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# Security Policies

CS461/ECE422

Computer Security I

Fall 2010

# Overview

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- Natural language policies
  - Example policies
- Implementation policies
  - High level
  - Low level

# Reading Material

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- *Computer Security*,
  - Introduction – Chapter 1.3 and 1.4
  - Security Policies – Chapter 4 skipping 4.7
- SANS policy project
  - <http://www.sans.org/resources/policies/>
- *Information Security Policies and Procedures*, Thomas Peltier

# Motivation

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- Security Policies guides implementation
  - Reflects what one can assume about an organization
  - *Who* has access to *which* resources in *what* manner
  - Confidentiality, integrity, availability
- Policy occurs at multiple levels
  - Policy-driven management

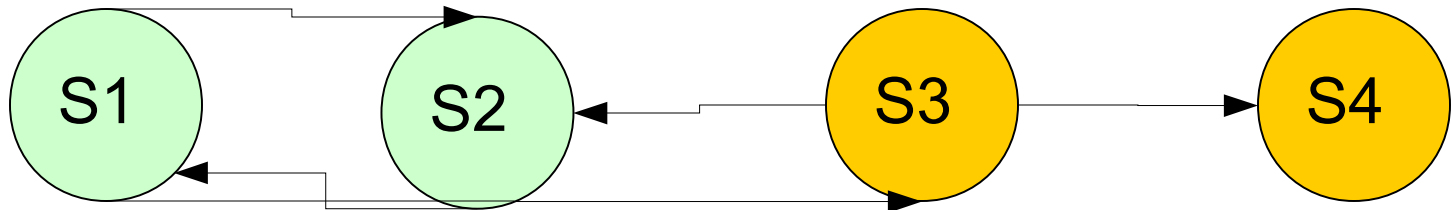
# Security Policy

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- Policy partitions system states into:
  - Authorized (secure)
    - These are states the system can enter
  - Unauthorized (nonsecure)
    - If the system enters any of these states, it's a security violation
  - Same state may be secure in one organization and nonsecure in another
- Secure system
  - Starts in authorized state, and never enters unauthorized state

# Authorized System States

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# Question

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- Policy disallows cheating
  - Includes copying homework, with or without permission
- CS class has students do homework on computer
- Anne forgets to read-protect her homework file
- Bill copies it
- Who cheated?
  - Anne, Bill, or both?

# Answer Part 1

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- Bill cheated
  - Policy forbids copying homework assignment
  - Bill did it
  - System entered unauthorized state (Bill having a copy of Anne's assignment)
- If not explicit in computer security policy, certainly implicit
  - Not credible that a unit of the university allows something that the university as a whole forbids, unless the unit explicitly says so



# Answer Part #2

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- Anne didn't protect her homework
  - Not required by security policy
- She didn't breach security
- If policy said students had to read-protect homework files, then Anne did breach security
  - She didn't do this

