# Introduction to Mininet & POX

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HY436

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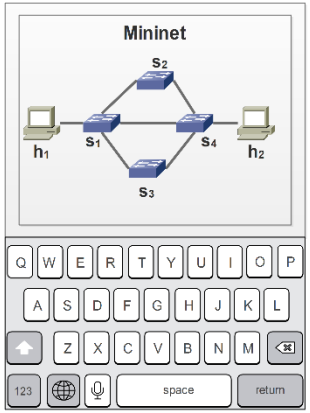
# Outline

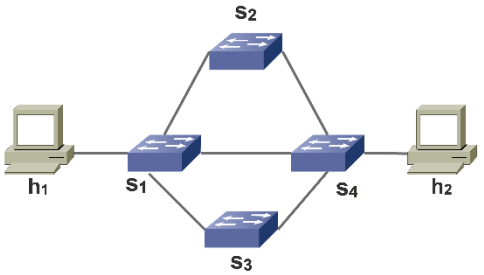
- Mininet
- OpenFlow 
- POX 

# Mininet

- Mininet is a **network emulator**
- Allows emulating **end-hosts, switches, routers and links** using software similar to real-world elements




(a) Emulated Network




(b) Hardware Network

# Mininet

- Mininet advantages
  - Fast network setup
  - Allows custom topologies for experiments
  - Supports OpenFlow enabling custom packet forwarding
  - Reduces cost for experiments since hardware is not required
  - Enables executing commands/scripts in each host (using XMing)
- Limitations
  - Suffers from resource limitations
    - All virtual network components run a single system
    - Resource requirements for large scale topologies
  - All end-hosts share the same file system
  - Lacks of virtual timing capabilities

# Mininet topologies

- Mininet allows creating parametrized topologies using Python scripts
- This is useful for experimenting with different network scenarios

- Useful methods

| Method | Meaning |
|---|---|
| addSwitch() | Adds a switch to the topology and returns the switch name |
| addHost() | Adds a host to the topology and returns the host name |
| addLink() | adds a bidirectional link to the topology |
| pingAll() | Connectivity test using ping between all hosts |
| net.hosts | List all the hosts in a network |
| dumpNodeConnections | Dumps connections to/from a set of nodes |

# Mininet Topology Example

**simple_test.py**

```
from mininet.topo import Topo
from mininet.net import Mininet
from mininet.util import dumpNodeConnections
from mininet.log import setLogLevel

class SingleSwitchTopo(Topo):
    "Single switch connected to n hosts."
    def build(self, n=2):
        switch = self.addSwitch('s1')
        # Python's range(N) generates 0..N-1
        for h in range(n):
            host = self.addHost('h%s' % (h + 1))
            self.addLink(host, switch)

def simpleTest():
    "Create and test a simple network"
    topo = SingleSwitchTopo(n=4)
    net = Mininet(topo)
    net.start()
    print "Dumping host connections"
    dumpNodeConnections(net.hosts)
    print "Testing network connectivity"
    net.pingAll()
    net.stop()

if __name__ == '__main__':
    # Tell mininet to print useful information
    setLogLevel('info')
    simpleTest()
```

**sudo python simple_test.py**

```
*** Creating network
*** Adding controller
*** Adding hosts:
h1 h2 h3 h4
*** Adding switches:
s1
*** Adding links:
(h1, s1) (h2, s1) (h3, s1) (h4, s1)
*** Configuring hosts
h1 h2 h3 h4
*** Starting controller
c0
*** Starting 1 switches
s1 ...
Dumping host connections
h1 h1-eth0:s1-eth1
h2 h2-eth0:s1-eth2
h3 h3-eth0:s1-eth3
h4 h4-eth0:s1-eth4
Testing network connectivity
*** Ping: testing ping reachability
h1 -> h2 h3 h4
h2 -> h1 h3 h4
h3 -> h1 h2 h4
h4 -> h1 h2 h3
*** Results: 0% dropped (12/12 received)
*** Stopping 1 controllers
c0
*** Stopping 4 links
....
*** Stopping 1 switches
s1
*** Stopping 4 hosts
h1 h2 h3 h4
*** Done
```

# Mininet Topology Example

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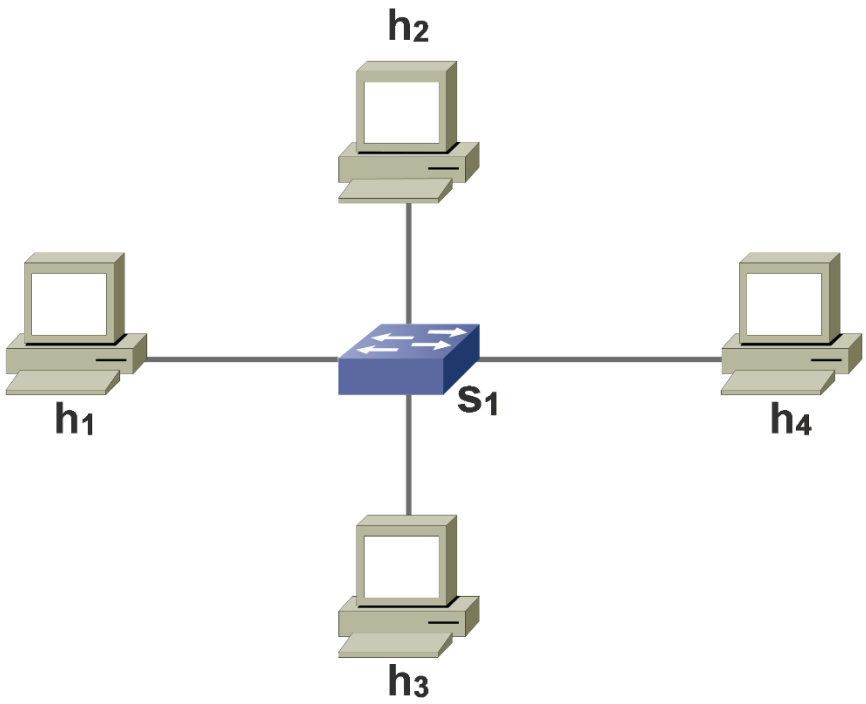
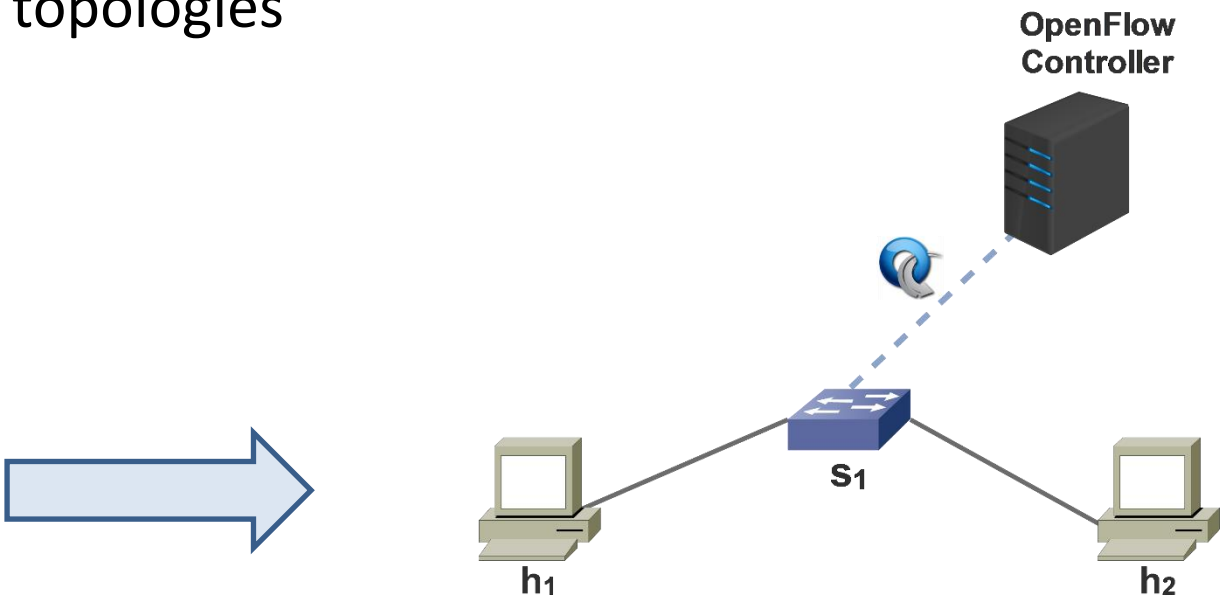


