

Keeping Individuals, and Nations Safe from Cyber Threats: The Continuing Mission of the PMU's Cybersecurity Center

Leading the charge, the PMU Cybersecurity Center strives to create a safer digital environment through education, training, and practical experience.

AL-KHOBAR, EASTERN PROVINCE, SAUDI ARABIA, April 25, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With our world of eight billion people increasingly reliant on the digital realm for commerce, communication, healthcare, and more, cybersecurity is arguably now as important as it has ever been.

To help individuals and organizations protect themselves against rising threats to digital assets and privacy, Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU) is training a next generation of specialists through its [Cybersecurity Center](#). Founded in 2017, the Cybersecurity Center serves as an essential hub for developing expertise in cybersecurity and fostering a deeper understanding of the technicalities and challenges involved.

"Cybersecurity is not only incredibly important for people doing everyday online activities such as banking and retail, it is also fundamental to business and global national security in the 21st century," said Dr. Issa Al Ansari, President of PMU. "We are honored to have the responsibility of featuring the Cybersecurity Center as one of the four research centers at PMU, where we can impart critical training to today's students and faculty, and thus prepare tomorrow's leaders in industry and academia."



Building Resilience, Ensuring Safety

The overall mission of the Cybersecurity Center is to make government, industry, and the general public more resilient by spreading knowledge and enhancing skills in cybersecurity. Starting with undergraduates, a Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity is offered at PMU. The courses at PMU are designed to align with industry standards, allowing students to pursue industry-recognized credentials alongside their academic studies.

“PMU goes beyond a traditional cybersecurity curriculum, offering a program that seamlessly integrates with industry certifications,” said Dr.

Faisal Al Anezi, Vice President for Academic Affairs. “This fusion of academic rigor and practical skills sets PMU graduates apart.”



Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University

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At PMU, countering the ever-growing threats in the cyber realm is a significant priority. Staying one step ahead of cybercriminals will require unceasing and diligent effort as we move forward”

*Dr. Issa Al Ansari, President
(PMU)*

Additionally, for students but also for industrial professionals, PMU hosts workshops to foster a continuous learning environment. Through these education initiatives, PMU is cultivating a skilled workforce ready to shore up defenses for nation- and world-leading companies that are delivering valuable goods and services.

“The Cybersecurity Center at PMU was established to support the growth and progression of cybersecurity professionals through the latest curriculum, vibrant industry partnerships, community involvement, and

training,” said Dr. Al Ansari. “The sophistication of cyberattacks is increasing continuously, along with the number of attacks. On the contrary, there are not enough well-trained cyber professionals to meet industry demand.”

Meeting the skyrocketing demand

The massive industry demand to combat cyber threats worldwide is ably illustrated by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, widely recognized as the emerging largest cybersecurity market in the Middle East. The 2024 Global Digital Trust survey from [PwC](#), an international professional services company, reported that high percentages of business and tech executives in Saudi Arabia and other nations are significantly concerned about digital- and technology-related risks, cloud-related threats, and attacks on connected devices.

The danger is indeed real, as indicated by the staggering detection of approximately 110 million cyber threats in Saudi Arabia alone, according to the 2022 Annual Cybersecurity Report from Trend Micro, an American-Japanese cyber security software company. Interest in countering such threats is evident in a recent report from Qrator Labs, a leading security software company, which found that search queries for cybersecurity analysts in Saudi Arabia surged by more than 133% in 2023 compared to 2022.

In line with these data points is a projection from Statista—a global data and business intelligence platform—that annual revenue in the cybersecurity market in Saudi Arabia is expected grow by more than 10% over the next five years.

Learning cybersecurity skills

Based on this threat environment, the Cybersecurity Center is equipping the PMU community with what they need to know now to seize the present opportunity and counter the looming cyber menace.

To this end, the Center runs a state-of-the-art interdisciplinary lab, which provides both students and faculty with valuable hands-on experience in various aspects of cybersecurity, including penetration testing, threat analysis, and vulnerability assessment. Other training domains where practical experience can be gained are information security compliance, cryptography, enterprise security architecture, Internet of Things (IOT) security, cloud security, and security of smart cities. Furthermore, PMU fosters a vibrant student cybersecurity club where students not only hone technical skills but also develop essential leadership, communication, and organizational abilities through workshops, competitions, and awareness campaigns.

“PMU cultivates cybersecurity expertise in its students through a unique blend of practical training and experiential learning,” said Dr. Nazeeruddin Mohammad, Director of PMU’s Cybersecurity Center.

As a new initiative to bridge the gap between theory and real-world application, PMU is also establishing a company that involves senior students working on industrial cybersecurity projects. This endeavor provides invaluable practical experience that prepares PMU graduates in advance for their cybersecurity careers.

Another critical means of the Cybersecurity Center achieving its mission objectives are the academic alliances forged with leading international institutes and companies. Some of these alliances PMU has established include an academic partnership with [EC-Council](#), a U.S.-based cybersecurity certification, education, training, and services company; the Palo Alto Cyber Security Academy; the Cisco Networking Academy; the Amazon Web Service Alliance; and the DELL EMC Academic Alliance.

“This collaborative approach positions PMU well in preparing students for successful cybersecurity careers,” said Dr. Al Ansari.

Based on these alliances, the Center is also offering free online courses so that PMU community members, industry professionals, and the public can be inculcated with valuable cybersecurity skills. The courses offered include Digital Forensics Essentials, Network Defense Essentials, Ethical Hacking Essentials, and much more.

By training individuals to better understand and address security concerns, both in professional and personal contexts, the PMU Cybersecurity Center is helping people to protect themselves and their data from potential breaches.

Global Media Department
Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University
+966 13 849 9346

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