Instruction: OpenFlow

Software-Defined Networking & OpenFlow:

Software-Defined Networking (SDN) is a recently proposed networking paradigm in which the data and the control planes are decoupled from one another. One can think of the control plane as being the network's "brain", i.e., it is responsible for making all decisions, for example, how to forward data, while the data plane is what actually moves the data. In traditional networks, both the control- and data planes are tightly integrated and implemented in the forwarding devices that comprise a network.

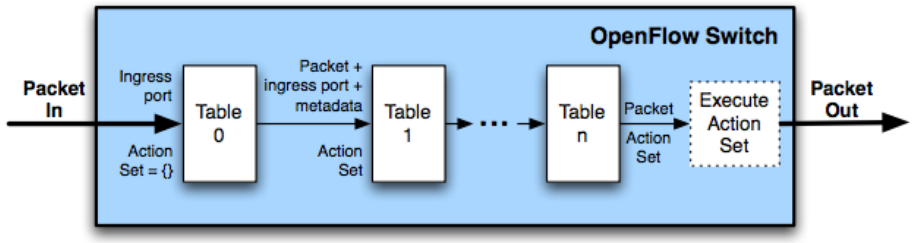
The SDN control plane is implemented by the "controller" and the data plane by "switches". The controller acts as the "brain" of the network, and sends commands (a.k.a. "rules") to the switches on how to handle traffic. OpenFlow has emerged as the de facto SDN standard and specifies how the controller and the switches communicate as well as the rules controllers install on switches.

Mininet and OpenFlow:

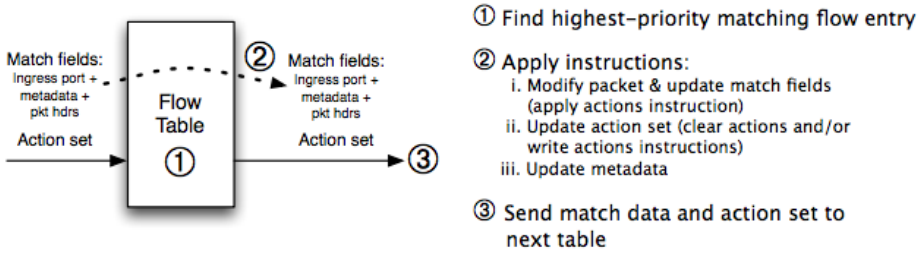
In project 1, we experimented with Mininet using its internal controller. We can also use our own designed controller to send commands to the switches. We will be using the POX controller, which is written in Python.

OpenFlow 1.3 Overview:

OpenFlow 1.3 is the version of the OpenFlow protocol supported within the Mininet environment. The following diagram explains the operation of OpenFlow switches.



(a) Packets are matched against multiple tables in the pipeline



(b) Per-table packet processing

Figure 2: Packet flow through the processing pipeline

Note that when the packet comes into an OpenFlow switch, the switch will reference a table containing “rules” and “actions”. This “flow” table contains the following fields:

Match Fields	Priority	Counters	Instructions	Timeouts	Cookie

Table 1: Main components of a flow entry in a flow table.

The figure below shows the flow of execution that follows. If an ofp_packet_in does not match any of the flow entries and the flow table does not have a “table-miss” flow entry, the packet will be dropped. If the packet matches the “table-miss” flow entry, it will be forwarded to the controller. If there is a match-entry for the packet, the switch will execute the action stored in the instruction field of the corresponding flow table.

5.3 Matching

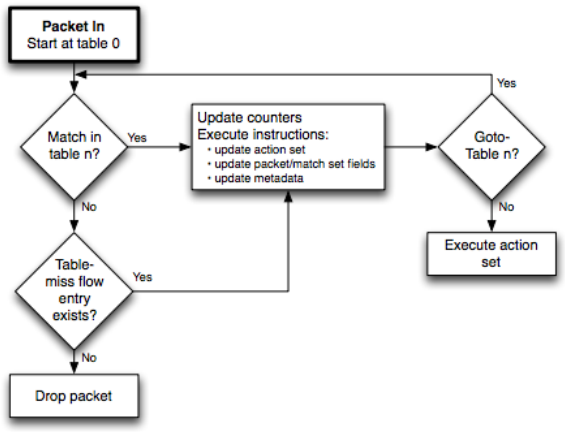


Figure 3: Flowchart detailing packet flow through an OpenFlow switch.

