

ECE 592-080 (Fall 2018)

Cryptographic Engineering and Hardware Security

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Objective/Description: Trusted computing in hardware is fundamental for information security practices. The basis of security guarantees in digital systems ultimately boils down to a set of cryptographic operations executing in a hardware root-of-trust. When this root-of-trust is compromised, security enforcement/isolation mechanisms at higher abstraction levels will inevitably fail. This course is on *how to establish trust in hardware*. It covers information leaks from a wide-array of hardware vulnerabilities of critical cyberinfrastructure. The course will involve hands-on experiments to teach the applications of these attacks and study state-of-the-art countermeasures to mitigate them. The goal of the course is to equip the participants with an understanding of implementations of cryptographic hardware, potential exploits, and associated defenses.



Prerequisites: ECE-564 or prior background on RTL coding. Familiarity with assembly language. Background on cryptography is not necessary but is helpful.

Textbook: There is no single textbook that the class relies on. “Handbook of Applied Cryptography” by Menezes et al., “Physically Unclonable Functions: Constructions, Properties and Applications” by Roel Maas, “Power Analysis Attacks” by Mangard et al., and “Post-quantum Cryptography” by Bernstein et al. are among the books that will be used for the course. Proceedings of conferences such as CHES, HOST, DATE, DAC, CCS, and S&P will also be used.

Topics:

- Design and implementation of cryptographic primitives: symmetric- and public-key systems, hash functions, and random number generators
- Implementation attacks on cryptography (physical side-channels and fault attacks)
- Securing electronic supply-chain and counterfeit detection via Physical Unclonable Functions
- Hardware backdoors and Trojans
- Next-generation cryptosystems (post-quantum cryptography, lightweight cryptography, and cryptocurrencies)
- Trusted computing bases: Intel SGX, ARM Trustzone, and academic proposals
- Micro-architectural vulnerabilities, side- and covert-channels in computer architectures

Grading: Bi-weekly reading assignments/presentations/critiques; monthly hands-on project assignments; one final research project and presentation;