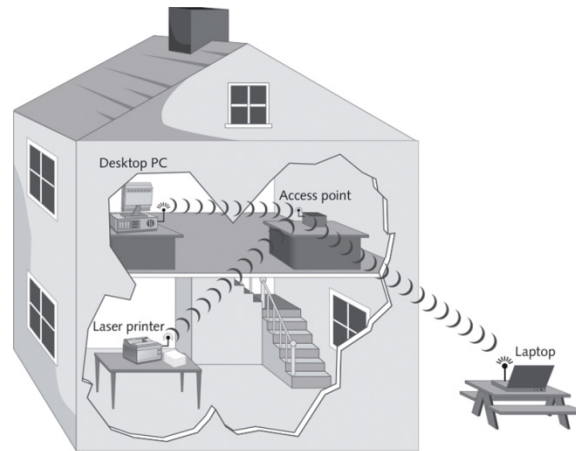# IEEE 802.11 Wireless LANs
Part I: Basics

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Audio/Video recordings of this class lecture are available at:

http://www.cse.wustl.edu/~jain/cse574-16/

Overview

1. IEEE 802.11 Features

2. IEEE 802.11 Physical Layers

3. IEEE 802.11 MAC

4. IEEE 802.11 Architecture
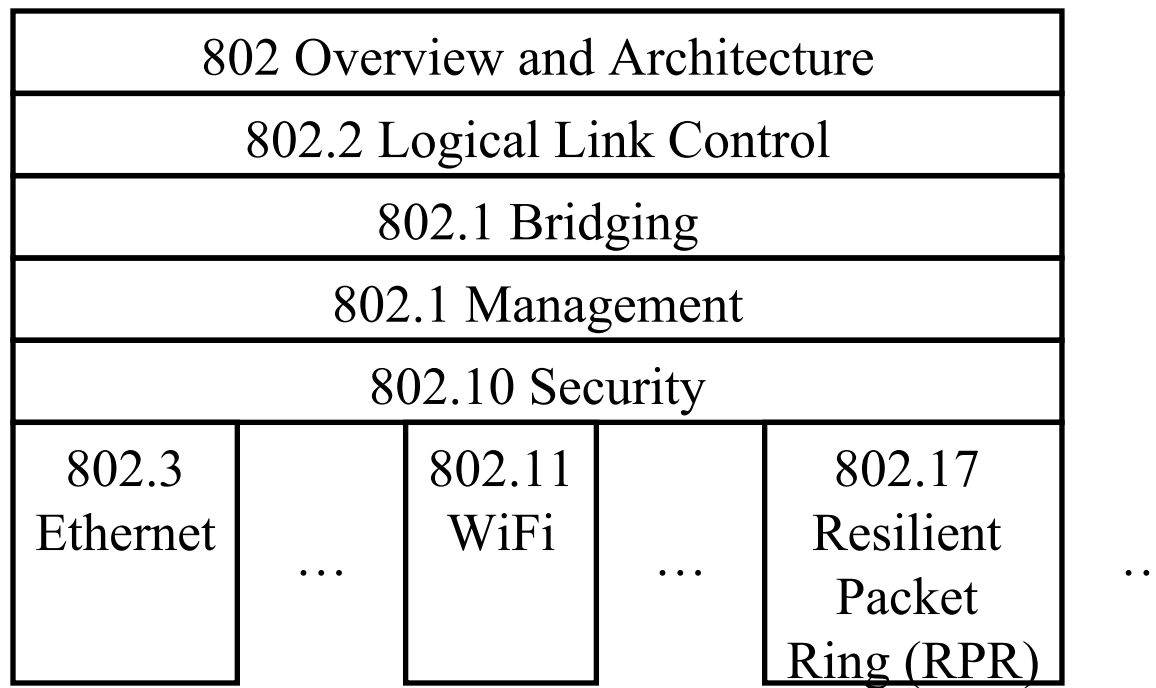
5. Frame Format

6. Power Management

Note: This is 1st of 2 lectures on WiFi. The 2nd lecture covers recent developments such as high-throughput WiFi, white spaces, etc.

IEEE 802.11 vs. WiFi

❑ IEEE 802.11 is a standard

❑ WiFi = "Wireless Fidelity" is a trademark

❑ Fidelity = Compatibility between wireless equipment from different manufacturers

❑ WiFi Alliance is a non-profit organization that does the compatibility testing (WiFi.org)

❑ 802.11 has many options and it is possible for two equipment based on 802.11 to be incompatible.

❑ All equipment with "WiFi" logo have selected options such that they will interoperate.

IEEE Standards Numbering System

❑ IEEE 802.* and IEEE 802.1* standards (e.g., IEEE 802.1Q-2011) apply to all IEEE 802 technologies:
  ➢ IEEE 802.3 Ethernet
  ➢ IEEE 802.11 WiFi
  ➢ IEEE 802.16 WiMAX

802 Overview and Architecture				
802.2 Logical Link Control				
802.1 Bridging				
802.1 Management				
802.10 Security				
802.3 Ethernet	…	802.11 WiFi	…	802.17 Resilient Packet Ring (RPR)	…

IEEE Standards Numbering (Cont)

❑ IEEE 802.11* (e.g., 802.11i) standards apply to all WiFi devices but may not apply to ZigBee devices which are based on 802.15,

❑ Standards with all upper case letters are base standards, e.g., IEEE 802.1AB-2009

❑ Standards with lower case are additions/extensions/revisions.
Merged with the base standard in its next revision. e.g., IEEE 802.1w-2001 was merged with IEEE 802.1D-2004

❑ Standards used to be numbered, sequentially, e.g., IEEE 802.1a, …, 802.1z, 802.1aa, 802.1ab, …

❑ Recently they started showing base standards in the additions, e.g., IEEE 802.1Qau-2010

IEEE 802.11 Features

❑ Original IEEE 802.11-1997 was at 1 and 2 Mbps.
Newer versions at 11 Mbps, 54 Mbps, 108 Mbps, 200 Mbps,…

