

COMS31700 Design Verification

Hardware Design

Languages

Kerstin Eder

(Acknowledgement: Avi Ziv from the IBM Research Labs in Haifa has kindly permitted the re-use of some of his slides.)

Hardware Design Languages

- Hardware Design Languages were built with simulation in mind
 - Synthesis and other back-end purposes were added at a later stage
- Most popular languages today (both are IEEE standards)
 - VHDL
 - Verilog/SystemVerilog
- VHDL:
 - Committee-designed language contracted by U.S. (DoD) (ADA-derived)
 - Functional/logic modeling and simulation language
 - Main differentiator from Verilog is types (e.g. records)
- Verilog:
 - Logic modeling and simulation language
 - Started in EDA industry in the 80's then owned by Cadence
 - Donated to IEEE as a general industry standard
 - SystemVerilog (the next generation of Verilog) is designed to improve abstraction of Verilog
 - Abstraction levels
 - Data types
 - Verification constructs
- **Verilog vs. VHDL:** personal preferences, EDA tool availability, commercial, business and marketing issues.

Modeling Levels – Major Dimensions

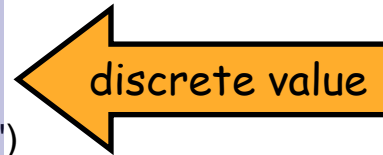
- **Temporal Dimension:**

- continuous (analog)
- gate delay
- clock cycle
- instruction cycle
- events



- **Data Abstraction:**

- continuous (analog)
- bit : multiple values
- bit : binary
- abstract value
- composite value ("struct")



