

# Lab 3 Concurrency

---

## Deadlines & Grading

- **Code and report submission:** Friday, March 23 at 5:00 PM on CMS, **groups of 2**
  - **Grading:** 7% of total grade
- 

## TA Mentoring and Lab Preparation

In order to successfully complete a lab assignment in time, we encourage you to start working on each lab early. Learning how to work effectively as a team is also an important part of the labs, and working together when team members have different backgrounds, schedule constraints, and expectations often requires communicating and planning early.

Instead of a mandatory meeting with a TA mentor, your group needs to submit a written pre-lab plan on CMS by **Tuesday, March 13 at 11:59 pm**.

The pre-lab is worth 5 points out of 100. Grading for lab preparation: 0 – no preparation, 2 – incomplete, 5 – complete.

### *Lab 3 Preparation questions*

Understanding the lab assignment

- Explain the lab assignment in your words (one or two sentences).
- Describe the `process_state` in a couple of sentences. Include specific such as its purpose, how it will be represented in C, and what will be contained in it.
- In a sentence or two, describe the data structure used to keep track of multiple processes in this lab.
- In one sentence each, describe the functionality of `process_create`, `process_start`, and `process_select`.

Plan to work together

- Have you and your partner met to discuss how to work on the lab assignment together?
- How do you plan to divide the work between group members?
- When and where do you plan to meet and work on the lab? Provide specific dates and times.
- How are you and your partner communicating and sharing code?
- Do you have any logistical or technical questions regarding the lab?
- Do you need a face-to-face meeting with your mentor to discuss the lab?

We expect both members to contribute equally to the entire lab rather than simply partitioning the work in a way that each member only contributes to a subset of tasks. Everyone on the team should have an opportunity to play an active role in major tasks. For this you can use techniques such as pair programming.

## Section I: Overview

**Goal.** The purpose of this lab is to give you experience with concurrency on the FRDM-K64F microcontroller. To successfully complete this lab, you will need to understand the following:

- I/O and Interrupts (Lab 2)
- Concurrency (time sharing) and its implementation

### NOTE 1

We suggest that you first understand context switching on paper before you start writing C code. It is important that you have confidence in your implementation before you start, because it is challenging to find mistakes using standard testing methods.

### Precautions.


- The micro-controller boards should be handled with care. Misuse such as incorrectly connecting the boards is likely to damage the device.
- These devices are *static sensitive*. This means that you can "zap" them with static electricity (a bigger problem in the winter months). Be very careful about handling boards that are not in their package. Your body should be at the same potential as the boards to avoid damaging them. For more information, check [wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Static_electricity).
- It is your responsibility to ensure that the boards are returned in the same condition as you received them. If you damage the boards, it is your responsibility to get a replacement (\$35).


---

## Section II: Getting Started

### Part 1: $\mu$ Vision Setup

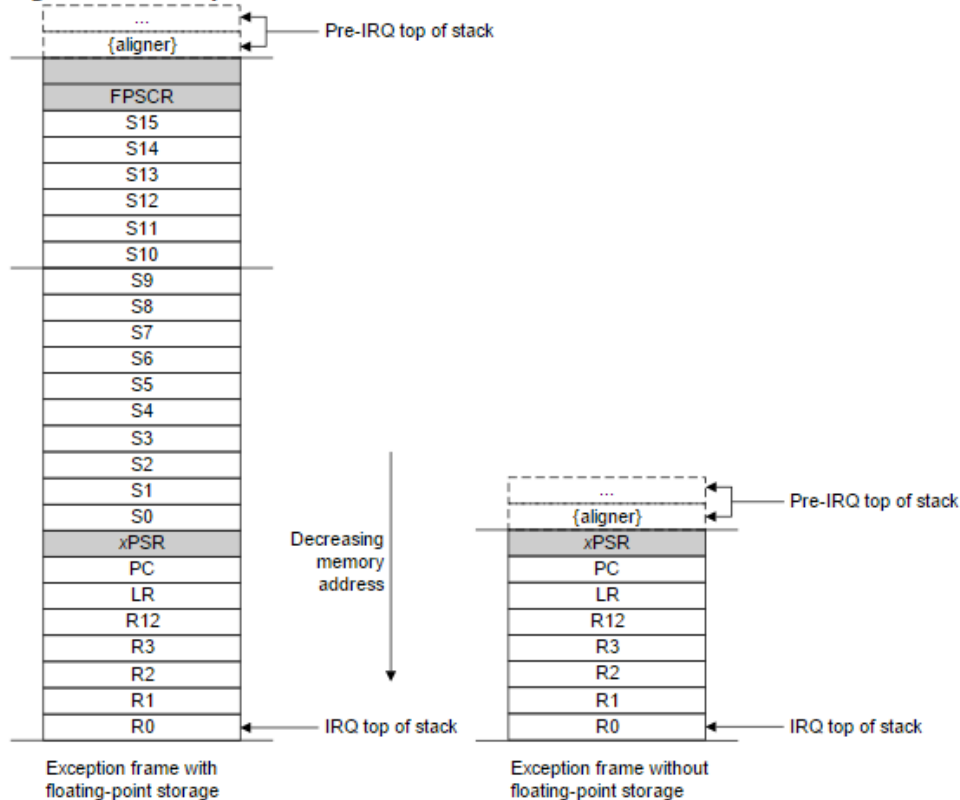
First set up your project as described in Lab 0 (including setting the scatter file).

