System and Language Support for Timing Constraints



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Goals

- Understand different concepts about temporal constraints.
- Understand how temporal constraints can be incorporated into a programming language.
- Discuss how you would design your language.

Overview of Temporal Constraints

Why Temporal Constraints?

- A number of control applications puts temporal constraints on the control software.
 - Engine simulation: 1kHz recording frequency over a distributed system
 - o Clock synchronization: down to 1 nanosecond
 - o Industrial process control
 - o Drive-by-wire
 - o Anti-lock brakes
 - o Pacemakers
 - o Helicopter control
 - 200 Hz pilot stick, 400 Hz sensors, 200 Hz flight control, 1kHz actuator electronics
 - Heating control: 10 seconds

Temporal Constraints

 Real-time is about producing the correct result at the right time.

Value	Timing	Result
Wrong	Too late	Failure
Wrong	On time	Failure
Correct	Too late	Failure
Correct	On time	Ok

 Temporal constraints are a way to specify, when the value is on time.

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Types of Temporal Constraints

- Hard temporal constraints
- Soft temporal constraints
- Firm temporal constraints
- Deterministic temporal constraints

Soft Temporal Constraints

- A **soft real-time system** is one where the response time is normally specified as an average value. This time is normally dictated by the business or market.
- A single computation arriving late is not significant to the operation of the system, though many late arrivals might be.
- Ex: Airline reservation system If a single computation is late, the system's response time may lag. However, the only consequence would be a frustrated potential passenger.

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Hard Temporal Constraints

- A hard real-time system is one where the response time is specified as an absolute value. This time is normally dictated by the environment.
- A system is called a hard real-time if tasks always must finish execution before their deadlines or if message always can be delivered within a specified time interval.
- Hard real-time is often associated with safety critical applications. A failure (e.g. missing a deadline) in a safety-critical application can lead to loss of human life or severe economical damage.

Firm Temporal Constraints

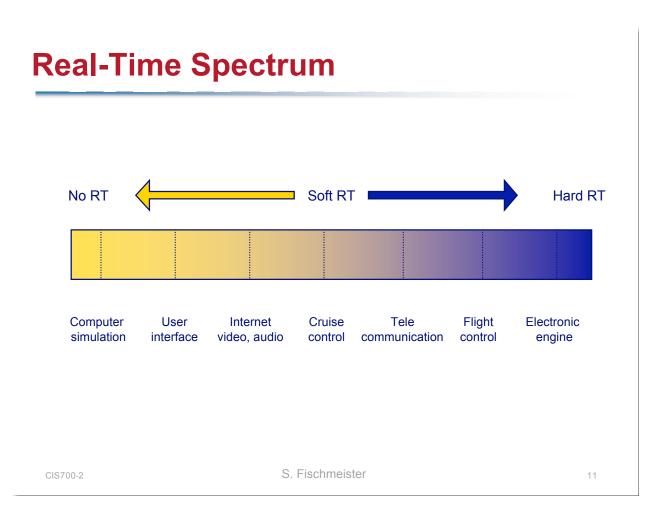
- In a firm real-time system timing requirements are a combination of both hard and soft ones. Typically the computation will have a shorter soft requirement and a longer hard requirement.
- Ex: Ventilator The system must ventilate a patient so many times within a given time period. But a few second delay in the initiation of the patient's breath is allowed, but not more.

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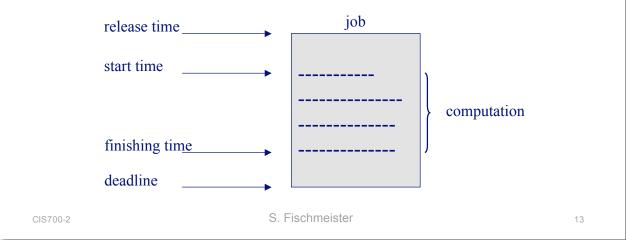
Deterministic Temporal Constraints

- In a temporal deterministic real-time system timing requirements are a deterministic. An external observer can tell the temporal state at any time.
- A system with deterministic temporal constraints finishes execution exactly at the deadline (not before [hard] and not about [soft]).
- Ex. Similar to hard real-time systems, however, temporal determinism simplifies guaranteeing compositionality.



Terminology of Temporal Constraints

- A task is a piece of code that can be executed many times with different input data. (thread or process)
- A job is an instance of a task.



Parameters

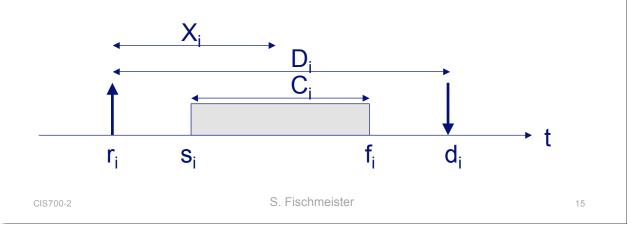
- Release or Arrival Time (ri)
 - o is the time at which the task becomes ready for execution.
- Computation time (Ci)
 - o is the time necessary to the processor for executing the task without interruption.
- Deadline (di)
 - is the time before which a task should be complete to avoid damage to the system.
 - o Relative Deadline (Di): Di = di ri
- Start time (si)
 - o is the time at which the task starts its execution.

Parameters

Finishing time (fi)

o is the time at which the task finishes its execution.

- Laxity (Slack time) (X_i)
 - X_i = d_i r_i C_i is the maximum time a task can be delayed on its activation to complete within its deadline.

