COSC755 Project Instructions*

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Project Basics

Students have two options for the course project, a technical project (Section 1) or a research paper (Section 2). Students must select one of the two options. For both options, students must submit a proposal by January 29th before class. Please submit your project proposals as PDF documents, emailed to me. More specific instructions for the project proposals are described below in each section.

IMPORTANT: If your project might involve conducting research on human subjects, talk to me first.

Universities, including Georgetown University, impose strict ethical and legal guidelines for conducting human subject research, and rightfully so.

1 Technical Project Option

Students may participate in a novel research project related to surveillance or censorship. Projects that merely implement existing protocols or that attempt to solve problems that have existing, well-understood, and widely-accepted solutions will not be accepted. The topic and scope of the project must be approved by the instructor, and the project itself will be graded based on its novelty, student effort, technical depth and correctness, and the clarity of the project presentation. The output of the project should be at least a workshop-length paper that addresses a novel computer security research topic.

With the instructor’s permission, students may work in groups, so long as the scope of the project is proportional to the size of the group. All students in a group will receive the same grade.

Instructions

Your project proposal should briefly describe your project, keeping in mind that you have approximately two months to complete the work. You should do a preliminary literature search to ensure that your project is indeed novel. Google Scholar is your friend. Try searching for various keywords. If you find something that looks potentially relevant, also see what papers it cites and what papers cited it.

In terms of content, your project should relate to censorship and/or surveillance.

Extensions of prior work — that is, advancements over existing findings — are perfectly acceptable, but your project must make a novel contribution.

More concretely, your project proposal should include:

- a brief overview of your project
- what is/are the main research contribution(s)?
- what is your experimental methodology? (if any; theoretical contributions are acceptable)
- what are the pertinent metrics? how will you measure your results?
- what would be a positive finding?

*Last updated January 12, 2014.
• what resources will you need?
• a list of project milestones, with anticipated dates of completion for each

2 Research Paper Option

Students may alternatively write a thesis paper on a subject relating to surveillance or censorship. The topic and scope of the paper must be approved by the instructor. The paper should clearly identify a thesis and offer substantial, evidence-based arguments that support that thesis. The paper itself will be graded based on its novelty, clarity and organization, thoroughness, and how well the cited evidence supports the thesis.

The paper should be 15-25 pages (including references), double spaced, with one-inch margins and a 12-point font.

Instructions

Your paper proposal should briefly describe your thesis, keeping in mind that you have approximately two months to complete the work. You should do a preliminary literature search to ensure that your thesis is indeed novel. Google Scholar is your friend. Try searching for various keywords. If you find something that looks potentially relevant, also see what papers it cites and what papers cited it.

In terms of content, your thesis should relate to censorship and/or surveillance.

More concretely, your paper proposal should include:

• a brief overview of the paper
• what is the main thesis statement? or, what question will the paper address?
• what are the pertinent source documents?
• what resources will you need?
• a list of paper milestones, with anticipated dates of completion for each