Subject: Re: 'toy OS', most students would just manage to learn assembler
Posted by arnold on Mon, 20 May 2013 00:18:52 GMT

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There is no excuse to teach an OS course to students who have never had
any exposure to assembly language. After you have learned assembler for
one real machine, you can learn another machine very easily, since the concepts
are the same (given Von-Nueman machines), just the syntax is different.

To expect a student to both learn assembler and do an OS is unreasonable.
First teach 'em how to program in a high level language, then teach 'em
assmbler, then COBOL and ADA so they'll see how not to do it, then C, so
that they'll appreciate it, and THEN teach 'em how to write an OS.

Some schools also like to teach a "simple" assembler, like MIX, which is even
worse than not teaching anything. You should teach people about real
machines; e.g. it is not too hard to write a simulator for the PDP-11,
even in Pascal!

Besides, who says an OS has to be written all in assembler anyway? (Lookout!
BIG BLUE is going to get me!!!!) I can name at least one OS written in
a high level language, which is in use today (MULTICS... :-)

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"Look Bruce! It's the Bat Signal!"