EE458 - Embedded Systems
Lecture 10 – Intro to Tasks

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  - Task Definition
  - Task States
  - Task Operations
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  - RTEMS Task Directives

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  - RTC: Chapter 5
  - CUG: Chapter 5
Defining a Task

- Although simple embedded applications may use a super-loop architecture, more complex applications (multiple inputs and outputs, time constraints) must be designed to run multiple tasks concurrently.

- requires the developer to decompose an application into small, schedulable program units. Most RTOS kernels provide task objects and task management services.
A task is a *schedulable* independent thread of execution. Each task has a name, an ID, a priority, a task control block (TCB) and task code. Task *state* (CPU registers) are stored in a TCB during a *context switch*.

The kernel may run its own set of *system tasks* at reserved priority levels. An _____ _____ will always be present. Others may include: logging task, exception handling task, debug agent task.
A task may be in either the ready, **blocked** or running states:

- **Ready**: the task cannot run because a higher priority task is running.
- **Blocked**: the task is waiting on a resource or event.
- **Running**: the task has the highest priority and is running.
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Task States

Finite State Machine of Task States

Figure 5.2

RTC

Task is initialized and enters the finite state machine.

Ready

Task is unblocked but is not the highest-priority task.

Blocked

Task no longer has the highest priority.

Running

Task has the highest priority.

Task is unblocked and is the highest-priority task.

Task is blocked due to a request for an unavailable resource.
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Typical Task Operations

• A RTOS kernel typically provides _______-________ services for:
  - Creating, starting and deleting tasks: typically there is a call to first create the task and a second call to start it.
  - Controlling task scheduling: normally there are routines for suspending and resuming tasks, delaying a task, changing priorities, and disabling and enabling the scheduler.
  - Obtaining task information: get the task ID, obtain stack size, etc.
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Typical Task Structure

- RTOS tasks are usually structured to either run-to-completion or run in an endless-loop:
  - A run-to-completion task is a high priority task that is run at startup to perform initialization (create tasks, semaphores, queues, etc.)
  - The majority of RTOS tasks will run in an endless loop. One or more ________ ______ must be made in the loop. (This is necessary so that lower priority tasks will have a chance to run.)
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Synch, Comm and Concurrency

• Tasks synchronize and communicate using _______ ________: semaphores, message queues, signals, pipes, etc. We will discuss these topics during the coming weeks.

• We will also discuss how to decompose an application into concurrent tasks (application design).
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RTEMS Tasks

• In addition to the running, ready, and blocked states, RTEMS defines the following task states:
  - ________: a created task that is not started
  - non-existent: uncreated or deleted task

• RTEMS supports 255 task priorities (1 is high, 255 is low).

• In addition, there is no limit to the number of tasks assigned the same priority.
RTEMS Task Modes

RTEMS tasks have an execution *mode* and *attributes*. By setting the *mode* the following features can be enabled or disabled (the mode can be changed at run-time):

- preemption (switching to a higher priority task)
- [ ] (switching to an equal priority task)
- signal processing (asynch. signaling)
- interrupt processing (can allow interrupts at a particular level)
RTEMS Task Modes

- By default, preemption, signal processing and all interrupts are enabled while time slicing is disabled.

- The set of valid mode constants are listed on the next slide (Section 5.2.5 of the CUG). A mode is specified by _______ mode constants:

  RTEMS_NO_PREEMPT | RTEMS_NO_ASR

- The RTEMS_DEFAULT_MODES constant can be used to select the default modes.
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RTEMS Task Modes

- RTEMS_PREEMPT - enable preemption (default)
- RTEMS_NO_PREEMPT - disable preemption
- RTEMS_NO_TIMESLICE - disable timeslicing (default)
- RTEMS_TIMESLICE - enable timeslicing
- RTEMS_ASR - enable ASR processing (default)
- RTEMS_NO_ASR - disable ASR processing
- RTEMS_INTERRUPT_LEVEL(0) - enable all interrupts (default)
- RTEMS_INTERRUPT_LEVEL(n) - execute at interrupt level n
Attributes are used to indicate whether or not a task uses the floating point coprocessor and whether it is a local or _________ task.

