

Greedy Algorithms

Lecture 20

April 11, 2023

Part I

Greedy Algorithms: Tools and Techniques

What is a Greedy Algorithm?

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Greedy algorithms:

- 1 make decision incrementally in small steps *without backtracking*
- 2 decision at each step is based on improving *local or current* state in a myopic fashion without paying attention to the *global* situation
- 3 decisions often based on some fixed and simple *priority* rules

Pros and Cons of Greedy Algorithms

Pros:

- 1 Usually (too) easy to design greedy algorithms
- 2 Easy to implement and often run fast since they are simple
- 3 Several important cases where they are effective/optimal
- 4 Lead to a first-cut heuristic when problem not well understood

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CS 374: Every greedy algorithm needs a proof of correctness

Greedy Algorithm Types

Crude classification:

- 1 **Non-adaptive:** fix some ordering of decisions a priori and stick with the order
- 2 **Adaptive:** make decisions adaptively but greedily/locally at each step

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Plan:

- 1 See several examples
- 2 Pick up some proof techniques

Part II

Scheduling Jobs to Minimize Average Waiting Time

The Problem

- n jobs J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n . J_i has non-negative processing time p_i
- One server/machine/person available to process jobs.
- Schedule/order the jobs to minimize total or average *waiting time*
- Waiting time of J_i in schedule σ : sum of processing times of all jobs scheduled before J_i

	J_1	J_2	J_3	J_4	J_5	J_6
<i>time</i>	3	4	1	8	2	6

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Example: schedule is $J_1, J_2, J_3, J_4, J_5, J_6$. Total waiting time is

$$0 + 3 + (3 + 4) + (3 + 4 + 1) + (3 + 4 + 1 + 8) + \dots =$$

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Optimal schedule:

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Optimal schedule: Shortest Job First. $J_3, J_5, J_1, J_2, J_6, J_4$.

Optimality of SJF

Theorem

Shortest Job First gives an optimum schedule for the problem of minimizing total waiting time.

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Intuition: case of two jobs. Say with processing times p_1, p_2 with $p_1 < p_2$

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Proof strategy for general case: exchange argument

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Proof strategy for general case: exchange argument

Assume without loss of generality that job sorted in increasing order of processing time and hence $p_1 \leq p_2 \leq \dots \leq p_n$ and SJF order is J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n .

Inversions

Definition

A schedule $J_{i_1}, J_{i_2}, \dots, J_{i_n}$ is said to have an **inversion** if there are jobs J_a and J_b such that S schedules J_a before J_b , but $p_a > p_b$.

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Claim

If a schedule has an inversion then there is an inversion between two adjacently scheduled jobs.

Proof: exercise.

Proof of optimality of SJF

Recall SJF order is J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n .

- Let $J_{i_1}, J_{i_2}, \dots, J_{i_n}$ be an optimum schedule with fewest inversions.
- If schedule has no inversions then it is identical to SJF schedule and we are done.
- Otherwise there is an $1 \leq \ell < n$ such that $i_\ell > i_{\ell+1}$ since schedule has inversion among two adjacently scheduled jobs

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Claim

*The schedule obtained from $J_{i_1}, J_{i_2}, \dots, J_{i_n}$ by **exchanging/swapping** positions of jobs J_{i_ℓ} and $J_{i_{\ell+1}}$ is also optimal and has one fewer inversion.*

Assuming claim we obtain a contradiction and hence optimum schedule with fewest inversions must be the SJF schedule.

A Weighted Version

- n jobs J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n . J_i has non-negative processing time p_i and a non-negative weight w_i
- One server/machine/person available to process jobs.
- Schedule/order the jobs to minimize total or average *waiting time*
- Waiting time of J_i in schedule σ : sum of processing times of all jobs scheduled before J_i
- Goal: minimize total *weighted* waiting time.

