

Final Project Proposal

eSoc 488: Information Privacy with Applications

Due: 10 October 2017

50% of final project grade

The final project is a chance to be think imaginatively about technological solutions to privacy problems.¹ At this stage, you are to write a proposal for the project. The audience for your proposal is sophisticated in the use of technology, but has no background in issues surrounding the technologies of privacy in particular. Readers might include engineers from other disciplines, technology-focused lawyers, experts in technology issues in public policy, or hackers looking for a new project. Try to think about these groups as you write and revise.

The proposal should answer each of the following questions:

- What is the privacy harm that you seek to mitigate, or what is the privacy benefit you seek to enhance? How does it compare with a few other, related privacy harms/benefits?
- Why is the harm/benefit that you have chosen especially important to do now? How does your project interact with broader themes in the intellectual history of privacy?
- How would your project fit in the legal landscape in the US?
- What are the strongest arguments against your chosen technology, and what is your response to them?
- What is the best analogy between your chosen project and an older, non-computational privacy technology? Describe where the analogy holds up, and where it breaks down.

You will be graded both on writing mechanics and on the quality of your answers to each of the above questions. ‘Writing mechanics’ includes organization, spelling and grammar, citations, brevity, and tone appropriate to your audience. ‘Quality’ includes comprehensiveness of cited research, quality of cited research, clarity of explanation (especially of the technologies involved),² persuasiveness of argument, and creativity of thought.

¹To find a novel idea, you may wish to compile a list of privacy problems connected to something or someone you care about first. Analyze the problems on your list to try to identify parts that may be addressed by a technology.

²The proposal should focus on the details of the technology only insofar as they might reasonably be argued to establish that your project could be completed by the end of the semester. To that end, you should research existing packages or libraries that are available, as well as what related projects are already implemented (you might look to github for this, and talk to me).