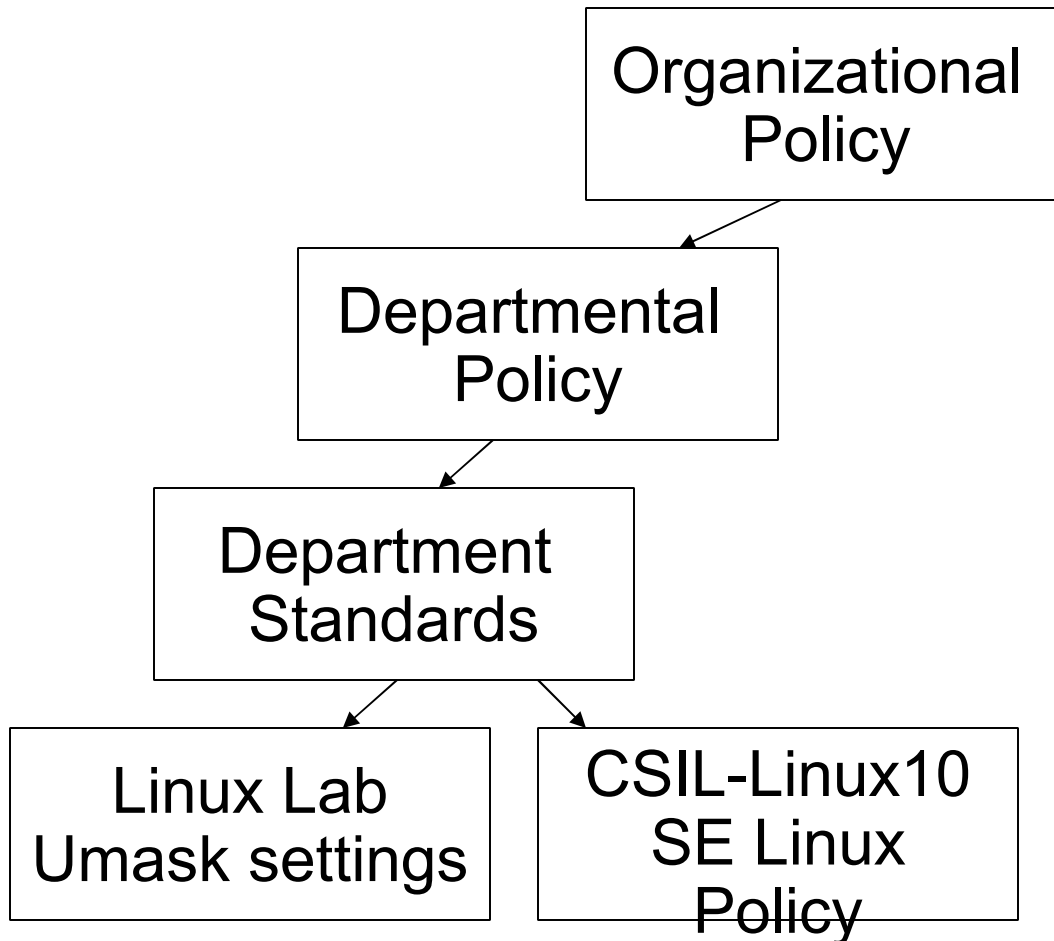
# Mechanisms/Controls

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- Entity or procedure that enforces some part of the security policy
  - Access controls (like bits to prevent someone from reading a homework file)
  - Disallowing people from bringing CDs and floppy disks into a computer facility to control what is placed on systems

# Hierarchy of Policies

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# Types of Policies that Affect Information Security

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- Data protection
- Privacy
- Email
- Hiring
- Numerous others types of organizational policies with varying impact on information security

# Natural Language Security Policies

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- Targeting Humans
  - Written at different levels
    - To inform end users
    - To inform lawyers
    - To inform technicians
    - Users, owners, beneficiaries (customers)
- As with all policies, should define purpose not mechanism
  - May have additional documents that define how policy maps to mechanism
- Should be enduring
  - Don't want to update with each change to technology
- Shows due diligence on part of the organization

# How to Write a Policy

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- Understand your environment
  - Risk Analysis (see next lecture)
- Understand your industry
  - Look for “standards” from similar companies
  - Leverage others wisdom
  - Already proven with auditors/regulators
- Gather the right set of people
  - Technical experts, person ultimately responsible, person who can make it happen
  - Not just the security policy “expert”

# Security Policy Contents

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- Purpose – Why are we trying to secure things
- Identify protected resources
- Who is responsible for protecting
  - What kind of protection? Degree but probably not precise mechanism.
- Cover all cases
- Realistic

# University of Illinois Information Security Policies

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- University of Illinois Information Security Policies
  - System wide policy; Identifies what, not how
  - <http://www.obfs.uillinois.edu/cms/one.aspx?pageId=914038>
- CITES UIUC standards and guidelines
  - DNS - <http://www.cites.uiuc.edu/dns/standards.html>
  - FERPA - [http://www.cites.uiuc.edu/edtech/development\\_aids/ferpa/index](http://www.cites.uiuc.edu/edtech/development_aids/ferpa/index)
- CS Department policies
  - <https://agora.cs.illinois.edu/display/tsg/Policies>



