

LINUX PROGRAMMING

Linux /proc File System

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Outline – The /proc FS

- **□** Introduction
- Linux file system
- ☐ The /proc FS
 - Process entries
 - Hardware Information
 - Kernel Information
 - File System
 - System statistic



The Linux Proc File System

- The /proc file system does not store data, rather, its contents are computed on demand according to user file I/O requests
 - The **/proc** must implement a directory structure, and the file contents within; it must then define a unique and persistent inode number for each directory and files it contains
 - It uses this inode number to identify just what operation is required when a user tries to read from a particular file inode or perform a lookup in a particular directory inode
 - When data is read from one of these files, proc collects the appropriate information, formats it into text form and places it into the requesting process's read buffer

The Linux Proc File System (cont'd)

- /proc is a virtual file system that allow communication between kernel and use space
- ☐ It doesn't contain 'real' files but runtime system information system memory, devices mounted, hardware configuration
- Widely used for many reporting information
- ☐ E.g., /proc/modules, /proc/meminfo, /proc/cpuinfo,...
- http://www.tldp.org/LDP/Linux-Filesystem-Hierarchy/html/proc.html



Example: /proc, /proc/cpuinfo

```
ung@TonyStark2022:~$ ls /proc
                cmdline filesystems loadayg mounts self sys uptime version signature
15 83 cgroups cpuinfo interrupts
                                      meminfo net
                                                       stat ttv version
 ung@TonyStark2022:~$ cat /proc/cpuinfo
processor
                : 0
vendor id
                : GenuineIntel
cpu family
               : 6
model
               : 158
model name
                : Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-8750H CPU @ 2.20GHz
stepping
                : 10
               : 0xffffffff
microcode
               : 2208.000
cpu MHz
               : 256 KB
cache size
physical id
                : 0
siblings
                : 12
core id
                : 0
                : 6
cpu cores
apicid
                : 0
initial apicid
               : 0
fpu
                : ves
fpu exception : yes
cpuid level
                : 6
                : ves
                : fpu vme de pse tsc msr pae mce cx8 apic sep mtrr pge mca cmov pat pse36 clflush dts acpi mmx fxsr sse
sse2 ss ht tm pbe syscall nx pdpe1gb rdtscp lm pni pclmulqdq dtes64 est tm2 ssse3 fma cx1<u>6 xtpr pdcm pcid sse4 1 sse4 2</u>
x2apic movbe popcnt aes xsave osxsave avx f16c rdrand hypervisor lahf lm abm 3dnowprefetch fsgsbase tsc adjust bmi1 avx2
smep bmi2 erms invpcid mpx rdseed adx smap clflushopt ibrs ibpb stibp ssbd
bogomips
                : 4416.00
clflush size
                . 64
cache alignment : 64
```

Example: /proc/meminfo

\$ cat /proc/meminfo

```
nung@TonyStark2022:~$ cat /proc/meminfo
MemTotal:
                 33343772 kB
MemFree:
                 16995068 kB
Buffers:
                    34032 kB
Cached:
                   188576 kB
SwapCached:
                        Ø kB
Active:
                   167556 kB
Inactive:
                   157876 kB
Active(anon):
                   103104 kB
Inactive(anon):
                   17440 kB
Active(file):
                   64452 kB
Inactive(file):
                   140436 kB
Unevictable:
                        Ø kB
Mlocked:
                        Ø kB
SwapTotal:
                 29257504 kB
SwapFree:
                 28632988 kB
Dirtv:
                        Ø kB
Writeback:
                        Ø kB
AnonPages:
                   102824 kB
Mapped:
                    71404 kB
Shmem:
                    17720 kB
Slab:
                    13868 kB
SReclaimable:
                     6744 kB
SUnreclaim:
                     7124 kB
KernelStack:
                     2848 kB
PageTables:
                     2524 kB
NFS Unstable:
                        Ø kB
Bounce:
                        Ø kB
WritebackTmp:
                        Ø kB
CommitLimit:
                   515524 kB
```



proc manual

\$ man 5 proc





Create a directory under /proc

```
19 extern struct proc_dir_entry *proc_mkdir(const char *, struct proc_dir_entry *);
```

