

CS61c Fall 2014 Discussion 4 – MIPS Procedures

1 MIPS Control Flow

There are only two instructions necessary for creating and calling functions: `jal` and `jr`. If you follow register conventions when calling functions, you will be able to write much simpler and cleaner MIPS code.

2 Conventions

1. How should `$sp` be used? When do we add or subtract from `$sp`?

We should use `$sp` to store information that we need that will be erased after a new function call. We should subtract from `$sp` when we need allocate space ($4 * \text{num of registers}$) and add when we need to restore space ($4 * \text{num of registers}$)

2. Which registers need to be saved or restored before using `jr` to return from a function?

All `$s*` registers that were modified during the function must be restored to their value at the start of the function

3. Which registers need to be saved before using `jal`?

`$ra`, `$v*`, `$a*`, `$t*`

4. How do we pass arguments into functions?

by the `$a*` registers

5. What do we do if there are more than four arguments to a function?

we put the arguments that didn't fit on the stack

6. How are values returned by functions?

the values are returned in `$v*` registers

When calling a function in MIPS, who needs to save the following registers to the stack? Answer “caller” for the procedure making a function call, “callee” for the function being called, or “N/A” for neither.

<code>\$0</code>	<code>\$v*</code>	<code>\$a*</code>	<code>\$t*</code>	<code>\$s*</code>	<code>\$sp</code>	<code>\$ra</code>
N / A	caller	caller	caller	callee	N / A	caller

Now assume a function `foo` (which may be called from a `main` function) calls another function `bar`, which is known to call some other functions. `foo` takes one argument and will modify and use `$t0` and `$s0`. `bar` takes two arguments, returns an integer, and uses `$t0–$t2` and `$s0–$s1`. In the boxes below, draw a possible ordering of the stack just before `bar` calls a function. The top left box is the address of `$sp` when `foo` is first called, and the stack goes downwards, continuing at each next column. Add ‘(f)’ if the register is stored by `foo` and ‘(b)’ if the register is stored by `bar`. The first one is written in for you.

1 <code>\$ra</code> (f)	5 <code>\$v1</code> (f)	9 <code>\$a0</code> (b)	13 <code>\$t2</code> (b)
2 <code>\$t0</code> (f)	6 <code>\$s0</code> (b)	10 <code>\$a1</code> (b)	14 <code>\$v0</code> (b)
3 <code>\$a0</code> (f)	7 <code>\$s1</code> (b)	11 <code>\$t0</code> (b)	15
4 <code>\$t0</code> (f)	8 <code>\$ra</code> (b)	12 <code>\$t1</code> (b)	16

3 A Guide to Writing Functions

```
FunctionFoo: # PROLOGUE
             # begin by reserving space on the stack
             addiu $sp, $sp, -FrameSize

             # now, store needed registers
             sw $ra, 0($sp)
             sw $s0, 4($sp)
             ...
             # BODY
             ...
             # EPILOGUE
             # restore registers
             lw $s0 4($sp)
             lw $ra 0($sp)

             # release stack spaces
             addiu $sp, $sp, FrameSize

             # return to normal execution
             jr $ra
```

4 C to MIPS

1. Assuming `$a0` and `$a1` hold integer pointers, swap the values they point to via the stack and return control.

```
void swap(int *a, int *b) {
    int tmp = *a;
    *a = *b;
    *b = tmp;
}

swap:
    addiu $sp, $sp, -4
    lw $t0, 0($a0)
    sw $t0, 0($sp)
    lw $t0, 0($a1)
    sw $t0, 0($a0)
    lw $t0, 0($sp)
    sw $t0, 0($a1)
    addiu $sp, $sp, 4
    jr $ra
```

2. Translate the following algorithm that finds the sum of the numbers from 0 to N to MIPS assembly. Assume `$s0` holds N , `$s1` holds `sum`, and that N is greater than or equal to 0.

```
int sum = 0;
if (N==0)    return 0;

while (N != 0) {
    sum += N;
    N--;
}

return sum;

addu $s1, $0, $0
loop:
    addu $s1, $s1, $s0
    addiu $s0, $s0, -1
    beq $s0, $0, return
    j loop
return:
    addu $v0, $s1, $0
    j $ra
```

3. What must be done to make the adding algorithm from the previous part into a callable MIPS function?

```
sum:
    addu $v0, $0, $0
loop:
    addu $v0, $v0, $a0
    addiu $a0, $a0, -1
    beq $a0, $0, return
    j loop
return:
    j $ra
```