

Datapath Design, Coding Standards, and Lab 2

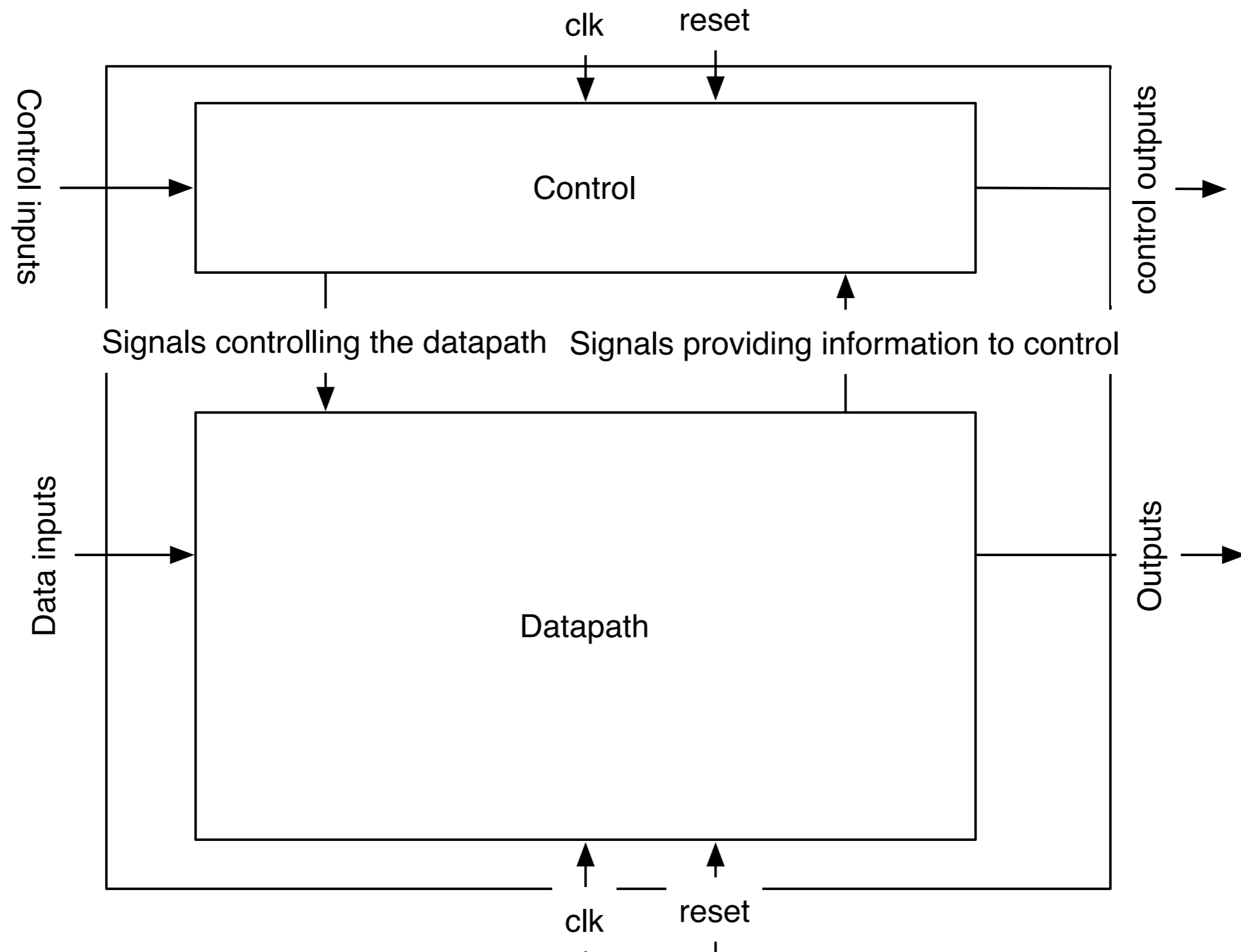
Separating Control From Data

- The datapath is where data moves from place to place.
 - Computation happens in the datapath
 - No decisions are made here.
 - Things you should find in a datapath
 - Muxes
 - Registers
 - ALUs
 - Wide busses (34 bits for data. 17 bits for instructions)
 - These components are physically large
 - In a real machine, their spatial relationship are important.
 - Mostly about wiring things up.

