



Colloquium



Date and time: Friday, Nov. 6, 2015, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Venue: BB141

Title: **Inferring Unknown and Inconsistent Privacy Control Policies in a Social Networking System**

Speaker: **AMIR MASOUMZADEH**, Dept. of Computer Sc.,
University at Albany, State University of New York (SUNY)

Abstract: Privacy settings in social networking systems (SNSs) such as Facebook allow users to control sharing of certain information belonging to them with other users. However, due to various system design considerations and usability restrictions such settings are never complete, i.e., not all the applicable policies to user information are configurable. In fact, access to user information is governed by the collection of the privacy settings and a set of fixed policies specified by the SNS. We observe that major SNSs such as Facebook are less than transparent about such fixed policies; although some might be communicated to users via help pages and nudges, they tend to be incomplete and inaccurate.

In this talk, we present an approach to infer the enforced privacy control policies by an SNS, and consequently, identify unknown or inconsistently-enforced policies. Our approach can help end users understand better the implicit policies imposed by an SNS, and can be leveraged by an SNS operator to improve the transparency and consistency of its system.

Speaker's brief bio: Amir Masoumzadeh is an Assistant Professor in the Computer Science Department at SUNY – Albany. He received his PhD in Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh and BS/MS in Computer Science/Engineering. Amir is broadly interested in information security, privacy, and trust in modern information systems. His research is primarily focused on access control policy models and privacy-preserving data sharing approaches in application domains such as social networking systems and location based services.