The Cortex M4 processor supports two types of stack frames: one with floating-point storage and one without floating-point storage. The image below describes the differences between the two options. To make the code behave uniformly over all lab groups, make sure your implementation uses the exception frame WITHOUT floating-point storage. To do this, navigate to Target Settings  » Target and make sure Floating Point Hardware is set to "Not Used":



Floating Point Hardware: Not Used

Figure 2.3. Exception stack frame



## Part 2: Adding the Files

The following files are provided to you for the lab:

*3140.s* – contains the assembly language definition of the timer interrupt and functions called when a process terminates.

*3140\_concurr.c* – contains C definitions of functions for allocating stack space and initializing a process.

*3140\_concur.h* – a header file with all function definitions listed (**including the ones that you must implement**).

*utils.c* – contains helper functions for setting up and using the LEDs.

*utils.h* – a header file with the function definitions for the functions defined in *utils.c*.

*lab3\_t0.c* – a test program that uses concurrency

Add them to your project by right clicking *Source Group 1* in the Project window and clicking on *Add Existing Files to Group 'Source Group 1'...* You may need to change the *Files of type:* in the file selection window to “All files (\*.\*)” to see all the files.

Create a new file *process.c* which will implement the functions needed for the lab. You can create a new file by right clicking *Source Group 1* in the Project window and clicking on *Add New Files to Group 'Source Group 1'...*

You should add the following includes to the top of your file:

```
#include "3140_concur.h"
#include <stdlib.h>
#include <fsl_device_registers.h>
```

The *stdlib.h* header file allows you to use the `malloc` and `free` functions. The *3140\_concur.h* header file gives the declarations for the functions you will need to implement. The *fsl\_device\_registers.h* header file allows you to interact with peripherals on the device

#### NOTE 2

Look through all the provided files to make sure you understand all the code provided. The provided files should not be modified. Instead, all the functionality you will need to implement should be written in the file *process.c*. Your implementation should only use C and not have to use assembly code other than the routines we have already provided.

## Part 3: Data Structures

### Process State

We suggest that your implementation uses a data structure to maintain the process state of the following form:

```
struct process_state {
    unsigned int * sp;
    /* the stack pointer for the process */
    ...
};
```

In the presence of weak fairness of concurrent execution, a process may end up relinquishing the processor to allow another process to execute at any time. On the K64F, we will achieve this by using timer interrupts. However, it may be advisable to disable these interrupts temporarily inside a process to create larger atomic operations. The functions that support this are:

```
PIT->CHANNEL[0].TCTRL = 1;
PIT->CHANNEL[0].TCTRL = 3;
```

When a process terminates, the next process will be automatically selected for execution by calling your `process_select()` function.

## Linked Lists

A linked list data structure is aremonly used to implement queues and stacks. A simple linked list node that holds an integer is given by:

```
struct mylist {
    int val;
    struct mylist *next;
};
```

You can use a single pointer to store the beginning of a linked list. Suppose this pointer is called `list_start`.

Initially, the list is empty. We need a special value of `list_start` that indicates this. In C, a common practice is to use `NULL` (integer 0) to indicate it. Hence, an empty list would be declared and initialized by

```
struct mylist * list_start = NULL;
```

If `elem` is a pointer to another `struct mylist` element, then we can insert it at the beginning of our list by the following operations:

```
elem->next = list_start;
list_start = elem;
```

The operation `elem->next` is shorthand for `(*elem).next`. We can traverse the list one item at a time as follows:

```
struct mylist *tmp;
for (tmp = list_start; tmp != NULL; tmp = tmp->next) {
    // tmp->val is the integer of interest
    // do something here
}
```

To insert an element at the end of the list is a bit more complicated. This is because there are two cases: (i) the list is currently empty; or (ii) the list has some items in it. If the list is empty, then the operation is easy. If the list is not empty, we need to traverse the list to find the last element in it, and then add the new one to the end of the list. The following code does this (assuming that `elem` is the new element to be added to the list):

```
struct mylist *tmp;
if (list_start == NULL) {
    list_start = elem;
    elem->next = NULL;
}
```

```
else {
    tmp = list_start;
    while (tmp->next != NULL) {
        // while there are more elements in the list
        tmp = tmp->next;
    }
    // now tmp is the last element in the list
    tmp->next = elem;
    elem->next = NULL;
}
```

We can remove the first element of the list in a straightforward way:

```
if (list_start == NULL) {
    elem = NULL;
}
else {
    elem = list_start;
    list_start = list_start->next;
}
```

In the above code, `elem` is the first element, and `elem->val` is the value. Normally we do not use `elem->next` at this point since we have removed it from the list. Sometimes programmers set `elem->next = NULL` just to be safe. A similar technique can be used to remove the last element of the list.