Separating Control From Data

- Control is where decisions are made
 - Things you will there
 - State machines
 - Random lots of complex logic
 - Little state (maybe just a single register)
 - Spatial relationships are harder to reason about or exploit.
- Because they are qualitatively so different, we will use different coding styles for each.
 - These are best practices from people who build real chips.
 - Following them will save you lots of pain
 - If you don't follow them, and you have problem, the TAs and I will tell you to go fix the coding style issues first.

Basic Design



Separating Design from Implementation

- As you will learn, debugging hardware is slow
- Design first
 - Draw your schematic in complete detail.
 - Signal names and everything.
 - Design the state machine for your control
 - Write out the truth tables for your control signals.
- The implement
 - Our coding standards are recipe for implementing datapath and control.
 - Writing Verilog is really just about translating your design into Verilog.
 - It should be almost completely mechanical.

Designing the Datapath

- Designing datapaths is easier than it may seem.
- Design
 - You start with a specification of the algorithm your circuit should implement
 - Figure out what operations need to be performed on the data and how data will flow between operations
 - Draw the schematic
 - Remember: the datapath does not make decisions.
 - It generates data needed to make the decisions
 - It provides the flexibility implement decisions that the control might make.
- Implement
 - Instantiate those components and connect them with wires.
 - Test.

Example: Greatest Common Divisor

- See second set of slides from Arvind.
- The code in the slides is buggy.
- The source code for a correct implementation is available on the course web site.

Datapath Coding Standards

- Non-leaf nodes should contain only
 - Module instantiations
 - Wires
 - Simple assigns for renaming: assign foo = bar (and not many of these)
- Leaf nodes are either stateful or not.
- Stateful leafs
 - Registers
 - Register files
 - Memory modules.
 - Need to have clk and reset.
 - May contain always @(posedge clk), always @(*), and '<=' assignments
- Non-stateful leafs
 - May contain always @(*), and '=' assignments
 - No clk or reset input.

Datapath Coding Standards

- Consistently use a good naming conventions
- Label all inputs and outputs
 - e.g. `foo_in`, `foo_out`
- Include module types in their names
 - `A_mux` -- the instantiated mux
- Give control lines descriptive and consistent names
 - `A_mux_sel_in` -- the input that controls the mux
 - `A_mux_sel` -- should not exist since it would be a control line (and would come from the control path)
 - The control unit would have a corresponding `A_mux_sel_out`

Build Useful Modules

- Parameterize!
- You should only ever write code for one
 - Register (of any width)
 - 2-input mux (of any width)
 - 3-input mux
 - etc.
- Give your modules descriptive names
 - my3Mux
 - my4Mux
 - myFF
 - gcd_control
 - gcd_datapath
 - gcd -- top-level.

Lab 2: Datapath for a simple processor

- Very simple design, but includes all the parts you will need later
 - Memories
 - Registers
 - ALUs
 - Wires
 - Our IO interface
 - Datapath (and control)

The Architecture

- Word/address size: 8 bits.
 - Data memory contains 256 bytes.
- Instruction length: 16 bits
 - Instruction memory contains 8192 instruction words
- Nine instructions, two argument instructions
 - Math: Add, Sub, Mult ($r1 = r1 \text{ op } r2$)
 - Memory: LD, ST
 - Constants: LI
 - IO: Read, Write
 - Control: Halt
- Four registers
- Instruction format
 - `<4 bit opcode><dst><src2><immediate (8 bits)>`

Basic Algorithm

```
byte reg[4];
inst imem[8192];
byte mem[256];
int PC;

While(!halted) {
    inst = imem[PC]; // Get the instructions
    opcode = ExtractOPcode(inst); // decode it
    r1 = ExtractR1(inst);
    r2 = ExtractR2(inst);
    imm = ExtractImm(inst);

    //collect the inputs and perform the op
    byte r = DoOp(opcode, reg[r1], reg[r2]);
    // write the results
    if (opcode needs to write a result) {
        reg[r1] = r;
    }

    // What's next?
    PC++;
}
```

Basic Algorithm

```
byte DoOp(Opcode op, byte r1, byte r2, byte imm)
{
    switch (op) {
        case ADD:
            return r1 + r2;
        case SUB:
            return r1 - r2;
        ...
        case LD:
            return mem[r2];
        case ST:
            return mem[r2] = r1; // Why not mem[r1] = r2]?
        case Read:
            out_port = r1;
            // wait for data to be taken...
        case Write:
            // wait for value to appear on in_port
            return in_port;
        case Halt:
            halted = true;
    }
}
```