

# CS 351

## Design of Large Programs

### Java Synchronization

October 25, 2021

# Concurrency Issues

- The performance benefits of concurrency come with added programming complexity.
- Without the proper use of *mutual exclusion* when accessing shared resources, some concurrency issues can arise:
  - Thread interference (race conditions)
  - Deadlock
  - Livelock
  - Starvation

## Recall: Mutual Exclusion

*Mutual exclusion* is the requirement that no more than one thread of execution may access a particular *critical section* at once.

$$x = 1$$

Thread A

$$x = x + 1$$

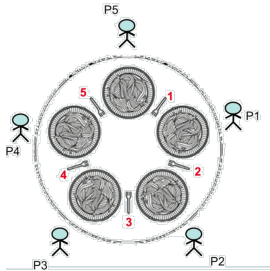
Thread B

$$x = x - 2$$

What does  $x$  equal?

Without mutual exclusion, we don't know which thread will access, manipulate, and store the result first!

# Example of Deadlock: Dining Philosophers



- 5 philosophers are seated around a table spending their time thinking and eating
- Each philosopher has a fork to their left and to their right
- In order to eat a philosopher must have both forks in their hands

# Synchronization: Programming Mutual Exclusion

*Synchronization* is the programming construct used to ensure mutual exclusion in Java.

Two synchronization idioms are used:

## Synchronized methods

```
public synchronized void foo() {  
    // ...  
}
```

Only one thread at a time can execute in a synchronized method. The lock is on the object providing the methods.

## Synchronized blocks

```
public void foo() {  
    synchronized(lock) {  
        // ...  
    }  
}
```

Only the thread possessing the lock can execute in a synchronized block.

# Example: Counter

Consider a static Counter which allows *two* Farmers to keep track of the number of sheep in the pen.

```
public class Counter {  
    private static int n = 0;  
  
    public static void increment() {  
        n++;  
    }  
  
    public static void decrement() {  
        n--;  
    }  
  
    public static void printCount() {  
        // print sheep count...  
    }  
}
```

```
public class Farmer  
    implements Runnable {  
  
    @Override  
    public void run() {  
        // two sheep arrive  
        Counter.increment();  
        Counter.increment();  
  
        // one sheep leaves  
        Counter.decrement();  
    }  
}
```

How many sheep are in the pen?

# Counter: Console Output

```
public static void main(String[] args) {  
    Farmer f1 = new Farmer();  
    Thread t1 = new Thread(f1);  
  
    Farmer f2 = new Farmer();  
    Thread t2 = new Thread(f2);  
  
    t1.start();  
    t2.start();  
  
    Counter.printCount();  
}
```

**Output**

# Counter: Console Output

```
public static void main(String[] args) {  
    Farmer f1 = new Farmer();  
    Thread t1 = new Thread(f1);  
  
    Farmer f2 = new Farmer();  
    Thread t2 = new Thread(f2);  
  
    t1.start();  
    t2.start();  
  
    Counter.printCount();  
}
```

## Output

2 sheep in the pen.



# Counter: Console Output

```
public static void main(String[] args) {  
    Farmer f1 = new Farmer();  
    Thread t1 = new Thread(f1);  
  
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    Thread t2 = new Thread(f2);  
  
    t1.start();  
    t2.start();  
  
    Counter.printCount();  
}
```

## Output

2 sheep in the pen.  
3 sheep in the pen.

# Counter: Console Output

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public static void main(String[] args) {  
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## Output

2 sheep in the pen.  
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## Output

2 sheep in the pen.  
3 sheep in the pen.  
2 sheep in the pen.  
1 sheep in the pen.

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    t2.start();  
  
    Counter.printCount();  
}
```

## Output

2 sheep in the pen.  
3 sheep in the pen.  
2 sheep in the pen.  
1 sheep in the pen.

We have a *race condition*.

Access to the critical region (where we manipulate the shared resource n) should be synchronized.

# Counter: Synchronized Methods

In this trivial example, synchronizing access to both methods eliminates the race condition.