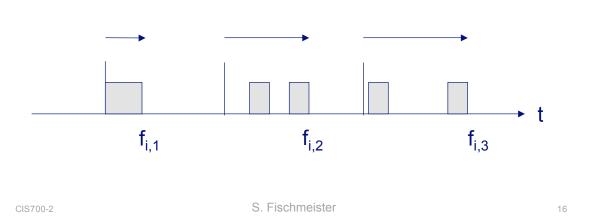


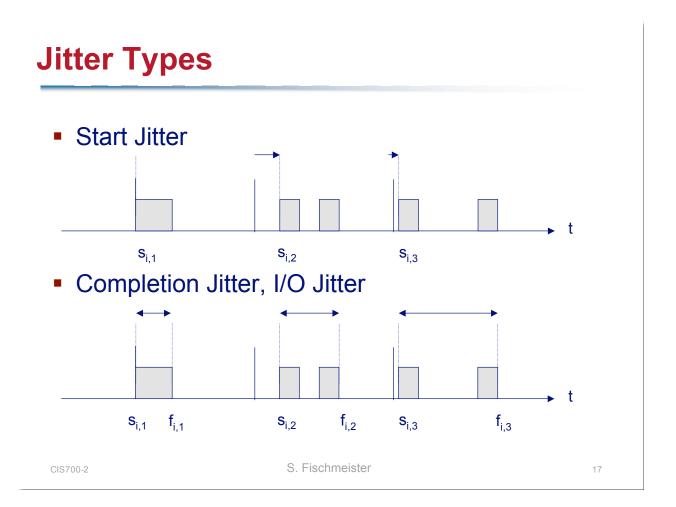
Jitter

- Jitter refers to the temporal variation of a periodic event
- E.g. Absolute Finishing

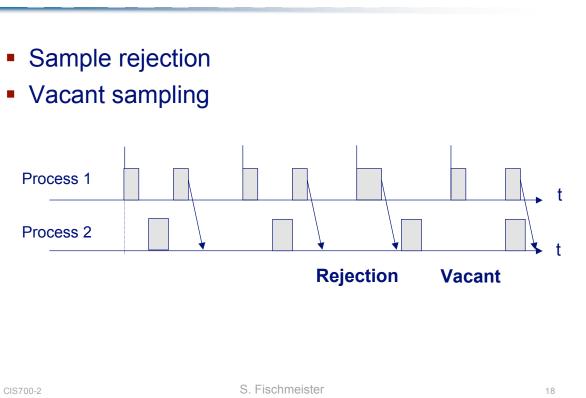
Jitter = $\max_{k} (f_{i,k} - r_{i,k}) - \min_{k} (f_{i,k} - r_{i,k})$

 E.g. Relative Finishing Jitter = max_k |(f_{i,k} - r_{i,k}) - (f_{i,k-1} - r_{i,k-1})|





Sampling



Revisiting RT Types

Туре	Jitter	Sampling
Soft RT	Positive and negative	Rejection and vacant sampling
Hard RT	Only negative	Rejection
Firm RT	Soft DL: pos. and neg. Hard DL: only negative	Soft DL: rej. and vac. s. Hard DL: vacant s.
Deterministic RT	None	None

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Temporal Constraint Specifications

Task Types

 A periodic task has invocations within regular time intervals.

o E.g., reading a heat sensor.

 A sporadic task has unknown arrival times, but have bounds such as maximum frequency.

o E.g., routinely memory status check.

An aperiodic task has an unknown arrival time.
 o E.g., an emergency shutoff.

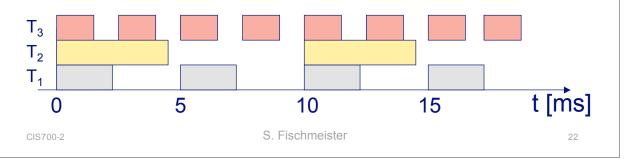
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Frequency, **Period**

- Period, frequency:
 o T₁: Period=10ms, Frequency=2
- Period:
 - o T₂: Period=10ms
- Frequency
 - o T₃: Frequency=400Hz



Additional Terms

- Execution time: total time of execution of a specific task
- Elapse time: the task's execution time + all delays
- Maximum time constraint: no more than t time units will elapse
- Minimum time constraint: no less than t time units will elapse

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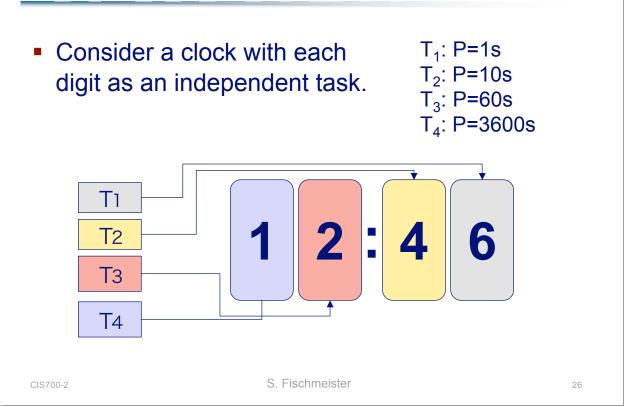
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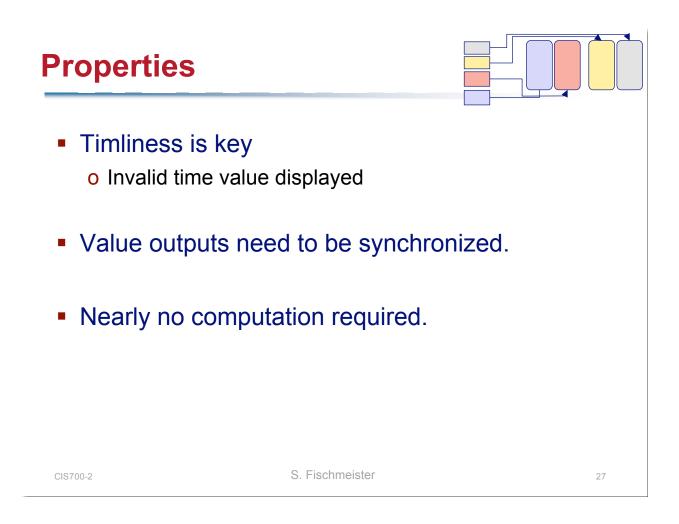
Hyper-Period

- Hyper-Period is the time span after which the system repeats its behavior.
 - o T₁: Period=10ms, Frequency=2
 - o T₂: Period=10ms
 - o T₃: Frequency=400Hz
 - Hyper period = 10ms