❑ All versions use "License-exempt" spectrum

❑ Need ways to share spectrum among multiple users and multiple LANs Þ *Spread Spectrum* (CDMA)

❑ Three Phys:

  ➢ Direct Sequence (**DS**) spread spectrum using ISM band

  ➢ Frequency Hopping (**FH**) spread spectrum using ISM band

  ➢ Diffused Infrared (850-900 nm) bands

❑ Supports multiple priorities

❑ Supports time-critical and data traffic

❑ Power management allows a node to doze off

ISM Bands

❑ Industrial, Scientific, and Medical bands. License exempt

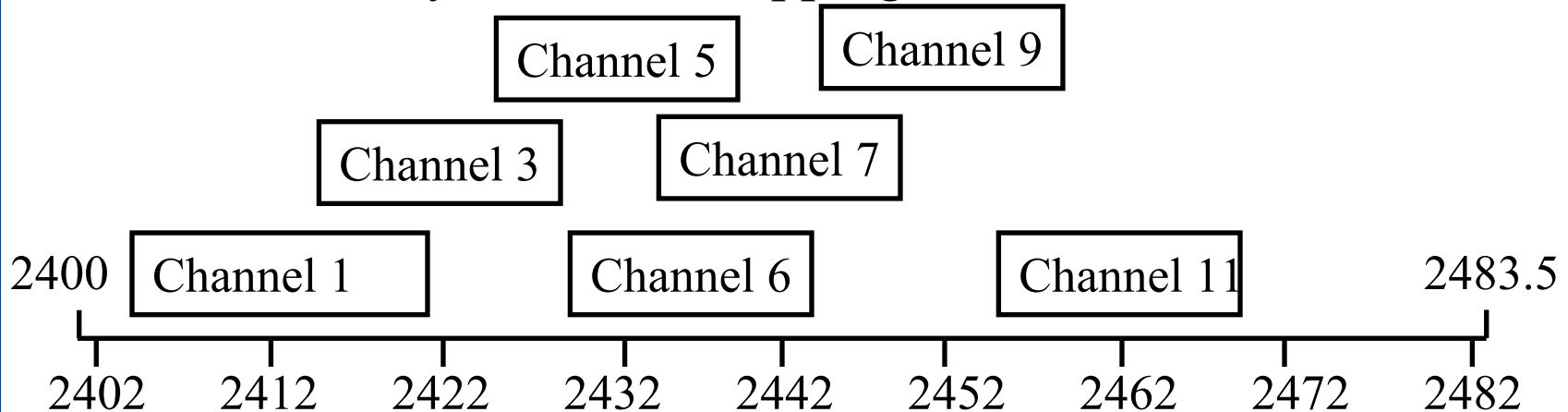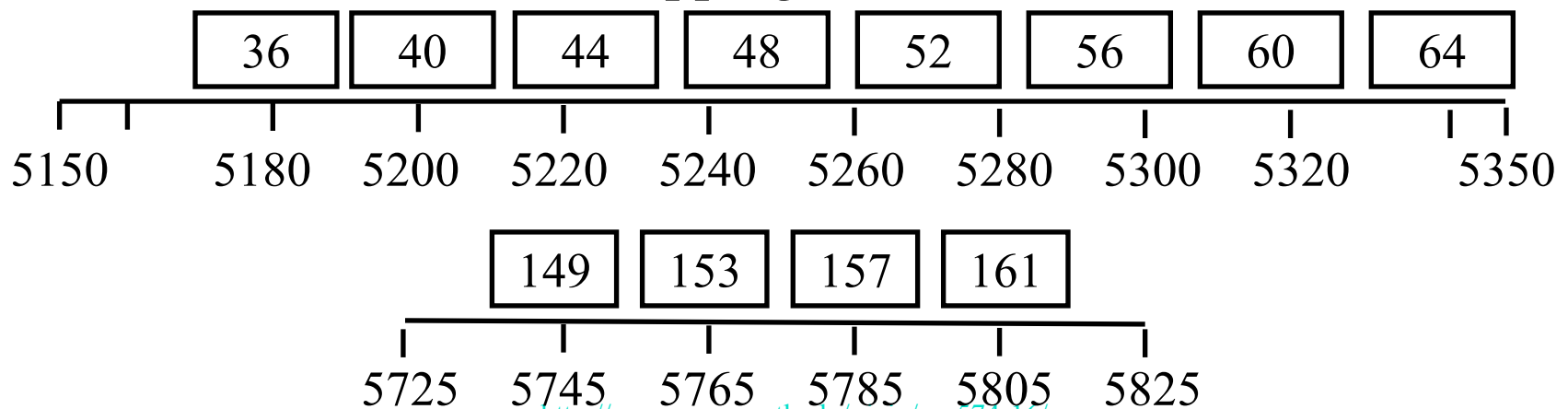| From	To	Bandwidth	Availability
6.765 MHz	6.795 MHz	30 kHz	
13.553 MHz	13.567 MHz	14 kHz	Worldwide
26.957 MHz	27.283 MHz	326 kHz	Worldwide
40.660 MHz	40.700 MHz	40 kHz	Worldwide
433.050 MHz	434.790 MHz	1.74 MHz	Europe, Africa, Middle east, Former Soviet Union
902.000 MHz	928.000 MHz	26 MHz	America, Greenland
2.400 GHz	**2.500 GHz**	**100 MHz**	**Worldwide**
5.725 GHz	**5.875 GHz**	**150 MHz**	**Worldwide**
24.000 GHz	24.250 GHz	250 MHz	Worldwide
61.000 GHz	61.500 GHz	500 MHz	
122.000 GHz	123.000 GHz	1 GHz	
244 GHz	246 GHz	2 GHz	

