

# Processes

# Producer-Consumer Problem

- Paradigm for cooperating processes, *producer* process produces information that is consumed by a *consumer* process
  - **unbounded-buffer** places no practical limit on the size of the buffer
  - **bounded-buffer** assumes that there is a fixed buffer size

## Interprocess Communication – Shared Memory

- An area of memory shared among the processes that wish to communicate
- The communication is under the control of the users processes not the operating system.
- Major issues is to provide mechanism that will allow the user processes to synchronize their actions when they access shared memory.
- Synchronization is discussed in great details in Chapter 5.

## Interprocess Communication – Message Passing

- Mechanism for processes to communicate and to synchronize their actions
- Message system – processes communicate with each other without resorting to shared variables
- IPC facility provides two operations:
  - **send**(*message*)
  - **receive**(*message*)
- The *message* size is either fixed or variable

## Message Passing (Cont.)

- If processes  $P$  and  $Q$  wish to communicate, they need to:
  - Establish a ***communication link*** between them
  - Exchange messages via send/receive
- Implementation issues:
  - How are links established?
  - Can a link be associated with more than two processes?
  - How many links can there be between every pair of communicating processes?
  - What is the capacity of a link?
  - Is the size of a message that the link can accommodate fixed or variable?
  - Is a link unidirectional or bi-directional?

## Message Passing (Cont.)

- Implementation of communication link
  - Physical:
    - Shared memory
    - Hardware bus
    - Network
  - Logical:
    - Direct or indirect
    - Synchronous or asynchronous
    - Automatic or explicit buffering

# Direct Communication

- Processes must name each other explicitly:
  - **send** (*P, message*) – send a message to process P
  - **receive**(*Q, message*) – receive a message from process Q
- Properties of communication link
  - Links are established automatically
  - A link is associated with exactly one pair of communicating processes
  - Between each pair there exists exactly one link
  - The link may be unidirectional, but is usually bi-directional

# Indirect Communication

- Messages are directed and received from mailboxes (also referred to as ports)
  - Each mailbox has a unique id
  - Processes can communicate only if they share a mailbox
- Properties of communication link
  - Link established only if processes share a common mailbox
  - A link may be associated with many processes
  - Each pair of processes may share several communication links
  - Link may be unidirectional or bi-directional



# Indirect Communication

- Operations

- create a new mailbox (port)
- send and receive messages through mailbox
- destroy a mailbox

- Primitives are defined as:

**send**(*A, message*) – send a message to mailbox A

**receive**(*A, message*) – receive a message from mailbox A

# Indirect Communication

- Mailbox sharing
  - $P_1$ ,  $P_2$ , and  $P_3$  share mailbox A
  - $P_1$  sends;  $P_2$  and  $P_3$  receive
  - Who gets the message?
- Solutions
  - Allow a link to be associated with at most two processes
  - Allow only one process at a time to execute a receive operation
  - Allow the system to select arbitrarily the receiver. Sender is notified who the receiver was.

# Synchronization

- Message passing may be either blocking or non-blocking
- **Blocking** is considered **synchronous**
  - **Blocking send** -- the sender is blocked until the message is received
  - **Blocking receive** -- the receiver is blocked until a message is available
- **Non-blocking** is considered **asynchronous**
  - **Non-blocking send** -- the sender sends the message and continue
  - **Non-blocking receive** -- the receiver receives:
    - ❑ A valid message, or
    - ❑ Null message
- ❑ Different combinations possible
  - ❑ If both send and receive are blocking, we have a **rendezvous**