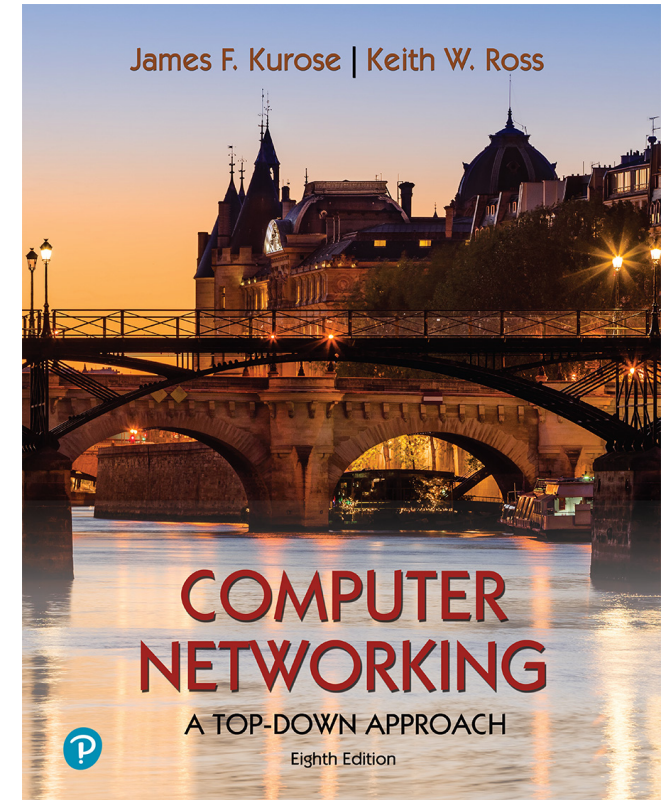


Chapter 2

Application Layer



Computer Networking: A Top-Down Approach

8th edition

Jim Kurose, Keith Ross
Pearson, 2020

Acknowledgement: Based on the textbook's website:
https://gaia.cs.umass.edu/kurose_ross/index.php

Application layer: overview

- Principles of network applications
- Web and HTTP
- **E-mail, SMTP, IMAP**
- The Domain Name System DNS
- P2P applications
- video streaming and content distribution networks
- socket programming with UDP and TCP