Example

Idependent-Digit Clock





Implicit Temporal Control

Foreground/Background System

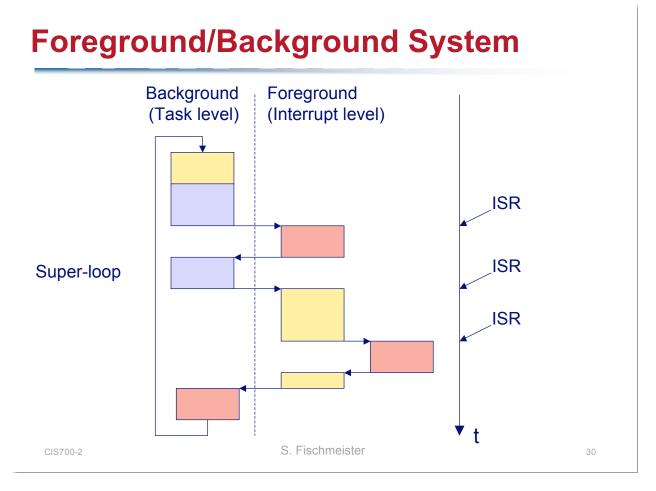
- Using super-loops as the main routine with two levels: the task level and the interrupt level.
 - o Task level (aka background): executes modules
 - Interrupt level (aka foreground): handles asynchronous evens via ISRs.
- Foreground can preempt the background, thus:
 - o Critical tasks must be in the foreground part.
 - Task level response = an ISR prepares data for the super-loop.

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 Used for small devices (e.g., microcontrollers in microwaves, washers, dryers, radio)

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Foreground/Background Properties

Simple system/low overhead

o No maintenance, basically no "system" at all

Not time deterministic

• F/B systems require hand tuning to meet a timing criteria; if the system is not responsive enough, then the developer will optimize the super-loop.

Sensitive to changes

- Changing a module constantly changes the timing of the superloop.
- Changing code in an ISR changes may change the overall timing behavior.

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Programming-Language Timing Control

Temporal Scopes

- Source: [Lee1985], the Distributed Programming System (DPS).
- Temporal scopes and DPS describes a system to specify generic temporal constraints at the statement level.
- The main goals for temporal scopes are:
 - o Provide language constructs for specifying timing constraints,
 - Apt for distributed systems,
 - Extend an existing language, and
 - Run-time monitoring and exception handling.
- Its properties are:
 - The program is configured offline.
 - All processes are created before start-up.
 - No dynamic create of RT processes.
 - The system has two modes: initialization and operation.
- Timing support is specification-based.

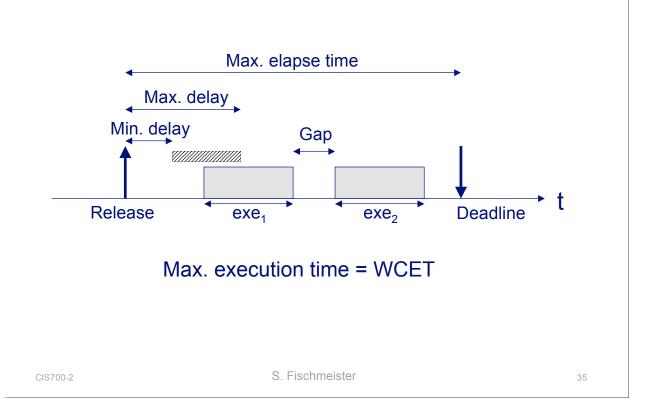
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Timing Specification

- Deadline. The latest time in which the execution of a temporal scope can be completed.
- Minimum delay. The minimum amount of time that should pass before starting the execution of a temporal scope.
- Maximum delay. the maximum amount of time that should pass before starting the execution of a temporal scope.
- Maximum execution time. The maximum computation time necessary for the execution of a temporal scope.
 Maximum elapse time. The maximum execution time plus all user-defined delay during the execution of a temporal scope.

Timing Specification



The Internal Temporal Scope

Repetitive Temporal Scope

```
• from <start_time> to <end time> every <period>
execute <exec_time> within <deadline> do
<stmts>
[<exceptions>]
end
• Example:
• from (8h:00m) to (18h:00m) every
(0h:30m) within 10 sec do
    destress_eyes()
end
```

Consecutive Temporal Scope

```
cstart <delay<sub>1</sub>> [<execute<sub>1</sub>>] [<deadline<sub>1</sub>>] do
  <stmts<sub>1</sub>>
  [<exceptions<sub>1</sub>>]
cstart <delay<sub>2</sub>> [<execute<sub>2</sub>>] [<deadline<sub>2</sub>>] do
  <stmts<sub>2</sub>>
  [<exceptions<sub>2</sub>>]
cstart <delay<sub>n</sub>> [<execute<sub>n</sub>>] [<deadline<sub>n</sub>>] do
  <stmts<sub>n</sub>>
  [<exceptions<sub>n</sub>>]
end
Example:
cstart within 2 sec do fill_glass_with_water()
  cstart after 2 sec do empty_glass() end
```

The Time Fence Protocol

Time Fence in the ARTS Kernel

- Source: [Tokuda, Mercer, 1998].
- The time-fence protocol allows for temporal constraints in a distributed real-time system. The time-fence protocol is built into the ARTS kernel.
- The ARTS kernel aims at distributed real-time systems.
- The *artsobject* is the abstraction for computation:
 - The artsobject has a WCET.
 - o The artsobject minimizes inter-module dependence.
 - It provides time-encapsulation (however, the designer must guarantee this).
- Timing support is specification-based.

Specification

```
// An example of a real-time thread
Thread Sample._Artobject::RT_Thread()
//# priority, stack_size, wcet, period, phase, delay
{ //thread body ...
ThreadExit();
}
```

The implementation also allows for object methods: type opt1 (type arg);//# within time except opr()

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The Time Fence Protocol

- The system scheduler checks for transient overloads (not enough CPU cycles) and rejects tasks in case of such an overload.
- Each RT computation has a WCET.
- The time fence uses the deadline to set a timer.
- The scheduler checks schedulability using the time fence and the WCET.