```
public class Counter {  
    private static int n = 0;  
  
    public static synchronized void increment() {  
        n++;  
    }  
  
    public static synchronized void decrement() {  
        n--;  
    }  
}
```

**Output**

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## Output

2 sheep in the pen.

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## Output

2 sheep in the pen.

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}
```

## Output

2 sheep in the pen.  
2 sheep in the pen.  
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    }  
}
```

## Output

```
2 sheep in the pen.  
2 sheep in the pen.  
2 sheep in the pen.  
2 sheep in the pen.
```

# Case Study: Producer/Consumer problem

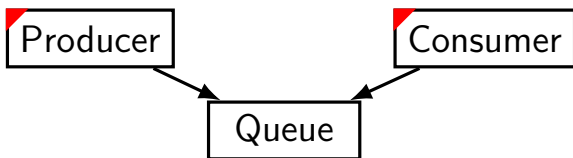
- Consider a *queue* which buffers data provided by a Producer and removed by a Consumer
  - the queue has a maximum size
  - the Producer should not add to a full queue
  - the Consumer should not consume from an empty queue
- How do we avoid...
  - putting objects in a full queue?
  - attempting to remove them from an empty one?

# Case Study: Producer/Consumer problem

- Consider a *queue* which buffers data provided by a Producer and removed by a Consumer
  - the queue has a maximum size
  - the Producer should not add to a full queue
  - the Consumer should not consume from an empty queue
- How do we avoid...
  - putting objects in a full queue?
  - attempting to remove them from an empty one?
- We will explore a solution that implements a *singleton* queue.
  - Educational purposes only!
  - BlockingQueue implementations already exist!

# Producer/Consumer: Design Overview

- Producer (thread)
  - integers are placed in the Queue
  - waits when the Queue is full
- Queue – a singleton queue
  - holds integer values
  - starts being empty
  - has a maximum size
- Consumer (thread)
  - waits for a non-empty Queue
  - consumes its contents



## Queue: recall the singleton pattern...

- A single instance of Queue is referenced globally by the Producer and Consumer
  - thus, we can implement it using the *singleton pattern*.
- Recall that the singleton pattern is *not necessarily thread-safe* unless implemented correctly.
  - lazy vs. eager instantiation
- Let's see why...

# Queue: Lazy Instantiation

```
public class Queue {
    private static final int CAPACITY = 5;
    private List<Integer> dataQueue = new ArrayList<>();
    private static Queue uniqueInstance;

    private Queue() {}

    public static Queue getInstance() {
        if (uniqueInstance == null) {
            uniqueInstance = new Queue();
        }
        return uniqueInstance;
    }

    // enqueue(), dequeue()...
}
```

# Queue: Lazy Instantiation Pitfall

Consider the case in which the Producer and Consumer running concurrently in separate threads call `Queue.getInstance()` in order to access data in the queue...

---

```
1 public static Queue getInstance() {  
2     if (uniqueInstance == null) {  
3         uniqueInstance = new Queue();  
4     }  
5     return uniqueInstance;  
6 }
```

If Consumer reaches line ?? before Producer has instantiated `uniqueInstance` on line ??, `getInstance()` will return two separate, unique instances of `Queue`!

# Queue: Eager Instantiation Fix

```
public class Queue {  
    private static final int CAPACITY = 5;  
    private List<Integer> dataQueue = new ArrayList<>();  
    private static Queue uniqueInstance = new Queue();  
  
    private Queue() {}  
  
    public static Queue getInstance() {  
        return uniqueInstance;  
    }  
  
    // enqueue(), dequeue()...  
}
```

uniqueInstance is instantiated eagerly (i.e. before we know we need it). What is another way of addressing this thread-safety issue?



# Queue: Synchronized getInstance Fix