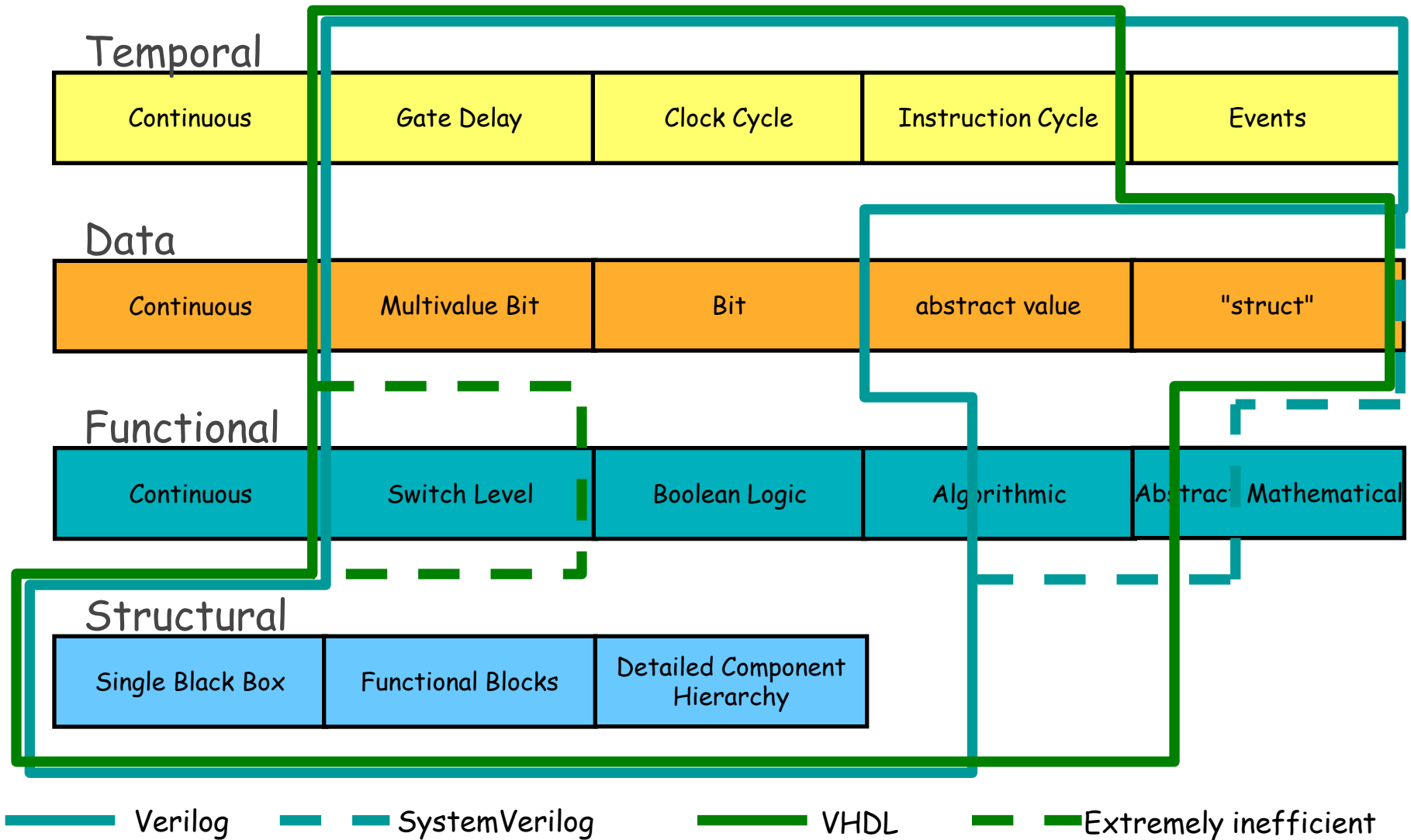
- **Functional Dimension:**

- continuous functions (e.g. differential equations)
- Switch-level (transistors as switches)
- Boolean Logic
- Algorithmic (e.g. sort procedure)
- Abstract mathematical formula (e.g. matrix multiplication)

- **Structural Dimension:**

- Single black box
- Functional blocks
- Detailed hierarchy with primitive library elements

Modeling Levels – Major Dimensions



Verilog for Design Verification

- Assignment calc1 design in Verilog
 - Testbench for calc1 design in Verilog
- **Interactive Evita Verilog tutorial** (Ch1-4,5-7):
 - Structure of Verilog modules
 - Verilog signal values: 0, 1, x and z (4-valued logic)
 - Verilog signals:
 - nets (used for “connections”, no storage capacity)
 - registers (storage capacity, similar to variables in pgr languages)
 - Verilog external signals:
 - ports (input, output or inout, port connecting rules)
 - Coding styles:
 - Structural
 - **Dataflow**
 - **Behavioural** (best for verification)

Continuous Assignment

- **Used in Dataflow coding style.**
- Keyword **assign** followed by optional delay declaration
- **LHS** (target) can be net (scalar or vector) or concatenation of nets
 - NO registers allowed as target for assignment!
- Assignment symbol: **=**
- **RHS** is an expression.
 - `assign #4 Out = In1 & In2;`
- **Implicit continuous assignment:** `wire x = ...;`
- **Conditional assignment:**
 - `assign Out = Sel ? In1 : In0;`
 - If `Sel` is 1 then `In1` is assigned to `Out`; if `Sel` is 0 then `Out` is `In0`.
 - If `Sel` is `x/z`, evaluate both `In1` and `In0`, if they are the same then `Out` is assigned this value, otherwise `x/z`.

Continuous Assignment: Execution

- Continuous assignments are **always active**.
- **Concurrency:**
 - When any of the operands on RHS changes, assignment is evaluated.
 - Several assignments can be executed concurrently.
 - **Race conditions can occur!**
 - Two or more assignments, which operate on the same data, read and write the data concurrently.
 - Result, which might be erroneous, depends on which assignment does what when.
- **Delays** specify time between change of operand on RHS and assignment of resulting value to LHS target.
 - **assign #4 Out = In1 & In2;**

Behavioural Coding Style

- Most advanced coding style: flexible and high-level
 - closest to programming languages
 - allows use of conditional statements, case statements, loops, etc.