North American Channels

2.4 GHz Band: 14 5-MHz Channels. Only 12 in USA.
20 MHz Þ Only 3 non-overlapping channels

	Channel 5		Channel 9

	Channel 3	Channel 7

2400 | Channel 1 | | Channel 6 | | Channel 11 | 2483.5

2402 2412 2422 2432 2442 2452 2462 2472 2482

5 GHz Band: 12 non-overlapping channels

36	40	44	48	52	56	60	64

5150 5180 5200 5220 5240 5260 5280 5300 5320 5350

149	153	157	161

5725 5745 5765 5785 5805 5825

# IEEE 802.11 Physical Layers

- ❑ Issued in several stages
- ❑ First version in 1997: IEEE 802.11
  - ➢ Includes MAC layer and three physical layer specifications
  - ➢ Two in 2.4-GHz band and one infrared
  - ➢ All operating at 1 and 2 Mbps
  - ➢ No longer used
- ❑ Two additional amendments in 1999:
  - ➢ IEEE 802.11a-1999: 5-GHz band, 54 Mbps/20 MHz, **OFDM**
  - ➢ IEEE 802.11b-1999: 2.4 GHz band, 11 Mbps/22 MHz
- ❑ Fourth amendment:
  - ➢ IEEE 802.11g-2003 : 2.4 GHz band, 54 Mbps/20 MHz, **OFDM**

Hidden Node Problem
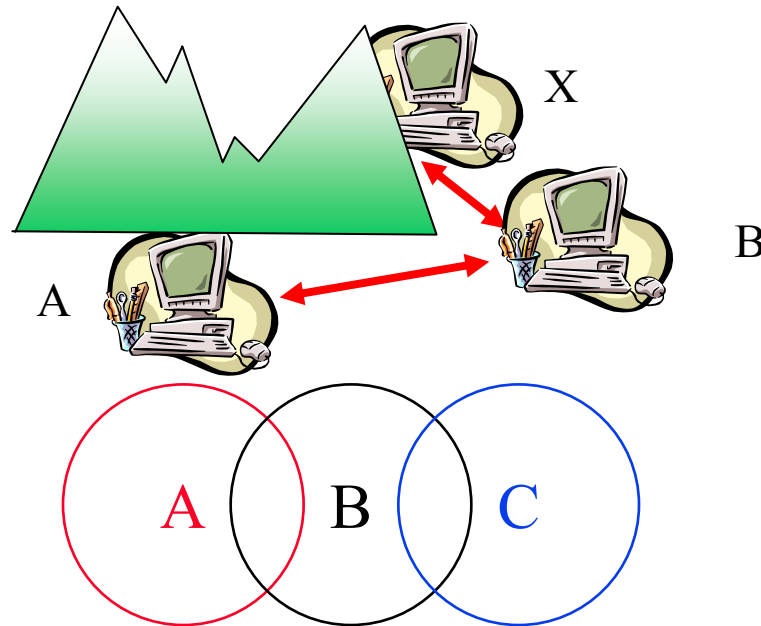
- ❑ A can hear B, B can hear C, but C cannot hear A.
- ❑ C may start transmitting while A is also transmitting
     A and C can't detect collision.
- ❑ CSMA/CD is not possible
     Þ Only the receiver can help avoid collisions

4-Way Handshake

Access Point

Mobile Node

Ready to send

Clear to send

Data

Ack
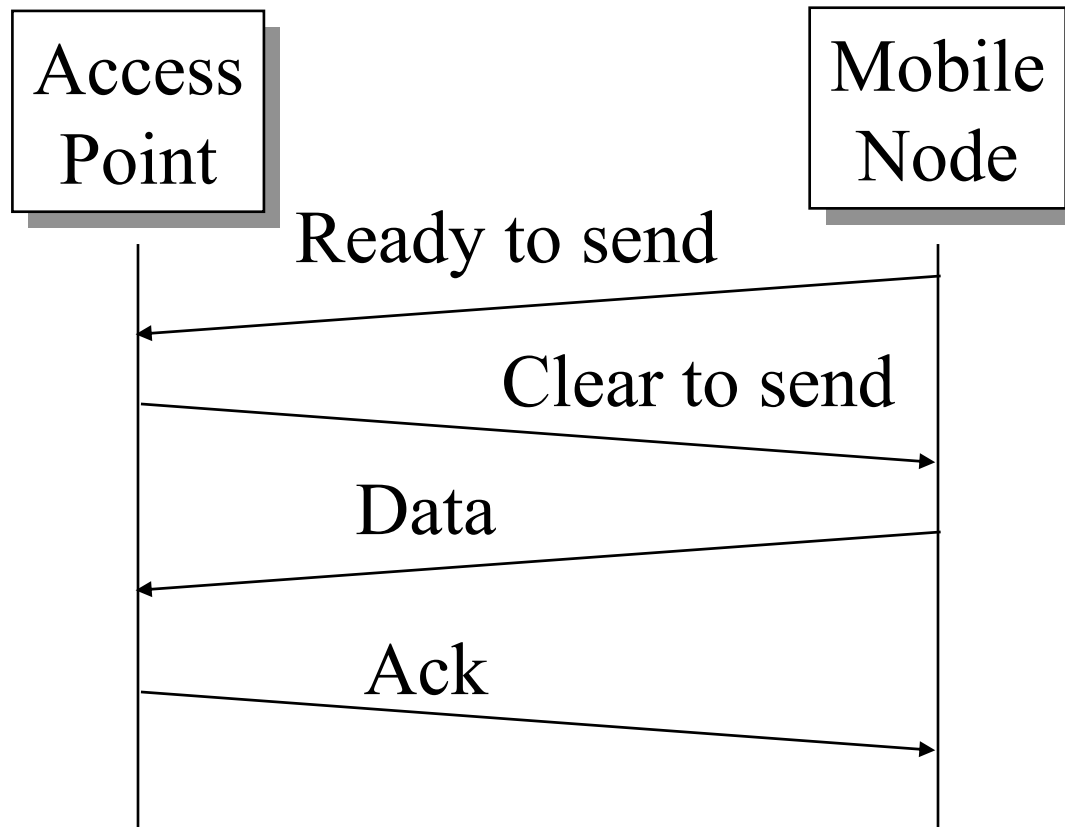
IEEE 802.11 MAC

❑ Carrier Sense Multiple Access with
  Collision Avoidance (**CSMA/CA**)

❑ Listen before you talk. If the medium is busy, the transmitter
  backs off for a random period.

