

# CMSC216: Processes and Exceptional Control Flow

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# Logistics

Reading: Bryant/O'Hallaron Ch 8

Ch	Read?	Topic
8.1	Skim	Assembly/Hardware mechanisms for “exceptional control flow”
8.2	READ	Processes as running programs, context switches, user/kernel mode
8.3	Skim	System call error handling
8.4	READ	Fundamental process system calls: <code>fork()</code> / <code>waitpid()</code> / etc.
8.5	Opt	Optional: Software Signals
8.6	Opt	Optional: Nonlocal jumps via <code>setjmp()</code> / <code>longjmp()</code>
8.7	READ	“Tools” (one paragraph, we'll discuss these in more detail in class)

## Goals

- ▶ Complete Unix basics
- ▶ Creating Child Processes
- ▶ Waiting for them
- ▶ Running other programs

## Assignments

- ▶ P3 ASM Coding: due Mon 30-Oct
- ▶ Dis08 Reflection: due Mon 30-Oct
- ▶ Dis09: `fork()` / `wait()`
- ▶ HW09: `fork()` / `waitpid()` / `exec()`

# Announcements

None

# Old vs New Computing Devices

- ▶ Old-school computers had a single executing programs which could interact freely with all parts of the computing hardware
- ▶ Modern computing devices have different expectations summarized below

Old	New
Single program on device	Multiple programs sharing single device
No Operating System	OS manages all programs
Program access to all hardware	OS controls/coordinates hardware access
Single program accesses all memory	OS isolates memories of each program
Relatively simple hardware interactions	Complex interactions of many devices
Single “user” running programs at once	Multiple users simultaneously on system
Apple II: insert disk to run program	Mac OS: Click to start another program

- ▶ New hardware and expectations led to new computing concepts
- ▶ **Operating Systems:** “manager” program that coordinates activities of all programs / users, manages hardware and provides abstraction layer, enforces security and fairness
- ▶ **Process:** a running program with its context

# Processes

- ▶ Hardware just executes a stream of instructions
- ▶ The OS creates the notion of a **process**: instructions comprising a **running program**
- ▶ Processes can be executed for a while, then paused while another process executes
- ▶ To accomplish this, OS usually provides. . .
  1. Bookkeeping info for processes (resources)
  2. Ability to interrupt / pre-empt a running process to allow OS actions to take place
  3. Scheduler that decides which process runs and for how long
- ▶ Will discuss all of these things from a systems programming perspective

# Process Context

# Exceptional Control Flow

# Overview of Process Creation/Coordination

## `getpid() / getppid()`

- ▶ Get process ID of the currently running process
- ▶ Get parent process ID

## `fork()`

- ▶ Create a child process
- ▶ Identical to parent EXCEPT for return value of `fork()` call
- ▶ Determines child/parent

## `wait() / waitpid()`

- ▶ Wait for any child to finish (`wait`)
- ▶ Wait for a specific child to finish (`waitpid`)
- ▶ Get return status of child

## `exec() family`

- ▶ Replace currently running process with a different program image
- ▶ Process becomes something else losing previous code
- ▶ Focus on `execvp()`



# Overview of Process Creation/Coordination

## getpid() / getppid()

```
pid_t my_pid = getpid();  
printf("I'm proces %d\n",my_pid);  
pid_t par_pid = getppid();  
printf("My parent is %d\n",par_pid);
```

## wait() / waitpid()

```
int status;  
waitpid(child_pid, &status, 0);  
printf("Child %d done, status %d\n",  
       child_pid, status);
```

## fork()

```
pid_t child_pid = fork();  
if(child_pid == 0){  
    printf("Child!\n");  
}  
else{  
    printf("Parent!\n");  
}
```

## exec() family

```
char *new_argv[] = {"ls","-l",NULL};  
char *command = "ls";  
printf("Goodbye old code, hello LS!\n");  
execvp(command, new_argv);
```

## Exercise: Standard Use: Get Child to Do Something

### Child Labor

- ▶ Examine the file `child_labor.c` and discuss
- ▶ Makes use of `getpid()`, `getppid()`, `fork()`, `execvp()`
- ▶ **Explain** how these system calls are used

### Child Waiting

- ▶ `child_labor.c` has concurrency issues: parent/child output mixed
- ▶ **Modify** with a call to `wait()` to ensure parent output comes AFTER child output

**Write down your answers** as a team for screen sharing

Suggestion: Copy `child_labor.c` to `child_wait.c` and modify it to fix the concurrency problem