	J_1	J_2	J_3	J_4	J_5	J_6
<i>time</i>	3	4	1	8	2	6
<i>weight</i>	10	5	2	100	1	1

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Exercise: Argue that ordering in increasing p_j/w_j ratio is optimum

Part III

Scheduling to Minimize Lateness

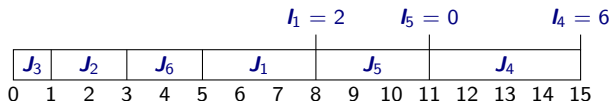
Scheduling to Minimize Lateness

- 1 Given jobs J_1, J_2, \dots, J_n with deadlines and processing times to be scheduled on a single resource.
- 2 If a job i starts at time s_i then it will finish at time $f_i = s_i + t_i$, where t_i is its processing time. d_i : deadline.
- 3 The lateness of a job is $l_i = \max(0, f_i - d_i)$.
- 4 Schedule all jobs such that $L = \max l_i$ is **minimized**.

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	J_1	J_2	J_3	J_4	J_5	J_6
t_i	3	2	1	4	3	2
d_i	6	8	9	9	14	15



Greedy Template

```
Initially  $R$  is the set of all requests  
 $curr\_time = 0$   
 $max\_lateness = 0$   
while  $R$  is not empty do  
    choose  $i \in R$   
     $curr\_time = curr\_time + t_i$   
    if ( $curr\_time > d_i$ ) then  
         $max\_lateness = \max(curr\_time - d_i, max\_lateness)$   
  
return  $max\_lateness$ 
```

Main task: Decide the order in which to process jobs in R

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Three Algorithms

- 1 Shortest job first — sort according to t_i .
- 2 Shortest slack first — sort according to $d_i - t_i$.
- 3 **EDF** = Earliest deadline first — sort according to d_i .

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Counter examples for first two: exercise

Earliest Deadline First

Theorem

Greedy with EDF rule minimizes maximum lateness.

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Proof via an exchange argument.

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Idle time: time during which machine is not working.

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Theorem

Greedy with EDF rule minimizes maximum lateness.

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Idle time: time during which machine is not working.

Lemma

If there is a feasible schedule then there is one with no idle time before all jobs are finished.

Inversions

Assume jobs are sorted such that $d_1 \leq d_2 \leq \dots \leq d_n$. Hence EDF schedules them in this order.

Definition

A schedule S is said to have an **inversion** if there are jobs i and j such that S schedules i before j , but $d_i > d_j$.

Inversions

Assume jobs are sorted such that $d_1 \leq d_2 \leq \dots \leq d_n$. Hence EDF schedules them in this order.

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A schedule S is said to have an **inversion** if there are jobs i and j such that S schedules i before j , but $d_i > d_j$.

Claim

If a schedule S has an inversion then there is an inversion between two adjacently scheduled jobs.

Proof: exercise.

Proof sketch of Optimality of EDF

- Let S be an optimum schedule with smallest number of inversions.
- If S has no inversions then this is same as EDF and we are done.
- Else S has two adjacent jobs i and j with $d_i > d_j$.
- Swap positions of i and j to obtain a new schedule S'

Claim

Maximum lateness of S' is no more than that of S . And S' has strictly fewer inversions than S .

Part IV

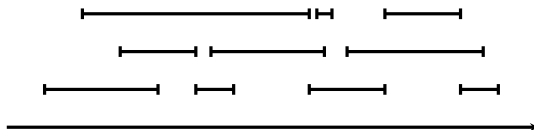
Interval Scheduling

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Problem (Interval Scheduling)

Input: *A set of jobs with start and finish times to be scheduled on a resource (example: classes and class rooms).*

Goal: *Schedule as many jobs as possible*



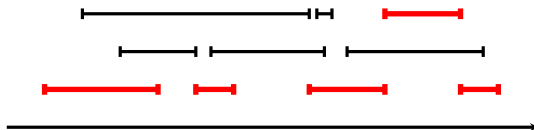
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- Two jobs with overlapping intervals cannot both be scheduled!