# Example Privacy policies

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- Busey Bank - <http://busey.com/>
  - Financial Privacy Policy
    - Targets handling of personal non-public data
    - Clarifies what data is protected
    - Who the data is shared with

# Poorly Written Policies

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- Cars.gov – Had following in click-through policy for dealers
- This application provides access to the [Department of Transportation] DoT CARS system. When logged on to the CARS system, your computer is considered a Federal computer system and is the property of the U.S. Government. Any or all uses of this system and all files on this system may be intercepted, monitored, recorded, copied, audited, inspected, and disclosed... to authorized CARS, DoT, and law enforcement personnel, as well as authorized officials of other agencies, both domestic and foreign.
- According to EFF
  - <http://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2009/08/cars-gov-t>

# Example Acceptable Use Policy

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- IEEE Email Acceptable Use Policy
  - <http://elecomm.ieee.org/email-aup.shtml>
  - Inform user of what he can do with IEEE email
  - Inform user of what IEEE will provide
    - Does not accept responsibility of actions resulting from user email
    - Does not guarantee privacy of IEEE computers and networks
  - Examples of acceptable and unacceptable use

# Policy Models

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- Abstract description of a policy or class of policies
- Types of policies
  - Military (governmental) security policy
    - Policy primarily protecting confidentiality
  - Commercial security policy
    - Policy primarily protecting integrity
  - Confidentiality policy
    - Policy protecting only confidentiality
  - Integrity policy
    - Policy protecting only integrity
  - Service Level Agreements
    - Availability agreements

# Policy Languages

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- Express security policies in a precise way
- A continuum of policy languages
  - English Policies
    - May be legally precise. Used as basis for legal action.
    - May be written imprecisely just to give real users a sense of the policy
  - High-level languages
    - Policy constraints expressed abstractly
  - Low-level languages
    - Policy constraints expressed in terms of program options, input, or specific characteristics of entities on system

# High-Level Policy Languages

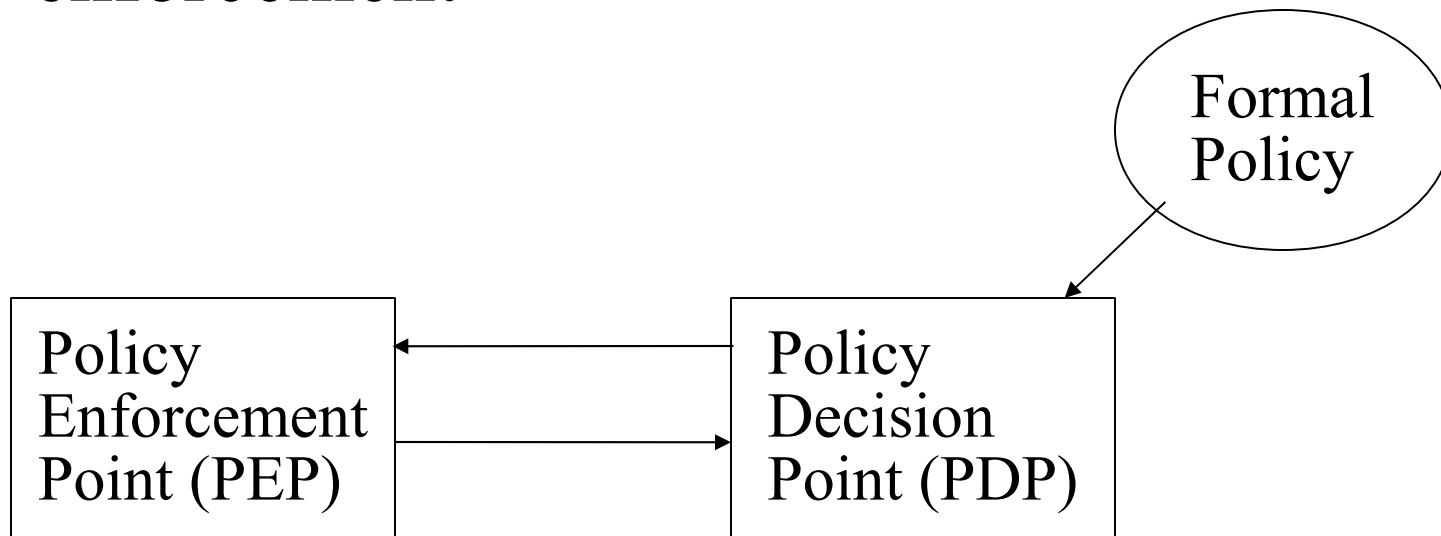
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- Constraints expressed independent of enforcement mechanism
- Constraints restrict entities, actions
- Constraints expressed unambiguously
  - Requires a precise language, usually a mathematical, logical, or programming-like language
- Examples
  - Java constraint language – described in CS:A&S
  - DTEL type enforcement language
  - WS-Policy
  - SAML <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SAML>
  - IETF Policy models <ftp://ftp.rfc-editor.org/in-notes/rfc3585.txt>

