

# Lessons Learned Recruiting Cybersecurity Students for Human Factors Research

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## Introduction

- Many cybersecurity attacks are preventable through preparation or response by individual consumer users.
- Users need to be empowered to protect themselves online, and behaviors that decrease risk are called cyber hygiene.
- Understanding cyber hygiene is key for knowing how to increase cyber hygiene practices, which can limit the impact of digital threats.
- We seek to understand if differences exist among participants' of differing majors, specifically how Computer Science (CS) and Computer Engineering (CE) students compare to other declared majors.
- Because most of our participant pool has come from Psychology introduction courses, recruitment of CS and CE majors has been our main goal.
- This study is an adaptation of Schuster et al. (2009) to the cybersecurity domain.

## Methods

- To recruit Computer Science and Computer Engineering participants, we have been recruiting technical cybersecurity majors with faculty help, in addition to using Sona Systems to reach different majors.
- This effort has taken several semesters, and we've encountered both successes and setbacks.

## Methods

We provide recommendations for recruiting participants from specific majors on campus.



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## Issues

1. Lack of compensation for CS and CE students (Psych 101 students acquire Sona credit participation, this is not the case for CS/students).
2. In-person recruitment strategy was halted due to COVID restrictions - many classes pivoted it from in-person to online, then from online to a hybrid format.
3. Response rates from our email campaign for recruitment (to professors) were not as high as expected.

## Lessons Learned

1. Post fliers on campus to increase awareness.
2. Contact student organizations.
3. Reach out through social media. (Discord or LinkedIn).
4. Develop relationships with CS/CE faculty early in the semester.
5. Provide compensation for participation.

## References

Schuster, D., Harper-Sciarini, M., Curtis, M., Jentsch, F., & Swanson, R. (2009). The relationship between conceptual understanding and performance. Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Annual Meeting. Santa Monica, CA: Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. doi:10.1177/154193120905302605

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Poster layout adapted from Morrison (2019).

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