



Program Guidebook

Bachelor of Science, Cybersecurity and Information Assurance

To meet an increasing demand for cybersecurity professionals, the Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity and Information Assurance (BSCSIA) degree program prepares IT professionals to apply knowledge and experience in risk management and digital forensics to safeguard infrastructure and secure data through continuity planning and disaster recovery operations. Courses deliver proven methods for information security using software analysis techniques, web engineering, cloud management, and networking strategies to prevent, detect, and mitigate cyberattacks. This program features nationally recognized, high demand certifications in the field of cybersecurity.

Understanding the Competency-Based Approach

Practically speaking, how do competency-based programs like those offered at Western Governors University (WGU) work? Unlike traditional universities, WGU does not award degrees based on completion of a certain number of credit hours or a certain set of required courses. Instead, you will earn your degree by demonstrating your skills, knowledge, and understanding of important concepts.

Progress through a degree program is governed not by the amount of time you spend in class but by your ability to demonstrate mastery of competencies as you complete required courses. Of course, you will need to engage in learning experiences as you review competencies or develop knowledge and skills in areas in which you may be weak. To help you acquire the knowledge and skills you need to complete your courses and program, WGU provides a rich array of learning resources. Your program mentor will work closely with you to help you understand the competencies required for your program and to help you create a schedule for completing your courses. You will also work closely with course instructors as you engage in each of your courses. As subject matter experts, course instructors will guide you through the content you must master to pass the course assessments.

The benefit of this competency-based system is that enables students who are knowledgeable about a particular subject to make accelerated progress toward completing a degree, even if they lack college experience. You may have gained skills and knowledge of a subject while on the job, accumulated wisdom through years of life experience, or already taken a course on a particular subject. WGU will award your degree based on the skills and knowledge that you possess and can demonstrate—not the number of credits hours on your transcript.

Accreditation

Western Governors University is the only university in the history of American higher education to have earned accreditation from four regional accrediting commissions. WGU's accreditation was awarded by (1) the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, (2) the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, (3) the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, and (4) the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. The university's accreditation status is now managed by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), which reaffirmed WGU's accreditation in February 2020. The WGU Teachers College is accredited at the initial-licensure level by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and by the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP). The nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Health Information Management program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM). The College of Business programs are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

The Degree Plan

The focus of your program is your personalized Degree Plan. The Degree Plan is a detailed blueprint of the courses you will need to complete in order to earn your degree. The Degree Plan also lays out the accompanying learning resources and assessments that compose your program. The list of courses in the Degree Plan is often referred to as the standard path. The amount of time it takes to complete your program depends on both the amount of new information you need to learn and the amount of time you plan to devote each week to study. Your program mentor and course instructors will help you assess your strengths and development needs to establish a study plan.

Students vary widely in the specific skills and information they need to learn. For example, some students may be highly knowledgeable in a particular subject matter and would not need to engage in new learning opportunities. Other students may find that portions of the program require them to learn new information and that they need to take an online class or participate in a study module to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to fulfill program competencies in that area. Some individuals may be able to devote as little

as 15–20 hours per week to the program, while others may need to devote more time. For this reason, pre-assessments are there to help your program mentor form a profile of your prior knowledge and create a personalized Degree Plan.

How You Will Interact with Faculty

At WGU, faculty serve in specialized roles, and they will work with you individually to provide the guidance, instruction, and support you will need to succeed and graduate. As a student, it is important for you to take advantage of this support. It is key to your progress and ultimate success.

Upon your enrollment, you will be assigned a program mentor—an expert in your field of study who will provide you with regular program-level guidance and support from the day you start until the day you graduate. Your program mentor will set up regular telephone appointments (weekly at first) with you, which you will be expected to keep. The mentor will review program competencies with you and work with you to develop a plan and schedule for your coursework. Your program mentor will serve as your main point of contact throughout your program—helping you set weekly study goals, recommending specific learning materials, telling you what to expect in courses, and keeping you motivated. In addition to regular calls, your program mentor is available to help you resolve questions and concerns as they arise.

