

Reflection paper on: 2018 COINS PhD Student Seminar + NISK 2018

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Ambika Shrestha Chitrakar

On 2018, COINS PhD seminar was held in Longyearbyen (Svalbard) on 18th of September, which was followed by the NISK conference. COINS PhD seminar is for COINS PhD students who do research in the field of Information Security. This is an event where we share our experience and get to know each other. COINS PhD seminar is beneficial in many ways. Some students get feedback by presenting their research work. Soon to be ex-students share their experience about their PhD life, difficulties they faced, and how they handled the problems. Ex-students share their experience during and after their PhD, which can be very useful for the students to think in advance from their experience. Apart from these important lessons, the event is usually organized in a beautiful city of Norway. It is also a good opportunity to explore Norway and its beauty.

This year's PhD seminar was very interesting. Chris Carr, Andrii, and Bo Sun presented their experience and lessons learned from doing PhD. They presented in different style but they had almost the same message. They emphasized on managing our time, not to get distracted, importance of balancing work and personal life, not to get frustrated and try to solve the problem instead (there is always light at the end of tunnel). These types of advice are very important to the PhD Students, who at some point of their PhD face problems

There were 6 PhD students, who presented their research work. These students are working on different area under information security. It was interesting to learn about their research work. The topic varied from fake face detection, risk analysis to language-based mechanisms for GDPR compliance.

Berglind and Bikash talked about the life after the PhD. Berglind talked about how to find jobs after PhD and Bikash talked about his journey from PhD to startup. They showed different possibilities after our PhD and inspired us to be positive for the future.

After COINS PhD seminar, I mostly attended the presentations from the NISK conference. The first keynote I attended was from Professor Barbara Wasson and she talked about learning analytics and its role in education. It was interesting to know how they collect data and use it to help the students that are not performing well based on their analytics. One of the interesting presentations from NISK conference include detecting fake profiles in social media, where the author talked about controlling the crime by detecting the fake profiles. Research on this topic is very important since criminals target many young people by using fake profiles in social media. The author proposed to track the user behavior on chat messages and map it to the profile to identify if the user is genuine or not. Their current work include identifying the gender based on the rhythm of typing the chat messages. In my opinion, the rhythm of typing is not enough to identify the gender of a person in the chat room. Authors should consider Natural Language Processing (NLP) to find the sentiments and semantics of the chat, because the way a girl writes differently than a boy, in general.

Another interesting presentation was about combining the threat models with security economics. The purpose of quantifying the risk with security economics is to help decision makers in making security related decisions. Quantifying risk is a very difficult task and different experts have their own preferences to quantify the risk. I think quantifying risk based on the security economics is a good way to do it.

The next day, there were presentations related to ransomwares, evaluation of search engines for security, source code patterns of Cross Site Scripting in PHP open source projects etc. It was interesting to listen how people are trying to solve the problem of security through their research.

Apart from attending the seminar and conference, I also took out some time for myself. I managed to go for dog sledging before the conference started. We went to Svalbard tour with the team and had lovely camp-side dinner. I was glad to meet many known faces and to make new friends. I had a wonderful time in Svalbard. I would like to visit it again in winter.