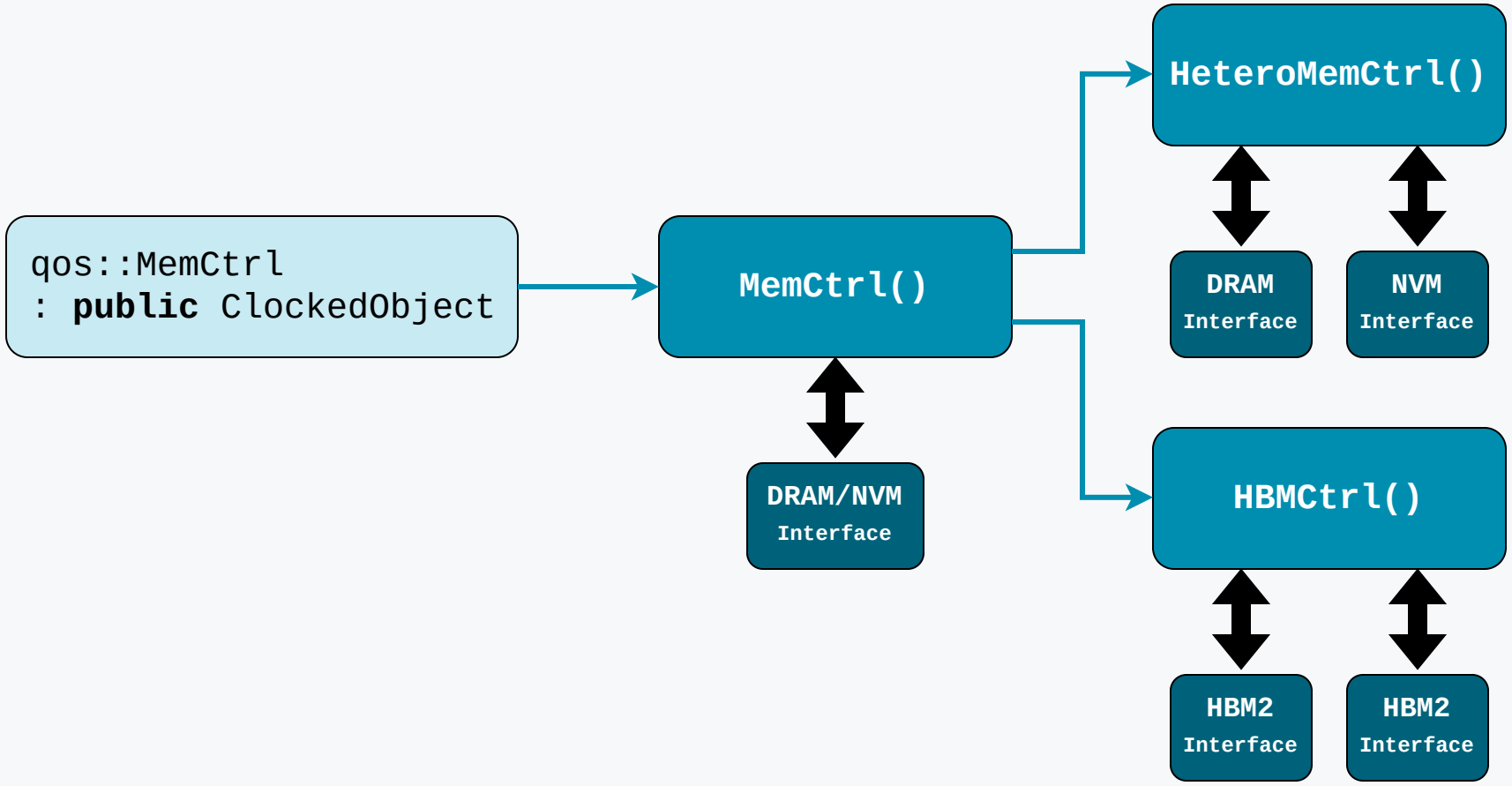


Memory Interface

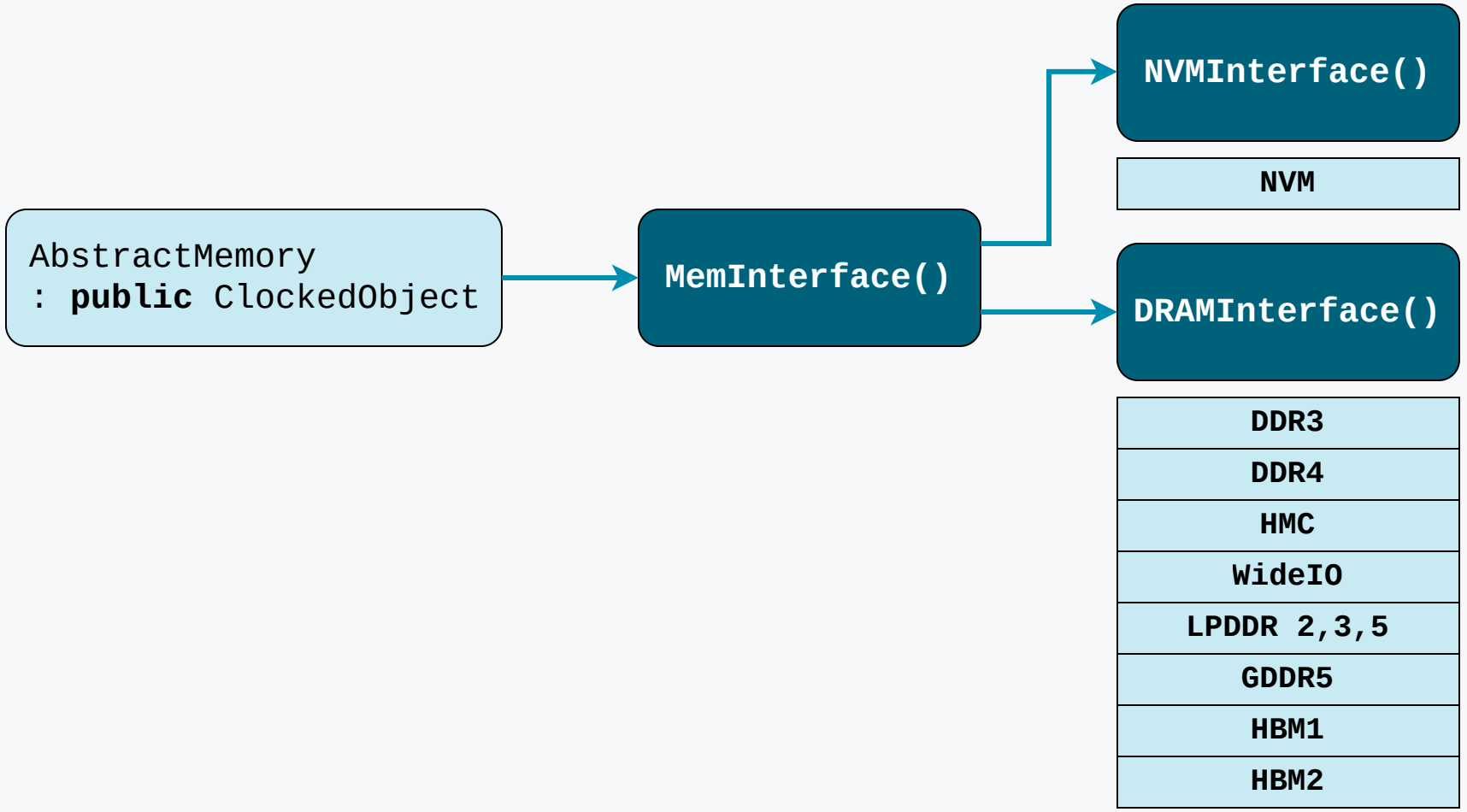
- The memory interface implements the **architecture** and **timing parameters** of the chosen memory type.
- It manages the **media specific operations** like activation, pre-charge, refresh and low-power modes, etc.



gem5's Memory Controllers



gem5's Memory Interfaces



Configuring Memory Controllers & Interfaces

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = MemCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4()
system.mem_ctrl.dram.range = AddrRange('512MB')
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

For full list of their configuration options, investigate their Python object files in: `gem5/src/mem`

Configuring Memory Controllers & Interfaces

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = HBMCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = HBM_1000_4H_1x128(range=AddrRange(start = '0', end = '512MB', masks = [1 << 6], intlvMatch = 0))
system.mem_ctrl.dram_2 = HBM_1000_4H_1x128(range=AddrRange(start = '0', end = '512MB', masks = [1 << 6], intlvMatch = 1))
# system.mem_ctrl.dram.range = addr_range
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64
system.mem_ctrl.dram_2.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram_2.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