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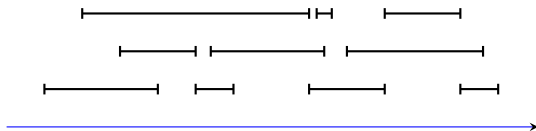
SP

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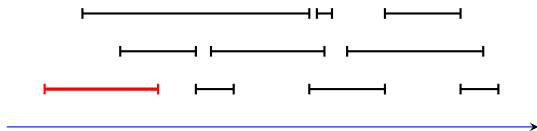
Earliest Start Time

Process jobs in the order of their starting times, beginning with those that start earliest.



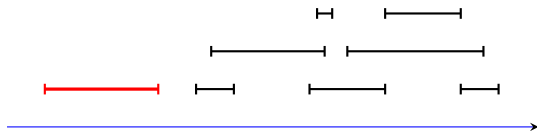
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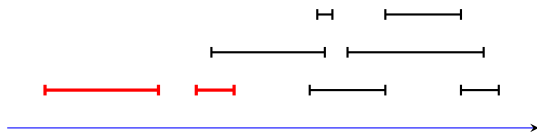
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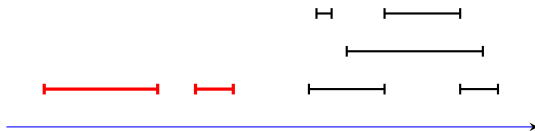
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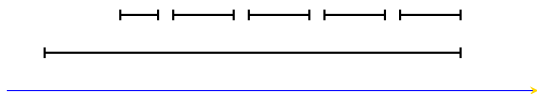


Figure: Counter example for earliest start time

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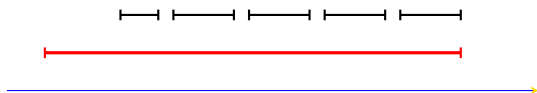


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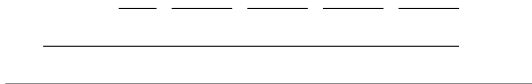
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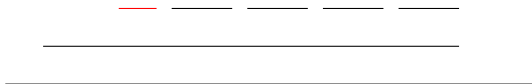
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Process jobs in the order of processing time, starting with jobs that require the shortest processing.

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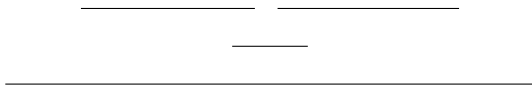


Figure: Counter example for smallest processing time

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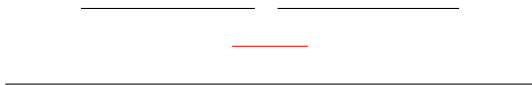


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Process jobs in that have the fewest “conflicts” first.



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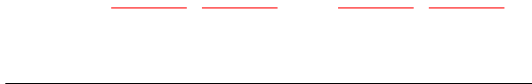


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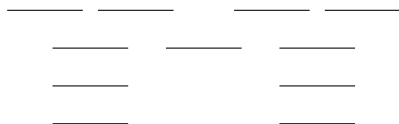


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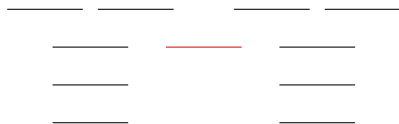


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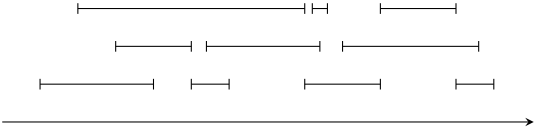
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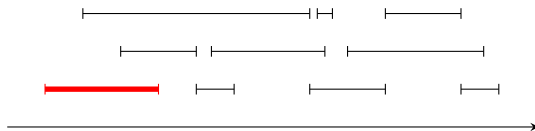
Earliest Finish Time

Process jobs in the order of their finishing times, beginning with those that finish earliest.