*Callee_{wrtv} < Caller_{ctv} - 2*comm+clockdrift*

• *Comm* can include communication overhead for the distributed system.

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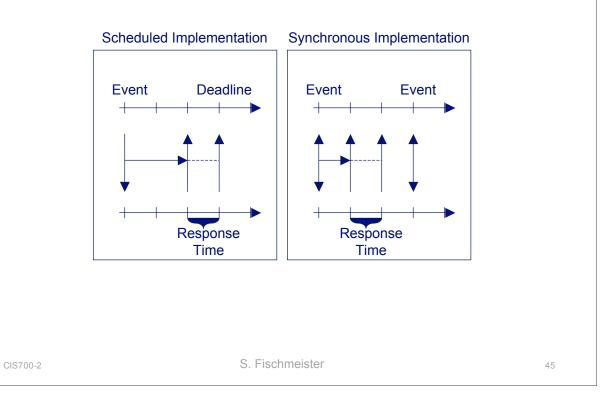
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Synchronous Model Scheduled Model Synchronous Model Event Deadline Event Event +---____ +---____ Scheduled Synchronous Computation Computation Response Time CIS700-2 S. Fischmeister 44

Synchronous Model



Basic Concepts

Specification language has been specialized for reactive systems.

Reactive system:

- o In continuous interaction with its environment.
- A reaction begins when the system receives an input event and ends when it generates the corresponding output event.

Black-box approach

o Inputs produce outputs, continuously.

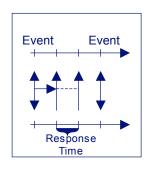


- Only define relationships between input and output events.
- A task may be complex, but: you don't care.



Basic Concepts

- Based on synchronous model of time (synchrony hypothesis)
 - The underlying machine is infinitely fast and, hence, the reaction of the system to an input event is instantaneous; in between reactions, the system is idle.
 - No reaction intervals → only reaction instants → reactions do not overlap.
 - The synchrony hypothesis simplifies the behavioral specification of reactive systems (see the example later on).
 - Looks flawed, but the machine must react to an input event before the next input event arrives.



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Basic Concepts

- Determinism
 - A non-deterministic system does not have a unique response to a given input event → the external observer cannot predict the response.

o Example:

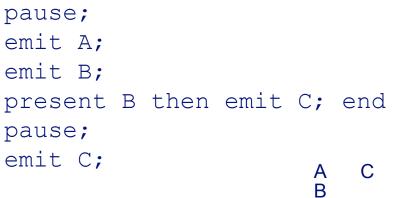
- Waiting for 60 seconds and *then(??)* signal "minute".
- Broadcasting the signal, timing delays.

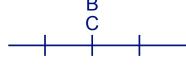
```
loop
  delay 60; B.MINUTE; (C.MINUTE)
end
```

- o Esterel guarantees determinism
 - All statements and constructs are well defined (syntax and semantics).
 - A compiler checks the program and ensures determinism.

Signal Handling: Example

Example program:



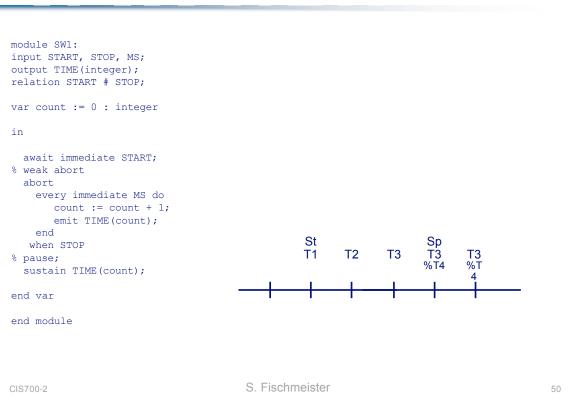


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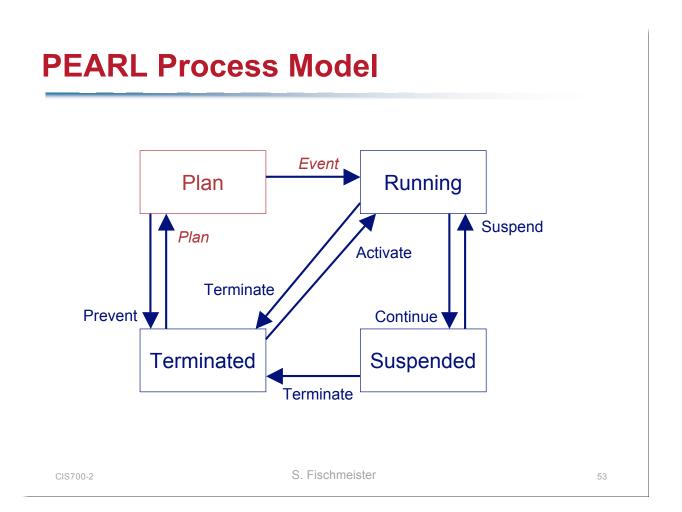
Example StopWatch



PEARL

PEARL Overview

- Sources: [Martin T, 1979]
- PEARL = Process and Experiment Automation Realtime Language
- Developed in Germany around 1969 for programming real-time systems. The major funding agency was the German government (DIN 66253).
- Developed at the same time as PASCAL, so both share similar syntax.
- PEARL forbids recursive procedures to eliminate out-ofmemory errors.
- Strong emphasis on the I/O part, because of its target domain.