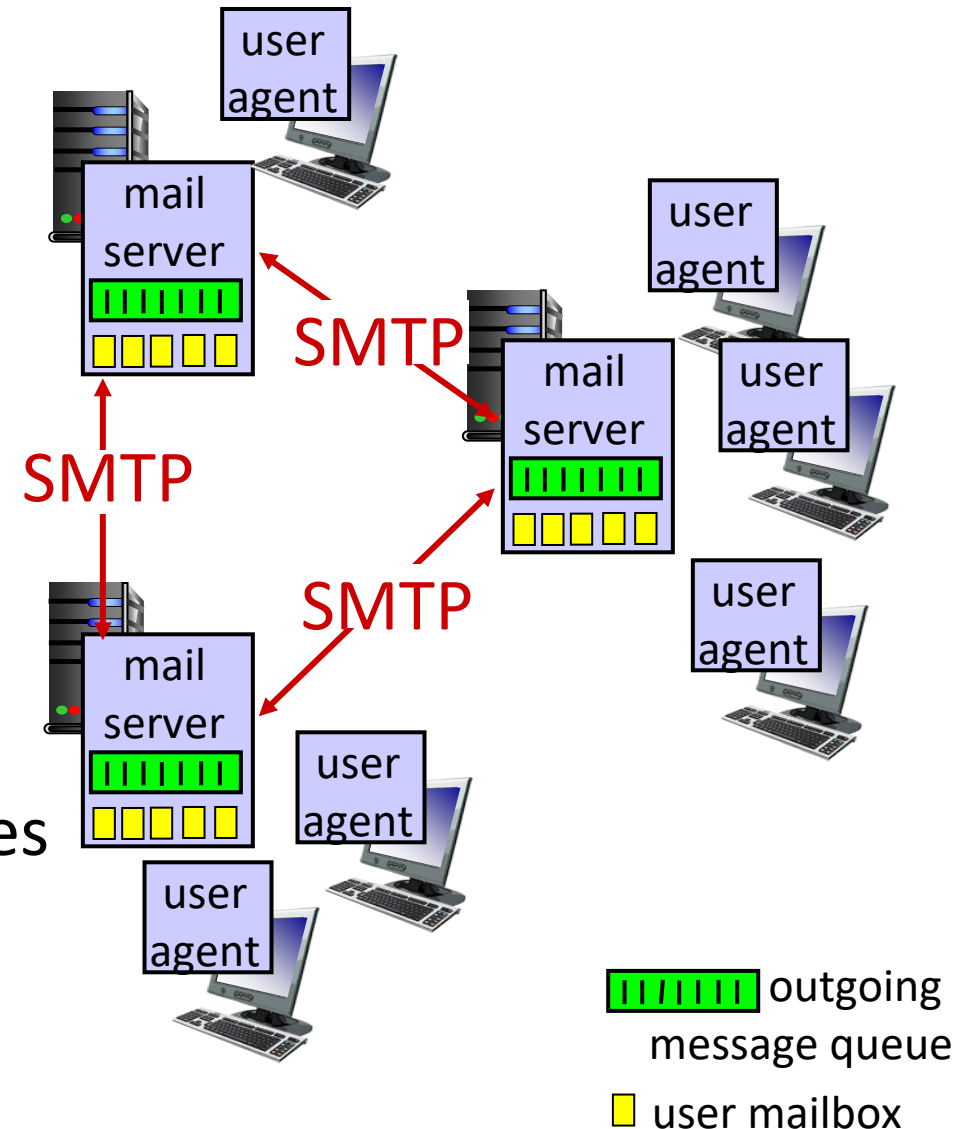
E-mail

Three major components:

- user agents
- mail servers
- simple mail transfer protocol: SMTP

User Agent

- a.k.a. “mail reader”
- composing, editing, reading mail messages
- e.g., Outlook, iPhone mail client
- outgoing, incoming messages stored on server