# Mininet topologies

- Apart from writing Python scripts for creating network topologies, Mininet allows topology setup using command line extending existing default topologies

sudo mn




The default topology is the minimal topology, which includes **one OpenFlow switch** connected to **two hosts**, plus the **OpenFlow reference controller**.

# Mininet topologies

- Other useful Mininet commands

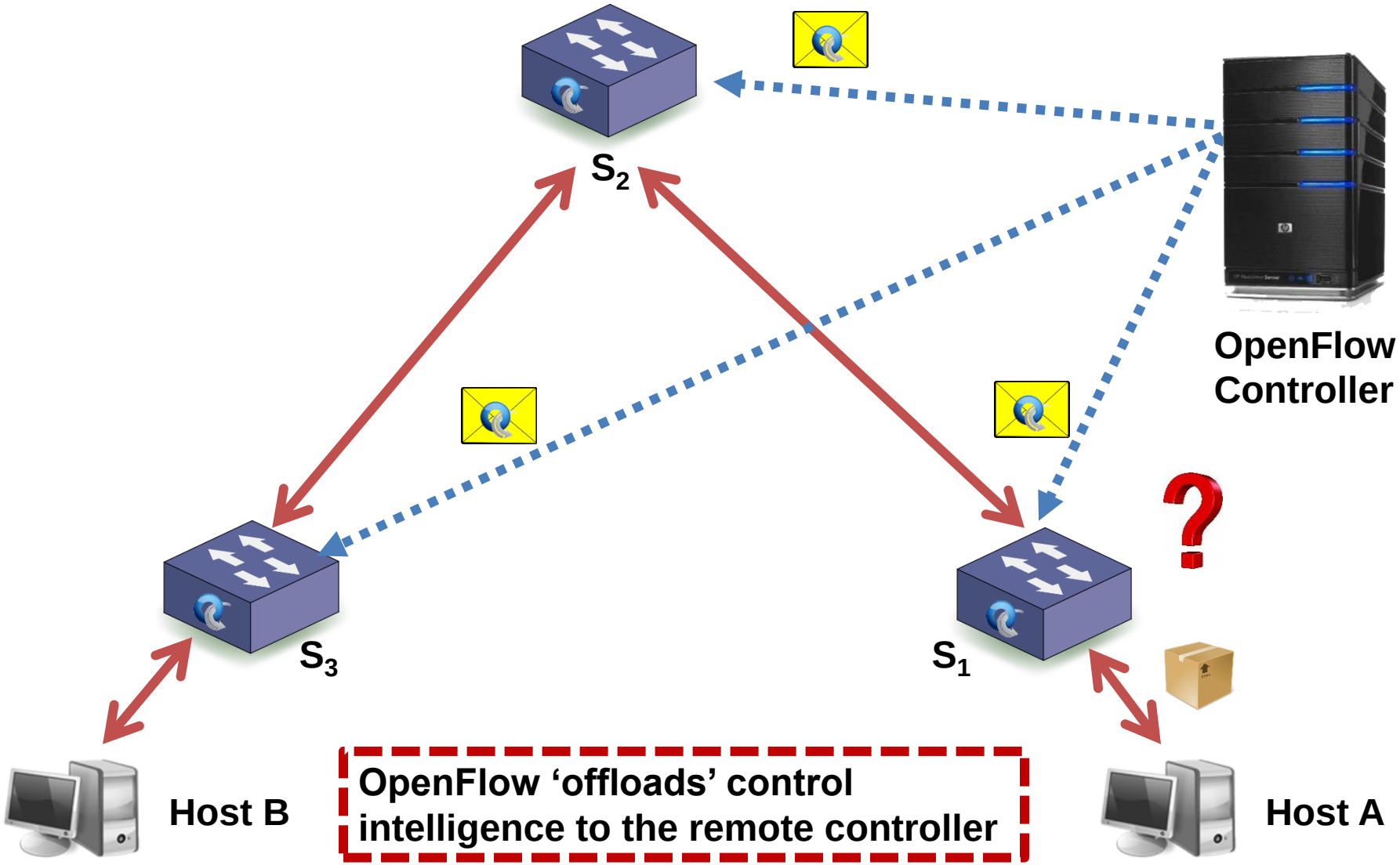
| Command | Meaning |
|---|---|
| help | Display available commands |
| nodes | List nodes |
| net | Display links |
| dump | Display dump information |
| xterm $h_i$ $h_j$ | Open terminal to hosts $h_i$, $h_j$ |
| exit/quit | Exit/quit Mininet |

- Mininet clean up: sudo mn –c (before each experiment)

# Mininet topologies

- Other topology example
  - sudo mn --topo single,3 --mac --switch ovsk --controller remote
  - This command creates a simple network topology with 3 hosts, each host n has a separate IP using 10.0.0.n format, the MAC for each host is a function of the assigned IP address (00:00:00:00:00:n) and the OpenFlow switch will be coordinated by a remote OpenFlow controller
- Usually, hosts are named h1,..,hN and switches s1,..,sN, host $h_1$'s default interface is h1-eth0 and switch $s_1$'s first port is s1-eth1