You will also be assigned to a course instructor for each course. Course instructors are doctoral-level subject matter experts who will assist your learning in each individual course. When you begin a new course, your assigned course instructor will actively monitor your progress and will be in touch to offer one-on-one instruction and to provide you with information about webinars, cohort sessions, and other learning opportunities available to help you acquire the competencies you need to master the course. Your course instructor can discuss your learning for the course, help you find answers to content questions, and give you the tools to navigate the course successfully. In addition, you will communicate with course instructors by posting in the online learning community and participating in live discussion sessions such as webinars and cohorts.

For many of the courses at WGU, you will be required to complete performance assessments. These include reports, papers, presentations, and projects that let you demonstrate your mastery of the required competencies. A separate group of faculty members, called evaluators, will review your work to determine whether it meets requirements. Evaluators are also subject matter experts in their field of evaluation. If your assessment needs further work before it “passes,” these evaluators, who review your work anonymously, will provide you with instructional feedback to help you meet evaluation standards and allow you to advance.

Connecting with Other Mentors and Fellow Students

As you proceed through your Degree Plan, you will have direct contact with multiple faculty members. These communications can take a variety of forms, including participation in one-on-one discussions, chats in the learning communities, and live cohort and webinar opportunities. As a WGU student, you will have access to your own personal MyWGU Student Portal, which will provide a gateway to your courses of study, learning resources, and learning communities where you will interact with faculty and other students.

The learning resources in each course are specifically designed to support you as you develop competencies in preparation for your assessments. These learning resources may include reading materials, videos, tutorials, cohort opportunities, community discussions, and live discussions that are guided by course instructors who are experts in their field. You will access your program community during your orientation course to network with peers who are enrolled in your program and to receive continued support through professional enrichment and program-specific chats, blogs, and discussions. WGU also provides Student Services associates to help you and your program mentor solve any special problems that may arise.

Orientation

The WGU orientation course focuses on acquainting you with WGU's competency-based model, distance education, technology, and other resources and tools available for students. You will also utilize WGU program and course communities, participate in activities, and get to know other students at WGU. The orientation course must be completed before you can start your first term at WGU.

Transferability of Prior College Coursework

Because WGU is a competency-based institution, it does not award degrees based on credits but rather on demonstration of competency. However, if you have completed college coursework at another accredited institution, or if you have completed industry certifications, you may have your transcripts and certifications evaluated to determine if you are eligible to receive some transfer credit. The guidelines for determining what credits will be granted varies based on the degree program. Students entering graduate programs must have their undergraduate degree verified before being admitted to WGU. To review more information in regards to transfer guidelines based on the different degree programs, you may visit the Student Handbook found at the link below and search for "Transfer Credit Evaluation."

[Click here for the Student Handbook](#)

WGU does not waive any requirements based on a student's professional experience and does not perform a "résumé review" or "portfolio review" that will automatically waive any degree requirements. Degree requirements and transferability rules are subject to change in order to keep the degree content relevant and current.

Remember, WGU's competency-based approach lets you take advantage of your knowledge and skills, regardless of how you obtained them. Even when you do not directly receive credit, the knowledge you possess may help you accelerate the time it takes to complete your degree program.

Continuous Enrollment, On Time Progress, and Satisfactory Academic Progress

WGU is a "continuous enrollment" institution, which means you will be automatically enrolled in each of your new terms while you are at WGU. Each term is six months long. Longer terms and continuous enrollment allow you to focus on your studies without the hassle of unnatural breaks between terms that you would experience at a more traditional university. At the end of every six-month term, you and your program mentor will review the progress you have made and revise your Degree Plan for your next six-month term.

WGU requires that students make measurable progress toward the completion of their degree programs every term. We call this "On-Time Progress," denoting that you are on track and making progress toward on-time graduation. As full-time students, graduate students must enroll in at least 8 competency units each term, and undergraduate students must enroll in at least 12 competency units each term. Completing at least these minimum enrollments is essential to On-Time Progress and serves as a baseline from which you may accelerate your program. We measure your progress based on the courses you are able to pass, not on your accumulation of credit hours or course grades. Every time you pass a course, you are demonstrating that you have mastered skills and knowledge in your degree program. For comparison to traditional grading systems, passing a course means you have demonstrated competency equivalent to a "B" grade or better.

