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EECE0193: Emerging Memory Technologies: HW4

Part I

Answer the following questions based on the default configuration reported in the spreadsheet:

Part I: Getting started

The sheet describing the computational model for AlexNet can be divided in 5 regions:

• The top left region reports a summary of the design parameters derived from the Configuration Input sheet. In addition, the Compression rate parameter allows to vary the model sparsity;

• The block on the left (green) summarizes the DNN architecture and computes the required memory and computational parameters;

• The block in the center (pink) computes intermediate results based on the accelerator and memory configuration for an architecture using a 4MB on-chip memory;

• The block on the right (blue) computes intermediate results based on the accelerator and memory configuration for an architecture without on-chip memory;

• The block on the bottom (orange) shows the final performance metric results;

Answer the following questions based on the default configuration reported in the spreadsheet

1) **What are the total memory requirements for the AlexNet model?**





2) **What factors determine the overall data traffic for both off- and on-chip memory?**

Bandwidth limitations serve as upper-bounds for all operation such as read and write.

3**) Compare the performance results for the two proposed design choices (with and without onchip SRAM) and comment on any difference between the two. What layers have the highest impact on performance?**

With SRAM, the HW MAC Efficiency (44% vs 29%) and Network MAC Efficiency (60% vs 40%) percentages are significantly higher than without SRAM. Total cycle time and FPS also compare favorably for SRAM cases.

As for layers, 3,4,5 with SRAM have only 20% of the max cycles as without SRAM, which is significant – with layers 1 and 2 showing no difference between both configurations. The DRAM cycles are many factors less for SRAM than without SRAM, with the noticeable increase in magnitude at levels 2-5. DRAM traffic is many factors larger with no SRAM, as can be expected since there is not a better option for traffic to flow through. The batch sizes are 18-102x higher for SRAM batches vs conventional in the SRAM vs non-SRAM cases. The long pole going from MAC (SRAM and non-SRAM layers 1,2,3) to DRAM (non-SRAM case only) has to be a main factor as to why the layer bump in 4 and 5 is so significant between the two models.

**Part II: Evaluating the memory system energy**

The NVDLA examples we have used in Part I provide performance estimates but do not include any

energy metric. For this part of the assignment we are going to extend the model to include energy

estimates for the memory architecture. Note that it is also possible to compute the MAC energy for

better model accuracy, but since we are not going to make any changes to the datapath implementation

we are going to ignore its contribution.

1) Modify the spreadsheet to include a more accurate memory model for both SRAM and DRAM.For the SRAM model, include the NVSim estimates for read and write bandwidth, area, and read

and write energy. For the DRAM model you can assume the same bandwidth, and use a total power of 200 mW. Use these parameters to compute the energy per layer, and total energy per inference.

2) Repeat the steps in 1) replacing the SRAM memory with SLC RRAM. Run experiments for both iso-capacity and iso-area cases. Comment on your results highlighting the advantages and/or disadvantages of these design choices both in terms of energy and performance.

Part III: Memory system optimization

Based on the results from Part I and II, we are now going to optimize the system by implementing a hybrid memory in which both SRAM and SLC RRAM are used. Your goal is to achieve the best performance and energy with minimal area overhead.

1) Based on NVSim results create a fourth design case in which both SRAM, eNVM and DRAM can be used. You should evaluate different target optimizations in NVSim to get the best implementation for your design.

2) Repeat the experiment from 1) by evaluating different model compression options. You can select the compression rate by editing the value in cell F2. Report your results for compression rates between 20% and 80%.

In your report, state all the assumptions you have made for creating your model and describe the NVSim design settings you have used for your experiments. The deliverables should include a copy of your edited NVDLA spreadsheet.