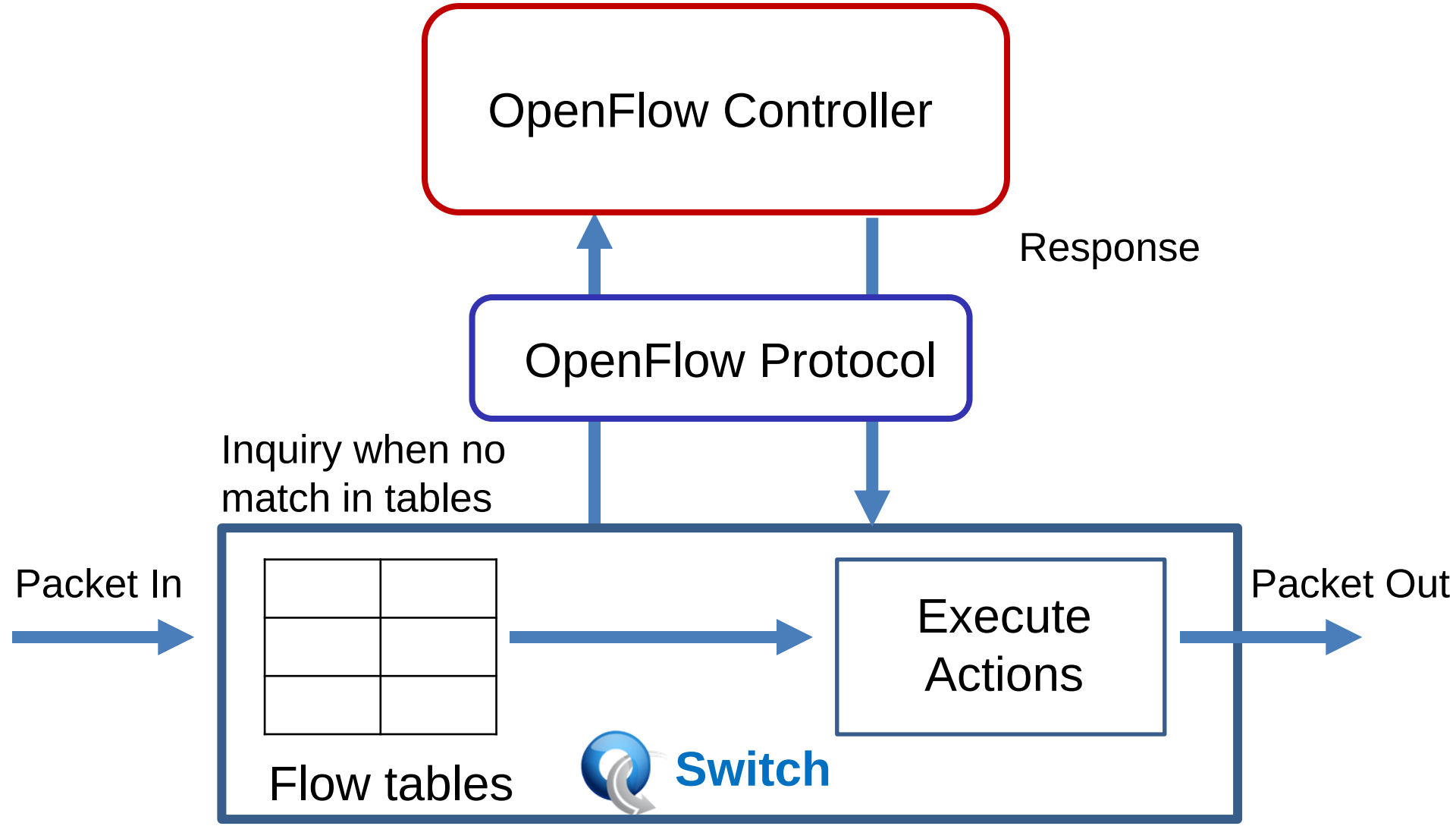
# OpenFlow


S2
OpenFlow Controller
S3
S1
Host B
Host A
OpenFlow 'offloads' control intelligence to the remote controller

# OpenFlow differentiation

- **A conventional switch:**
  - Keeps data plane and control plane in the same device
- **An OpenFlow switch:**
  - Separates data plane and control plane
  - The data plane includes a Flow Table and a specific action for each flow entry
  - The control plane includes the controller that installs the flow entry in the flow table
  - The data plane still resides on the switch
  - The control plane is migrated to the controller

# Pipeline Processing



# What can I do with OpenFlow?

- Easily deploy innovative routing and switching protocols
- Secure networks
- Build scalable data center networks
- More energy-efficient networks
- Virtual machine mobility

# Introduction to POX

- What is POX? 

  - Python-based OpenFlow controller framework
  - Supports OpenFlow specification version 1.0
  - Widely used and supported
  - Easy learning curve
  - Slow performance but easy and fast development for SDN controller applications
  - Generally applied for research, experimentation, demonstrations

# Introduction to POX

- How does POX work?
  - Event-driven programming model
  - Controller functionalities implemented on Components
  - Registers event listeners and/or handlers & creates objects of any Component class:
    - https://github.com/noxrepo/pox/blob/carp/pox/forwarding/hub.py
    - https://github.com/noxrepo/pox/blob/carp/pox/forwarding/l2_learning.py

# Introduction to POX

- Each switch in the topology has a unique datapath ID (DPID)
- POX controller and network switches exchange messages
  - Communication from the controller to the switch is performed by controller code which sends an OpenFlow message to a particular switch
  - When messages are coming from the switch, they show up in POX as events for which you can write event handlers
- DPIDs are used by the POX Controller to send messages to the switches and also recognize the switches that send messages/raise events to the Controller

# Events in POX

- **ConnectionUp**:
  - Raised in response to the establishment of a new control channel between a switch and the Controller
- **PacketIn**:
  - Fired when the Controller receives an OpenFlow packet-in message indicating that a packet arriving at a switch port has either failed to match all entries in the table, or the matching entry included an action specifying to send the packet to the controller
- Other events: ConnectionDown, PortStatus, FlowRemoved etc.
- Events are treated by handlers

# OpenFlow Messages in POX

- **ofp_packet_out:**
  - Instructs the switch to send (or sometimes discard) a packet, which might be constructed at the controller, or might be the one that the switch received, buffered in the datapath and forwarded to the controller
  - Attributes:
    - **buffer_id**: ID of the buffer in which the packet is stored at the datapath
    - **in_port**: The port number for the packet initially arrived on
    - **actions**: A list of actions to apply
    - **data**: The data to be sent (or None if sending an existing buffer via its buffer_id).

# OpenFlow Messages in POX

- **ofp_flow_mod**:
  - Instructs the switch to install a flow table entry
  - Flow table entries match some fields of the incoming packets, and execute a list of actions on the matched packets
  - Major fields are:
    - **idle_timeout**: The rule will expire if it is not matched in 'idle_timeout' seconds
    - **hard_timeout**: The rule will expire after 'hard_timeout' seconds
    - **actions**: A list of actions that will be applied to the matched packets, each desired action object is then appended to this list and **they are executed in order**
    - **buffer_id**: The ID of the buffer on the datapath that the new flow will be applied to
    - **priority**: The priority at which a rule will match, higher numbers higher priority
    - **match**: The match structure for the rule to match on

# OpenFlow Actions

- OpenFlow actions are applied to packets that match a rule installed at the switch
- **ofp_action_output**:
  - An action for use with **ofp_packet_out** and **ofp_flow_mod**, which specifies a switch port that you wish to send the packet out of
  - Example: Create an output action that would send packets to all ports (flooding):
    - out_action=of.ofp_action_output(port=of.OFPP_FLOOD)

# OpenFlow Actions

- Other OpenFlow actions allow to set/modify:
  - VLAN ID
  - Ethernet source or destination address
  - IP source or destination address
  - IP Type of Service
  - TCP/UDP source or destination port
- For more details, please visit:
  - https://openflow.stanford.edu/display/ONL/POX+Wiki

# OpenFlow Messages in POX

- **ofp_packet_out example:**

```
msg = of.ofp_packet_out()
msg.data = e.pack() # as data we forward the data from packet e in this example
msg.actions.append(of.ofp_action_output(port = 4))
self.connection.send(msg)
```

**Packet e is forwarded from switch port 4**

# OpenFlow Messages in POX

- **ofp_flow_mod example:**

```
msg = of.ofp_flow_mod()
msg.priority = 42
msg.match.dl_type = 0x800
msg.match.nw_dst = IPAddr("192.168.101.101")
msg.match.tp_dst = 80
msg.actions.append(of.ofp_action_output(port = 4))
self.connection.send(msg)
```