WGU assigns competency units to each course in order to track your progress through the program. A competency unit is equivalent to one semester credit of learning. Some courses may be assigned 3 competency units while others may be as large as 12 competency units.

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is particularly important to students on financial aid because you must achieve SAP in order to maintain eligibility for financial aid. We will measure your SAP quantitatively by reviewing the number of competency units you have completed each term. In order to remain in good

academic standing, you must complete at least 66.67% of the units you attempt over the length of your program—including any courses you add to your term to accelerate your progress. Additionally, during your first term at WGU you must pass at least 3 competency units in order to remain eligible for financial aid. We know that SAP is complex, so please contact a financial aid counselor should you have additional questions. *Please note: The Endorsement Preparation Program in Educational Leadership is not eligible for federal financial aid.

Courses

Your Degree Plan includes courses needed to complete your program. To obtain your degree, you will be required to demonstrate your skills and knowledge by completing the assessment(s) for each course. In general there are two types of assessments: performance assessments and objective assessments. Performance assessments contain, in most cases, multiple scored tasks such as projects, essays, and research papers. Objective assessments include multiple-choice items, multiple-selection items, matching, short answer, drag-and-drop, and point-and-click item types, as well as case study and video-based items. Certifications verified through third parties may also be included in your program. More detailed information about each assessment is provided in each course of study.

Learning Resources

WGU works with many different educational partners, including enterprises, publishers, training companies, and higher educational institutions, to provide high-quality and effective learning resources that match the competencies you are developing. These vary in type, and may be combined to create the best learning experience for your course. A learning resource can be an e-textbook, online module, study guide, simulation, virtual lab, tutorial, or a combination of these. The cost of most learning resources are included in your tuition and Learning Resource Fee. They can be accessed or enrolled for through your courses. Some degree-specific resources are not covered by your tuition, and you will need to cover those costs separately. WGU also provides a robust library to help you obtain additional learning resources, as needed.

Mobile Compatibility:

The following article provides additional details about the current state of mobile compatibility for learning resources at WGU. It includes a list that can be referenced to determine the mobile friendliness of all core course materials used in a program.

[Student Handbook article: Can I use my mobile device for learning resources?](#)

Standard Path

As previously mentioned, competency units (CUs) have been assigned to each course in order to measure your academic progress. If you are an undergraduate student, you will be expected to enroll in a minimum of 12 competency units each term. Graduate students are expected to enroll in a minimum of 8 competency units each term. A standard plan for a student for this program who entered WGU without any transfer units would look similar to the one on the following page. Your personal progress can be faster, but your pace will be determined by the extent of your transfer units, your time commitment, and your determination to proceed at a faster rate.

Standard Path for Bachelor of Science, Cybersecurity and Information Assurance

Course Description	CUs	Term
Introduction to IT	4	1
Critical Thinking and Logic	3	1
Fundamentals of Information Security	3	1
Business of IT - Applications	4	1
Introduction to Geography	3	2
Integrated Physical Sciences	3	2
Legal Issues in Information Security	4	2
IT Foundations	4	2
IT Applications	4	3
Web Development Foundations	3	3
Business of IT - Project Management	4	3
Network and Security - Foundations	3	3
Networks	4	4
Applied Probability and Statistics	3	4
English Composition I	3	4
Introduction to Cryptography	4	4
Network and Security - Applications	4	5
Data Management - Foundations	3	5
Data Management - Applications	4	5
Scripting and Programming - Foundations	3	5
Emerging Technologies in Cybersecurity	4	6
American Politics and the US Constitution	3	6
Digital Forensics in Cybersecurity	4	6
Applied Algebra	3	6
English Composition II	3	7
Information Systems Security	4	7
Introduction to Communication	3	7
Ethics in Technology	3	7
Managing Cloud Security	4	8
Managing Information Security	6	8
Cyber Defense and Countermeasures	4	8
Technical Communication	3	9
Penetration Testing and Vulnerability Analysis	4	9
IT Capstone Written Project	4	9

Changes to Curriculum

WGU publishes an Institutional Catalog, which describes the academic requirements of each degree program. Although students are required to complete the program version current at the time of their enrollment, WGU may modify requirements and course offerings within that version of the program to maintain the currency and relevance of WGU's competencies and programs. When program requirements are updated, students readmitting after withdrawal from the university will be expected to re-enter into the most current catalog version of the program.