# Answers: child\_labor.c commentary

```
1 // child_labor.c: demonstrate the basics of fork/exec to launch a
2 // child process to do "labor"; e.g. run a another program via
3 // exec. Make sure that the the 'complain' program is compiled first.
4 #include <stdio.h>
5 #include <stdlib.h>
6 #include <sys/wait.h>
7 #include <unistd.h>
8
9 int main(int argc, char* argv){
10
11     // char *child_argv[] = {"complain",NULL};           // argument array to child, must end with NULL
12     // char *child_cmd = "complain";                     // actual command to run, must be on path
13
14     char *child_argv[] = {"ls","-l","-ah",NULL};         // alternative argv/command swap commenting
15     char *child_cmd = "ls";                               // with above to alter what child does
16
17     printf("I'm %d, and I really don't feel like '%s'ing\n",
18           getpid(),child_cmd);                             // use of getpid() to get current PID
19     printf("I have a solution\n");
20
21     pid_t child_pid = fork();                             // clone a child
22
23     if(child_pid == 0){                                    // child will have a 0 here
24         printf(" I'm %d My pa '%d' wants me to '%s'. This sucks.\n",
25               getpid(),getppid(), child_cmd);             // use of getpid() and getppid()
26
27         execvp(child_cmd, child_argv);                     // replace running image with child_cmd
28
29         printf(" I don't feel like myself anymore...\n"); // unreachable statement
30     }
31     else{                                                  // parent will see nonzero in child_pid
32         printf("Great, junior %d is taking care of that\n",
33               child_pid);
34     }
35     return 0;
36 }
```

# Answers: child\_wait.c modification

```
1 // child_wait.c: fork/exec plus parent waits for child to
2 // complete printing before printing itself.
3
4 #include <stdio.h>
5 #include <stdlib.h>
6 #include <sys/wait.h>
7 #include <unistd.h>
8
9 int main(int argc, char* argv){
10
11     // char *child_argv[] = {"ls","-l","-ah",NULL};           // argument array to child, must end with NULL
12     // char *child_cmd = "ls";                                   // actual command to run, must be on path
13
14     char *child_argv[] = {"/./complain",NULL};                // alternative commands
15     char *child_cmd = "complain";
16
17     printf("I'm %d, and I really don't feel like '%s'ing\n",
18           getpid(),child_cmd);
19     printf("I have a solution\n");
20
21     pid_t child_pid = fork();
22
23     if(child_pid == 0){
24         printf("  I'm %d My pa '%d' wants me to '%s'. This sucks.\n",
25               getpid(),getppid(), child_cmd);
26         execvp(child_cmd, child_argv);
27         printf("    I don't feel like myself anymore...\n"); // unreachable
28     }
29     else{
30         int status;
31         wait(&status);                                     // wait for child to finish, collect status
32         printf("Great, junior %d is done with that '%s'ing\n",
33               child_pid, child_cmd);
34     }
35     return 0;
36 }
```

# Effects of fork()

- ▶ Single process becomes 2 processes
- ▶ Sole difference is return value from fork()
- ▶ All other aspects of process are copied

*Before fork(): 1 process*

<b>Process 1234</b>			
<b>STACK</b>	heap_str	0x500	
	myint	5	
	child_pid	?	
	...	...	
<b>HEAP</b>	0x500	h	
	0x501	i	
	0x502	\0	
	...	...	
<b>GLOBALS</b>	glob_doub	1.23	
	...	...	
<b>TEXT/CODE</b>			
int main(){			
char *heap_str = malloc(..);			
int myint = 5;			
glob_doub = 1.23;			
>> int child_pid = fork()			
if(child_pid == 0){			
myint = 19;			
}			
printf("myint: %d\n", myint);			
...			

*After fork(): 2 processes*

<b>Process 1234 (parent)</b>				<b>Process 5678 (child)</b>			
<b>STACK</b>	heap_str	0x500		<b>STACK</b>	heap_str	0x500	
	myint	5			myint	5	
	child_pid	5678			child_pid	0	
	...	...			...	...	
<b>HEAP</b>	0x500	h		<b>HEAP</b>	0x500	h	
	0x501	i			0x501	i	
	0x502	\0			0x502	\0	
	...	...			...	...	
<b>GLOBALS</b>	glob_doub	1.23		<b>GLOBALS</b>	glob_doub	1.23	
	...	...			...	...	
<b>TEXT/CODE</b>				<b>TEXT/CODE</b>			
int main(){				int main(){			
char *heap_str = malloc(..);				char *heap_str = malloc(..);			
int myint = 5;				int myint = 5;			
glob_doub = 1.23;				glob_doub = 1.23;			
>> int child_pid = fork()				int child_pid = fork()			
if(child_pid == 0){				>> if(child_pid == 0){			
myint = 19;				myint = 19;			
}				}			
printf("myint: %d\n", myint);				printf("myint: %d\n", myint);			
...				...			