**OR**

```
self.connection.send( of.ofp_flow_mod( action=of.ofp_action_output( port=4 ),
                                       priority=42,
                                       match=of.ofp_match( dl_type=0x800,
                                                           nw_dst="192.168.101.101",
                                                           tp_dst=80 )))
```

**Traffic to 192.168.101.101:80 should be sent out from switch port 4**

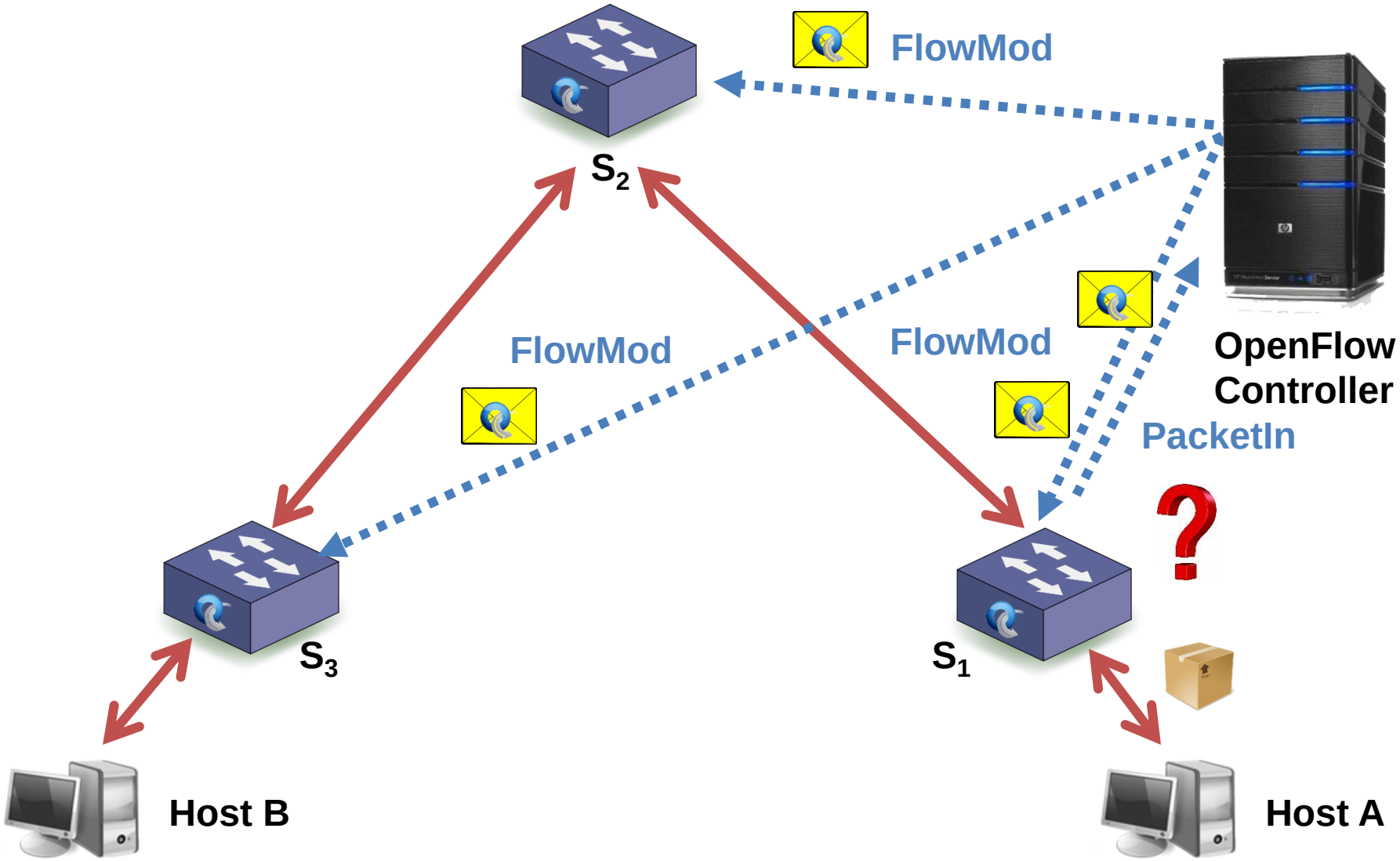
# OpenFlow Match Structure

- Major **ofp_match** class attributes:

| Attribute | Meaning |
|---|---|
| in_port | Switch port number the packet arrived on |
| dl_src | Ethernet (MAC) source address |
| dl_dst | Ethernet (MAC) destination address |
| dl_type | Ethertype / length (e.g. 0x0800 = IPv4) |
| nw_proto | IP protocol (e.g., 6 denotes TCP) |
| nw_src | IP source address |
| nw_dst | IP destination address |
| tp_src | TCP/UDP source port |
| tp_dst | TCP/UDP destination port |

- OpenFlow also allows match from an existing packet using the ofp_match.from_packet() method

# OpenFlow in an example



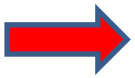
# Other useful methods

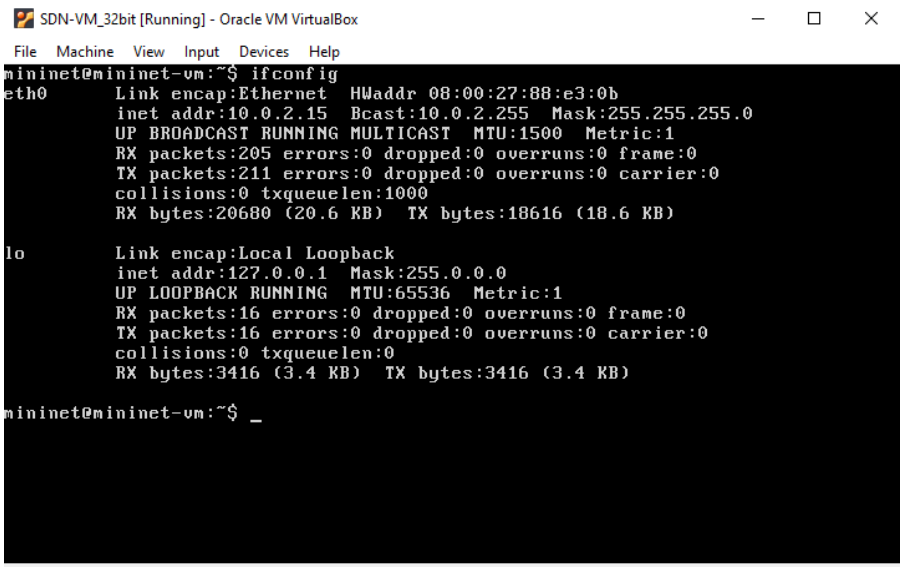
- Displaying a debug message in POX:
  - log.debug(‘saw new MAC!’)
- Displaying an error message in POX:
  - log.error(‘unexpected operation’)
- Python print command also works for debugging or displaying variables values