Create a directory under /proc proc_mkdir()

Create a file under /proc proc_create()



```
1486 struct file operations {
1487
                          struct module *owner;
1488
                          loff t (*llseek) (struct file *, loff t, int);
1489
                          ssize t (*read) (struct file *, char user *, size t, loff t *);
                          ssize t (*write) (struct file *, const char user *, size t, loff t *);
1490
                          ssize t (*aio read) (struct kiocb *, const struct iovec *, unsigned long, loff t);
1491
                          ssize t (*aio write) (struct kiocb *, const struct iovec *, unsigned long, loff t);
1492
1493
                          ssize t (*read iter) (struct kiocb *, struct iov iter *);
1494
                          ssize t (*write iter) (struct kioch *, struct iov iter *);
1495
                          int (*iterate) (struct file *, struct dir context *);
                          unsigned int (*poll) (struct file *, struct poll table struct *);
1496
1497
                          long (*unlocked ioctl) (struct file *, unsigned int, unsigned long);
1498
                          long (*compat ioctl) (struct file *, unsigned int, unsigned long);
                          int (*mmap) (struct file *, struct vm area struct *);
1499
                          int (*open) (struct inode *, struct file *);
1500
                          int (*flush) (struct file *, fl owner t id);
1501
                          int (*release) (struct inode *, struct file *);
1502
                          int (*fsync) (struct file *, loff t, loff t, int datasync);
1503
                          int (*aio fsync) (struct kiocb *, int datasync);
1504
1505
                          int (*fasync) (int, struct file *, int);
                          int (*lock) (struct file *, int, struct file lock *);
1506
                          ssize t (*sendpage) (struct file *, struct page *, int, size t, loff t *, int);
1507
                          unsigned long (*get unmapped area) (struct file *, unsigned long, 
1508
1509
                          int (*check flags) (int);
1510
                          int (*flock) (struct file *, int, struct file lock *);
                          ssize t (*splice write) (struct pipe inode info *, struct file *, loff t *, size t, unsigned int);
1511
1512
                          ssize t (*splice read) (struct file *, loff t *, struct pipe inode info *, size t, unsigned int);
                          int (*setlease) (struct file *, long, struct file lock **, void **);
1513
1514
                          long (*fallocate) (struct file *file, int mode, loff t offset,
                                                              loff t len);
1515
1516
                          int (*show fdinfo) (struct seq file *m, struct file *f);
1517 };
```



Sample code: Using /proc

Sample code:

```
#define FILENAME "status"
#define DIRECTORY "mp1"
static struct proc dir entry *proc dir;
static struct proc dir entry *proc entry;
static ssize t mpl read (struct file *file, char user *buffer, size t count, loff t *data) {
   // implementation goes here...
static ssize t mpl write (struct file *file, const char user *buffer, size t count, loff t
*data){
   // implementation goes here...
static const struct file operations mp1 file = {
   .owner = THIS MODULE,
   .read = mp1 read,
   .write = mp1 write,
};
int init mp1 init(void){
   proc dir = proc mkdir(DIRECTORY, NULL);
   proc entry = proc create(FILENAME, 0666, proc dir, & mp1 file);
```

- Within MP1_read/mp1_write, you may need to move data between kernel/user space
 - copy_from_user()
 - copy_to_user()

Sample code (There are other ways of implementing it):

```
static ssize_t mp1_read (struct file *file, char __user *buffer, size_t count, loff_t *data){
    // implementation goes here...
    int copied;
    char * buf;
    buf = (char *) kmalloc(count, GFP_KERNEL);
    copied = 0;
    //... put something into the buf, updated copied
    copy_to_user(buffer, buf, copied);
    kfree(buf);
    return copied;
}
```