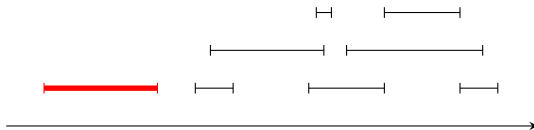
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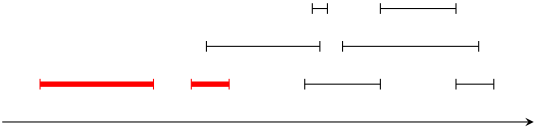
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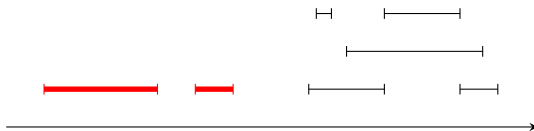
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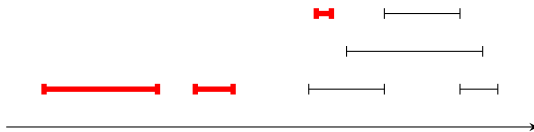
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Optimal Greedy Algorithm

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 $R$  is the set of all requests  
 $X \leftarrow \emptyset$  (*  $X$  stores the jobs that will be scheduled *)  
while  $R$  is not empty  
    choose  $i \in R$  such that finishing time of  $i$  is smallest  
    add  $i$  to  $X$   
    remove from  $R$  all requests that overlap with  $i$   
return  $X$ 
```

Theorem

The greedy algorithm that picks jobs in the order of their finishing times is optimal.

Proving Optimality

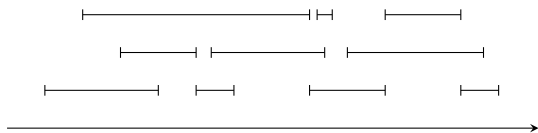
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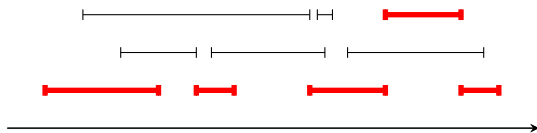
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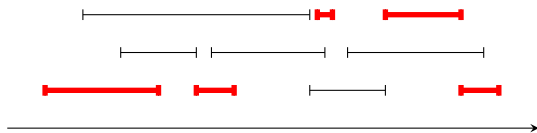
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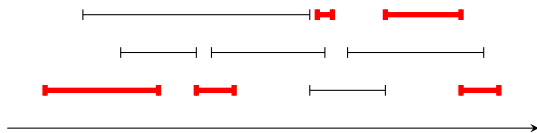
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Proving Optimality

- 1 **Correctness:** Clearly the algorithm returns a set of jobs that does not have any conflicts
- 2 For a set of requests R , let O be an optimal set and let X be the set returned by the greedy algorithm. Then $O = X$? Not likely!



Instead we will show that $|O| = |X|$

Proof of Optimality: Key Lemma

Lemma

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Proof.

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- 1 Form a new set O' by removing j_1 from O and adding i_1 , that is $O' = (O - \{j_1\}) \cup \{i_1\}$.
- 2 From claim, O' is a *feasible* solution (no conflicts).
- 3 Since $|O'| = |O|$, O' is also an optimum solution and it contains i_1 . □

Proof of Claim

Claim

If $i_1 \notin O$, there is exactly one interval $j_1 \in O$ that conflicts with i_1 .

Proof.

- 1 If no $j \in O$ conflicts with i_1 then O is not optimal!
- 2 Suppose $j_1, j_2 \in O$ such that $j_1 \neq j_2$ and both j_1 and j_2 conflict with i_1 .
- 3 Since i_1 has earliest finish time, j_1 and i_1 overlap at $f(i_1)$.
- 4 For same reason j_2 also overlaps with i_1 at $f(i_1)$.
- 5 Implies that j_1, j_2 overlap at $f(i_1)$ but intervals in O cannot overlap.

See figure in next slide. □

Figure for proof of Claim

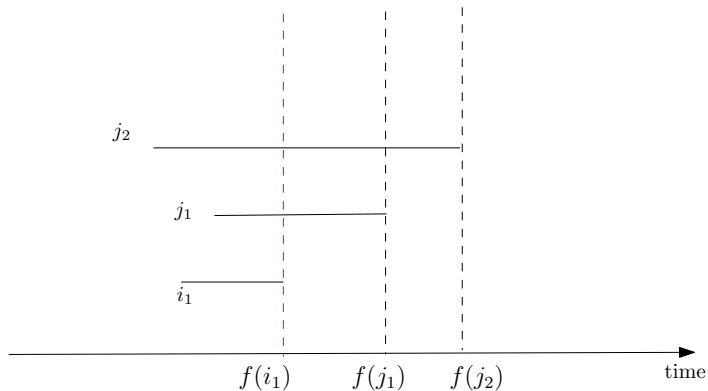


Figure: Since i_1 has the earliest finish time, any interval that conflicts with it does so at $f(i_1)$. This implies j_1 and j_2 conflict.

Proof of Optimality of Earliest Finish Time First

Proof by Induction on number of intervals.

Base Case: $n = 1$. Trivial since Greedy picks one interval.

Induction Step: Assume theorem holds for $i < n$.

Let I be an instance with n intervals

I' : I with i_1 and all intervals that overlap with i_1 removed

$G(I), G(I')$: Solution produced by Greedy on I and I'

From Lemma, there is an optimum solution O to I and $i_1 \in O$.

Let $O' = O - \{i_1\}$. O' is a solution to I' .

$$\begin{aligned} |G(I)| &= 1 + |G(I')| \quad (\text{from Greedy description}) \\ &\geq 1 + |O'| \quad (\text{By induction, } G(I') \text{ is optimum for } I') \\ &= |O| \end{aligned}$$



Implementation and Running Time