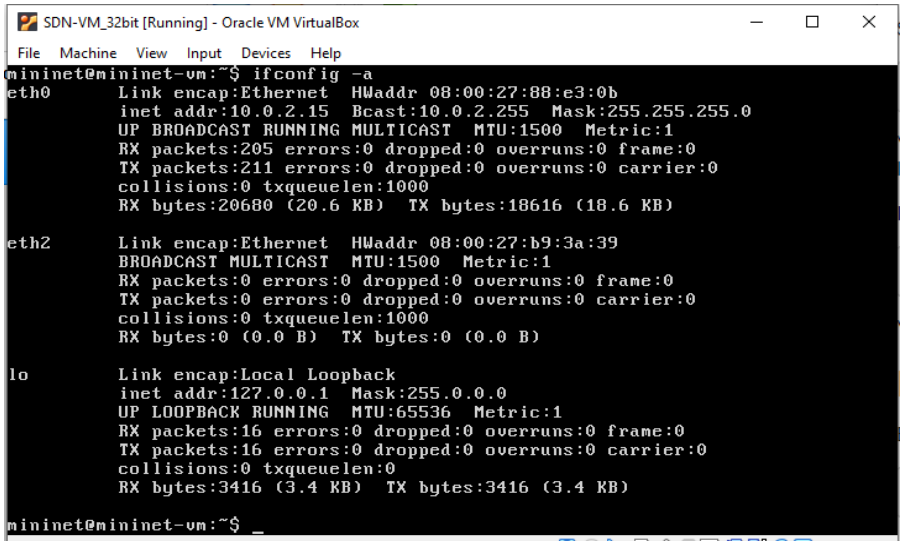
# VM Setup

- Import Virtual Machine Image
- Log in using as credentials
  - Username: mininet
  - Password: mininet
- Your VM should have 2 network interfaces
  - One NAT interface that can be used for Internet access and
  - One host-only interface to enable communication with the host machine

In order to list all network interfaces (also those without IP address) :

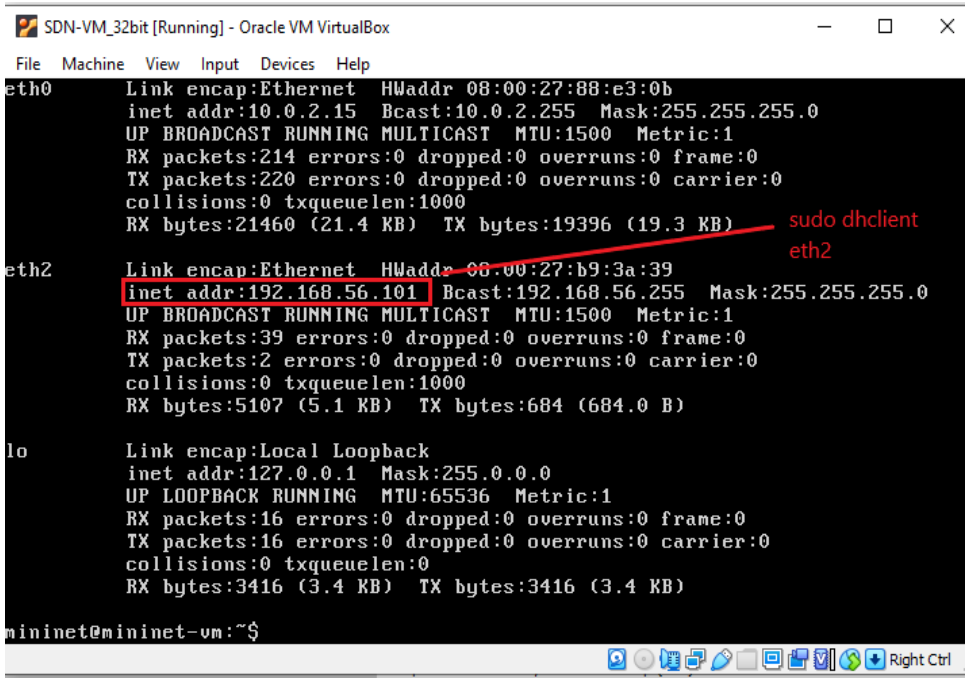




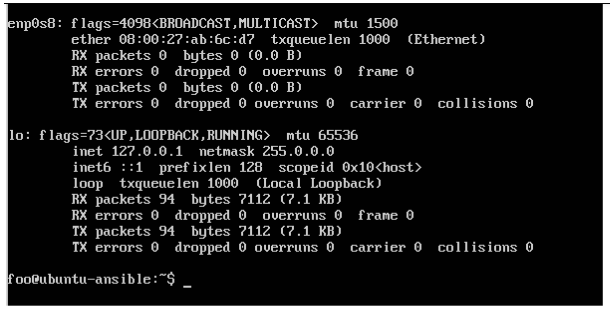
# VM Setup

- In case of a network interface without IP address, you can assign an IP using command
  - sudo dhclient ‘ethX’
  - “ethX’ is the interface name
- The host only interface  will be used for SSH access to the VM



# VM Setup

- In case that dhclient command does not work, please follow the instructions on the right




We need to edit the file of the interfaces: **/etc/network/interfaces**. As it is owned by root we need to use `sudo` . If you are not familiar with more powerful editors then use nano:

```
$ sudo nano /etc/network/interfaces
```

Add the following lines to the end of the file:

```
auto enp0s8
iface enp0s8 inet static
address 192.168.56.10
netmask 255.255.255.0
```

Then we need to start the network card. We can either restart the machine using `sudo shutdown -r now` or we can install a software that can do it for us:

```
$ sudo apt-get install ifupdown
```

Start the network interface:

```
$ sudo ifup enp0s8
```

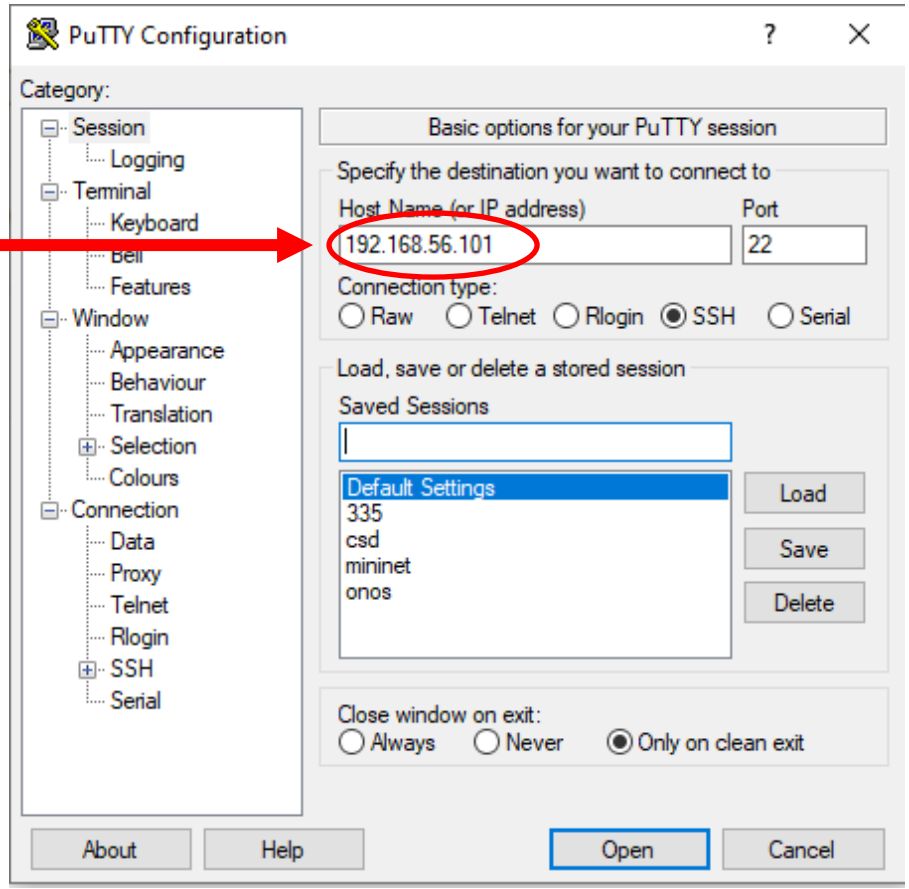
You can verify that the interface was configured by running `ifconfig` again and observing that there are now 3 network cards listed and each one of them has an IP address.

