CSCI-UA.0480-003  
Parallel Computing  
Spring 2015

Pre-requisite: Computer System Organization (CSCI-UA.0201)  
Meeting time and place: Mondays/Wednesdays 2:00-3:15pm  WWH 317  
Instructor: Mohamed Zahran (mzahran@cs.nyu.edu)  
Web page: http://cs.nyu.edu/courses/spring15/CSCI-UA.0480-003/  
Office hours: Tuesdays 2-4pm (WWH 320)  

Check the web page for updated information about the course, announcements, as well as the lecture notes. Each lecture note will be posted before the actual lecture day.

Description:

Most of us have learned to program a single microprocessor using a high-level programming language like C/C++, Java, ... This is called sequential programming. We feel very comfortable with this because we think in sequential way and give the machine statements to be executed in sequence. However, this has to change. A single microprocessor (or single core) no longer exists in almost all computers we are using today (including your tablets and smart phones). Most of our devices are now multicore processors. A multicore processor contains several core (called CPUs or cores) on-chip. To make the best use of these multicore chips we need to program them in-parallel. Sequential programming, for all platforms from smartphones to supercomputers, is falling out of fashion and taking back-seat to parallel programming. How to think in parallel? How to write code in parallel to make the best use of the underlying hardware? How is that new hardware different from the traditional one? What will the future be for the software and hardware? This is the topic of this course.

Text:

We will use the following book:

Author: Peter S. Pacheo  
Title: An Introduction to Parallel Programming  
Publisher: Morgan Kaufmann  
Year: 2011  
ISBN 978-0-12-374260-5
Main Topics

- What is parallel computing? And why do we need it?
- Basics of parallel hardware & coherence
- Challenges in parallel programming
- How to think in parallel?
- OpenMP
- MPI
- New look at data structures
- Performance analysis of parallel programs & Amdahl's law
- Pitfalls in parallel programming
- GPUs and CUDA

Grading

- Homework assignments  20%
- Labs  20%
- Midterm  20%
- Final exam  40%

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations with me, please contact me as soon as possible.

Feedback: I would like as much feedback/criticisms as possible from you, as early as possible, so that I can try to improve the way the course is taught. Please feel free to give me any suggestions (anonymously if you wish) that you think could improve the way the course is handled. Keep in mind that you are not alone. If you have a question, undoubtedly others do too; and we will all benefit from your input. Do not be shy to ask about anything you do not understand in the course.

Good Luck and Have fun!