Areas of Study for Bachelor of Science, Cybersecurity and Information Assurance

The following section includes the areas of study in the program, with their associated courses. Your specific learning resources and level of instructional support will vary based on the individual competencies you bring to the program and your confidence in developing the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in each area of the degree. The Degree Plan and learning resources are dynamic, so you need to review your Degree Plan and seek the advice of your mentor regarding the resources before you purchase them.

IT Fundamentals

Introduction to IT

Introduction to IT examines information technology as a discipline and the various roles and functions of the IT department as business support. Students are presented with various IT disciplines including systems and services, network and security, scripting and programming, data management, and business of IT, with a survey of technologies in every area and how they relate to each other and to the business.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate describes IT as a discipline and discusses the history and future of computing as well as the currently used infrastructure.*
- *The graduate describes information technology systems and their role in converting data to organizational knowledge.*
- *The graduate identifies the role of different types of software in a computing environment and explains the fundamentals of software development.*
- *The graduate recognizes and describes functions of basic computer hardware components.*
- *The graduate describes the structure, function, and security associated with networks.*
- *The graduate identifies common software architectures, development techniques, and the relationship between software and its environment.*
- *The graduate explains the structure and function of databases.*
- *The graduate explains the role of technology in today's business environment and describes basic concepts of project management.*
- *The graduate evaluates ethical concerns involved in the use of technology.*

IT Foundations

IT Foundations is the first course in a two-part series that will prepare you for the CompTIA A+ exam, Part I. This course focuses mostly on hardware and will afford you the skills you need to support five core components: Mobile Devices; Networking; Hardware; Virtualization and Cloud Computing; and Network and Hardware Troubleshooting. These are essential skills to set up and troubleshoot any system. Whether you work in a data center or an office, most of your work as an IT professional will execute in a hardware platform; understanding the hardware layer of the IT infrastructure will allow you to work more efficiently, provide solutions for business requirements, and be a key contributor in your company.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate configures client-side virtualization to meet organizational requirements.*
- *The graduate determines appropriate diagnostic and repair strategies for common personal computer hardware, access to network resources, and network connectivity.*
- *The graduate recommends appropriate strategies for classifying, installing, configuring, optimizing, upgrading, and troubleshooting laptops and mobile devices.*
- *The graduate recommends appropriate strategies for classifying, installing, configuring, optimizing, and upgrading basic network types.*

- *The graduate demonstrates an understanding of personal computer components and their function in a desktop system.*

IT Applications

IT Applications provides students with an understanding of personal computer components and their functions in a desktop system. Also covered is computer data storage and retrieval including classifying, installing, configuring, optimizing, upgrading, and troubleshooting printers, laptops, portable devices, operating systems, networks, and system security. Other areas include recommending appropriate tools, diagnostic procedures, preventative maintenance, and troubleshooting techniques for personal computer components in a desktop system. The course then finishes with strategies for identifying, preventing, and reporting safety hazards and environmental/human accidents in a technological environment, and effective communication with colleagues and clients as well as job-related professional behavior. This course is designed to build the skills to support 4 core components: Operating Systems, Security, Software Troubleshooting, and Operational Procedures. These are core competencies for IT professionals from cloud engineers to data analysts, and will empower you with a better understanding of the tools used during your career.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate determines appropriate tools, diagnostic procedures, preventive maintenance, security, malware removal, and troubleshooting techniques for common personal computer and mobile operating systems (mobile and personal computer) and applications.*
- *The graduate determines appropriate strategies to implement documentation, change management and disaster recovery, and explain common safety, environmental concerns; explain addressing prohibited content; use professional communication techniques.*
- *The graduate determines appropriate strategies for classifying, installing, configuring, optimizing, upgrading, and troubleshooting computer operating systems.*
- *The graduate determines appropriate strategies for classifying, controlling access, setting permission, configuring, optimizing, and upgrading basic system security.*