Timing Specification

StartCondition ::=
 AT Expression§Time [Frequency]
 | AFTER Expression§Duration [Frequency]
 | WHEN Name§Interrupt [AFTER Expression§Duration] [Frequency]
 | Frequency
Frequency ::=
 ALL Expression§Duration [{ UNTIL Expression§Time }
 | { DURING Expression§Duration }]

Examples:

- ALL 0.00005 SEC ACTIVATE Highspeedcontroller;
- AT 12:00 ALL 4 SEC UNTIL 12:30 ACTIVATE lunchhour;
- WHEN fire ACTIVATE extinguish;

Programmable Logic Controllers

Introduction

- Source: [Bliesener, Ebel, Loeffler, ... 1998]
- Created in 1968 by General Motors with the following goals in mind:
 - o Replace relays,
 - o Simple programming (no CS required),
 - o Software instead of hard wiring,
 - o Smaller, cheaper, more reliable than relays, and
 - o Simple and cheap maintenance.
- 5 standardized languages (IEC_61131-3):
 - FBD (Function Block Diagram), LD (Ladder Diagram), ST (Structured Text, Pascal type language), IL (Instruction List) and SFC (Sequential Function Chart)

The Look of an PLC

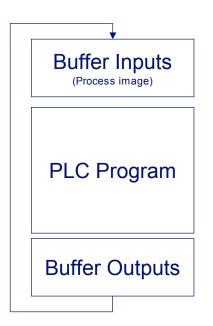
Internals are similar to a workstation.



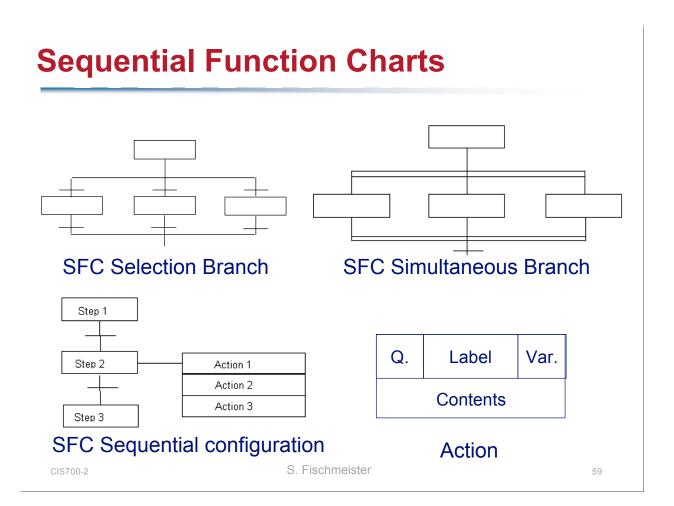
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Operation of an PLC

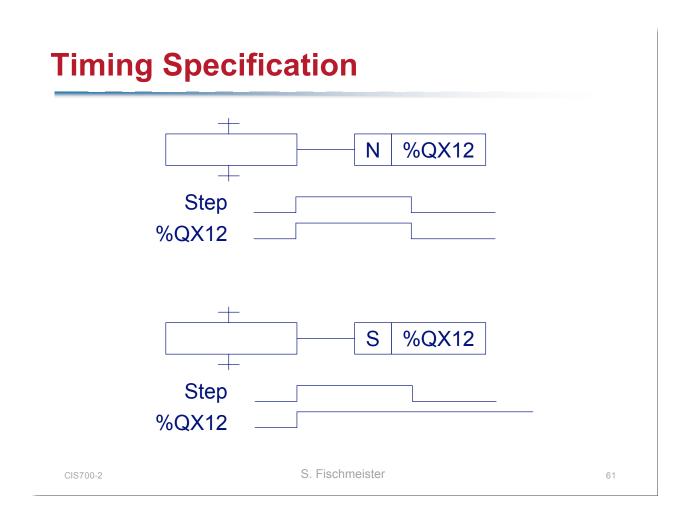


- Inputs, which are shorter than one cycle, are omitted.
- A reaction to an input can be two cycles late.
- The PLC program executes sequentially, so the instructions' ordering is relevant.
- Some new PLCs support direct value access.

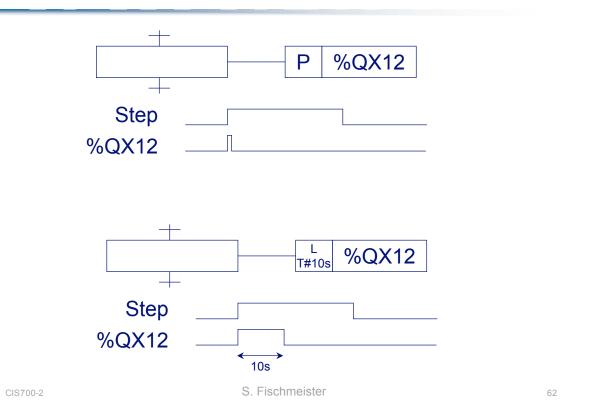


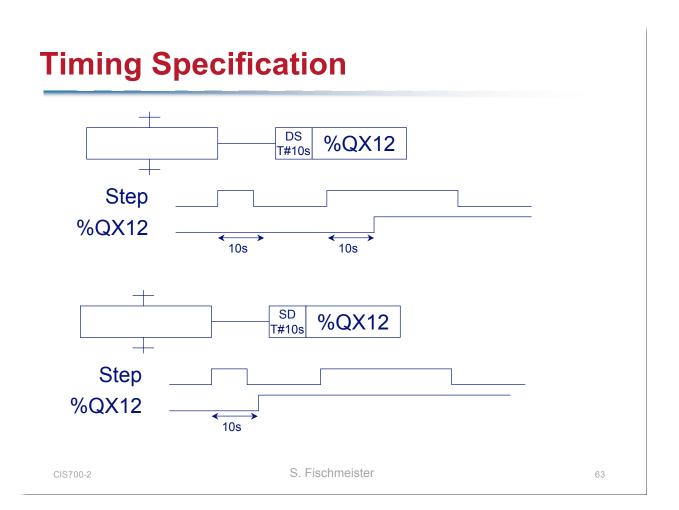
Action Qualifiers

1		
	N	Nonstored. Terminate when the step becomes inactive.
	S	Set (stored). Continue after the step is deactivated, until the action is reset.
	R	Reset. Terminate the execution of an action previously started with the S, SD, SL, or DS qualifier.
	L	Time Limited. Start when step becomes active and continue until the step goes inactive or a set time passes.
	D	Time Delayed. Start a delay timer when the step becomes active. If the step is still active after the time delay, the action starts and continues until deactivated.
	Ρ	Pulse. Start when the step becomes Active/Deactive and execute the action only once.
	SD	Stored and time Delayed Action starts after time delay, continues until reset.
	DS	Delayed & Stored. If step is still active, action starts after time delay, continues until reset.
	SL	Stored & timeLimited. Action starts when step becomes active, continues for a set time or until reset.

