

Out Brief from the Inaugural Cybersecurity&Privacy@GW Research and Education Day

December 13, 2022

We believe that ...

GW is primed to be a national and regional leader in cybersecurity and privacy due to its diverse and distinctive programs spanning multiple schools and colleges and its unique location in the nation's capital that provides access to and partnerships with government, technology firms, and defense industries.

And, we believe that ...

Centralized coordination from GW with strong incentives for collaboration in both education and research across schools, programs, and departments will provide an input framework to launch Cyber@GW into a national and regional powerhouse that can attract research funding, corporate and government partnerships, new faculty, and a broad cohort of students that are interested in the distinctive and diverse cybersecurity and privacy programs available here at GW.

In the rest of this document we memorialize the inaugural event and describe the group discussion regarding the vision for and next steps to achieve Cyber@GW.

Summary of the Event

The inaugural **Cybersecurity & Privacy @GW Research and Education Day** (gw-cyber-day.seas.gwu.edu) event was held on Dec 13, 2022. The goal of the event was to bring together a pan-GW community, who are often siloed and distant from each other, to discuss the various cybersecurity and privacy efforts currently ongoing throughout the university. The inaugural event was organized by the Cyber Security and Privacy Research Institute (CSPRI) director Dr. Costis Toregas and faculty in the school of engineering, but the hope is that future events would be hosted and executed by other schools throughout GW. In attendance for the inaugural event were over 35 participants from the student body, faculty, and GW administration, including Dr. Pamela Norris the vice provost of research, Geneva Henry the vice provost for IT, and Michael

Glatzer the vice provost for budget and finance. Four GW schools were represented: SEAS, Elliot, Law, and CPS.

John Lach, dean of SEAS, provided the opening remarks for the day, where he also read comments from Pamela Norris (who was unfortunately out sick). He encouraged the group to think big and to identify the connections between the cybersecurity programs currently operating at GW, and he and Dr. Norris both were excited to see what vision could be developed for identifying a “GW Cyber” brand going forward that would be unique to GW.

The rest of the day included “lightning” research talks from nine faculty that covered the breadth of research being conducted at GW, as well as a poster session with eleven student presenters. It was clear that there is a wide-range of cyber work at GW, and that there are many opportunities for “cross pollination” between the many researchers at the varied schools. There was also a lively panel on the educational efforts and degree programs currently ongoing at GW focused on identifying innovations to diversify our cybersecurity and privacy curriculum, from law, to engineering, to professional studies, to international affairs, and beyond. We recognize that there are many overlapping courses in our programs, but this also provides opportunities for collaborations to make more cross disciplinary courses available to the broader GW community.

We rounded out the day with a town hall where participants spent significant time discussing the obstacles and impediments that limit the vision for creating a true, unified GW Cybersecurity and Privacy brand. This included lack of centralization that makes it difficult to identify resources; access to programs in other schools when enrollment priorities are not set properly (e.g., for class registration); lack of incentives to build new collaborations and joint programs (e.g., will faculty get credit for this work in their home department and school?); the need for Deans and other leaders to provide “cover” and “buy-in” such that this work can be done in a positive and encouraging environment.

The consensus was that we need a deliberate process for creating and codifying the vision for the future of cybersecurity and privacy at GW at all levels, including faculty, administration, and students. The rest of this document provides some direction on that vision and some actions that can be taken to get there.

Our Preliminary Vision

As part of the event, as a group, we developed the following vision for cyber security and privacy at GW (so called “Cyber@GW”):

- Cyber@GW should empower interdisciplinary and cross-school research collaborations that include processes for funding, recognition, and incentivization of these efforts.

- Cyber@GW should provide resources to discover and the capacity to support the plethora of degree and certificate programs, where courses and programs across schools are made available and clearly accessible by students, faculty, administrators, and external partners.
- Cyber@GW should project a robust and distinctive brand that recognizes the diversity but also the unity of the cybersecurity and privacy efforts at the university.
- Cyber@GW should be marketed cohesively with robust outreach to industry, government partners, peer universities, and potential students and faculty who might be attracted to this brand.
- Cyber@GW should support continued efforts to bring the broader GW community together, through programming, events, and outreach to students, faculty, and administration.

Proposed Next Steps

We believe that the vision outlined above requires continued effort over multiple years, but we believe the following, more immediate next steps can help us achieve such a trajectory for Cyber@GW as we enter 2023.

- Distribute this document and other future planning and action resources to individuals who were unable to join the inaugural event to broaden the tent of participation in this new collaborative effort.
- Create a list-serve and other communication mechanisms to maintain communication and ease collaboration between individuals who attended or are interested in the event's outcomes.
- Support a central website under a central banner and branding that can highlight cybersecurity resources including:
 - courses and degree programs,
 - faculty and researchers,
 - scholarships, and
 - research and career opportunities
 that are available at GW. The current CSPRI website (cspri.seas.gwu.edu) can be expanded to play that role.
- Establish GW communication and marketing connections to highlight and promote these efforts, such as propagating this new brand and promoting showcases and networking opportunities (e.g., conferences, workshops, and other events) to the broader community.

- Organize a regular cybersecurity and privacy event building on the inaugural December 13, 2022 experience and have that event rotate to other schools to highlight efforts across the university.
- Conduct comparisons with peer institutions that have different structures around their cybersecurity and privacy efforts to learn from best practices and create strategies to adopt those that can improve GW's approach.
- Consider establishing an exploratory committee that includes internal and external partners to help advise and implement this vision.
- Consider creating an internal, university-wide committee, rather than at the school level, to help coordinate the Cyber@GW effort that has input from the existing industry and national advisory councils that already exist within each school.
- Create smaller working groups and engagements based on the outreach we've accomplished so far.
- Update CSPRI organization structure and mission as a university-chartered institute on cybersecurity and privacy to identify how it can assist and be a central point of contact across the university for these efforts.

Participants at the Event and Contributors to this Vision

Pamela Norris, OVPR
 Michael Glatzer, Vice Provost Finance
 John Lach, SEAS Dean
 Geneva Henry, Vice Provost for IT
 Brian Ensor, GW-IT
 Daniel J. Solove, GW Law
 Susan Aaronson, Elliot
 Scott White, CPS
 Connie Uthoff, CPS
 Adam J. Aviv, CS, SEAS

Guru Venkataramani, SEAS, ECE
 Arkady Yerukhimovich, SEAS, CS
 Timothy Wood, SEAS, CS
 Howie Huang, SEAS, ECE
 Costis Toregas, SEAS, CSPRI
 Huriyet Ok, SEAS, CS
 Neil Wasserman, SEAS, CS
 Sibin Mohan, SEAS, CS

Additionally, 15 undergraduate, graduate students from SEAS, Trachtenberg, Elliot