



**Homeland
Security**

To: Director Ellery Sanders, National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center; Director Wayne Gilbert, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency; Julian Rhodes; Amos Bronstein; Benjamin Lang
From: Office of the Secretary of Homeland Security; Olivia Worley
Date: January 1, 2020
Revised: March 12, 2020
Re: Project 220

Executive Summary

The purpose of this memo is to outline the Department of Homeland Security's expectations for Project 220, also known as Project Ohio. The project was established in December 2019 by the Cybersecurity Division of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to assess the piracy capabilities of the hacktivist and puzzle-trading organization known as the "Crypto-Collegium." The primary component of this project involves the outsourcing of intercepted puzzles to Oberlin College students, through a second module class called CODE 220.

Project Goals

- Develop working knowledge of the Crypto-Collegium.
- Infiltrate the recruitment network.
- Offer academic credit to students in need of a second module course.

Background

The Crypto-Collegium is an undercover hacktivist organization responsible for the October 2019 server breaches in the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the "fluffy unicorn challenge" of 2013. The organization is believed to communicate through codes and ciphers sent to "recruits" through Twitch streams and online forums. In November 2019, following the breaches in the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the National Security Agency (NSA) intercepted a document claiming the organization broke RSA.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) investigated this claim but was not able to track down individual Crypto-Collegium members. In December 2019 the FBI turned the investigation over to the Department of Homeland Security and recommended direct infiltration of the organization's recruitment network. The Department of Homeland Security then outsourced



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the infiltration to decryption consultants in Northeastern Ohio. These consultants recommended using local students at Oberlin College as a cover for Crypto-Collegium recruits. In January 2020, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Security Agency jointly concluded that the hacking and decryption abilities of the organization present a real-time risk to national security. At this time, the Department of Homeland Security formerly assembled an infiltration team to work with Oberlin College. The goal behind this team is to train students to solve recruitment puzzles and eventually begin the infiltration of the organization.

Project Components

- A second module class held over Google Classroom and YouTube live, known as "Archaeological Cryptography."
- Puzzle sets made from intercepted puzzles.
- Three "professors" recommended by decryption consultants.
- One "teaching assistant" from the Department of Homeland Security.

Methodology

The main component of this project is the class itself. The class will be held over Google Classroom and YouTube Live and consist of current Oberlin College students and puzzle-enthusiasts. The class will be taught in three sections a week by decryption consultants Julian Rhodes, Amos Bronstein, and Benjamin Lang. Department of Homeland Security policy officer Olivia Worley will pose as the class "TA" in order to supervise the project.

Puzzle sets will relate to material from intercepted Crypto-Collegium puzzles. The goal with this is to develop a model for infiltration, without involving the students directly in the recruitment network. Many Oberlin College students identify as anarchists. This makes Oberlin the ideal school for the Crypto-Collegium to draw potential recruits, and thus the perfect cover for infiltration.

At the conclusion of the project, the highest-ranked students will solve actual recruitment puzzles for the Crypto-Collegium. At this time Olivia Worley will brief these students on the real intent behind the class. The students will then share any and all information that comes up during recruitment, including the names of Crypto-Collegium members and where they are based. At this point the project will be turned back over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.



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Funding

The Department of Homeland Security has agreed to pay the equivalent of Oberlin annual tuition for every student involved in this project. The breakdown of these funds are as follows:

- 55% contract fees, paid to Oberlin College.
- 45% compensation, paid to the four project managers:
 - 15% to Olivia Worley
 - 10% to Julian Rhodes
 - 10% to Amos Bronstein
 - 10% to Benjamin Lang

Potential Limitations

This is not a big operation, and therefore there is not as much oversight and institutional support as with larger operations. In addition, online learning presents unique technical and social challenges. Project managers should maintain communication with each other and with students to ensure that everything is running smoothly.

Finally, though the Federal Bureau of Investigation manages the infiltration into the Crypto-Collegium, their involvement in the project itself is a liability to both the students and the course. They should only be contacted as a last resort.

Final Notes and Permissions

The decryption consultants are not employed directly by the United States government. Olivia Worley is therefore the sole supervisor of this project and the only point of contact within the Department of Homeland Security.

Prepared by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Olivia Worley".

Olivia Worley
Policy Officer for the Department of Homeland Security