For full list of their configuration options, investigate their Python object files in: `gem5/src/mem`

Configuring Memory Controllers & Interfaces

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = HeteroMemCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4(range=AddrRange(start = '0', end = '256MB'))
system.mem_ctrl.nvm = NVM_2400_1x64(range=AddrRange(start = '256MB', end = '512MB'))
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64
system.mem_ctrl.nvm.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.nvm.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

Configuring Memory Controllers & Interfaces

```
# memory controller parameters
num_chnls = 2
addr_ranges = [AddrRange('0', '256MB'), AddrRange('256MB', '512MB')]
system.mem_ctrls = [MemCtrl() for i in range(num_chnls)]

for i, mem_ctrl in enumerate(system.mem_ctrls):
    mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

    # memory interface parameters
    mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4(range=addr_ranges[i])
    mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
    mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64

    mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

Memory Controller/Interface Example

- Open `materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/blank_memory.py`
- Look for the comment `# insert memory controller and interface here`
- Copy and paste any of the code blocks from the 4 slides above or the one below

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = MemCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4()
system.mem_ctrl.dram.range = AddrRange('512MB')
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

Memory Controller/Interface Example

Run with

```
gem5 blank_memory.py
```

```
# memory controller parameters
system.mem_ctrl = MemCtrl()
system.mem_ctrl.mem_sched_policy = "fcfs"

# memory interface parameters
system.mem_ctrl.dram = DDR4_2400_16x4()
system.mem_ctrl.dram.range = AddrRange('512MB')
system.mem_ctrl.dram.read_buffer_size = 32
system.mem_ctrl.dram.write_buffer_size = 64

system.mem_ctrl.port = system.membus.mem_side_ports
```

Memory in the standard library

- Find memory in standard library at `gem5/src/python/gem5/components/memory`
- Standard library has two types of memory
  1. SimpleMemory
  2. ChanneledMemory
- `SimpleMemory()` allows the user to not worry about timing parameters and instead, just give the desiredlatency. bandwidth, and latency variation
- `ChanneledMemory()` encompasses a whole memory system (both the controller and the interface)
- ChanneledMemory provides a simple way to use multiple memory channels
- ChanneledMemory handles things like scheduling policy and interleaving for you

Running an example with the standard library

- Open `materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/std_lib_mem.py`
- Look at the line:
  `memory = SingleChannelSimpleMemory(latency="50ns", bandwidth="32GiB/s", size="8GiB", latency_var="10ns")`
- This shows how we can use SimpleMemory

Run with `gem5/build/NULL/gem5.opt`

Running Channeled Memory

- Open `gem5/src/python/gem5/components/memory/single_channel.py`
- We see `SingleChannel` memories such as:

```
def SingleChannelDDR4_2400(
    size: Optional[str] = None,
) -> AbstractMemorySystem:
    """
    A single channel memory system using DDR4_2400_8x8 based DIMM.
    """
    return ChanneledMemory(DDR4_2400_8x8, 1, 64, size=size)
```

- We see the DRAMInterface=DDR4_2400_8x8, the number of channels=1, interleaving_size=64, and the size.

Running Channeled Memory

- Lets go back to our script and replace the SingleChannelSimpleMemory with this!

Replace

```
SingleChannelSimpleMemory(latency="50ns", bandwidth="32GiB/s", size="8GiB", latency_var="10ns")
```

with

```
SingleChannelDDR4_2400()
```

Adding a new channeled memory

- Open `materials/02-Using-gem5/06-memory/lpddr2.py`
- If we wanted to add LPDDR2 as a new memory in the standard library, we first make sure there's a DRAM interface for it in the `dram_interfaces` directory
- then we need to make sure we import it by adding

```
from gem5.components.memory.abstract_memory_system import AbstractMemorySystem
from gem5.components.memory.dram_interfaces.lpddr2 import LPDDR2_S4_1066_1x32
from gem5.components.memory.memory import ChanneledMemory
```

to the top of your `lpddr2.py`

Adding a new channeled memory

Then add the following to the body of `lpddr2.py`

