CS161 Summer 2025

Introduction to Computer Security

Exam Prep 8

Q1 SQL Injection (14 points)

CS 161 students are using a modified version of Piazza to discuss project questions! In this version, the names and profile pictures of the students who answer questions frequently are listed on a side panel on the website.

The server stores a table of users with the following schema:

```
CREATE TABLE users (
First TEXT, -- First name of the user.
Last TEXT, -- Last name of the user.
ProfilePicture TEXT, -- URL of the image.
FrequentPoster BOOLEAN, -- Are they a frequent poster?
);
```

Q1.1 (3 points) Assume that you are a frequent poster. When playing around with your account, you notice that you can set your profile picture URL to the following, and your image on the frequent poster panel grows wider than everyone else's photos:

ProfilePicture URL: https://cs161.org/evan.jpg" width="1000

Frequent posters,



What kind of vulnerability might this indicate on Piazza's website?

O Stored XSS	O Path traversal attack
○ Reflected XSS	O Buffer overflow
○ CSRF	

(Question 1 continued)		
Q1.2	(3 points) Provide a malicious image URL that causes the JavaScript alert(1) to run for any browser that loads the frequent poster panel. Assume all relevant defenses are disabled. Hint: Recall that image tags are typically formatted as .	
Q1.3	(4 points) Suppose your account is not a frequent poster, but you still want to conduct an attack through the frequent posters panel!	
	When a user creates an account on Piazza, the server runs the following code:	
	<pre>query := fmt.Sprintf(" INSERT INTO users (First, Last, ProfilePicture, FrequentPoster) VALUES ('%s', '%s', '%s', FALSE); ",</pre>	
	<pre>first, last, profilePicture) db.Exec(query)</pre>	
	Provide an input for profilePicture that would cause your malicious script to run the next time a user loads the frequent posters panel. You may reference PAYLOAD as your malicious image URI from earlier, and you may include PAYLOAD as part of a larger input.	
Q1.4	(4 points) Instead of injecting a malicious script, you want to conduct a DoS attack on Piazza Provide an input for profilePicture that would cause the SQL statement DROP TABLE users to be executed by the server.	

Exam Prep 8 Page 2 of 6 CS161 — Summer 2025

Q2 Web: Unscramble (14 points)

www.evanbook.com is a website where users can submit and view posts. EvanBot is a user of this website, who is initially not logged in. Mallory is an on-path attacker between EvanBot and this website, and Mallory controls www.mallory.com.

- A user can load www.evanbook.com/home to see posts made by all users. (This behavior is the same whether the user is logged in or logged out.)
- A user can log in by making a POST request to www.evanbook.com/login, with their username and password (e.g. "alice,password123") in the contents. If the username and password are correct, the HTTP response contains a session token cookie.
- A user who is logged in can load www.evanbook.com/home?msg=X to display all the posts, along with an additional message X at the top of the page.
- A user who is logged in can follow another user by making a GET request to www.evanbook.com/follow?user=X, replacing X with the username to follow.

In each subpart, provide a sequence of events (choosing from the list below) to execute the given attack. If you choose an event with a placeholder X, write the value you would insert into the placeholder.

- A. EvanBot loads www.evanbook.com/home.
- B. EvanBot loads www.evanbook.com/home?msg=X.
- C. EvanBot makes a POST request with the correct username and password.
- D. Mallory makes a post with contents X.
- E. Mallory makes www.mallory.com send back X.
- F. Mallory reads the HTTP request sent from EvanBot to www.evanbook.com.
- G. Mallory reads the HTTP response sent from www.evanbook.com to EvanBot.

Write one event per row. You don't have to use all rows provided, but you may not use extra rows.

On each row: In the left box, write the letter (A to G) of the event. In the right box, if the event has a placeholder **X**, write the value you would use in the placeholder. If the event does not have a placeholder, leave the right box blank.

Example attack: Make EvanBot see the post "Mallory says hi."

Example answer: Mallory makes a post with contents "Mallory says hi."

Then, EvanBot loads www.evanbook.com/home.

С	Mallory says hi
A	

(Que	stion 2 continued)				
Q2.1	(2 points) For this subpart, assume all requests are sent over HTTP (not HTTPS), and the session token cookie has attributes Secure=false and HttpOnly=true.				
	Attack: Learn the value of EvanBot's session token.				
Q2.2	(2 points) Attack: Using stored XSS, make EvanBot run the JavaScript alert(1) with the origin of www.evanbook.com.				
Q2.3	(2 points) Attack: Make EvanBot log in as user mallory (who has password 161).				
	From this subpart onwards, you may use the post(url) JavaScript function to send POST requests.				
Q2.4	(2 points) For this subpart, assume all requests are sent over HTTPS, and the session token cookie has attributes Secure=true and HttpOnly=false.				
	Attack: Use reflected XSS to learn the value of EvanBot's session token.				

(Question 2 continued)	
Q2.5 (3 points) Attack: Make EvanBot fo	ollow Mallory.
Q2.6 (3 points) Attack: Using stored XSS www.mallory.com.	s, make EvanBot run the JavaScript alert(1) with the origin of

	a website they trust. The attacker might convince the user to go to what <i>appears</i> to be their bank and enter their username and password.
i)	What are some ways that attackers try to fool users about the site they are going to? How do they convince people to click on links to sites?
ii)	What are some defenses you should employ against phishing?

A phishing attacker tries to gain sensitive user information by tricking users into going to a fake version

(0 points)

Q3 Phishing