/proc/cpuinfo

\$ cat /proc/cpuinfo

```
nung@TonyStark2022:~$ cat /proc/cpuinfo
nung@TonyStark2022:~$ cat /proc/cpuinfo |
processor
vendor id
                : GenuineIntel
cpu family
                . 6
nodel
                : 158
model name
                : Intel(R) Core(TM) i7-8750H CPU @ 2.20GHz
stepping
microcode
                : 0xffffffff
cpu MHz
                : 2208.000
cache size
                : 256 KB
physical id
                : 0
siblings
                : 12
core id
cpu cores
apicid
initial apicid : 0
fpu
                : ves
fpu exception
                : yes
cpuid level
                : 6
                : ves
                : fpu vme de pse tsc msr pae mce cx8 apic sep mtrr pge mca cmov pat pse36 clflush dts acpi mmx fxsr sse
sse2 ss ht tm pbe syscall nx pdpe1gb rdtscp lm pni pclmulada dtes64 est tm2 ssse3 fma cx16 xtpr pdcm pcid sse4 1 sse4 2
x2apic movbe popcnt aes xsave osxsave avx f16c rdrand hypervisor lahf lm abm 3dnowprefetch fsgsbase tsc adjust bmi1 avx2
smep bmi2 erms invpcid mpx rdseed adx smap clflushopt ibrs ibpb stibp ssbd
bogomips
                : 4416.00
clflush size
                : 64
cache alignment : 64
              : 36 bits physical, 48 bits virtual
address sizes
power management:
```

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Extract CPU Clock Speed from /proc/cpuinfo

- □ A simple way to extract a value from this output is to read the file into a buffer and parse it in memory using sscanf.

 Listing 7.1 shows an example of this. The program includes the function get_cpu_clock_speed that reads from /proc/cpuinfo into memory and extracts the first CPU's clock speed.
- □ Code: Listing 7.1 (clock-speed.c): Extract CPU Clock Speed from /proc/cpuinfo (page 132-133, ALP).
 - □ http://www.advancedlinuxprogramming.com/listings/chapter-7/clock-speed.c



Extract CPU Clock Speed from /proc/cpuinfo

- □ \$ cat /proc/cpuinfo | grep "cpu MHz"
- □ Code: Listing 7.1 (clock-speed.c): Extract CPU Clock Speed from /proc/cpuinfo (page 132-133, ALP).
 - http://www.advancedlinuxprogramming.com/listings/chapter-7/clock-speed.c



Process Entries under /proc

- ☐ The /proc file system contains a directory entry for each process running on the GNU/Linux system. The name of each directory is the process ID of the corresponding process.
 - On some UNIX systems, the process IDs are padded with zeros. On GNU/Linux, they are not.
- These directories appear and disappear dynamically as processes start and terminate on the system. Each directory contains several entries providing access to information about the running process. From these process directories the **/proc** file system gets its name.



Process Entries under /proc (cont'd)

- Each process directory contains these entries:
 - cmdline contains the argument list for the process. The cmdline entry is described in Section 7.2.2, "Process Argument List."
 - cwd is a symbolic link that points to the current working directory of the process (as set, for instance, with the chdir call).
 - environ contains the process's environment. The environ entry is described in Section 7.2.3, "Process Environment."
 - exe is a symbolic link that points to the executable image running in the process. The exe entry is described in Section 7.2.4, "Process Executable."
 - fd is a subdirectory that contains entries for the file descriptors opened by the process. These are described in Section 7.2.5, "Process File Descriptors."

Process Entries under /proc (cont'd)

- Each process directory contains these entries (cont'd)
 - maps
 - root
 - stat
 - statm
 - status
 - cpu



/proc/self

- □ The entry /proc/self is a symbolic link to the /proc directory corresponding to the current process. The destination of the /proc/self link depends on which process looks at it: Each process sees its own process directory as the target of the link.
- □ For example, the program in Listing 7.2 reads the target of the /proc/self link to determine its process ID.



Listing 7.2 (get-pid.c) Obtain the Process ID from /proc/self



Process File Descriptors

- The fd entry is a subdirectory that contains entries for the file descriptors opened by a process. Each entry is a symbolic link to the file or device opened on that file descriptor.
- You can write to or read from these symbolic links; this writes to or reads from the corresponding file or device opened in the target process

```
$ Is -I /proc/16/fd
total 0
Irwx----- 1 hung hung 0 Nov 7 22:53 0 -> /dev/tty1
Irwx----- 1 hung hung 0 Nov 7 22:53 1 -> /dev/tty1
Irwx----- 1 hung hung 0 Nov 7 22:53 2 -> /dev/tty1
Irwx----- 1 hung hung 0 Nov 7 22:53 255 -> /dev/tty1
```