```
def SingleChannelLPDDR2_S4_1066_1x32(
    size: Optional[str] = None,
) -> AbstractMemorySystem:
    return ChanneledMemory(LPDDR2_S4_1066_1x32, 1, 64, size=size)
```

then we import this new class to our script with

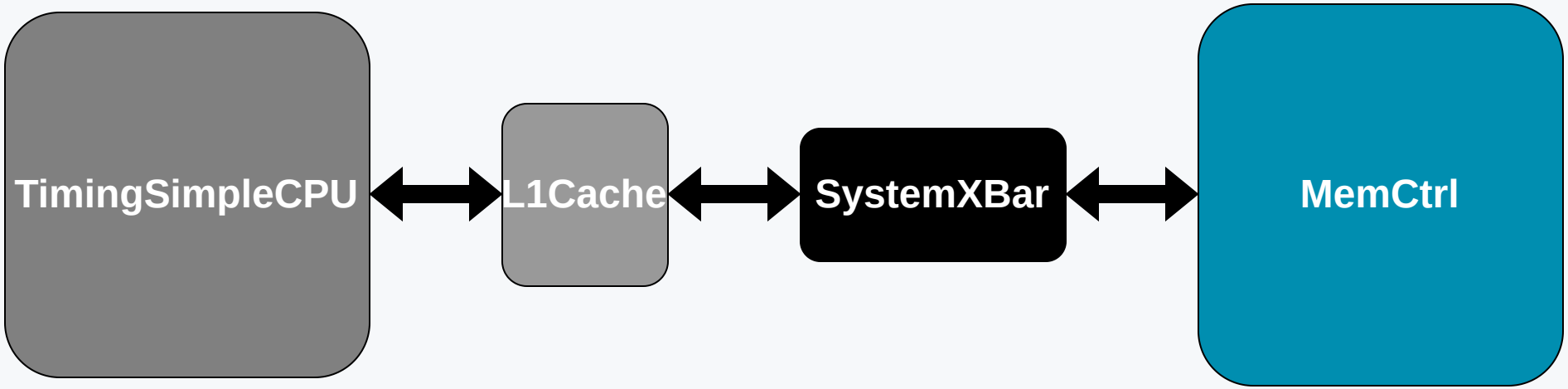
```
from lpddr2 import SingleChannelLPDDR2_S4_1066_1x32
```

CommMonitor

- SimObject monitoring communication happening between two ports
- Does not have any effect on timing
- `gem5/src/mem/CommMonitor.py`

CommMonitor

Simple system to modify



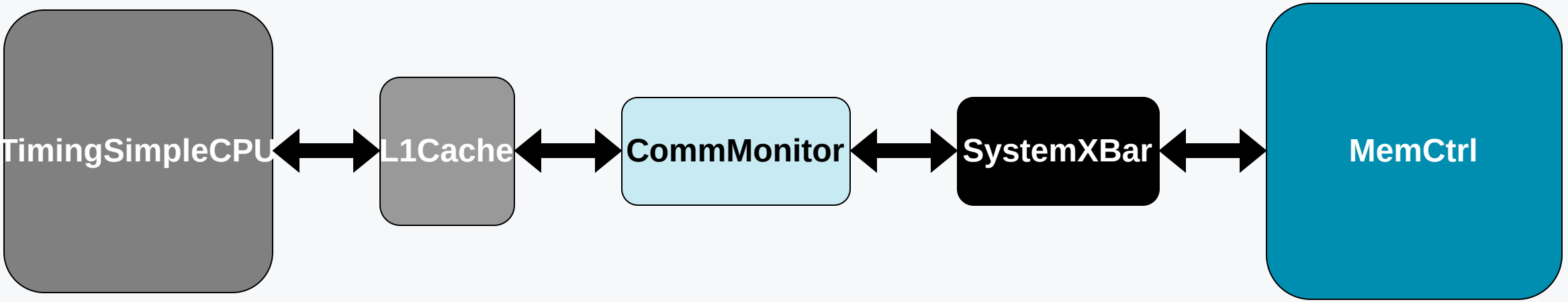
Let's simulate:

Run

```
gem5 comm_monitor.py
```

CommMonitor

Let's add the CommMonitor



CommMonitor

- Remove the line `system.l1cache.mem_side = system.membus.cpu_side_ports`
- Add the following block under the comment `# Insert CommMonitor here`

```
system.comm_monitor = CommMonitor()
system.comm_monitor.cpu_side_port = system.l1cache.mem_side
system.comm_monitor.mem_side_port = system.membus.cpu_side_ports
```

Run