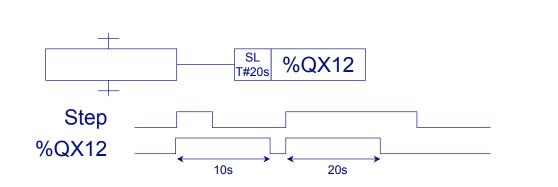


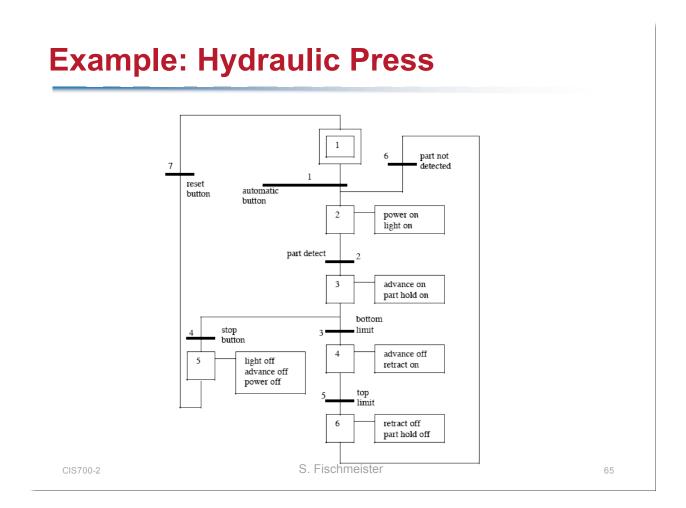
Timing Specification



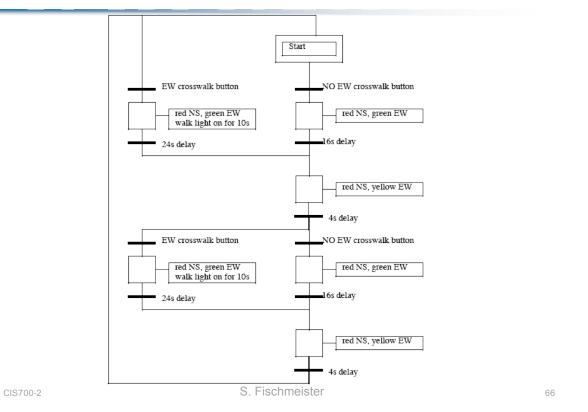


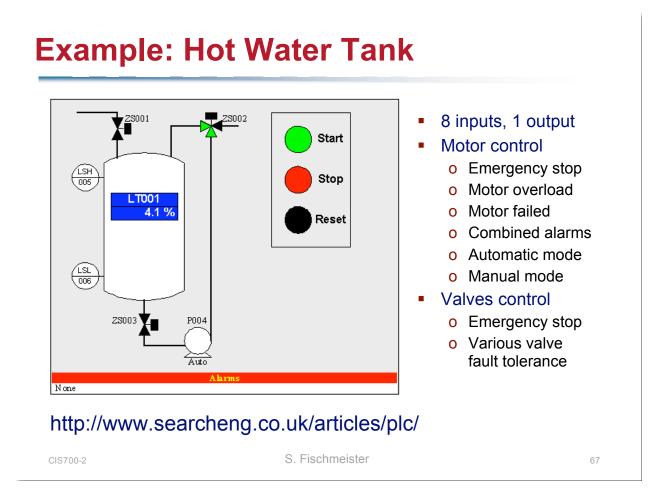
Timing Specification





Example: Crosswalk





Time-Triggered Message-Triggered Object

Introduction

- Source: [K.H. Kim, 1999]
- Developed in the early 1990s.
- Vision: Future RT computing must be realized in the form of a generalization of the non-RT computing, rather than in a form looking like an esoteric specialization. (=> same as RTSJ)
- Uses object orientation for strong modularity characteristics.
- Specification-based timing constraints.
- Side note: started with H. Kopetz (TT domain)

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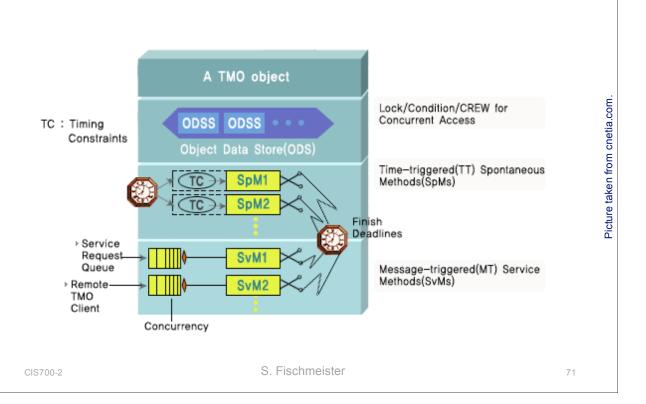
Overview

- TMO = (ODS, EAC, SpM, SvM)
 - ODS ... object-data-store section sec.
 - EAC ... environment access-capability sec.
 - SpM ... spontaneous-method sec.
 - SvM ... service-method sec.