Best for verification, but by no means ideal...

- **Behaviour:**
 - Actions a circuit is supposed to perform when it is active.
- **Algorithmic description:** Need "variables" similar to PLs!
 - Abstraction of data storage elements - register objects:
 - `reg R`; one bit register - default value x before first assignment
 - `time T`; can store/manipulate simulation time
 - `integer N`; by default at least 32 bit - stores values signed
 - `real R`; default value is 0
 - [Other data types, e.g. arrays exist, but are out of the scope of this introduction.]

Mux421: Behavioural Coding Example

```
module mux421_behavioural (Out, In0, In1, In2, In3, Sel0, Sel1);
    output Out;
    input In0, In1, In2, In3, Sel0, Sel1;
    reg Out;
    always @ (Sel1 or Sel0 or In0 or In1 or In2 or In3)
    begin
        case ({Sel1,Sel0})
            2'b00 : Out = In0;
            2'b01 : Out = In1;
            2'b10 : Out = In2;
            2'b11 : Out = In3;
            default : Out = 1'bx;
        endcase
    end
endmodule // mux421_behavioural
```

Mux421: Behavioural Coding Example

```
module mux421_behavioural (Out, In0, In1, In2, In3, Sel0, Sel1);  
    output Out;  
    input In0, In1, In2, In3, Sel0, Sel1;  
    reg Out;  
    always @ (Sel1,Sel0,In0,In1,In2,In3) // Verilog 2001 style  
    begin  
        case ({Sel1,Sel0})  
            2'b00 : Out = In0;  
            2'b01 : Out = In1;  
            2'b10 : Out = In2;  
            2'b11 : Out = In3;  
            default : Out = 1'bx;  
        endcase  
    end  
endmodule // mux421_behavioural
```

Behavioural Blocks

- **initial** and **always**
 - Can't be nested.
 - Block containing several statements must be grouped using:
 - **begin ... end** (sequential) or
 - **fork ... join** (concurrent)
- **initial** block:
 - Used to initialise variables (registers).
 - Executed at (simulation) time 0. Only once!
- **always** block:
 - Starts executing at time 0.
 - Contents is executed in infinite loop.
 - Means: Executing repeats as long as simulation is running.
 - Multiple blocks are all executed **concurrently** from time 0.

Assignment in Behavioural Coding

Assignment in behavioural coding style is

procedural:

- LHS (target) must be a register (reg, integer, real or time) - not a net, a bit or part of a vector of registers.
- **NO assign keyword!**
- Must be contained within a behavioural (i.e. `initial` or `always`) block.
- **NOT always active!**
 - Target register value is only changed when procedural assignment is executed according to **sequence** contained in block.
- **Delays:** indicate time that simulator waits from "finding" the assignment to executing it.

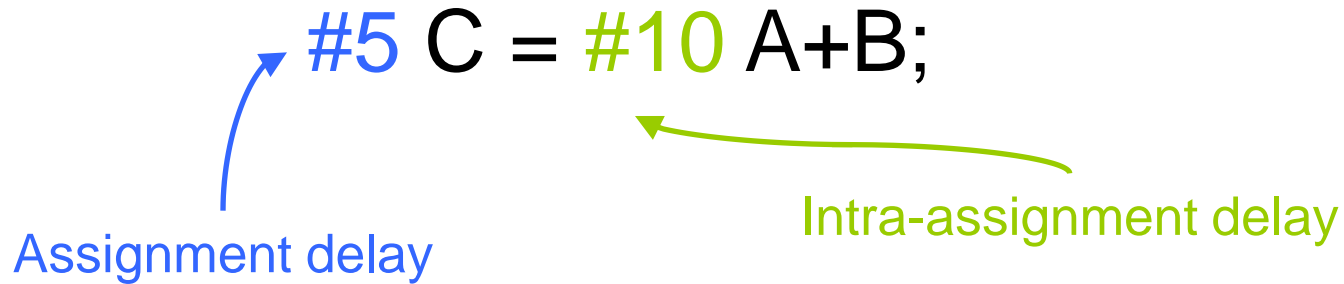
Blocking Assignment

(... as opposed to continuous assignment from dataflow coding style.)

```
reg A;  
reg [7:0] Vector;  
integer Count;  
initial  
begin  
    A = 1'b0;  
    Vector = 8'b0;  
    Count = 0;  
end
```

- Sequential initialisation assignment.