```
public class Queue {  
    private static final int CAPACITY = 5;  
    private List<Integer> dataQueue = new ArrayList<>();  
    private static Queue uniqueInstance;  
  
    private Queue() {}  
  
    public static synchronized Queue getInstance() {  
        if (uniqueInstance == null) {  
            uniqueInstance = new Queue();  
        }  
        return uniqueInstance;  
    }  
  
    // enqueue(), dequeue()...  
}
```

Here, we preserve lazy instantiation but *synchronize* access to `getInstance()`, ensuring that only one thread will be active in the method at a time.

# Producer/Consumer Concept

- In this example (and often in practice), Producers and Consumers are tasks running concurrently in different threads while exchanging information through a shared data structure.
- Their execution is coordinated using synchronized methods accessed *within the Queue object*.

# Producer

```
public class Producer implements Runnable {  
    @Override  
    public void run() {  
        Queue queue = Queue.getInstance();  
  
        while (!Thread.interrupted()) {  
            Integer newData = new Random().nextInt();  
            queue.enqueue(newData);  
        }  
    }  
}
```

# Consumer

```
public class Consumer implements Runnable {  
    @Override  
    public void run() {  
        Queue queue = Queue.getInstance();  
  
        while (!Thread.interrupted()) {  
            // consume the last value in the queue  
            queue.dequeue();  
        }  
    }  
}
```

# Producer/Consumer: Guarded Blocks

- While the Producer and Consumer wait for the Queue to be in an appropriate state (non-full or non-empty, respectively), they must perform *guarded blocks*.
- Guarded blocks allow the execution of threads to be coordinated based upon the state of shared variables.
- There are two types of guarded blocks:
  - **Bad:** Busy waiting
  - **Good:** Wait/notify

# Queue: Guarded block with a busy wait

```
public class Queue {  
    private static final int CAPACITY = 5;  
    private List<Integer> dataQueue = new ArrayList<>();  
    private static Queue uniqueInstance;  
  
    // constructor, getInstance() ...  
  
    public void enqueue(Integer data) {  
        while (dataQueue.size() >= CAPACITY) {  
            // wait ...  
        }  
        dataQueue.add(data);  
    }  
}
```

Busy waits are a waste of processor resources!

# Queue: Guarded block with wait/notify

```
public class Queue {
    private static final int CAPACITY = 5;
    private List<Integer> dataQueue = new ArrayList<>();
    private static Queue uniqueInstance;

    // constructor, getInstance() ...

    public synchronized void enqueue(Integer data) {
        while (dataQueue.size() >= CAPACITY) {
            try {
                wait();
            } catch (InterruptedException e) {
                e.printStackTrace();
            }
        }
        dataQueue.add(data);
        notifyAll();
    }
}
```

## What's happening here?

- enqueue is synchronized now. *wait calls must be performed by threads currently holding the lock in a synchronized method or block.*
- We still have a while loop: *wait calls must occur in a loop.* Otherwise, our waiting thread might be asleep when it's notified by another thread to wake.
- Despite the while loop, *our call to wait signals the thread scheduler to use processor resources elsewhere*  
No more busy wait!



# Queue: Guarded block on dequeue

```
public class Queue {
    private static final int CAPACITY = 5;
    private List<Integer> dataQueue = new ArrayList<>();
    private static Queue uniqueInstance;

    // constructor, getInstance(), enqueue()...

    public synchronized Integer dequeue() {
        while (dataQueue.size() == 0) {
            try {
                wait();
            } catch (InterruptedException e) {
                e.printStackTrace();
            }
        }
        notifyAll();
        return dataQueue.remove(dataQueue.size() - 1);
    }
}
```

# Producer/Consumer: Conclusion

- Using synchronization idioms, the execution of two different threads (in this case, Producer and Consumer) can be coordinated.
- Is synchronization always necessary?
  - no, and in some cases it can be a detriment to performance
  - redundant when applied to threads that possess mutually exclusive, private state