# IETF Policy Model

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- Separate policy decision making from enforcement



# DTEL – Domain Type Enforcement Language

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- Basis: access can be constrained by types
- Combines elements of low-level, high-level policy languages
  - Implementation-level constructs express constraints in terms of language types
  - Constructs do not express arguments or inputs to specific system commands
- Used in Sidewinder firewalls
- Details of DTEL in <http://citeseer.ist.psu.edu/cache/papers/cs/16179/http:zSzzSzwww>
- Type enforcement policies resurfacing in SE Linux



# Example

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- Goal: users cannot write to system binaries
- Subjects in administrative domain can
  - User must authenticate to enter that domain
- Subjects belong to domains:
  - *d\_user* ordinary users
  - *d\_admin* administrative users
  - *d\_login* for login
  - *d\_daemon* system daemons

# Types

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- Object types:
  - *t\_sysbin* executable system files
  - *t\_readable* readable files
  - *t\_writable* writable files
  - *t\_dte* data used by enforcement mechanisms
  - *t\_generic* data generated from user processes
- For example, treat these as partitions
  - In practice, files can be readable and writable; ignore this for the example

# Domain Representation

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- Sequence
  - First component is list of programs that start in the domain
  - Other components describe rights subject in domain has over objects of a type

`(crwd->t_writable)`

means subject can create, read, write, and list (search) any object of type `t_writable`

# *d\_daemon* Domain

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```
domain d_daemon = (/sbin/init),  
    (crwd->t_writable),  
    (rd->t_generic, t_readable, t_dte),  
    (rxd->t_sysbin),  
    (auto->d_login);
```

- Compromising subject in *d\_daemon* domain does not enable attacker to alter system files
  - Subjects here have no write access
- When /sbin/init invokes login program, login program transitions into *d\_login* domain

# *d\_admin* Domain

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```
domain d_admin =  
    (/usr/bin/sh, /usr/bin/csh, /usr/bin/ksh),  
    (crwxd->t_generic),  
    (crwxd->t_readable, t_writable, t_dte,  
     t_sysbin),  
    (sigtstp->d_daemon);
```

- *sigtstp* allows subjects to suspend processes in *d\_daemon* domain
- Admin users use a standard command interpreter

# *d\_user* Domain

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```
domain d_user =  
    (/usr/bin/sh, /usr/bin/csh, /usr/bin/ksh),  
    (crwd->t_generic),  
    (rxd->t_sysbin),  
    (crwd->t_writable),  
    (rd->t_readable, t_dte);
```

- No auto component as no user commands transition out of it
- Users cannot write to system binaries

# *d\_login* Domain

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```
domain d_login =  
    (/usr/bin/login),  
    (crwd->t_writable),  
    (rd->t_readable, t_generic, t_dte),  
    setauth,  
    (exec->d_user, d_admin);
```