```
gem5 comm_monitor.py
```

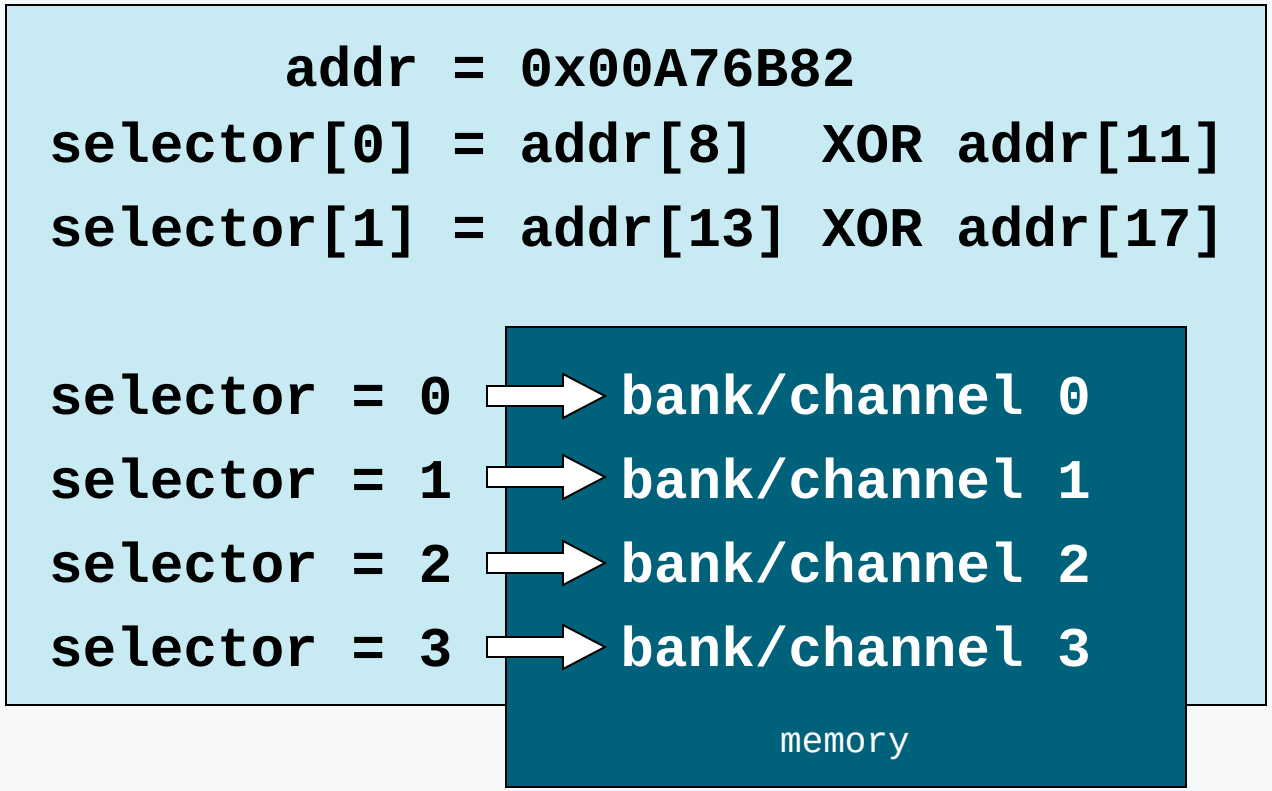
Address Interleaving

Idea: we can parallelize memory accesses

- For example, we can access multiple banks/channels/etc at the same time
- Use part of the address as a selector to choose which bank/channel to access
- Allows contiguous address ranges to interleave between banks/channels

Address Interleaving

For example...



Address Interleaving

Using address interleaving in gem5

- We can use AddrRange constructors to define a selector function
  - `src/base/addr_range.hh`
- Example: standard library's multi-channel memory
  - `gem5/src/python/gem5/components/memory/multi_channel.py`

Address Interleaving

There are two constructors

Constructor 1:

```
AddrRange(Addr _start,
          Addr _end,
          const std::vector<Addr> &_masks,
          uint8_t _intlv_match)
```

`_masks`: an array of masks, where bit `k` of selector is the XOR of all bits specified by `masks[k]`

Address Interleaving

There are two constructors

Constructor 2 (legacy):

```
AddrRange(Addr _start,
          Addr _end,
          uint8_t _intlv_high_bit,
          uint8_t _xor_high_bit,
          uint8_t _intlv_bits,
          uint8_t _intlv_match)
```

Selector defined as two ranges:

```
addr[_intlv_high_bit:_intlv_low_bit] XOR addr[_xor_high_bit:_xor_low_bit]
```