❑ Avoids collision by sending a short message:
  Ready to send (**RTS**)
  RTS contains dest. address and <u>duration</u> of message.
  Tells everyone to backoff for the duration.

❑ Destination sends: Clear to send (**CTS**)
  Other stations set their network allocation vector (**NAV**) and
  wait for that duration

❑ Can not detect collision   Each packet is acked.

❑ MAC-level retransmission if not acked.

IEEE 802.11 Priorities
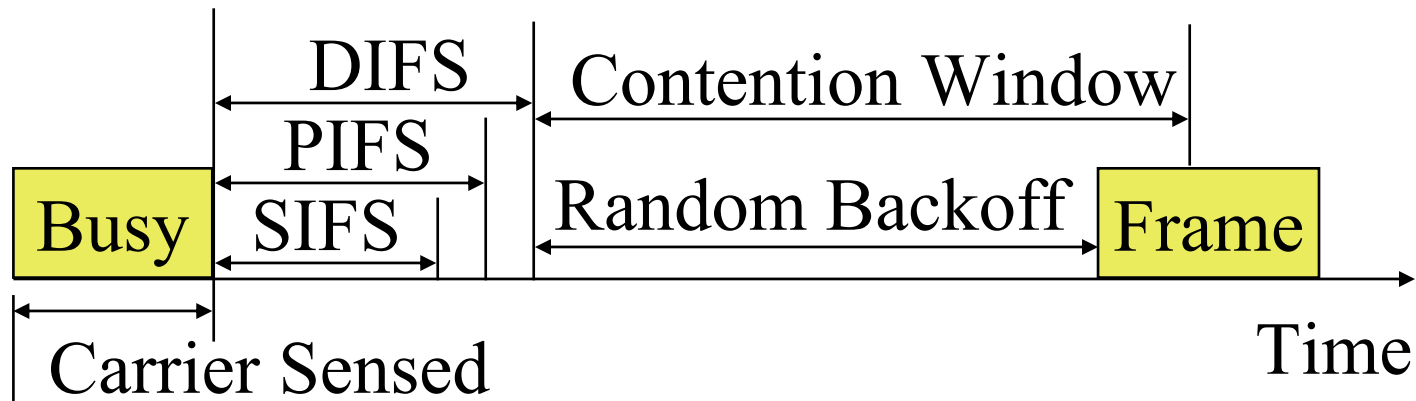
- Initial interframe space (**IFS**)

- Highest priority frames, e.g., Acks, use short IFS (**SIFS)**

- Medium priority time-critical frames use "Point Coordination Function IFS" (**PIFS**)

- Asynchronous data frames use "Distributed coordination function IFS" (**DIFS**)

Time Critical Services

Super Frame

Contention-Free Period

PCF Access

Contention Period

DCF Access
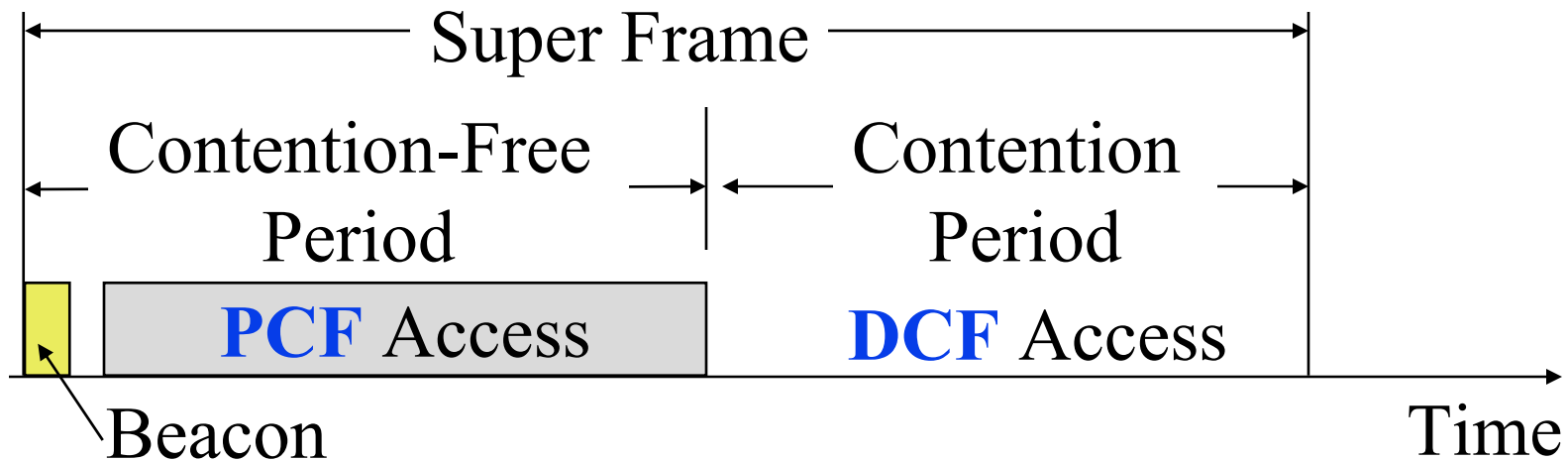
Beacon

Time

- ❑ Timer critical services use **Point Coordination Function**
- ❑ The point coordinator allows only one station to access
- ❑ Coordinator sends a beacon frame to all stations.
  Then uses a polling frame to allow a particular station to have contention-free access
- ❑ Contention Free Period (CFP) varies with the load.