Listing 7.6 (open-and-spin.c) Open a File for Reading

Listing 7.6 (open-and-spin.c) Open a File for Reading

```
#include <fcntl.h>
#include <stdio.h>
#include <sys/stat.h>
#include <sys/types.h>
#include <unistd.h>
int main (int argo, char* argv[])
  const char* const filename = argv[1];
  int fd = open (filename, O RDONLY);
  printf ("in process %d, file descriptor %d is open to %s\n",
          (int) getpid (), (int) fd, filename);
  while (1):
  return 0;
```

Try running it in one window:

% ./open-and-spin /etc/fstab

Process Memory Statistics

- The statm entry contains a list of seven numbers, separated by spaces.
 Each number is a count of the number of pages of memory used by the process in a particular category.
- The categories, in the order the numbers appear, are listed here:
 - The total process size
 - The size of the process resident in physical memory
 - The memory shared with other processes—that is, memory mapped both by this
 process and at least one other (such as shared libraries or untouched copy-on-write
 pages)
 - The text size of the process—that is, the size of loaded executable code
 - The size of shared libraries mapped into this process
 - The memory used by this process for its stack
 - The number of dirty pages—that is, pages of memory that have been modified by to program
 23 CCE-HCMUT Linux Programming 2022

Process Statistics

 The status entry contains a variety of information about the process, formatted for comprehension by humans. Among this information is the process ID and parent process ID, the real and effective user and group IDs, memory usage, and bit masks specifying which signals are caught, ignored, and blocked.



Hardware Information

- CPU Information
- Device Information
- PCI Bus Information
- Serial Port Information



Kernel Information

Version Information

- cat /proc/version
- cat /proc/sys/kernel/ostype
- cat /proc/sys/kernel/osrelease
- cat /proc/sys/kernel/version

Hostname and Domain Name

 The /proc/sys/kernel/hostname and /proc/sys/kernel/domainname entries contain the computer's hostname and domain name, respectively



Memory Usage

- The /proc/meminfo entry contains information about the system's memory usage. Information is presented both for physical memory and for swap space. The first three lines present memory totals, in bytes; subsequent lines summarize this information in kilobytes – e.g:
 - cat /proc/meminfo

```
ung@TonyStark2022:~$ cat /proc/meminfo
MemTotal:
MemEree:
                 20350092 kB
Buffers:
                    34032 kB
Cached:
                  188576 kB
SwapCached:
                        0 kB
Active:
                  167556 kB
Inactive:
                  157876 kB
Active(anon):
                  103104 kB
Inactive(anon):
                   17440 kB
Active(file):
                   64452 kB
Inactive(file):
                  140436 kB
Unevictable:
                        0 kB
Mlocked:
                        0 kB
SwapTotal:
                29257504 kB
SwapFree:
                29209052 kB
Dirtv:
                        0 kB
Writeback:
                        0 kB
AnonPages:
                  102824 kB
Mapped:
                   71404 kB
Shmem:
                   17720 kB
Slab:
                   13868 kB
SReclaimable:
                    6744 kB
SUnreclaim:
                    7124 kB
KernelStack:
                     2848 kB
PageTables:
                     2524 kB
                        0 kB
NFS Unstable:
                        0 kB
Bounce:
WritebackTmp:
                        0 kB
```

Drives, Mounts, and File Systems

/proc/filesystems

- The contents of /proc/filesystems list only file system types that either are statically linked into the kernel or are currently loaded.
- Other file system types may be available on the system as modules but might not be loaded yet.