In addition you can test this by opening the Cmd window of your Windows machine and type in

```
ping 192.168.56.10
```

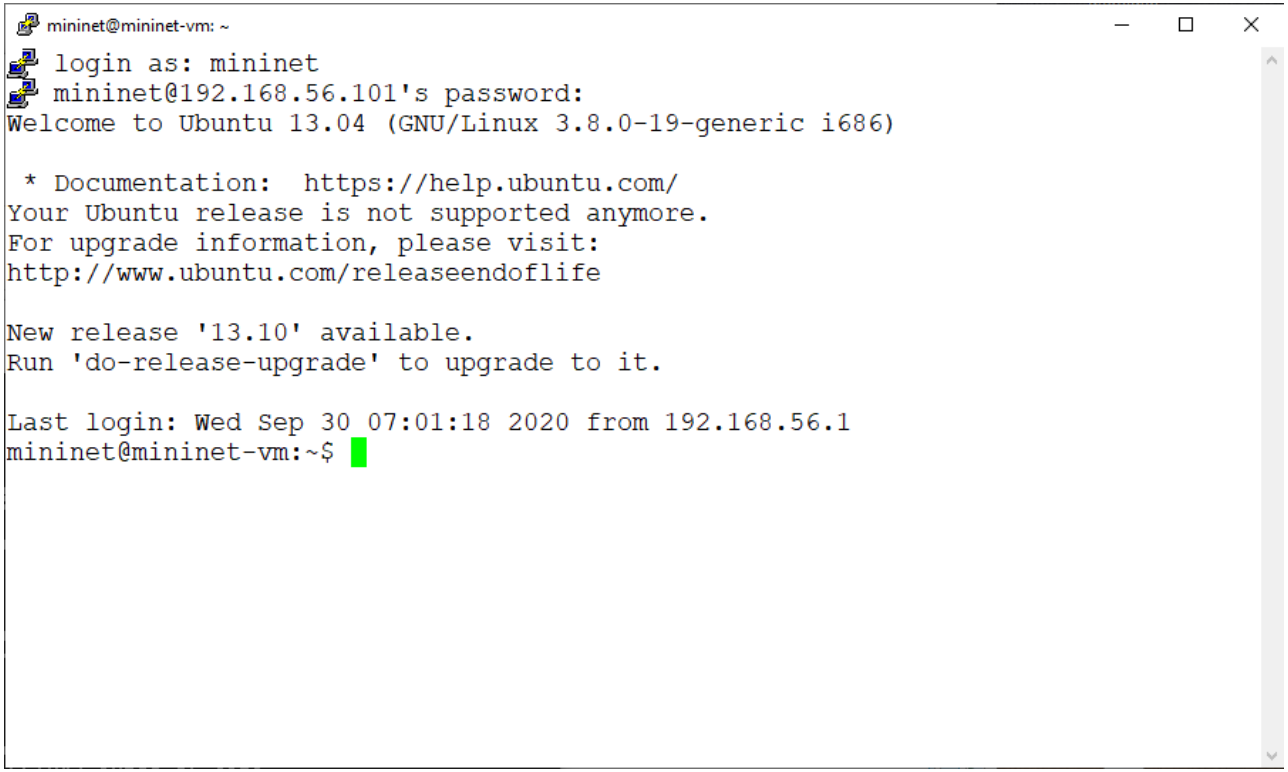
# Access VM via SSH

- Windows users should use SSH client software (e.g. PuTTy) with the assigned IP to the host-only interface
- Also Xming server should be installed as well as enabling X11 forwarding **before establishing the SSH session** (Session-> SSH -> X11 -> Enable X11 forwarding)
- For Linux/Mac OS X:
  - ssh -X mininet@[192.168.56.101]



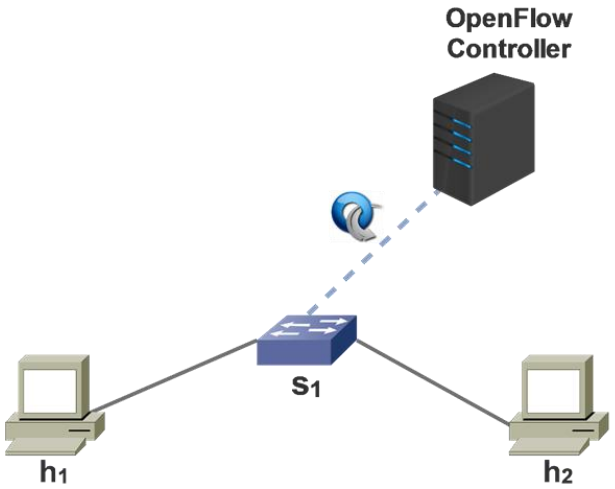
# Access VM via SSH

- After establishing the SSH session:



# Combine Mininet with POX

- Set up your network topology:
  - sudo mn --topo single,2 --mac --switch ovsk --controller remote



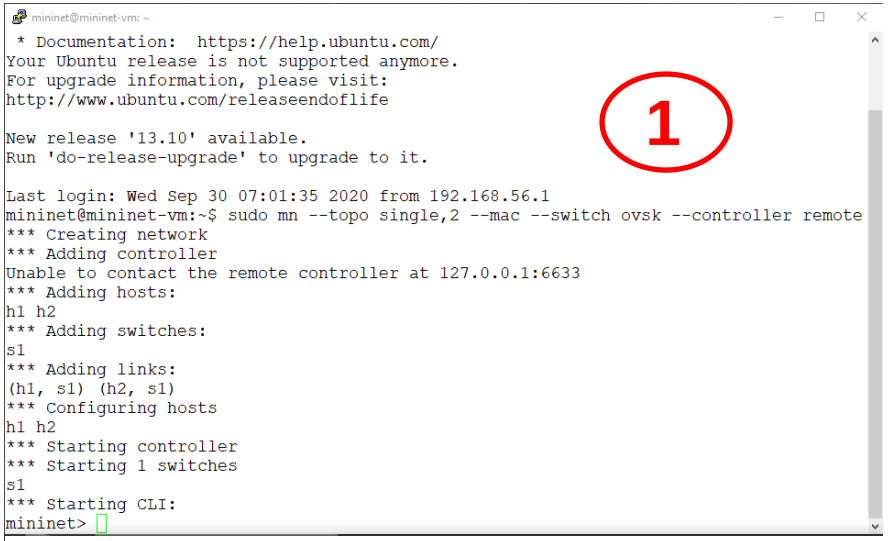

- Fire up the controller:
  - cd ~/pox
  - ./pox.py log.level --DEBUG forwarding.hub
- Try also:
  - ./pox.py log.level --DEBUG forwarding.l2_learning