IEEE 802.11 DCF Backoff

❑ MAC works with a single FIFO Queue

❑ Three variables:

➢ Contention Window (CW)

➢ Backoff count (BO)

➢ Network Allocation Vector (NAV)

❑ If a frame (RTS, CTS, Data, Ack) is heard, NAV is set to the duration in that frame. Stations sense the media after NAV expires.

❑ If the medium is idle for DIFS, and backoff (BO) is not already active, the station draws a random BO in [0, CW] and sets the backoff timer.

❑ If the medium becomes busy during backoff, the timer is stopped and a new NAV is set. After NAV, back off continues.

IEEE 802.11 DCF Backoff (Cont)

❑ Initially and after each successful transmission:

$$CW = CW_{min}$$

❑ After each unsuccessful attempt

$$CW = \min\{2CW + 1, CW_{max}\}$$

Example: CWmin=3, CWmax=127

3, 7, 15, 31, 63, 127, 127, 127, …

Typical Parameter Values

- For DS PHY: Slot time = 20 us, SIFS = 10 us, CWmin = 31, CWmax = 1023

- For FH PHY: Slot time = 50 us, SIFS = 28 us, CWmin = 15, CWmax = 1023

- 11a: Slot time = 9 us, SIFS= 16 us, CWmin= 15, CWmax=1023

- 11b: Slot time = 20 us, SIFS = 10 us, CWmin= 31, CWmax=1023

- 11g: Slot time = 20 us or 9 us, SIFS = 10 us, CWmin= 15 or 31, CWmax=1023

- PIFS = SIFS + 1 slot time

- DIFS = SIFS + 2 slot times

Virtual Carrier Sense

❑ Every frame has a "Duration ID" which indicates how long the medium will be busy.

➢ RTS has duration of RTS + SIF + CTS + SIF + Frame + SIF + Ack

➢ CTS has duration of CTS + SIF + Frame + SIF + Ack

➢ Frame has a duration of Frame + SIF + ACK

➢ ACK has a duration of ACK

❑ All stations keep a "**Network Allocation Vector (NAV)**" timer in which they record the duration of the each frame they hear.

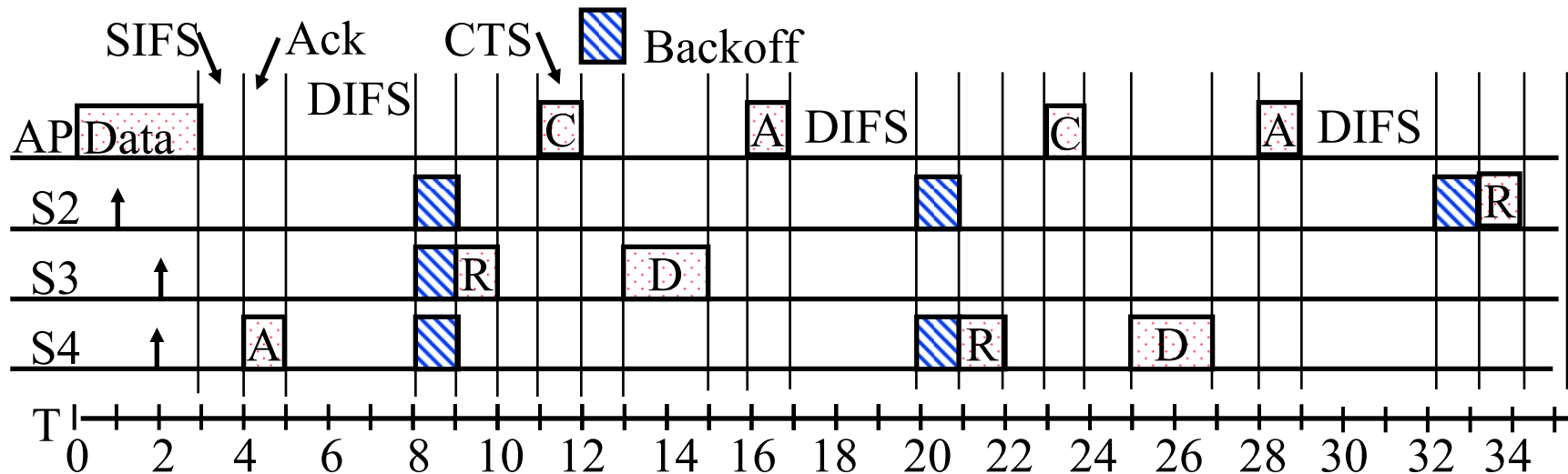❑ Stations do not need to sense the channel until NAV becomes zero.