Interesting for this discussion:

- o SpM ... time-triggered execution by the RT system
- o SvM ... event-triggered (e.g., service request msg)
- TMO incorporates deadlines; the designer guarantees and advertises ET windows by start time and completion time

Overview



Time-Triggered Actions

Time-constraint specification

```
ab "timing specification begin"
for <time-var> = from <activation-time>
to <deactivation-time>
[every <period>]
start-during (<earliest-start-time, latest-start-time)
finish-by <deadline>
ae "timing specification end"
```

Examples

- o {"start-during (10am, 10:05am) finish-by 10:10am", "start-during (10:30am, 10:35am) finish-by 10:40am"}
- o for t = from 10am to 10:50am every 30min
 start-during (t,t+5min) finish-by t+10min

Time-Triggered Actions

- Possible computations can be:
 - o Statements,
 - o Blocks,
 - o Function & procedures, and
 - o Object methods
- TMO implementations so far only handle SpM's and SvM's (I.e., object methods).

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Real-Time Specification for Java (**RTSJ**)

Introduction

- The correct name is: Real-Time Specification for Java (RTSJ).
- Started in 1999 as Sun Microsystems' Java Community Process under Real-Time for Java Expert Group (RTJEG).
- Guiding Principles:
 - **Applicability to Java Environments:** The RTSJ shall not include specifications that restrict its use to particular Java environments.
 - **Backward Compatibility:** The RTSJ shall not prevent existing, properly written, non-real-time Java programs from executing on implementations of the RTSJ.
 - Write Once, Run Anywhere.
 - Current Practice vs. Advanced Features: The RTSJ should address current real-time system practice as well as allow future implementations to include advanced features.
 - **Predictable Execution:** The RTSJ shall hold predictable execution as first priority in all trade-offs.
 - No Syntactic Extension.
 - o Allow Variation in Implementation Decisions.

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Overview

- RT Java consists of an RTJVM and the RTSJ class library.
- RTSJ-compliant JVMs can be considered Real-Time Java Virtual Machines (RTJVMs).
- Resides in the packet javax.realtime with modifications to the non RT Java such as
 - A RT Thread class extending java.lang.Thread
 - o Sophisticated scheduling support
 - No mandatory RT garbage collection, instead memory partitioning
 - o Raw memory access for device drivers

Handling of Time

- Clock:
 - A clock marks the passing of time.
 - o System.getRealtimeClock() for singletons.
 - o Can have an arbitrary resolution (see RelativeTime).
- Based on the clock, a number of classes dealing with time exist:
 - **HighResolutionTime:** is an abstract class and the base class for all time-related classes. Used to express time with nanosecond accuracy.
 - **AbsoluteTime:** represents a specific point in time given by milliseconds plus nanoseconds past some point in time fixed by the clock.
 - RationalTime: represents a time interval that is divided into subintervals by some frequency. Used to periodic events, threads, and feasibility analysis.
 - o RelativeTime: is generally used to represent a time relative to now
- All time objects must maintain nanosecond precision.

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Real-Time Threads

- Two types of threads:
 - o NoHeapRealtimeThread
 - RealtimeThread
- Release parameters specify the thread's behavior in the time domain:
 - **PeriodicParameters:** indicates that the schedulable object is released on a regular basis.
 - SporadicParameters: notes that the associated schedulable object's run method will be released aperiodically but with a minimum time between releases.
 - **AperiodicParameters:** characterizes a schedulable object that may be released at any time.

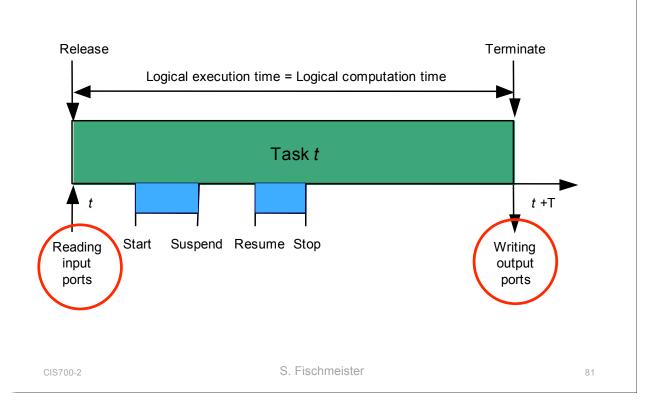
Giotto

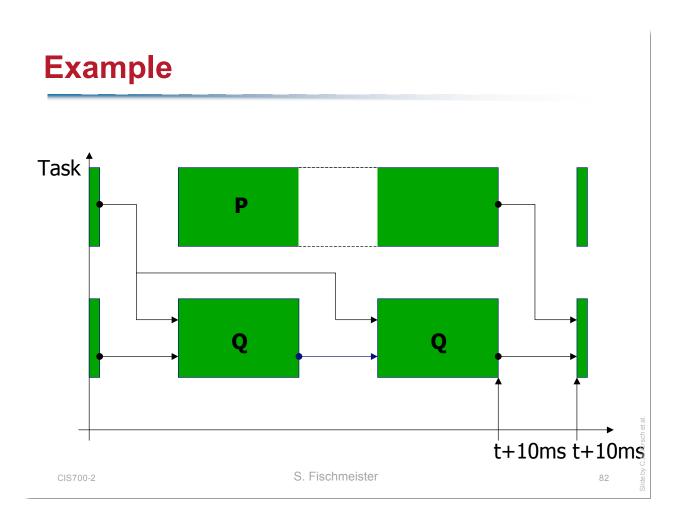
Overview

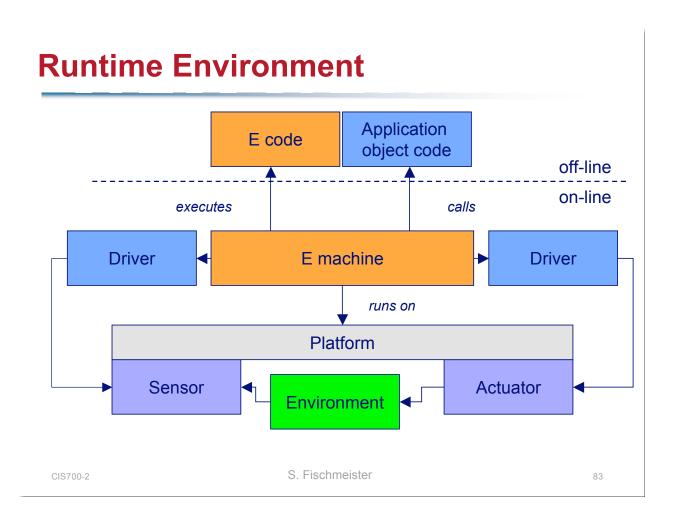
- Source: [T. Henzinger et al, 2002]
- One of the main issues was to create verifiable RT programs.
- Rigid control of the system's behavior.
 - Input/output values are buffered in ports (similar to the process image with PLCs)
 - o Value determinism
 - o Time determinism
- An embedded machine controls the task's execution.