Drives and Partitions

- The /proc file system includes information about devices connected to both IDE controllers and SCSI controllers (if the system includes them).
 - /proc/ide subdirectory may contain either or both of two subdirectories, ide0 and ide1, corresponding to the primary and secondary IDE controllers on the system

Table 7.1 Full Paths Corresponding to the Four Possible IDE Devices

Controller	Device	Subdirectory
Primary	Master	/proc/ide/ide0/hda/
Primary	Slave	/proc/ide/ide0/hdb/
Secondary	Master	/proc/ide/ide1/hdc/
Secondary	Slave	/proc/ide/ide1/hdd/



/proc/scsi/scsi

If SCSI devices are present in the system, /proc/scsi/scsi contains a summary of their identification values. For example, the contents might look like this:

```
% cat /proc/scsi/scsi
Attached devices:
Host: scsi0 Channel: 00 Id: 00 Lun: 00
Vendor: QUANTUM Model: ATLAS_V_9_WLS Rev: 0230
Type: Direct-Access ANSI SCSI revision: 03
Host: scsi0 Channel: 00 Id: 04 Lun: 00
Vendor: QUANTUM Model: QM39100TD-SW Rev: N491
Type: Direct-Access ANSI SCSI revision: 02
```



/proc/partitions, /proc/sys/dev/cdrom/

- The /proc/partitions entry displays the partitions of recognized disk devices. For each partition, the output includes the major and minor device number, the number of 1024-byte blocks, and the device name corresponding to that partition.
- The /proc/sys/dev/cdrom/ info entry displays miscellaneous information about the capabilities of CD-ROM drives



Mounts

 The /proc/mounts file provides a summary of mounted file systems. Each line corresponds to a single mount descriptor and lists the mounted device, the mount point, and other information. Note that /proc/mounts contains the same information as the ordinary file /etc/mtab, which is automatically updated by the mount command.



Locks

 The /proc/locks entry describes all the file locks currently outstanding in the system. Each row in the output corresponds to one lock.

% touch /tmp/test-file
% ./lock-file /tmp/test-file
file /tmp/test-file
opening /tmp/test-file
locking
locked; hit enter to unlock...

In another window, look at the contents of /proc/locks. % cat /proc/locks
1: POSIX ADVISORY WRITE 5467 08:05:181288 0 2147483647 d1b5f740 00000000 dfea7d40 000000000 000000000

% ps 5467
PID TTY STAT TIME COMMAND
5467 pts/28 S 0:00 ./lock-file /tmp/test-file



System statistic

/proc/stat

 Various statistics about the system, such as the number of page faults since the system was booted.

/proc/uptime

The time the system has been up.

/proc/version

The kernel version.

/proc/loadavg

 The `load average' of the system; three meaningless indicators of now much work the system has to do at the moment.

Summary the /proc

/proc/PID

 A directory with information about process number PID. Each process has a directory below /proc with the name being its process identification number.

/proc/cpuinfo

Information about the processor, such as its type, make, model, and performance.

/proc/devices

List of device drivers configured into the currently running kernel.

/proc/dma

Shows which DMA channels are being used at the moment.



Summary the /proc (cont'd)

/proc/filesystems

Filesystems configured into the kernel.

/proc/interrupts

Shows which interrupts are in use, and how many of each there have been.

/proc/ioports

Which I/O ports are in use at the moment.

/proc/kcore

An image of the physical memory of the system. This is exactly the same size as your physical memory, but does not really take up that much memory; it is generated on the fly as programs access it. (Remember: unless you copy it elsewhere, nothing under /proc takes up any disk space at all.)

/proc/kmsg

Messages output by the kernel. These are also routed to syslog.

Summary the /proc (cont'd)

/proc/ksyms

Symbol table for the kernel.

/proc/meminfo

Information about memory usage, both physical and swap.

/proc/modules

Which kernel modules are loaded at the moment.

/proc/net

Status information about network protocols.

/proc/self

A symbolic link to the process directory of the program that is looking at /proc. When
two processes look at /proc, they get different links. This is mainly a convenience to
make it easier for programs to get at their process directory.

Linux Virtual File Systems

- To the user, Linux's file system appears as a hierarchical directory tree obeying UNIX semantics
- Internally, the kernel hides implementation details and manages the multiple different file systems via an abstraction layer, that is, the Virtual File System (VFS)
- The Linux VFS is designed around object-oriented principles and is composed of four components:
 - A set of definitions that define what a file object is allowed to look like
 - The inode object structure represent an individual file
 - The file object represents an open file
 - The superblock object represents an entire file system
 - A dentry object represents an individual directory entry



Linux Virtual File Systems (Cont.)

