Computer Security - Dr. Scott Heggen

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**Cipher Reflection**

So I would like to make a small disclaimer, I finally sat down to do this homework (after I asked for the extension), and ended up completing it in under 2 hours. It was a lot less daunting than it seems.

I decided it was probably a block cipher after reading the prompt, because it was unlikely that you would do a simple caesar cipher (and even more unlikely because people hadn’t cracked it). However, I wasn’t certain on what kind of block cipher it was, or if it even was a block cipher. I noticed the X’s in the small cipher, and searched around for it in the large, before deciding they were markers or fillers of some sort. So I did a little poking around on the internet, and came across the Ceasar Block Cipher, which typically fills extra space in its matrix with x’s. Low and behold, it was the cipher.

I wrote my program, and solved the code, but not before writing out the cipher on a white board and identifying patterns with different colored markers. It looked like a jumble of colored spaghetti, but ended up making sense to me. I didn’t get too stuck anywhere, although at one point I wrote down an r for an n, which messed up my whole understanding of the quotes, and I thought I would have to do an additional shift maybe, but once I wrote it down again, the solution was correct. I think it would be better if I did this again, with another cipher, so that I can struggle more, and come up with some techniques for when I am stumped.