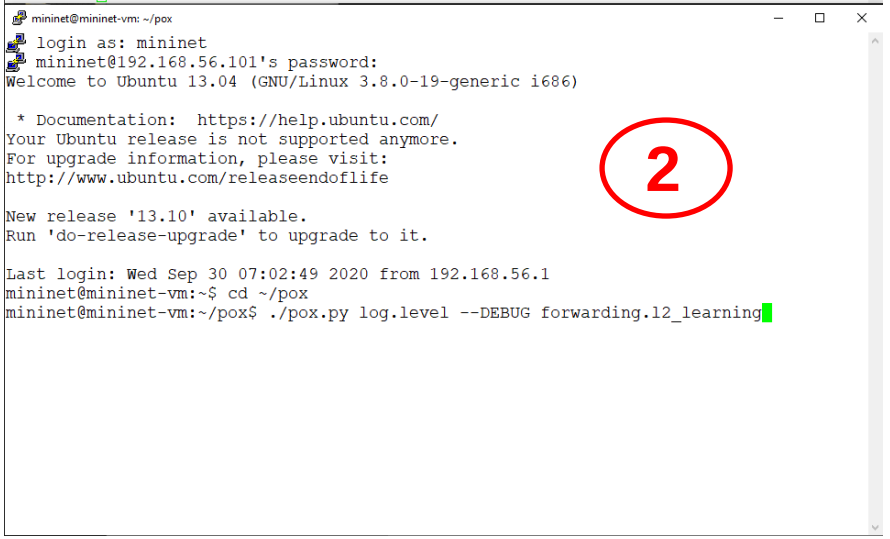
https://github.com/noxrepo/pox/blob/carp/pox/forwarding/hub.py

https://github.com/noxrepo/pox/blob/carp/pox/forwarding/l2_learning.py

# Combine Mininet with POX

- Set up your network topology by typing:
  - sudo mn --topo single,2 --mac --switch ovsk --controller remote
- In a new SSH session, fire up the POX controller
  - ./pox.py log.level --DEBUG forwarding.l2_learning

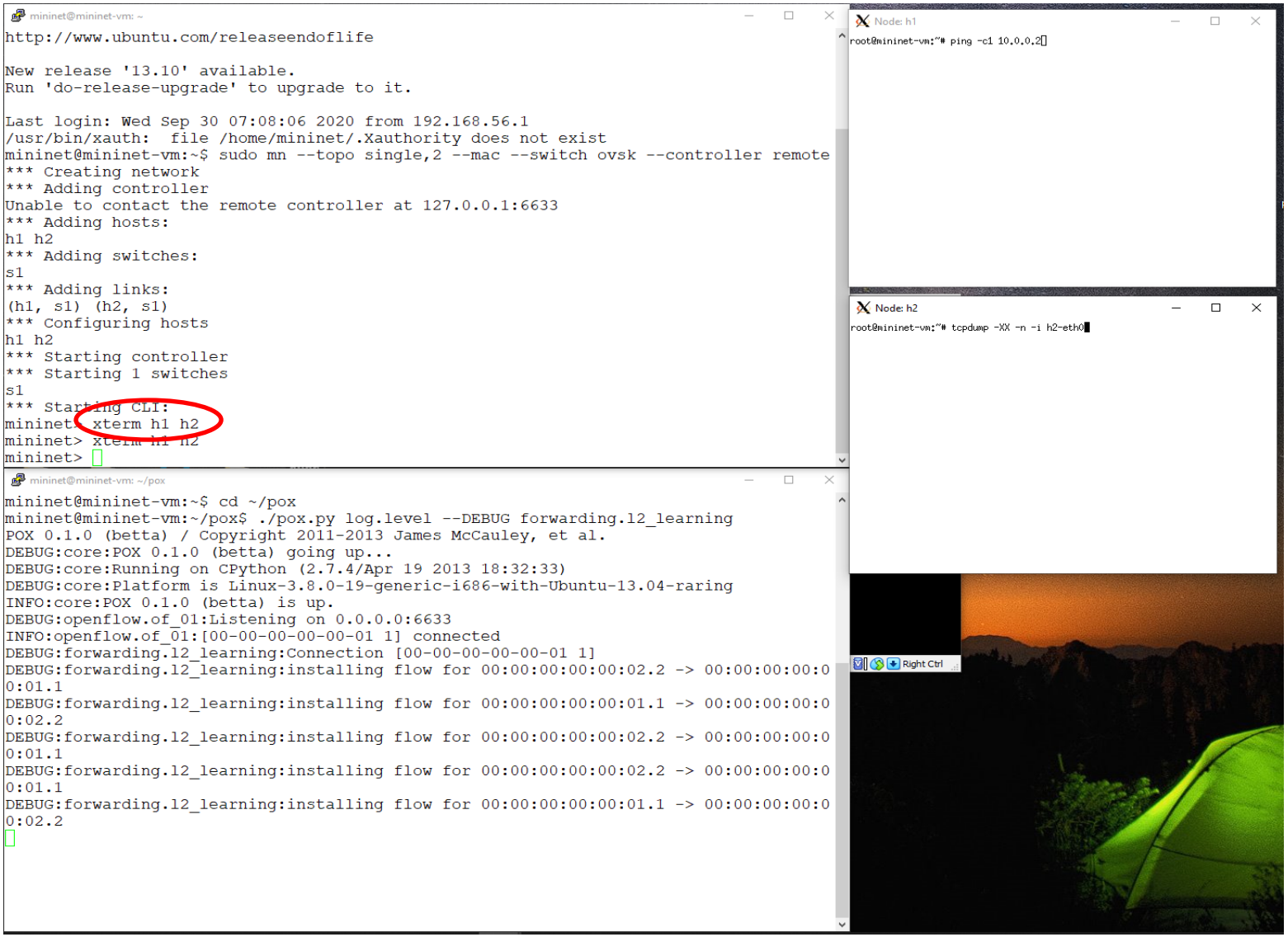


# Executing commands in hosts

- Xming Server is required for Windows users
- Hosts h1,…, hN are accessible by typing  (when Mininet is running)
  - xterm h1 h2 … hN
- You can execute commands such as ping or tcpdump for debug purposes after executing xterm command in the xterm of a host (e.h h2)
  - ping -c1 10.0.0.3 (ping the host with IP 10.0.0.3)
  - tcpdump -XX -n -i h2-eth0 (use tcpdump for the interface h2-eth0)