- To the user, Linux's file system appears as a hierarchical directory tree obeying UNIX semantics
- Internally, the kernel hides implementation details and manages the multiple different file systems via an abstraction layer, that is, the virtual file system (VFS)
- The Linux VFS is designed around object-oriented principles and layer of software to manipulate those objects with a set of operations on the objects
 - E.g. for the file object operations include (from struct file_operations in /usr/include/linux/fs.h

```
int open(...) — Open a file
ssize t read(...) — Read from a file
ssize t write(...) — Write to a file
int mmap(...) — Memory-map a file
```



Linux kernel sources:

☐ If you're interested in exactly how /proc works, take a look at the source code in the Linux kernel sources, under:

/usr/src/linux/fs/proc/



Linux Kernel Lists

- You will use Linux list to store all registered user processes
- Linux kernel list is a widely used data structure in Linux kernel
 - Defined in linux/linux.h>
 - You MUST get familiar of how to use it
 - Can be used as follows

```
struct list_head{
    struct list_head *next;
    struct list_head *prev;
};
```

```
struct my_cool_list{
    struct list_head list; /* kernel's list structure */
    int my_cool_data;
    void* my_cool_void;
};
```



Linux Kernel Module

- LKM are pieces of code that can be loaded and unloaded into the kernel upon demand
 - No need to modify the kernel source code
- Separate compilation
- Runtime linkage
- · Entry and Exit functions

```
#include nux/module.h>
#include <linux/kernel.h>
static int init myinit(void){
    printk(KERN ALERT "Hello, world\n");
    return 0;
static void exit myexit(void){
    printk(KERN ALERT "Goodbye, World\n");
module init(myinit);
module exit(myexit);
MODULE LICENSE("GPL");
```



Ref:

- Mitchell, M., Oldham, J., & Samuel, A. (2001). Advanced linux programming (pp. 95-129). Berkeley, CA: New riders.
- 2. Linux System Administrators Guide: https://tldp.org/LDP/sag/html/proc-fs.html



Discussions



44

LKM Example: Hello world

- 1. Edit
- 2. Makefile

```
#include <linux/module.h>
#include <linux/kernel.h>
static int __init myinit(void)
{
        printk(KERN_ALERT "Hello, world\n");
        return 0;
}
static void __exit myexit(void)
{
        printk(KERN_ALERT "Goodbye, World\n");
}
module_init(myinit);
module_exit(myexit);
MODULE_LICENSE("GPL");
```



LKM Example: Hello world (2)

- Make
 - (Compiles the module)
- Is
 - Show module has been compiled to hello.ko

```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help

cs423@cs423-vm:~/cs423/demo/mp1$ vim Makefile

cs423@cs423-vm:~/cs423/demo/mp1$ make

make -C /lib/modules/3.13.0-44-generic/build M=/home/cs423/cs423/demo/mp1 modules

make[1]: Entering directory `/usr/src/linux-headers-3.13.0-44-generic'

CC [M] /home/cs423/cs423/demo/mp1/hello.o

Building modules, stage 2.

MODPOST 1 modules

CC /home/cs423/cs423/demo/mp1/hello.mod.o

LD [M] /home/cs423/cs423/demo/mp1/hello.ko

make[1]: Leaving directory `/usr/src/linux-headers-3.13.0-44-generic'

cs423@cs423-vm:~/cs423/demo/mp1$ ls

hello.c hello.ko hello.mod.c hello.mod.o hello.o Makefile modules.order Module.symvers

cs423@cs423-vm:~/cs423/demo/mp1$
```

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```
File Edit View Search Terminal Help

cs423@cs423-vm:~/cs423/demo/mp1$ vim Makefile

cs423@cs423-vm:~/cs423/demo/mp1$ make

make -C /lib/modules/3.13.0-44-generic/build M=/home/cs423/cs423/demo/mp1 modules

make[1]: Entering directory `/usr/src/linux-headers-3.13.0-44-generic'

CC [M] /home/cs423/cs423/demo/mp1/hello.o

Building modules, stage 2.