DCF Example

- Example: Slot Time = 1, CWmin = 5, DIFS=3, PIFS=2, SIFS=1
- T=1 Station 2 wants to transmit but the media is busy
- T=2 Stations 3 and 4 want to transmit but the media is busy
- T=3 Station 1 finishes transmission.
- T=4 Station 1 receives ack for its transmission (SIFS=1)
  Stations 2, 3, 4 set their NAV to 1.
- T=5 Medium becomes free
- T=8 DIFS expires. Stations 2, 3, 4 draw backoff count between 0 and 5.
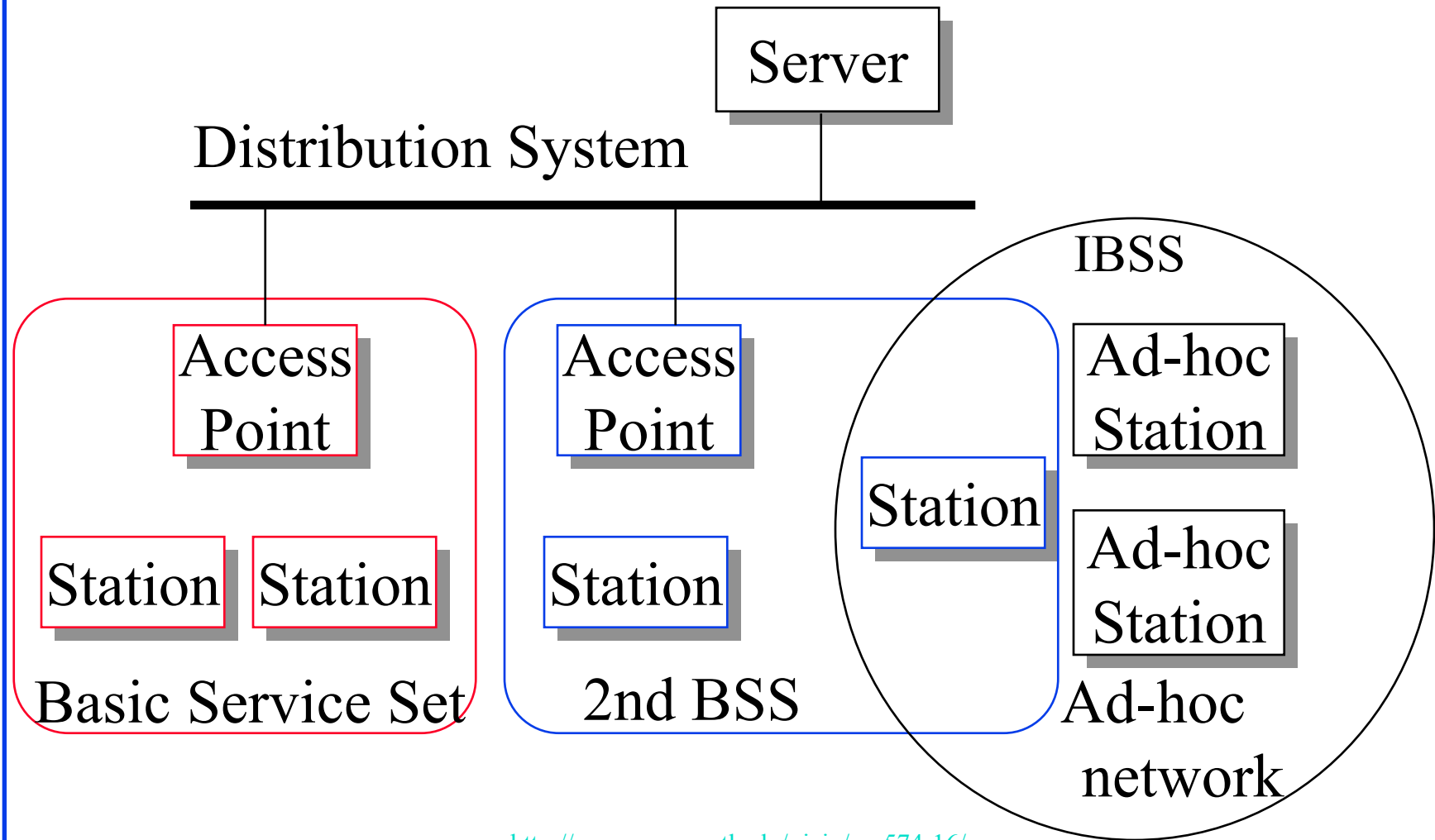 The counts are 3, 1, 2
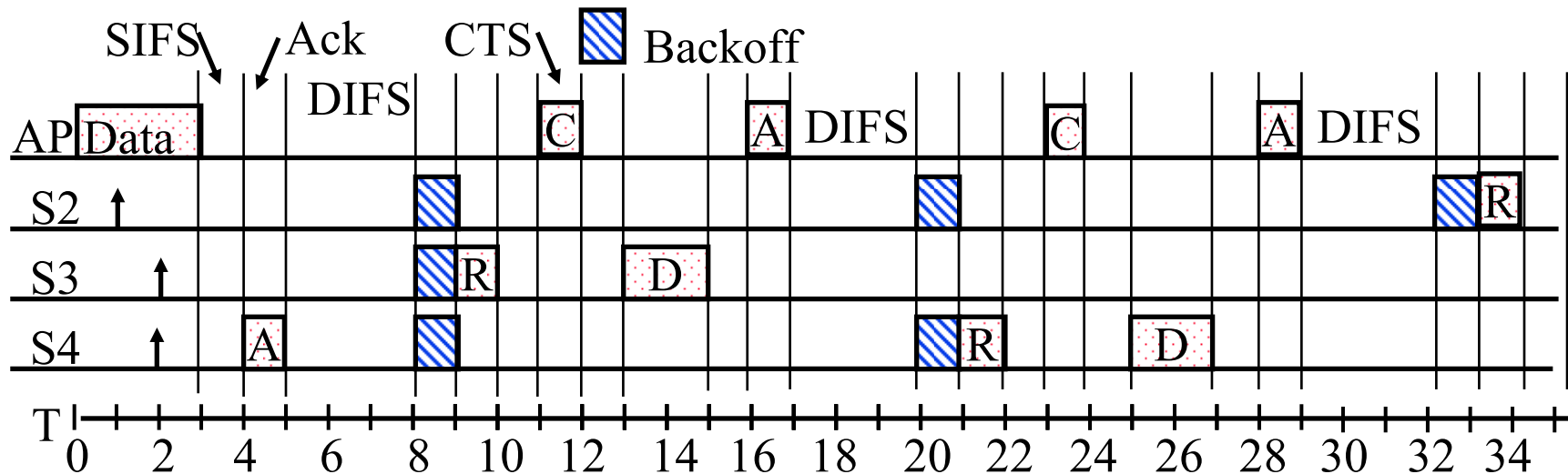
DCF Example (Cont)