# Effects of exec()

- ▶ Entire Memory image of process is replaced/reset
- ▶ Original process Text/Code is replaced, begin new main()
- ▶ Successful exec() does not return to original code

*Before exec(): original code*

<b>Process 1234</b>			
<b>STACK</b>	heap_str	0x500	
	myint	5	
	some_var	?	
	...	...	
<b>HEAP</b>	0x500	h	
	0x501	i	
	0x502	\0	
	...	...	
<b>GLOBALS</b>	glob_doub	1.23	
	...	...	
<b>TEXT/CODE</b>			
int main(){ // my program			
char *heap_str = malloc(...);			
int myint = 5;			
glob_doub = 1.23;			
>> exec("ls",...);			
printf("Unreachable!\n");			
some_var = 21;			
...			

*After exec(): code replaced*

<b>Process 1234</b>			
<b>STACK</b>	??	??	
	??	??	
	??	??	
	...	...	
<b>HEAP</b>	0x500	??	
	0x501	??	
	0x502	??	
	...	...	
<b>GLOBALS</b>	??	??	
	...	...	
<b>TEXT/CODE</b>			
int main(...){ // ls program			
>> if(argc == 1){			
MODE = SIMPLE_LIST;			
}			
else {			
...			
}			
...			

## Exercise: Child Exit Status

- ▶ A successful call to `wait()` sets a status variable giving info about child

```
int status;  
wait(&status);
```

- ▶ Several macros are used to parse out this variable

```
// determine if child actually exited  
// other things like signals can cause  
// wait to return  
if(WIFEXITED(status)){  
  
    // get the return value of program  
    int retval = WEXITSTATUS(status);  
}
```

- ▶ **Modify** `child_labor.c` so that parent checks child exit status
- ▶ Convention: 0 normal, nonzero error, print something if non-zero

```
# program that returns non-zero  
> gcc -o complain complain.c  
  
# EDIT FILE TO HAVE CHILD RUN 'complain'  
> gcc child_labor_wait_returnval.c  
> ./a.out  
I'm 2239, and I really don't feel  
like 'complain'ing  
I have a solution  
    I'm 2240 My pa '2239' wants me to 'complain'.  
    This sucks.  
COMPLAIN: God this sucks. On a scale of 0 to 10  
    I hate pa ...  
  
Great, junior 2240 did that and told me '10'  
That little punk gave me a non-zero return.  
I'm glad he's dead  
>
```

# Answers: Child Exit Status

```
1 // child_wait_returnval.c: fork/exec plus parent waits for child and
2 // checks their status using macros. If nonzero, parent reports.
3
4 #include <stdio.h>
5 #include <stdlib.h>
6 #include <sys/wait.h>
7 #include <unistd.h>
8
9 int main(int argc, char* argv[]){
10     char *child_argv[] = {"ls", "-l", NULL};           // program returns non-zero
11     char *child_cmd = "ls";
12
13     printf("I'm %d, and I really don't feel like '%s'ing\n",
14           getpid(), child_cmd);
15     printf("I have a solution\n");
16
17     pid_t child_pid = fork();
18
19     if(child_pid == 0){
20         printf("    I'm %d My pa '%d' wants me to '%s'. This sucks.\n",
21               getpid(), getppid(), child_cmd);
22         execvp(child_cmd, child_argv);
23         printf("    I don't feel like myself anymore...\n"); // unreachable
24     }
25     else{
26         int status;
27         wait(&status);                                // wait for child to finish, collect status
28         if(WIFEXITED(status)){
29             int retval = WEXITSTATUS(status);          // decode status to 0-255
30             printf("Great, junior %d did that and told me '%d'\n",
31                   child_pid, retval);
32             if(retval != 0){                            // nonzero exit codes usually indicate failure
33                 printf("That little punk gave me a non-zero return. I'm glad he's dead\n");
34             }
35         }
36     }
37     return 0;
38 }
```