General Education

Critical Thinking and Logic

Reasoning and Problem Solving helps candidates internalize a systematic process for exploring issues that takes them beyond an unexamined point of view and encourages them to become more self-aware thinkers by applying principles of problem identification and clarification, planning and information gathering, identifying assumptions and values, analyzing and interpreting information and data, reaching well-founded conclusions, and identifying the role of critical thinking in disciplines and professions.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate analyzes open-ended problems by learning about the problem and evaluating the accuracy and relevance of different perspectives on the problem.*
- *The graduate evaluates different sources representing a range of perspectives on a problem in order to weigh the implications and consequences of different solutions to the problem.*
- *The graduate identifies internal and external biases and assumptions related to a problem, and evaluates the influence and validity of these biases and assumptions.*
- *The graduate synthesizes information to understand a problem's complexities and potential solutions, and then evaluates the reasoning and evidence in support of these different solutions.*
- *The graduate logically brings together information to arrive at a viable solution to a problem, and then clearly and accurately communicates the results.*
- *The graduate recognizes the value of critical thinking in identifying and understanding the underlying structures of the disciplines and professions.*

Introduction to Geography

This course will discuss geographic concepts, places and regions, physical and human systems, and the environment.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate can describe and discuss fundamental concepts in geography.*
- *The graduate can describe and discuss places and regions.*
- *The graduate can describe and discuss physical systems.*
- *The graduate can describe and discuss human systems.*
- *The graduate can describe and discuss environment.*

Integrated Physical Sciences

This course provides students with an overview of the basic principles and unifying ideas of the physical sciences: physics, chemistry, and earth sciences. Course materials focus on scientific reasoning and practical, everyday applications of physical science concepts to help students integrate conceptual knowledge with practical skills.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate describes the nature and process of science.*
- *The graduate examines applications of physics including fundamental concepts such as forces, motion, energy, and waves.*
- *The graduate examines applications of key chemistry concepts including the structure of matter and the behavior and conservation of matter in chemical reactions.*
- *The graduate describes the underlying organization, interactions, and processes within the Earth system including the Earth's structure and atmosphere, and Earth's interactions within the solar system.*

Applied Probability and Statistics

Applied Probability and Statistics helps candidates develop competence in the fundamental concepts of basic statistics including introductory algebra and graphing; descriptive statistics; regression and correlation; and probability. Statistical data and probability are used in everyday life, science, business, information technology, and educational settings to make informed decisions about the validity of studies and the effect of data on decisions. This course discusses what constitutes sound research design and how to appropriately model phenomena using statistical data. Additionally, the content covers simple probability calculations based on events that occur in the business and IT industries. No prerequisites are required for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate applies the operations, processes, and procedures of fractions, decimals, and percentages to evaluate quantitative expressions.*
- *The graduate applies the operations, processes, and procedures of basic algebra to evaluate quantitative expressions, and to solve equations and inequalities.*
- *The graduate evaluates categorical and quantitative data pertaining to a single variable using appropriate graphical displays and numerical measures.*
- *The graduate evaluates the relationship between two variables through interpretation of visual displays and numerical measures.*
- *The graduate evaluates the relationship between two quantitative variables through correlation and regression.*
- *The graduate applies principles and methods of probability-based mathematics to explain and solve problems.*