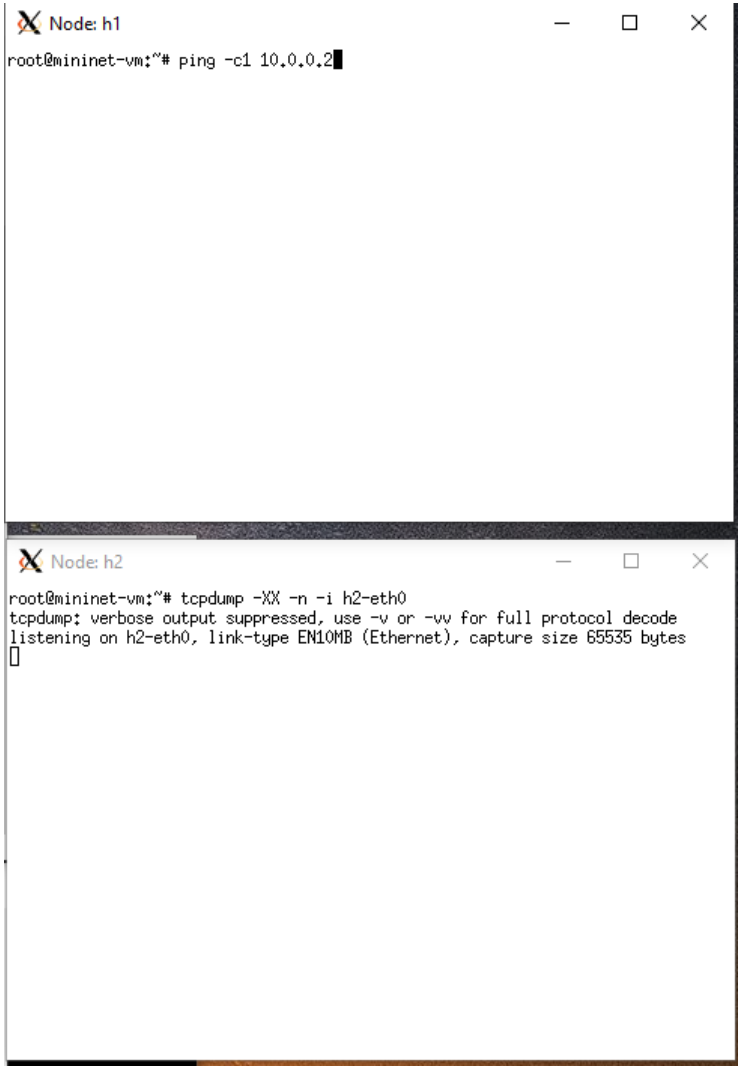
# Executing commands in hosts



# Executing commands in hosts

Host h1 pings 10.0.0.2 (h2)

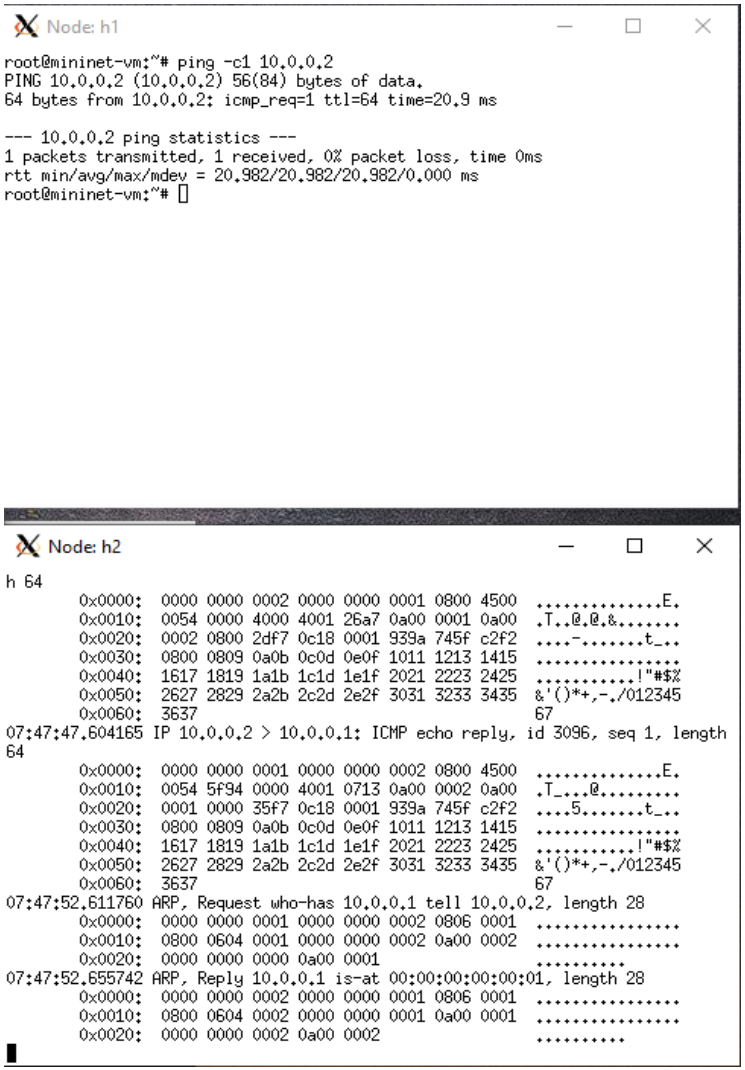
Host h2 uses tcpdump for traffic monitoring



# Executing commands in hosts

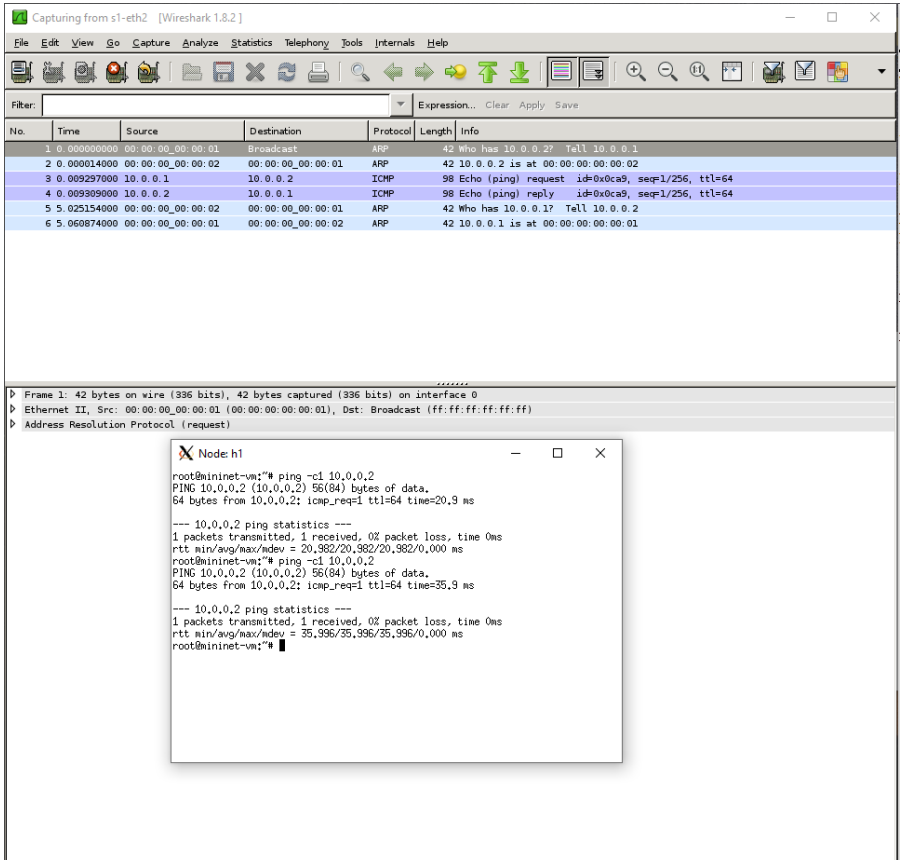
Host h1 pings 10.0.0.2 (h2)

Host h2 captures the traffic using from host h1 using tcpdump



# Traffic monitoring

- Wireshark is also installed in your vm for debug/traffic monitoring purposes
- Wireshark can monitor all interfaces in the network
- In a new SSH session, please type:
  - **sudo** wireshark &



# References

- http://mininet.org/
- https://github.com/mininet/mininet/wiki/Introduction-to-Mininet
- https://www.clear.rice.edu/comp529/www/papers/tutorial_4.pdf
- https://openflow.stanford.edu/display/ONL/POX+Wiki