## Return Value for wait() family

- ▶ Return value for wait() and waitpid() is the PID of the child that finished
- ▶ Makes a lot of sense for wait() as multiple children can be started and wait() reports which finished
- ▶ One wait() per child process is typical
- ▶ See faster\_child.c

```
// parent waits for each child
for(int i=0; i<3; i++){
    int status;
    int child_pid = wait(&status);
    if(WIFEXITED(status)){
        int retval = WEXITSTATUS(status);
        printf("PARENT: Finished child proc %d, retval: %d\n",
               child_pid, retval);
    }
}
```

# Blocking vs. Nonblocking Activities

## Blocking

- ▶ A call to `wait()` and `waitpid()` may cause calling process to **block** (hang, stall, pause, suspend, so many names...)
- ▶ Blocking is associated with other activities as well
  - ▶ I/O, obtain a lock, get a signal, etc.
- ▶ Generally creates **synchronous** situations: waiting for something to finish means the next action *always* happens.. next (e.g. `print` after `wait()` returns)

```
// BLOCKING VERSION
```

```
int pid = waitpid(child_pid, &status, 0);
```

## Non-blocking

- ▶ Contrast with **non-blocking** (asynchronous) activities: calling process goes ahead even if something isn't finished yet
- ▶ `wait()` is always blocking
- ▶ `waitpid()` can be blocking or non-blocking

# Non-Blocking waitpid()

- ▶ Use the WNOHANG option
- ▶ Returns immediately regardless of the child's status

```
int child_pid = fork();
int status;

// NON-BLOCKING
int pid = waitpid(child_pid, &status, WNOHANG); // specific child
OR
int pid = waitpid(-1, &status, WNOHANG); // any child
```

Returned pid is

Returned	Means
child_pid	status of child that changed / exited
0	there is no status change for child / none exited
-1	an error

Examine impatient\_parent.c

# impatient\_parent.c

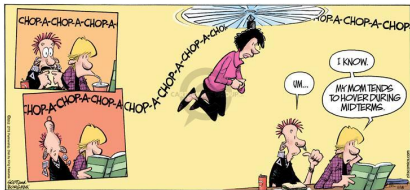
```
1 // impatient_parent.c: demonstrate non-blocking waitpid(),
2
3 #include <stdio.h>
4 #include <stdlib.h>
5 #include <sys/wait.h>
6 #include <unistd.h>
7
8 int main(int argc, char* argv){
9     char *child_argv[] = {"/complain",NULL};
10    char *child_cmd = "complain";
11    printf("PARENT: Junior is about to '%s', I'll keep an eye on him\n",
12          child_cmd);
13    pid_t child_pid = fork();
14
15    // CHILD CODE
16    if(child_pid == 0){
17        printf("CHILD: I'm %d and I'm about to '%s'\n",
18              getpid(), child_cmd);
19        execvp(child_cmd, child_argv);
20    }
21
22    // PARENT CODE
23    int status;
24    int retcode = waitpid(child_pid, &status, WNOHANG); // non-blocking wait
25    if(retcode == 0){ // 0 means child has not exited/changed status
26        printf("PARENT: 0? The kid's not done yet. I'm bored\n");
27    }
28    else{ // child has changed status / exited
29        printf("PARENT: Something happend to junior!\n");
30        if(WIFEXITED(status)){
31            printf("Ah, he Exited with code %d\n", WEXITSTATUS(status));
32        }
33        else{
34            printf("Junior didn't exit, what happened to him?\n");
35        }
36    }
37    return 0;
38 }
```

## Runs of impatient\_parent.c

```
> gcc impatient_parent.c
> a.out
PARENT: Junior is about to 'complain', I'll keep an eye on him
PARENT: 0? The kid's not done yet. I'm bored
CHILD: I'm 1863 and I'm about to 'complain'
> COMPLAIN: God this sucks. On a scale of 0 to 10 I hate pa ...

> a.out
PARENT: Junior is about to 'complain', I'll keep an eye on him
PARENT: 0? The kid's not done yet. I'm bored
CHILD: I'm 1865 and I'm about to 'complain'
> COMPLAIN: God this sucks. On a scale of 0 to 10 I hate pa ...
```

# Exercise: Helicopter Parent



- ▶ Modify `impatient_parent.c` to `helicopter_parent.c`
- ▶ Checks continuously on child process
- ▶ Will need a loop for this...

```
> gcc helicopter_parent.c
> a.out
PARENT: Junior is about to 'complain', I'll keep an eye on him
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
...
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
CHILD: I'm 21789 and I'm about to 'complain'
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
...
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
COMPLAIN: God this sucks. On a scale of 0 to 10 I hate pa ...
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50% of people that are below average?
...
PARENT: Good job junior. I only checked on you 226 times.
```