MODPOST 1 modules

CC /home/cs423/cs423/demo/mp1/hello.mod.o

LD [M] /home/cs423/cs423/demo/mp1/hello.ko

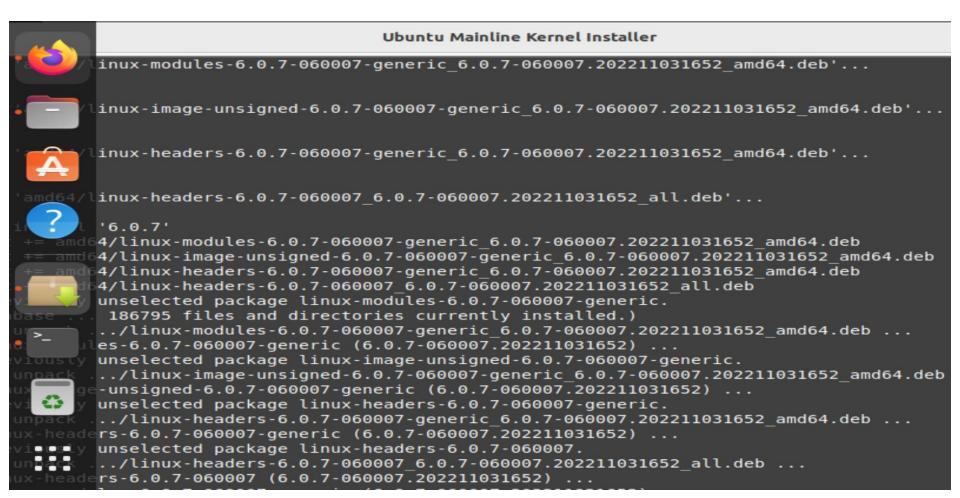
make[1]: Leaving directory `/usr/src/linux-headers-3.13.0-44-generic'

cs423@cs423-vm:~/cs423/demo/mp1$ ls

hello.c hello.ko hello.mod.c hello.mod.o hello.o Makefile modules.order Module.symvers

cs423@cs423-vm:~/cs423/demo/mp1$
```





Review

- Solving CPU Scheduling exercises?
- Answer questions



Thank you!



Q/A?



Other File Systems



The Linux ext3 File System

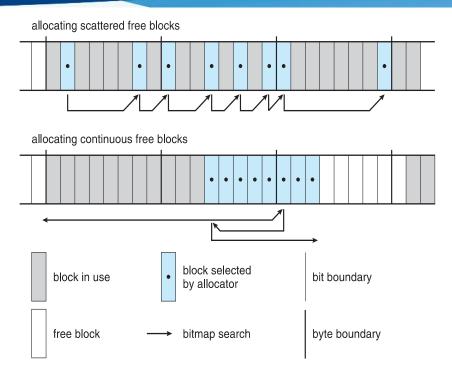
- ext3 is standard on disk file system for Linux
 - Uses a mechanism similar to that of BSD Fast File System (FFS) for locating data blocks belonging to a specific file
 - Supersedes older extfs, ext2 file systems
 - Work underway on ext4 adding features like extents
 - Of course, many other file system choices with Linux distros



The Linux ext3 File System (Cont.)

- The main differences between ext2fs and FFS concern their disk allocation policies
 - In ffs, the disk is allocated to files in blocks of 8Kb, with blocks being subdivided into fragments of 1Kb to store small files or partially filled blocks at the end of a file
 - ext3 does not use fragments; it performs its allocations in smaller units
 - The default block size on ext3 varies as a function of total size of file system with support for 1, 2, 4 and 8 KB blocks
 - ext3 uses cluster allocation policies designed to place logically adjacent blocks of a file into physically adjacent blocks on disk, so that it can submit an I/O request for several disk blocks as a single operation on a block group
 - Maintains bit map of free blocks in a block group, searches for free byte to allocate at least 8 blocks at a time

Ext2fs Block-Allocation Policies





Journaling

- ext3 implements journaling, with file system updates first written to a log file in the form of transactions
 - Once in log file, considered committed
 - Over time, log file transactions replayed over file system to put changes in place
- On system crash, some transactions might be in journal but not yet placed into file system
 - Must be completed once system recovers
 - No other consistency checking is needed after a crash (much faster than older methods)
- Improves write performance on hard disks by turning random I/O into sequențial