- T=9 Station 3 starts transmitting. Announces a duration of 8 (RTS + SIFS + CTS + SIFS + DATA + SIFS + ACK). Station 2 and 4 pause backoff counter at 2 and 1 resp. and wait till T=17
- T=15 Station 3 finishes data transmission
- T=16 Station 3 receives Ack.
- T=17 Medium becomes free
- T=20 DIFS expires. Station 2 and 4 notice that there was no transmission for DIFS. Stations 2 and 4 start their backoff counter from 2 and 1, respectively.
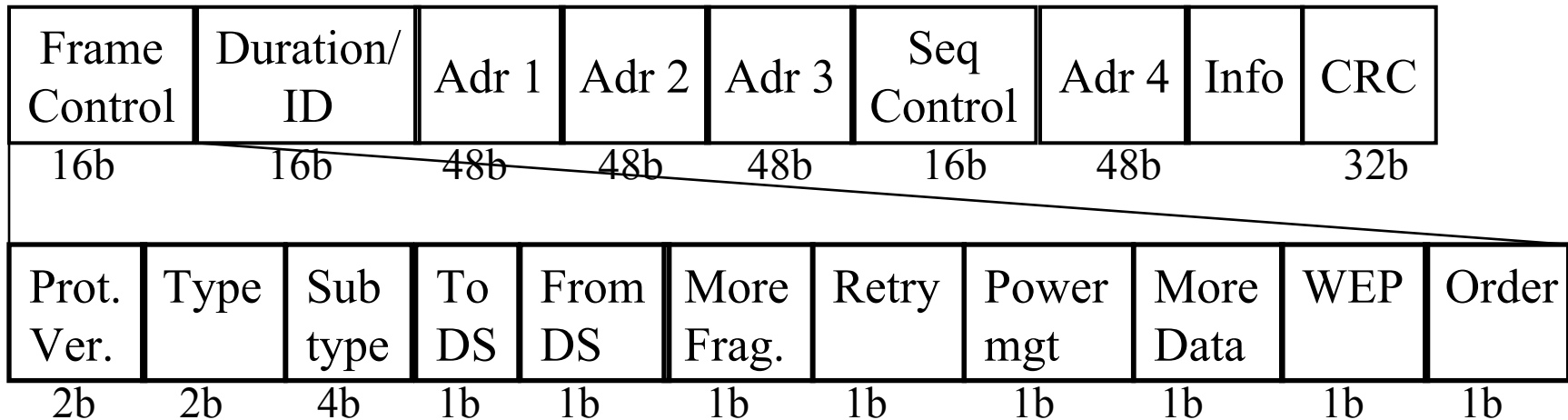- T=21 Station 4 starts transmitting RTS

IEEE 802.11 Architecture

Server

Distribution System

IBSS

Access Point

Ad-hoc Station

Access Point

Station

Station

Ad-hoc Station

Station

Station

Station

Basic Service Set

2nd BSS

Ad-hoc network

IEEE 802.11 Architecture (Cont)

- **Basic Service Area (BSA)** = Cell
- Each BSA may have several access points (APs)
- **Basic Service Set (BSS)** = Set of stations associated with one AP
- **Distribution System (DS)** - wired backbone
- **Extended Service Area (ESA)** = Multiple BSAs interconnected via a distribution system
- **Extended Service Set (ESS)** = Set of stations in an ESA
- **Independent Basic Service Set (IBSS)**: Set of computers in **ad-hoc mode**. May not be connected to wired backbone.
- Ad-hoc networks coexist and interoperate with infrastructure-based networks

Frame Format

Frame Control	Duration/ID	Adr 1	Adr 2	Adr 3	Seq Control	Adr 4	Info	CRC
16b	16b	48b	48b	48b	16b	48b		32b

Prot. Ver.	Type	Sub type	To DS	From DS	More Frag.	Retry	Power mgt	More Data	WEP	Order
2b	2b	4b	1b	1b	1b	1b	1b	1b	1b	1b

- ❑ Type: Control, management, or data
- ❑ Sub-Type: Association, disassociation, re-association, probe, authentication, de-authentication, CTS, RTS, Ack, …
- ❑ Retry/retransmission
- ❑ Going to Power Save mode
- ❑ More buffered data at AP for a station in power save mode
- ❑ Wireless Equivalent Privacy (Security) info in this frame
- ❑ Strict ordering

MAC Frame Fields

❑ **Duration/Connection ID**:

 ➢ If used as duration field, indicates time (in s) channel will be allocated for successful transmission of MAC frame. Includes time until the end of Ack

  ➢ In some control frames, contains association or connection identifier

❑ **Sequence Control**:

  ➢ 4-bit fragment number subfield

    ❑ For fragmentation and reassembly

  ➢ 12-bit sequence number

  ➢ Number frames between given transmitter and receiver

802.11 Frame Address Fields

❑ All stations filter on "Address 1"
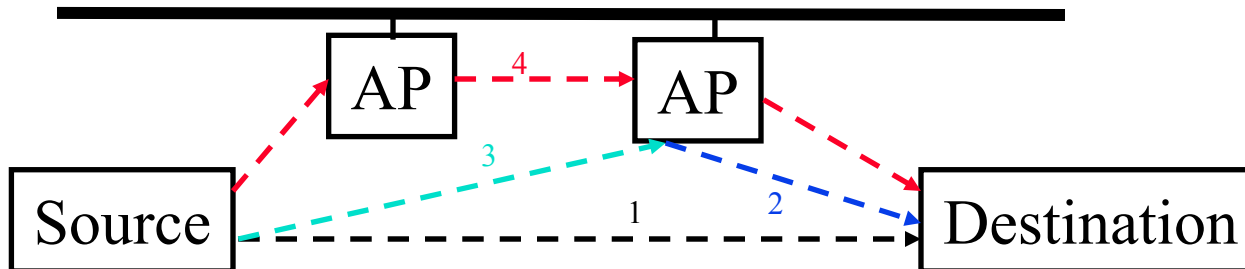
	To Distribution System	From Distribution System	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	Address 4
1	0	0	Destination Address	Source Address	BSS ID	-
2	0	1	Destination Address	BSS ID	Source Address	-
3	1	0	BSS ID	Source Address	Destination Address	-
4	1	1	Receiver Address	Transmitter Address	Destination Address	Source Address

802.11 Power Management
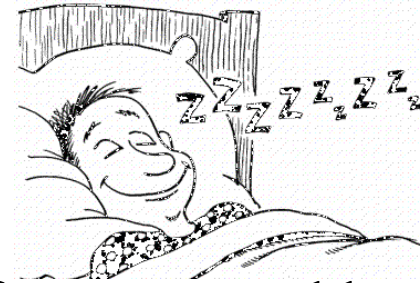
- Station tells the base station its mode: Power saving (PS) or active

- Mode changed by power mgmt bit in the frame control header.