Timing Control Evaluation



1. Find procedural assignment
2. Wait 5 time units
3. Perform $A+B$
4. Wait 10 time units
5. Assign result to C

- So, what is the difference between:
 - `#10 C = A+B` and
 - `C = #10 A+B`?

Events and Wait

- **Events** mark changes in nets and registers, e.g. raising/falling edge of clock.
 - @ **negedge** means from any value to 0
 - @ **posedge** means from any value to 1
 - @ **clk** always activates when clock changes
- **Wait statement:**
 - **wait** (condition) stmt;
 - **wait** (EN) #5 C = A + B;
 - waits for EN to be 1 before #5 C = A + B;
- Use **wait** to block execution by not specifying a statement!
 - **wait** (EN); ...

Sensitivity List

```
always @(sensitivity list) <begin> <procedural stments> <end>

always @ (posedge Clk or EN)
begin ... end

always @ (Sel1,Sel2) // Verilog 2001 style
begin ... end
```

- Allows to **suspend always blocks**.
- Block executes and suspends until signal (one or more) in **sensitivity list** changes.
- NOTE: **or** is used to make statement **sensitive to multiple signals or events**.
- (Don't use sensitivity list to express a logical condition!)
- Common mistake:
 - Forgetting to add relevant signals to sensitivity list!

Non-blocking Assignments

- **Concurrency** can be introduced into sequential statements.
 - Delay is counted down before assignment,
 - BUT **control is passed to next statement immediately.**
- **Non-blocking Assignments** allow to model multiple concurrent data transfers after common event.
- A blocking assignment would force sequential execution.

A <= #1 1; **B** <= #2 0; (non-blocking)

A	x	1	1	1
B	x	x	0	0
Time:	0	1	2	3

A = #1 1; **B** = #2 0; (blocking)

A	x	1	1	1
B	x	x	x	0
Time:	0	1	2	3

Approaches to Assignment - I

```
reg [7:0] MyReg;  
initial  
  fork  
    #50  MyReg = 8'hFF;  
    #100 MyReg = 8'h01;  
    #150 MyReg = 8'h2F;  
    #200 MyReg = 8'h00;  
    #250 $finish;  
  join
```

- **Concurrent blocking (=)**

Time:	0	50	100	150	200	250
MyReg[7:0]	XX	FF	01	2F	00	00

Important when driving input into a DUV in a testbench!

Approaches to Assignment - II

```
reg [7:0] MyReg;
```

```
initial
```

```
begin
```

```
    MyReg <= #50 8'hFF; // pass control, wait, assign
```

```
    MyReg <= #50 8'h01;
```

```
    MyReg <= #50 8'h2F;
```

```
    MyReg <= #50 8'h00;
```

```
    #250 $finish;
```

```
end
```

Race Condition!

- **Sequential non-blocking (<=)**

Time:	0	50	100	150	200	250
-------	---	----	-----	-----	-----	-----

MyReg[7:0]	XX	??				
------------	----	----	--	--	--	--

Important when driving input into a DUV in a testbench!

Approaches to Assignment - III

```
reg [7:0] MyReg;
initial
begin
    MyReg <= #50 8'hFF; // pass control, wait, assign
    MyReg <= #100 8'h01;
    MyReg <= #150 8'h2F;
    MyReg <= #200 8'h00;
    #250 $finish;
end
```

- **Sequential non-blocking (<=)**

Time:	0	50	100	150	200	250
MyReg[7:0]	XX	FF	01	2F	00	00

Important when driving input into a DUV in a testbench!