- Cannot execute anything except the transition
  - Only /usr/bin/login in this domain
- *setauth* enables subject to change UID
- *exec* access to *d\_user*, *d\_admin* domains

# Set Up

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```
initial_domain = d_daemon;
```

- System starts in *d\_daemon* domain

```
assign -r t_generic /;
```

```
assign -r t_writable /usr/var, /dev, /tmp;
```

```
assign -r t_readable /etc;
```

```
assign -r -s dte_t /dte;
```

```
assign -r -s t_sysbin /sbin, /bin,  
                /usr/bin, /usr/sbin;
```

- These assign initial types to objects
- `-r` recursively assigns type
- `-s` binds type to name of object (delete it, recreate it, still of given type)



# Add Log Type

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- Goal: users can't modify system logs; only subjects in *d\_admin*, new *d\_log* domains can

```
type t_readable, t_writable, t_sysbin,  
      t_dte, t_generic, t_log;
```

- New type *t\_log*

```
domain d_log =  
  (/usr/sbin/syslogd),  
  (crwd->t_log),  
  (rwd->t_writable),  
  (rd->t_generic, t_readable);
```

- New domain *d\_log*

# Fix Domain and Set-Up

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```
domain d_daemon =  
    (/sbin/init),  
    (crwd->t_writable),  
    (rxd->t_readable),  
    (rd->t_generic, t_dte, t_sysbin),  
    (auto->d_login, d_log);
```

- Subject in *d\_daemon* can invoke logging process
- Can log, but not execute anything

```
assign -r t_log /usr/var/log;  
assign t_writable /usr/var/log/wtmp,  
    /usr/var/log/utmp;
```

- Set type of logs

# Low-Level Policy Languages

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- Set of inputs or arguments to commands
  - Check or set constraints on system
- Low level of abstraction
  - Need details of system, commands
- Can think of as specific configuration languages.  
Generally very closely tied to an application.
- Examples:
  - Xhost
  - Unix file system access commands
  - Tripwire integrity databases

# Example: X Window System

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- UNIX X11 Windowing System
- Access to X11 display controlled by list
  - List says what hosts allowed, disallowed access  
`xhost +groucho -chico`
- Connections from host groucho allowed
- Connections from host chico not allowed

# Example: tripwire

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- File scanner that reports changes to file system and file attributes
  - *tw.config* describes what may change
  - `/usr/mab/tripwire +gimnpsu012345678-a`
    - Check everything but time of last access (“-a”)
  - Database holds previous values of attributes

# Example Database Record

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```
/usr/mab/tripwire/README 0 ..../. 100600 45763 1
917 10 33242 .gtPvf .gtPvY .gtPvY 0
.ZD4cc0Wr8i21ZKaI..LUOr3 .
0fwo5:hf4e4.8TAqd0V4ubv ?..... ...9b3
1M4GX01xbGIX0oVuGo1h15z3 ?:Y9jfa04rdzM1q:egt1AP
gHk ?.Eb9yo.2zkEh1XKovX1:d0wF0kfAvC ?
1M4GX01xbGIX2947jdyrior38h15z3 0
```

- file name, version, bitmask for attributes, mode, inode number, number of links, UID, GID, size, times of creation, last modification, last access, cryptographic checksums

# Comments

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- System administrators not expected to edit database to set attributes properly
- Checking for changes with tripwire is easy
  - Just run once to create the database, run again to check
- Checking for conformance to policy is harder
  - Need to either edit database file, or (better) set system up to conform to policy, then run tripwire to construct database

# Key Points

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- Policies specify Why
  - Mechanisms specify How
- Range of security policies
  - From high level and imprecise to formal and precise