



TO: Dr. Malesh, CEO, VAMCO

FROM: Aykhan Pashayev

DATE: 3/7/25

SUBJECT: Proposal to investigate student leadership engagement challenges in PantherSec

Purpose Statement

This proposal seeks approval to investigate the student leadership engagement challenges in PantherSec cybersecurity club and writing recommendation report in order to resolve the issue, improve student participation and club's sustainability.

Summary

This proposal requests approval from Dr. Malesh the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the VAMCO to investigate more deeply the student leadership participation issues in PantherSec cybersecurity club.

The PantherSec club established recently, facing challenges with student leaders like vice president, event planner, treasurer being unresponsive to their responsibilities. This lack of leadership engagement prevents club to do basic operations like making meetings, planning future events, workshops or training sessions. By making interviews with club's advisor, president and other club members, I aim to write a detailed recommendation report which will resolve the matter.

As cybersecurity major student and involvement with this cybersecurity club qualifies me for this particular task. Resolving this problem will help PantherSec's continues operations and future growth.

Introduction

PantherSec cybersecurity club established at the end of Fall 2024 semester, aiming assist students with cybersecurity certifications, hands-on trainings, cyber competitions, career development like resume building and networking opportunities for students who interested in cybersecurity.

However, after speaking over phone call on 2/14/2025 with club advisor Dr. Akkaya, he mentioned that club currently facing with huge problem, which is aside from president, other key positions holders in club such as vice president, event planner, treasurer are not fulfilling their responsibilities. Club's advisor Dr. Akkaya can't even reach the position holders via e-mail or phone.



I also contacted to PantherSec's president Francesco via discord on 3/9/2025 discussed the matter. Club president, Francesco also confirmed that, he tried to reach out the position holders via different communication platforms, but he did not get any response.

This type of lack of engagement can cause harm on club's future growth. Additionally, replacing these role holders officially is not possible since the documentation process already submitted. Lack of leadership engagement is not allowing the club to do simple operations like meeting, planning events, workshops or even training sessions. These can slow down club's growth and make questions in current club member's head. Current members can lose interest on the club.

Proposed task

To analyze this matter, I propose following tasks:

1. Having additional interviews with PantherSec club's advisor Dr. Akkaya and President Francesco analyze cause of this lack of engagement.
2. Investigating leadership methodologies and success strategies for cybersecurity clubs. "A good cybersecurity club has loads of opportunities with easy on-ramps that allow new students to immediately begin to contribute" Bestenheider (2020). This quote means that successful cybersecurity club should have ways for new students to contribute to club quickly rather than joining, being lost and don't know how to contribute.
3. Investigating strategies for retain new skilled students can contribute to the PantherSec. "A student club is only as strong as its members" Desthuis-Francis (2021). This quote means that student club success is coming from quality of its members. No matter how great is the club's ideas or goals without active and engaged members club cannot be strong enough.
4. Involving in club's first meeting, observing and bringing matter to discussion with other club members who will join to the meeting.

These activities will support the creation of the recommendation report which will address resolving the student leadership engagement challenges in PantherSec cybersecurity club. Allow club to operate the meetings, training sessions and workshops and recruit more member from the university.

Schedule for completion of the tasks

- March (17-24) – Attending the PantherSec first official meeting. Observing the club's meeting and conducting interviews with club's advisor, president and additionally, other regular club members.
- March (24-31) – Analysis of the information collected from interviews and multiple sources.
- April (1-8) – Creating draft recommendation report for peer review.



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- April (9-18) – Peer review, considering critics from peers, editing the report.
 - April (19-26) – Doing the final review for the report and finally, submission of the recommendation report.

Statement of Qualifications

As junior cybersecurity major student at Florida International University and active member of PantherSec cybersecurity club, I have easy access to club's executive members like club's advisor and president. Also, my academic and technical background allows me to understand the structure, purpose of the club and the challenges it faces. The technical writing skills, I gained from my course work called Professional and Technical Writing will allow me analysis of the research gained and write strong recommendation report which resolve PantherSec's current student leadership engagement issue.



Appendix A: Timetable

| <i>Task</i> | <i>Time period</i> |
|---|--------------------|
| Collecting information by contacting club executives and other members. | March (17-24) |
| Analysis of the information collected. | March (24-31) |
| Writing the draft for recommendation report. | April (1-8) |
| Peer review, considering critics from peers and editing the report. | April (9-18) |
| Final submission of the recommendation report. | April (19-26) |



Appendix B: References

1. Bryant, L. A., & Clement, D. (2015). *Coping Strategies of Female Peer Leaders Participating in College Club Sports*. *Recreational Sports Journal*, 39(2), 16–26.
2. Bestenheider, K. (2020, February 21). *Cybersecurity club survival guide: Leadership methodologies for running an effective cybersecurity club*. *CryptoKait*.
<https://cryptokait.com/2020/02/21/leadership-methods-for-a-new-cybersecurity-club/>
3. Desthuis-Francis, L.-K. (2021, September 28). *Student organizations: How to attract and retain members*. *CampusGroups Blog*.
<https://blog.campusgroups.com/campusgroups/2021/9/28/student-organizations-how-to-attract-and-retain-members>