```
Initially  $R$  is the set of all requests
 $X \leftarrow \emptyset$  (*  $X$  stores the jobs that will be scheduled *)
while  $R$  is not empty
    choose  $i \in R$  such that finishing time of  $i$  is least
    if  $i$  does not overlap with requests in  $X$ 
        add  $i$  to  $X$ 
    remove  $i$  from  $R$ 
return the set  $X$ 
```

- Presort all requests based on finishing time. $O(n \log n)$ time
- Now choosing least finishing time is $O(1)$
- Keep track of the finishing time of the last request added to A . Then check if starting time of i later than that
- Thus, checking non-overlapping is $O(1)$
- Total time $O(n \log n + n) = O(n \log n)$

Comments

- 1 Interesting Exercise: smallest interval first picks at least half the optimum number of intervals.
- 2 All requests need not be known at the beginning. Such *online* algorithms are a subject of research

Weighted Interval Scheduling

Suppose we are given n jobs. Each job i has a start time s_i , a finish time f_i , and a weight w_i . We would like to find a set S of compatible jobs whose total weight is maximized. Which of the following greedy algorithms finds the optimum schedule?

- Earliest start time first.
- Earliest finish time first.
- Highest weight first.
- None of the above.
- IDK.

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Weighted problem can be solved via dynamic prog. See notes.

Greedy Analysis: Overview

- 1 **Greedy's first step leads to an optimum solution.** Show that there is an optimum solution leading from the first step of Greedy and then use induction. Example, Interval Scheduling.
- 2 **Greedy algorithm stays ahead.** Show that after each step the solution of the greedy algorithm is at least as good as the solution of any other algorithm. Example, Interval scheduling.
- 3 **Structural property of solution.** Observe some structural bound of every solution to the problem, and show that greedy algorithm achieves this bound. Example, Interval Partitioning (see Kleinberg-Tardos book).
- 4 **Exchange argument.** Gradually transform any optimal solution to the one produced by the greedy algorithm, without hurting its optimality. Example, Minimizing lateness.

Takeaway Points

- 1 Greedy algorithms come naturally but often are incorrect. A proof of correctness is an absolute necessity.
- 2 *Exchange* arguments are often the key proof ingredient. Focus on why the first step of the algorithm is correct: need to show that there is an optimum/correct solution with the first step of the algorithm.
- 3 Thinking about correctness is also a good way to figure out which of the many greedy strategies is likely to work.