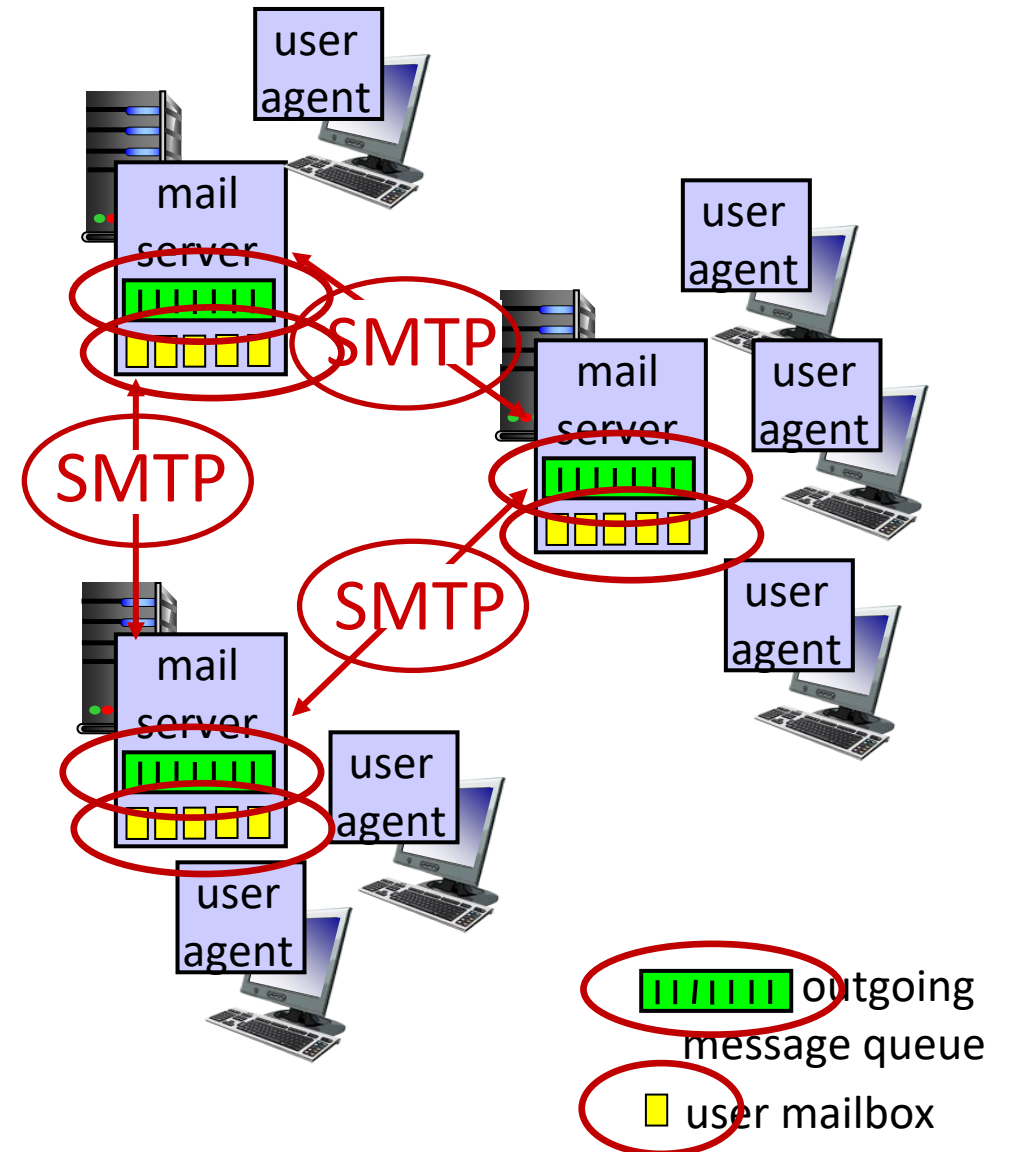
E-mail: mail servers

mail servers:

- *mailbox* contains incoming messages for user
- *message queue* of outgoing (to be sent) mail messages

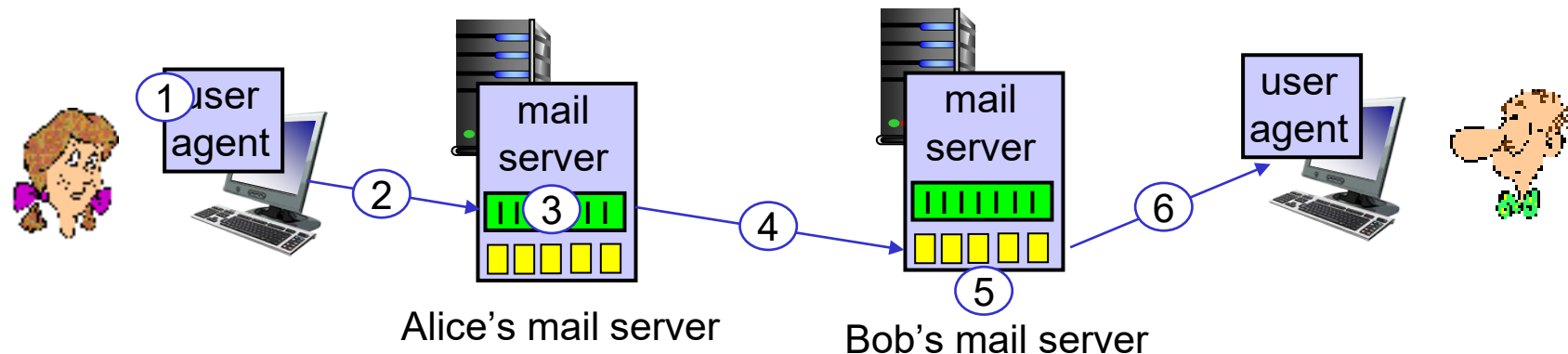
SMTP protocol between mail servers to send email messages