---

## Section III: Assignment

### Part 1: Implementing Concurrency

For this part of the lab assignment, you must implement three functions. These functions are directly called by users of your concurrency package and their functionality will be described below.

```
int process_create (void (*f)(void), int n);
```

This function creates a process that starts at function `f`, with an initial stack size of `n`. It should return `-1` on an error, and `0` on success. The implementation of this function may require that you allocate memory for a `process_t` structure, and you can use `malloc()` for this purpose.

The state of a process can be initialized by calling the provided function `process_stack_init` (you can find the header of this function in `3140_concur.h`) which allocates a new stack of size at least

n, initializes it for the process, and returns the value of the stack pointer. This function returns NULL if the stack could not be allocated.

```
void process_start (void);
```

As discussed in class, a context switch occurs on a timeout that is triggered by a timer interrupt. For this lab, we will use the periodic interval timer described in Lab 2. As such, `process_start()` must:

1. Set up a period interrupt to be generated using the `PIT[0]` interrupt. You will also need to call `NVIC_EnableIRQ` here. The interrupt handler itself is provided for you in *3140.s*, so you do NOT need to provide a C implementation of it.
2. Make sure all data structures you need are correctly initialized.
3. End with a call to `process_begin()`, which initiates the first process.

```
unsigned int * process_select(unsigned int * cursp);
```

This function is called by our provided (PIT0) interrupt handler code to select the next ready process. `cursp` will be the current stack pointer for the currently running process (NULL if there is no currently running process). If there is no process ready, this should return NULL; if there is a ready process, this must return the value of the stack pointer for the next ready process. Your implementation must always maintain the global variable:

```
process_t *current_process
```

as the currently running process. This variable is set to NULL when a process terminates, and should also be NULL until `process_start()` is called.

#### NOTE 3

You must use good programming practice and free memory that is no longer being used. This includes linked list nodes and process stacks for terminated processes. Linked list nodes can be freed using the function `free`. Process stacks can be freed using the function `process_stack_free` which is defined in *3140\_concur.h* and implemented in *3140\_concur.c*.

#### Task

Implement the three functions (`process_create`, `process_start`, and `process_select`) described above in *process.c*.

## Part 2: Testing your Implementation

We have provided a test case for your use (*lab3\_t0.c*). Your lab should pass this test case, and also a number of tests that we will not provide. Note that our provided test case is not comprehensive enough to ensure that your code is functionally correct.

### Task

You must also provide *two* tests cases to demonstrate that your implementation works correctly. Each test case should focus on some non-trivial aspect of the scheduler's behavior. Some examples are:

- What happens if there is only one call to `process_create()`?
- What if a process exits immediately?
- What if there are many short processes and one long process?

You must come up with at least one original test case (not one of the above). Your test cases should be documented (commented) to explain what they are testing along with a description of expected behavior.

Name these files *test\_1.c* and *test\_2.c*.

---

## Section IV: Submission

The lab requires the following files to be submitted:

- **concurrency.zip**  
The entire implementation and test cases, including the files we have provided. Do not include  $\mu$ Vision files.
- **report.pdf:**  
Provide a detailed description of your implementation of processes (max 5 pages in 11pt font and single line spacing – we will not read anything after page 5. Also, don't do that little trick where you adjust the size of the periods or margins).

We recommend using illustrations to describe your key data structures (processes, etc.) and key properties of the implementation that you use to ensure correct operation. This write-up should also demonstrate that you understand the files that were provided (*3140.s*, *3140\_concur.c*) in addition to your own implementation.

You should also include a section on how you tested your implementation and describe the test cases you provide.

We require that you describe in detail, in a separate section titled "Work Distribution", the following:

- a) How did you carry out the project? In your own words, identify the major components that constituted the project and how you conducted the a) design, b) coding, c) code review, d) testing, and e) documenting/writing. If you followed well-documented techniques (e.g., peer programming), this is the place to describe it.
- b) How did you collaborate? In your own words, explain how you divided the work, how you communicated with each other, and whether/how everyone on the team had an opportunity to play an active role in all the major tasks. If you used any sort of tools to facilitate collaboration, describe them here.



We encourage you to use meaningful variable and function names, comments, etc. to enhance code comprehensibility.

All files should be uploaded to CMS before the deadline. Multiple submissions are allowed, but only the latest submission will be graded.