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Logical Execution Time

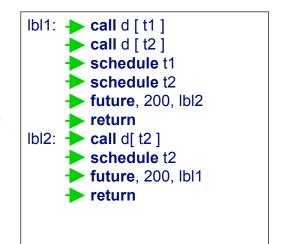






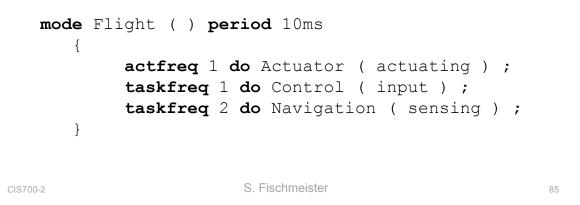
E-Code

- E-Code controls the execution behavior
- Call: executes drivers
- Schedule: enqueues tasks
- Future: schedules a resume
- Return: exists the interpreter



Timing Specification

- Only allows periodic tasks.
- Defined by period and frequency.
- Each mode has a period.
- Each task has a frequency within the mode.



Timed Atomic Commitment

Overview

- Source: [Davidson et al. 1991]
- Motivation: Atomic commitment is necessary for a number of applications. For real-time systems, time constraints need to be part of the algorithm.
- Example: Two robot arms together lift defective containers from a conveyor belt.
- Timing specification bases on timed scopes.

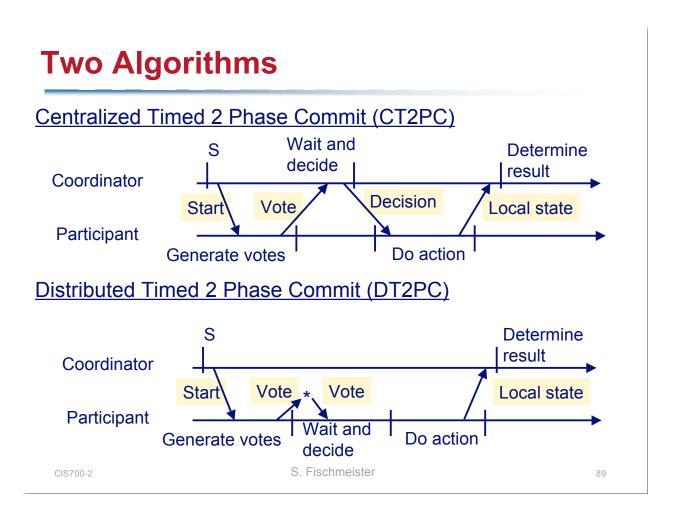
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Overview

- Three possible outcomes:
 - Commit: action done
 - Abort: no action done
 - o Exception: something done, need recovery function
- TAC has the following correctness criteria:
 - o TAC1: All participants, which reach a decision, reach the same one.
 - o TAC2: The decision is to commit only if all participants vote YES.
 - TAC3: At the deadline, the local state either reflects the completed action or is EXCEPTION.
 - o TAC4: (minimum success criterion)
 - All participants reach a decision.
 - If all participants vote YES, then the decision is to commit.
 - All participants complete the decided-upon action by the deadline.
 - At the deadline, the local state reflects the completed action.



Take Away Messages

- Timing constraints are a topic since 1968.
 - What are the right abstractions? (Modules, tasks, statements)
 - What is the right notion of time? (Zero, continuous, discrete time)
 - Who checks timing constraints? (Offline, online)
 - How to you specify timing? (Specification-based vs. programming)
 - How to ensure timing constraints? (Verification, runtime checking, offline, online)

Summary

- Timing constraints specify, how computation is done with respect to time.
- There are different types of real-time systems, each with its own requirements regarding timing constraints.
- A number of real-time programming languages, systems, and concepts exist. The following categories exist:
 - Intrinsic vs external control: e.g., language-specific constructs vs runtime control.
 - Specification-based vs program-based: e.g., at 12:00 do XY vs new event(new timer(12:00)).
 - Language extension (retrofitting) vs first-order citizen: e.g., RTSJ vs Giotto.
 - o Deterministic vs. approximation and best-effort: e.g., Esterel vs RTSJ.

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Summary

Name	Abstraction level	Туре	Guarantee	Enforcement	Note
F/B Sys	Superloop	Prog.	None	None	Simple
Temporal Scopes	Statement level	Spec.	Impl.	Runtime	Exceptions
Time Fences	Thread/Op level	Spec.	Impl.	Runtime	Simpler temporal scopes
Esterel	Stmt.	Prog.	Exact	Compiler	Toolchain
PLC	Block	Spec	Best eff.	Runtime	Commercial
ТМО	Method	Spec.	Best eff.	Runtime	
RTSJ	Thread	Prog.	Best eff.	Runtime	By popular demand
Giotto	Thread	Spec.	Exact (??)	By constr.	E-Code
TAC	Transaction	Spec	Impl.	Runtime	Bases on temporal sc.

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Personal Note & Observations

- PLCs & Sequential Function Charts are a rock solid method, sold billion times, defeats many theoretic and academic models.
- Synchronous languages are about to become a huge industry-strength concept: Airbus uses SCADE.
- Temporal scopes present a general abstraction, but did not catch on.
- Simple, but effective solutions or a complete tool chain.
- Retrofitting does not work it did not for security, it will not for RT systems.

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