# Answers: Helicopter Parent

```
1 // helicopter_parent.c: demonstrate non-blocking waitpid() in excess
2 #include <stdio.h>
3 #include <stdlib.h>
4 #include <sys/wait.h>
5 #include <unistd.h>
6
7 int main(int argc, char* argv){
8
9     char *child_argv[] = {"/./complain",NULL};
10    char *child_cmd = "complain";
11
12    printf("PARENT: Junior is about to '%s', I'll keep an eye on him\n",
13          child_cmd);
14
15    pid_t child_pid = fork();
16
17    // CHILD CODE
18    if(child_pid == 0){
19        printf("CHILD: I'm %d and I'm about to '%s'\n",
20              getpid(), child_cmd);
21        execvp(child_cmd, child_argv);
22    }
23
24    // PARENT CODE
25    int status;
26    int checked = 0;
27    while(1){
28        int cpid = waitpid(child_pid,&status,WNOHANG); // Check if child done, but don't actually wait
29        if(cpid == child_pid){                          // Child did finish
30            break;
31        }
32        printf("Oh, junior's taking so long. Is he among the 50%% of people that are below average?\n");
33        checked++;
34    }
35    printf("PARENT: Good job junior. I only checked on you %d times.\n",checked);
36    return 0;
37 }
```

# Polling vs Interrupts

- ▶ `helicopter_parent.c` is an example of **polling**: checking on something repeatedly until it achieves a ready state
- ▶ Easy to program, generally inefficient
- ▶ Alternative: **interrupt** style is closer to `wait()` and `waitpid()` *without* `WNOHANG`: rest until notified of a change
- ▶ Usually requires cooperation with OS/hardware which must wake up process when stuff is ready
- ▶ Both polling-style and interrupt-style programming have uses



# Zombies...

- ▶ Parent creates a child
- ▶ Child completes
- ▶ Child becomes a **zombie** (!!!)
- ▶ Parent waits for child
- ▶ Child eliminated



*All we want is the attention of a loving parent...*

## Zombie Process

A process that has finished, but has not been `wait()`'ed for by its parent yet so cannot be (entirely) eliminated from the system. OS can reclaim child resources like memory once parent `wait()`'s.

## Demonstrate

Requires a process monitoring with `top/ps` but can see zombies created using `spawn_undead.c`

## Tree of Processes

[illegible]

- ▶ Processes exist in a tree: see with shell command `ps tree`
- ▶ Children can be **orphaned** by parents: parent exits without `wait()`'ing for child
- ▶ Orphans are adopted by the root process (PID==1)
  - ▶ `init` traditionally
  - ▶ `systemd` in many modern systems
- ▶ Root process occasionally `wait()`'s to “reap” zombies

# Orphans are always Adopted

- ▶ Survey code in `baudelaire_orphans.c` which demonstrates what happens to orphans
- ▶ Parent exits without `wait()`'ing, leaving them orphaned.
- ▶ Adopted by root process with `PID=1`

```
> gcc baudelaire_orphans.c
```

```
> ./a.out
```

```
1754593: I'm Klaus and my parent is 1754592
```

```
1754594: I'm Violet and my parent is 1754592
```

```
1754596: (Sunny blows raspberry) 1754592
```

```
1754593: My original parent was 1754592, my current parent is 1754592
```

```
> 1754594: My original parent was 1754592, my current parent is 1
```

```
1754594: I've been orphaned. How Unfortunate.
```

```
1754596: My original parent was 1754592, my current parent is 1
```

```
1754596: I've been orphaned. How Unfortunate.
```

# Reapers and the Subreapers

- ▶ Process X creates many children, Orphans them
- ▶ Children of X complete, become Zombies until...
- ▶ Newly assigned Parent `wait()`'s for them
- ▶ Adoptive parent like Process 1 sometimes referred to as a **Reaper** process: "reaps the dead processes"
- ▶ System may designate a **Subreaper** to do this per user so orphans NOT re-parented to process ID 1

- ▶ Graphical Login on Ubuntu Linux systems usually designates a Subreaper for each user



Source: [Cartoongoodies.com](http://Cartoongoodies.com)  
*Reaper and Orphan? More like Subreaper...*