All of the figures and information in this section are from the OpenFlow 1.3 specification, which you can reference if you would like additional information

Running the Code:

To run the controller, place project3controller.py in the ~/pox/pox/misc directory. You can then launch the controller with the command **sudo ~/pox/pox.py misc.project3controller**

To run the mininet file, place it in ~ and run the command **sudo python ~/project3.py**

To do project3, you will need to be running both files at the same time (in 2 different terminal windows).

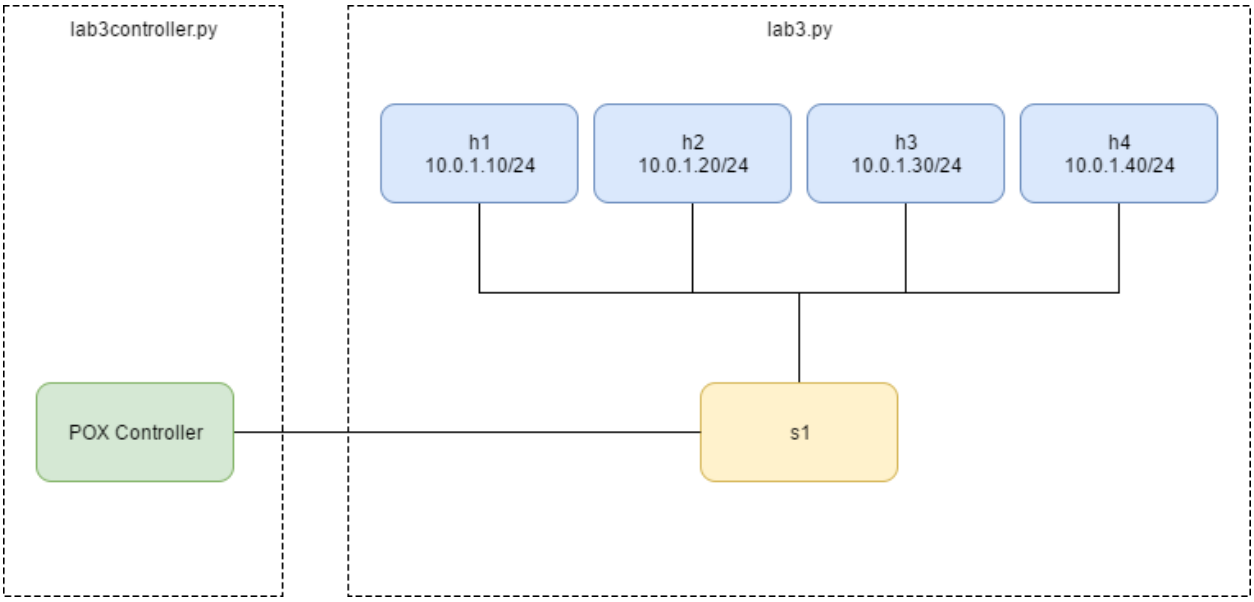
Useful Resources:

http://intronetworks.cs.luc.edu/auxiliary_files/mininet/poxwiki.pdf

Inside your VM, the pox/forwarding/l2_learning.py example file.

Example: Simple Firewall using OpenFlow

The topology that will be created will look as follows:



Rules:

The rules that you will need to implement in OpenFlow for this assignment are:

src ip	**dst ip**	**protocol**	**action**
any ipv4	any ipv4	tcp	accept
any	any	arp	accept
any ipv4	any ipv4	-	drop

Basically, your Firewall should allow all ARP and TCP traffic to pass. However, any other type of traffic should be dropped. It is acceptable to flood the allowable traffic out all ports.

Be careful! Flow tables match the rule with highest priority first, where priority is established based on the order rules are placed in the table.

When you create a rule in the POX controller, you need to also have POX “install” the rule in the switch. This makes it so the switch “remembers” what to do for a few seconds. You will be downgraded if your switch simply asks the controller what to do for every packet it receives.

Hint: To do this, look up ofp_flow_mod.

Testing:

To test your controller, first start the controller, then start the mininet script. When you are prompted with the mininet CLI, run the following commands and take a screenshot of each:

1) pingall : This should fail, since ICMP traffic should be blocked.

2) dpctl dump-flows: This should show a few entries. These are the entries that you installed into the switch with of_flow_mod. You'll need to do this within the timeout you specified in your of_flow_mod for the entries to show up!

3) iperf: This should succeed.