Exam preparation topics
CSC 443. Database Management Systems

Part I. Handling large amount of data efficiently

1. Storage media
   What are advantages and disadvantages of storing data in RAM? on magnetic disks? On tapes?
   things closer.
   Main components of disk latency.
   Why random access to disk data is significantly slower than sequential access?
   What is a key to lower I/O costs?

2. Buffering
   How the buffer pool is organized?
   What is a dirty page? What is a dirty bit?
   What is a pin count? Why pin count need to be a number and not a single bit?
   What pages are written back to disk?
   Replacement policies: First In-First Out, Least Recently Used*, Most Recently Used*, Clock*, the
   second chance algorithm*.
   What is sequential flooding? Sample code for sequential flooding. What are the solutions to
   sequential flooding problem?
   What is double-buffering?

3. Algorithms
   I/O model of computation. What is beneficial for algorithms which work on inputs that cannot fit
   into RAM?
   Two-Phase Multiway Merge Sort* (2PMMS). Phase I. Phase II. What is in input buffers? What is in an
   output buffer? How many buffers max for RAM of size M? Max number of records that we can sort
   in 2 passes. Given N – number of records – determine if you can sort them in 2 passes with the
   memory of size M and a block of size B. How to sort larger relations? How many records we can sort
   with 3 passes?
   Algorithms that benefit from sorting.
   Software and hardware method for improving performance of 2PMMS.
   How to incorporate duplicate elimination (or other operations) into the merge phase of 2PMMS.
   Design similar algorithms to solve problems such as: set union, intersection, difference etc.

4. Data structures
   Primary and secondary indexes. Dense and sparse indexes. Static trees. Static hashes.

* For these questions you should understand how the algorithm works, be able execute steps of
  the algorithm, draw the state of all participating data structures etc.
B-tree file organization: clustered files = clustered indexes.
Extendible hashing*, linear hashing*.
When to use B-trees, Hash tables, Grid files, R-trees, Bitmap indexes, inverted indexes.

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