- All packets destined to stations in PS mode are buffered

- AP broadcasts list of stations with buffered packets in its beacon frames: Traffic Indication Map (TIM)

- Subscriber Station (SS) sends a PS-Poll message to AP, which sends one frame. More bit in the header Þ more frames.

- With 802.11e unscheduled Automatic Power Save Delivery (APSD): SS transmits a data or null frame with power saving bit set to 0. AP transmits all buffered frames for SS.

- With Scheduled APSD mode:AP will transmit at pre-negotiated time schedule. No need for polling.

- Hybrid APSD mode: PS-poll for some. Scheduled for other categories

Summary
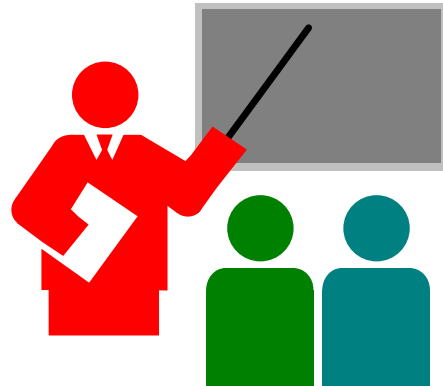
1. 802.11 uses Frequency hopping, Direct Sequence CDMA, OFDM

2. 802.11 PHYs: 802.11, 802.11a, 802.11b, 802.11g

3. Allows both: Ad-Hoc vs. Infrastructure-based

4. 802.11 supports single FIFO Q. Uses SIFS, PIFS, DIFS

Homework 5

❑ Two 802.11 stations get frames to transmit at time t=0. The 3rd station (AP) has just finished transmitting data for a long packet at t=0 to Station 1. The transmission parameters are: Slot time=1, SIFS=1, DIFS=3, CWmin=5, CWmax=7. Assume that the pseudo-random number generated are 1, 3. The data size for both stations is 3 slots. Draw a transmission diagram. At what time the two packets will get acknowledged assuming no new arrivals.

Reading List

❑ IEEE 802.11 Tutorial,
http://wow.eecs.berkeley.edu/ergen/docs/ieee.pdf

❑ A Technical Tutorial on the IEEE 802.11 Protocol,
http://www.sss-mag.com/pdf/802_11tut.pdf

Wikipedia Links

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wireless_LAN

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IEEE_802.11

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Channel_access_method

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Direct-sequence_spread_spectrum

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wi-Fi

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Distributed_Coordination_Function

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrier_sense_multiple_access

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiple_Access_with_Collision_Avoidance_for_Wireless

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beacon_frame

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IEEE_802.11

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IEEE_802.11_(legacy_mode)

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IEEE_802.11_RTS/CTS

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_WLAN_channels

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Point_Coordination_Function

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service_set_(802.11_network)

❑ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wi-Fi_Alliance

Acronyms

- Ack   Acknowledgement
- AP   Access Point
- APSD   Automatic Power Save Delivery
- BO   Backoff
- BSA   Basic Service Area
- BSS   Basic Service Set
- BSSID   Basic Service Set Identifier
- CA   Collision Avoidance
- CD   Collision Detection
- CDMA   Code Division Multiple Access
- CFP   Contention Free Period
- CRC   Cyclic Redundancy Check
- CSMA   Carrier Sense Multiple Access
- CTS   Clear to Send
- CW   Congestion Window
- CWmax   Maximum Congestion Window

Acronyms (Cont)

- CWmin   Minimum Congestion Window
- DA   Destination Address
- DCF   Distributed Coordination Function
- DIFS   DCF Inter-frame Spacing
- DS   Direct Sequence
- ESA   Extended Service Area
- ESS   Extended Service Set
- FH   Frequency Hopping
- FIFO   First In First Out
- GHz   Giga Hertz
- IBSS   Independent Basic Service Set
- ID   Identifier
- IEEE   Institution of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
- IFS   Inter-frame spacing
- ISM   Instrumentation, Scientific and Medical
- LAN   Local Area Network

Acronyms (Cont)

- MAC   Media Access Control
- MHz   Mega Hertz
- MIMO   Multiple Input Multiple Output
- NAV   Network Allocation Vector
- OFDM   Orthogonal Frequency Division Multiplexing
- PCF   Point Coordination Function
- PHY   Physical Layer
- PIFS   PCF inter-frame spacing
- PS   Power saving
- QoS   Quality of Service
- RA   Receiver Address
- RTS   Ready to Send
- SA   Source Address
- SIFS   Short Inter-frame Spacing

Acronyms (Cont)

- ❑ SS   Subscriber Station
- ❑ TA   Transmitter's Address
- ❑ TIM   Traffic Indication Map
- ❑ WiFi   Wireless Fidelity
- ❑ WLAN   Wireless Local Area Network

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Related Modules

Introduction to 5G,
http://www.cse.wustl.edu/~jain/cse574-16/j_195g.htm

Low Power WAN Protocols for IoT,
http://www.cse.wustl.edu/~jain/cse574-16/j_14ahl.htm

Introduction to Vehicular Wireless Networks,
http://www.cse.wustl.edu/~jain/cse574-16/j_08vwn.htm

Internet of Things,
http://www.cse.wustl.edu/~jain/cse574-16/j_10iot.htm

Audio/Video Recordings and Podcasts of
Professor Raj Jain's Lectures,
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN4-5wzNP9-ruOzQMs-8NUw