Context switches take longer for tasks that use the coprocessor because the coproc. registers must also be saved in the TCB. (See Sect 5.2.7 for other options.)

A global task can be contacted by other tasks in a multiprocessor system.
RTEMS Task Attributes

- Attributes are set when a task is __________ and may not be changed. (Task mode settings, on the other hand, can be changed.)

- The default attributes indicate that the task is a local task that does not use the floating point coprocessor. The constant RTEMS_DEFAULT_ATTRIBUTES can be used to create a task with default attributes.
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RTEMS Task Attributes

- The constants that can be _______ to indicate a task attribute are listed below (Section 4.6.5 of the CUG).

RTEMS_LOCAL | RTEMS_FLOATING_POINT

- RTEMS_NO_FLOATING_POINT - does not use coprocessor (default)
- RTEMS_FLOATING_POINT - uses coprocessor
- RTEMS_LOCAL - local task (default)
- RTEMS_GLOBAL - global task
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RTEMS Task Directives

- There are directives to create a task, start a task, restart a task, delete a task, suspend a task, resume a suspended task, change a task's __________, change a task's mode, and put a task to sleep for a certain number of ticks or until a particular date and time.

- We will briefly look at the most common task directives. Refer to Section 5.4 of the CUG for the complete list of task related directives.
Tasks are usually created in the ____ routine. Here is the rtems_task_create() prototype:

```c
rtems_status_code rtems_task_create
( rtems_name           name,
  rtems_task_priority  initial_priority,
  unsigned32           stack_size,
  rtems_mode           initial_modes,
  rtems_attribute      attribute_set,
  Objects_Id           *id );
```
Here is an example call:

```c
rtems_id   task_id[2];  // A GLOBAL
rtems_status_code status;
status = rtems_task_create(
   rtems_build_name('T','S','K','1'),
   10,
   RTEMS_MINIMUM_STACK_SIZE,
   RTEMS_DEFAULT_MODES,
   RTEMS_DEFAULT_ATTRIBUTES,
   &task_id[0]
);
```
It is recommended practice to check that the return status from all directive calls is RTEMS_SUCCESSFUL:

A task must be __________ before it will run:

```c
rtems_status_code rtems_task_start(
    Objects_Id id,
    rtems_task_entry entry_point,
    unsigned32 argument
);
```
A task can be deleted (you can use an ID of RTEMS_SELF to delete the current task):

```c
rtems_status_code
rtems_task_delete( Objects_Id id );
```

You can restart a task from any state except the _______ or non-existant (deleted) states:

```c
rtems_status_code
rtems_task_restart
( Objects_Id id, unsigned32 arg );
```
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RTEMS Task Directives

- There are directives to suspend and resume a task and to see if a task is suspended:

```c
rtems_status_code
rtems_task_suspend( Objects_Id id );
rtems_status_code
rtems_task_resume( Objects_Id id );
rtems_status_code
rtems_task_is_suspended
( Objects_Id id );
```
Here are a few other task related directives:

```c
rtems_status_code
    rtems_task_set_priority(
        Objects_Id id,
        rtems_task_priority new_priority,
        rtems_task_priority *old_priority );

rtems_status_code rtems_task_mode(
    rtems_mode mode_set,
    rtems_mode mask,
    rtems_mode *previous_mode_set );

rtems_status_code
    rtems_task_wake_after
        ( rtems_interval ticks );
```
To change the task mode, both the new mode setting and a corresponding mode mask must be given:

```c
rtems_status_code status;
rtems_mode old_mode;
status = rtems_task_mode(
    RTEMS_PREEMPT | RTEMS_NO_TIMESLICE,
    RTEMS_PREEMPT_MASK|RTEMS_TIMESLICE_MASK,
    &old_mode );
```

A mask of RTEMS_ALL_MODE_MASKS can be used with `old_mode` to reset the mode.