

ECE471: Embedded Systems – Homework 1

Due: Friday 13 September 2019, 1:00pm

For this homework short answers will suffice. There isn't necessarily a right or wrong answer for some of the questions, but be sure to explain your reasoning.

To submit, create a document with your answers (text, pdf, libreoffice, MS Office if you must) and e-mail them to *vincent.weaver@maine.edu* by the homework deadline. Title your e-mail "ECE471 Homework 1" and be sure your name is included in the document.

1. For each of the following three cases, classify if you would consider the device described as an embedded system or not. For each case list 3 of the characteristics given in class for what defines an "embedded system" and say whether the device meets them.
 - (a) You buy an electric toothbrush that has an 8-bit PIC16F1516 microcontroller (16MHz, 8k flash, 512 bytes RAM), an 8 LED display, an i2c pressure sensor, and a motor driven by an H-bridge.
 - (b) The iPhone 8 has an Apple A11 processor in it. This processor is a six-core 64-bit CPU running up to 2.4GHz, with large L1, L2 and L3 caches. It also has 3GB of RAM and a powerful GPU (graphics unit) with 1080x1920 resolution.
 - (c) You open up a wall thermostat and it has an 8-bit PIC processor in it. This processor runs at 10MHz and the only interface is an LCD display, a small keypad, a temperature sensor, and some circuitry to turn on a relay when the temperature hits a certain level.

2. How many "bits" wide are the following systems? Why?
 - (a) An ARM 1176 found in the original Raspberry Pi. Its registers, integer ALU, program-counter, and address bus are all 32-bits.
 - (b) A MOS 6502 processor (found in older desktop and embedded systems). Its registers, data bus, and ALU are 8-bit while the instruction pointer and address bus are both 16-bit.

3. You are designing a small embedded system.
 - (a) Describe one reason why using an ASIC (application-specific integrated circuit) might be better than using a microcontroller.
 - (b) Describe one reason why using a microcontroller might be better than using an ASIC.