Approaches to Assignment - IV

```
reg [7:0] MyReg;  
initial  
begin  
    #50 MyReg = 8'hFF; // wait, assign, pass control  
    #50 MyReg = 8'h01;  
    #50 MyReg = 8'h2F;  
    #50 MyReg = 8'h00;  
    #250 $finish;  
end
```

- **Sequential blocking (=)**

Time:	0	50	100	150	200	250
MyReg[7:0]	XX	FF	01	2F	00	00

Important when driving input into a DUV in a testbench!

HDL vs. Programming Languages

3 major new concepts of HDLs compared to PLs:

■ **Connectivity:**

- Ability to describe a design using simpler blocks and then connecting them together.

■ **Time:**

- Can specify a delay (in time units of simulator): (WHY?)
 - **and #2 (Y3, In3, Sel1, Sel0);**

■ **Concurrency is always assumed!** (for structural style this is)

- No matter in which order primitives/components are specified, a change in value of any input signal **activates** the component.
- If 2 or more components are activated **concurrently**, they perform their actions **concurrently**.
- **Order of specification does not influence order of activation!**
- (NOTE: Statements inside behavioural blocks may be sequential -more later.)

Tasks and Functions

Tasks and Functions

- Both are **purely behavioural**.
 - Can't define nets inside them.
 - Can use logical variables, registers, integers and reals.
- **Must be declared within a module.**
 - Are local to this module.
 - To share tasks/functions in several modules, specify declaration in separate module and use '**include**' directive.
- **Timing (simulation time)**
 - **Tasks:**
 - No restriction on use of timing; engineer specifies execution.
 - **Functions:**
 - **Execute in ZERO sim time units**; no timing/event control allowed.

Comparing Tasks with Functions

	Tasks	Functions
Timing	can be non-zero sim time	execute in 0 sim time
Calling other tasks or functions	no limit; may enable functions	may not call tasks but may call another function No recursion!
Arguments	any number; any type; can't return result	at least one input; no output/inout; always results in single return value
Purpose	modularize code	react to some input with single response; only combinatorial code; use as operands in expressions

Example Task

```
task factorial;  
    output [31:0] f;  
    input [3:0] n;  
    integer count; // local variable  
    begin  
        f = 1;  
        for (count=n; count>0; count=count-1)  
            f = f * count;  
        end  
    endtask
```

- **Invoke task:** `< task name > (list of arguments);`
 - Declaration order determines order of arguments when task is called!

Example Function

```
function ParityCheck;  
    input [3:0] Data;  
    begin  
        ParityCheck = ^Data; // bit-wise xor reduction  
    end  
endfunction
```

- **Result** is by default a 1 bit register assigned to implicitly declared local variable that has same name as function.
- **Function calls:**
 - Are either assigned to a variable, or
 - occur in an expression that is assigned to a variable,
 - or occur as an argument of another function call.

System Tasks and Functions

- More than 100 Verilog system tasks/functions.
 - (See Evita Verilog Reference Guide for more information.)
- Can be used in any module without explicit include directive.
- **Syntax:** `$< keyword >`
- **Most important tasks for verification:**
 - `$display`, `$monitor`
 - `$time`, `$stop`, `$finish`
 - (Also with files: `$fopen`, `$fdisplay`)

Summary

- Evita Verilog Tutorial [Ch1-7]
- **Verilog HDL IEEE Standard 1364-2001**
 - Signals: internal and external (ports)
 - Different coding styles:
 - structural
 - dataflow
 - **behavioural**
- SystemVerilog builds on IEEE 1364-2005
- **HDLs: Connectivity, Time and Concurrency**
- BOOK: Verilog HDL by Samir Palnikar [in QB Library]
- **Next:** Specification of Assignment 1!