- **client**: sending mail server
- **“server”**: receiving mail server



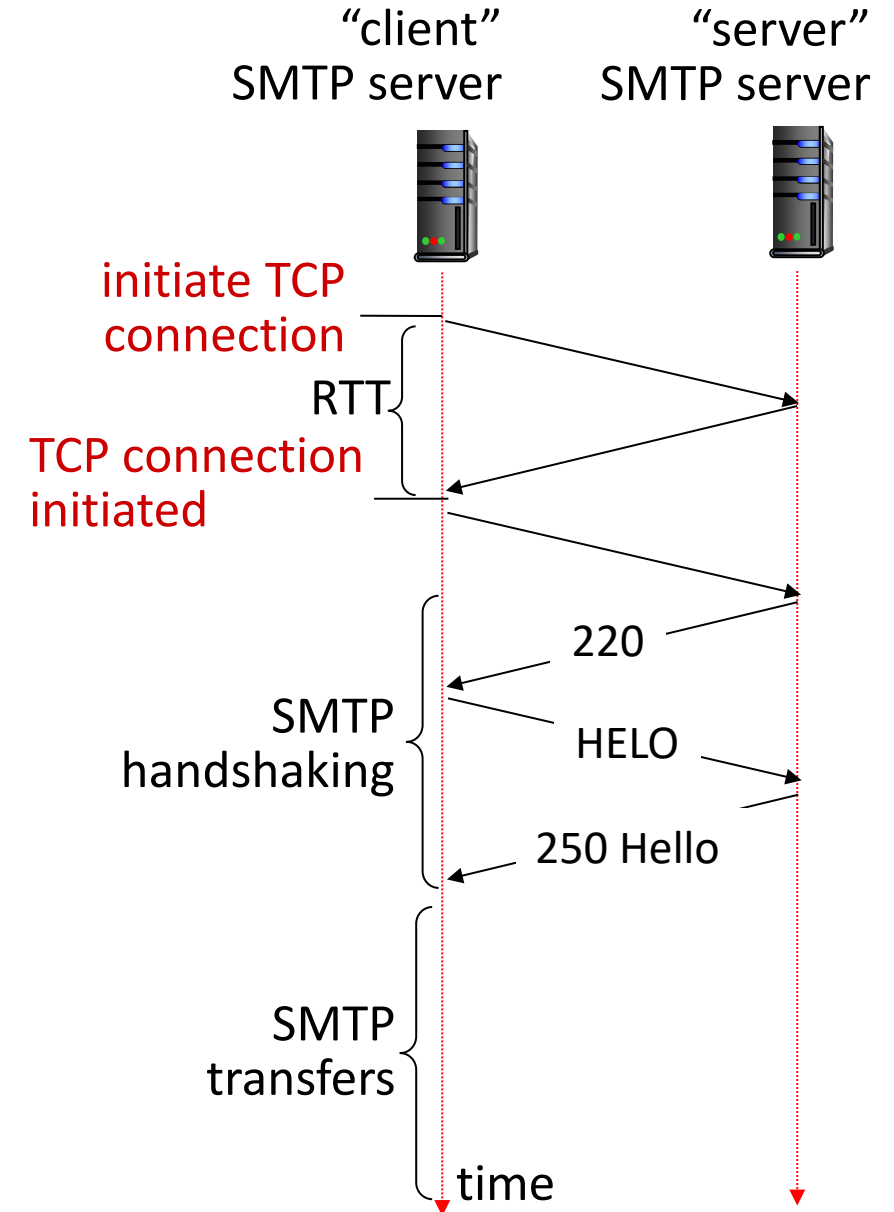
Scenario: Alice sends e-mail to Bob

- 1) Alice uses UA to compose e-mail message "to" bob@some school.edu
- 2) Alice's UA sends message to her mail server using SMTP; message placed in message queue
- 3) client side of SMTP at mail server opens TCP connection with Bob's mail server
- 4) SMTP client sends Alice's message over the TCP connection
- 5) Bob's mail server places the message in Bob's mailbox
- 6) Bob invokes his user agent to read message



SMTP RFC (5321)

- uses TCP to reliably transfer email message from client (mail server initiating connection) to server, port 25
 - direct transfer: sending server (acting like client) to receiving server
- three phases of transfer
 - SMTP handshaking (greeting)
 - SMTP transfer of messages
 - SMTP closure
- command/response interaction (like HTTP)
 - **commands**: ASCII text
 - **response**: status code and phrase



SMTP: observations

comparison with HTTP:

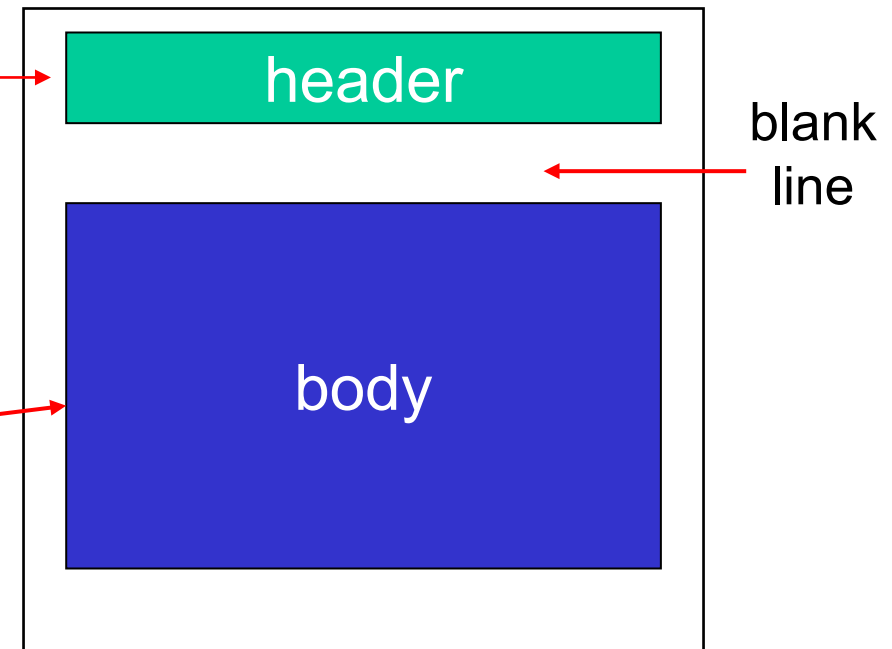
- HTTP: client pull
 - SMTP: client push
 - both have ASCII command/response interaction, status codes
 - HTTP: each object encapsulated in its own response message
 - SMTP: multiple objects sent in multipart message
- SMTP uses persistent connections
 - SMTP requires message (header & body) to be in 7-bit ASCII
 - SMTP server uses CRLF.CRLF to determine end of message

Mail message format

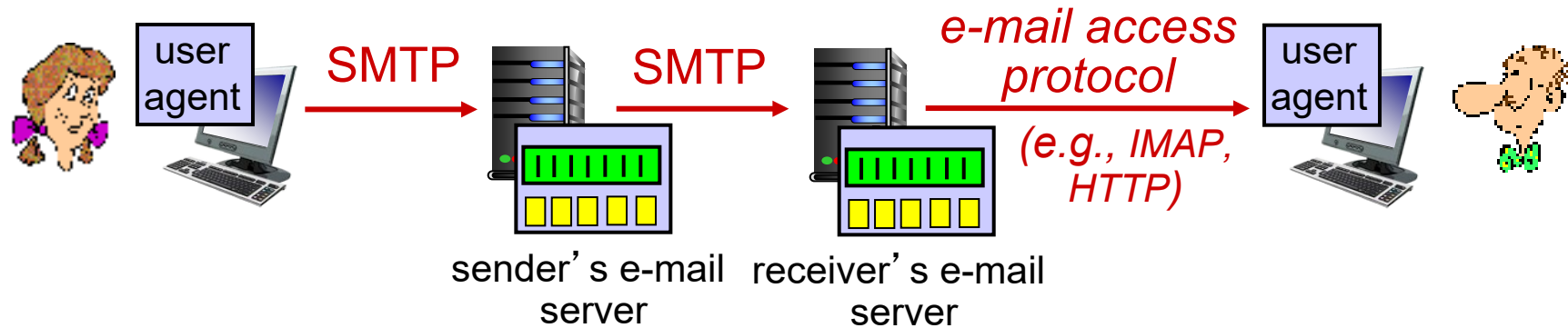
SMTP: protocol for exchanging e-mail messages, defined in RFC 5321 (like RFC 7231 defines HTTP)

RFC 2822 defines *syntax* for e-mail message itself (like HTML defines syntax for web documents)

- header lines, e.g.,
 - To:
 - From:
 - Subject:these lines, within the body of the email message area different from SMTP MAIL FROM:, RCPT TO: commands!
- Body: the “message” , ASCII characters only



Retrieving email: mail access protocols



- **SMTP**: delivery/storage of e-mail messages to receiver's server
- mail access protocol: retrieval from server
 - **IMAP**: Internet Mail Access Protocol [RFC 3501]: messages stored on server, IMAP provides retrieval, deletion, folders of stored messages on server
- **HTTP**: gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo!Mail, etc. provides web-based interface on top of SMTP (to send), IMAP (or POP) to retrieve e-mail messages