English Composition I

English Composition I introduces candidates to the types of writing and thinking that are valued in college and beyond. Candidates will practice writing in several genres with emphasis placed on writing and revising academic arguments. Instruction and exercises in grammar, mechanics, research documentation, and style are paired with each module so that writers can practice these skills as necessary. Composition I is a foundational course designed to help candidates prepare

for success at the college level. There are no prerequisites for English Composition I.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate applies appropriate grammatical rules, sentence structure, and writing conventions.*
- *The graduate selects appropriate rhetorical strategies that improve writing and argumentation.*
- *The graduate appropriately uses a given writing style.*
- *The graduate uses appropriate writing and revision strategies.*
- *The graduate integrates credible and relevant sources into written arguments.*
- *The graduate composes an appropriate narrative for a given context.*
- *The graduate composes an appropriate argumentative essay for a given context.*

American Politics and the US Constitution

American Politics and the U.S. Constitution examines the evolution of representative government in the United States and the changing interpretations of the civil rights and civil liberties protected by the Constitution. This course will give candidates an understanding of the powers of the branches of the federal government, the continual tensions inherent in a federal system, the shifting relationship between state and federal governments, and the interactions between elected officials and the ever-changing electorate. This course will focus on such topics as the role of a free press in a democracy, the impact of changing demographics on American politics, and the debates over and expansion of civil rights. Upon completion of the course, candidates should be able to explain the basic functions of the federal government, describe the forces that shape American policy and politics, and be better prepared to participate in America's civic institutions. This course has no prerequisite.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate describes the influence of competing political ideologies on the development of the United States government.*
- *The graduate explains how the structure and powers of the United States government interact to form public policy.*
- *The graduate examines the influence of political parties, citizens, and non-governmental organizations on elections and other political processes inside a participatory democracy.*
- *The graduate examines the struggle to balance individual liberty, public order, and state's rights.*
- *The graduate examines the influence of the media, public opinion, and political discourse on American democracy.*

Applied Algebra

Applied Algebra is designed to help candidates develop competence in working with functions, working with the algebra of functions, and using some applied properties of functions. Candidates will learn how to apply different kinds of functions to relevant, real-life examples. From there, the algebra of several families of functions will be explored, including linear, polynomial, exponential, and logistic functions. Candidates will also learn about relevant, applicable mathematical properties of each family of functions, including rate of change, concavity, maximizing/minimizing, and asymptotes. These properties will be used to solve problems related to a WGU major and make sense of problems in everyday living. Candidates should complete Applied Probability and Statistics or its equivalent prior to engaging in Applied Algebra.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate interprets the real-world meaning of various functions based on notation, graphical representations, and data representations.*
- *The graduate applies linear functions and their properties to real-world problems.*
- *The graduate applies polynomial functions and their properties to real-world problems.*
- *The graduate applies exponential functions and their properties to real-world problems.*
- *The graduate applies logistic functions and their properties to real-world problems.*

- *The graduate analyzes graphical depictions of real-world situations using functional properties.*
- *The graduate verifies the validity of a given model.*

English Composition II

English Composition II introduces candidates to the types of research and writing that are valued in college and beyond. Candidates will practice writing, with emphasis placed on research, writing, and revising an academic argument. Instruction and exercises in grammar, mechanics, research documentation, and style are paired with each module so that writers can practice these skills as necessary. Composition II is a foundational course designed to help candidates prepare for success at the college level. Composition I is the prerequisite for Composition II.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate evaluates the quality, credibility, and relevance of evidence in order to integrate evidence into a final research paper.*
- *The graduate applies steps of the writing process appropriately to improve quality of writing.*
- *The graduate composes an argumentative research paper.*

Introduction to Communication

This introductory communication course allows candidates to become familiar with the fundamental communication theories and practices necessary to engage in healthy professional and personal relationships. Candidates will survey human communication on multiple levels and critically apply the theoretical grounding of the course to interpersonal, intercultural, small group, and public presentational contexts. The course also encourages candidates to consider the influence of language, perception, culture, and media on their daily communicative interactions. In addition to theory, candidates will engage in the application of effective communication skills through systematically preparing and delivering an oral presentation. By practicing these fundamental skills in human communication, candidates become more competent communicators as they develop more flexible, useful, and discriminatory communicative practices in a variety of contexts. Note: There are references within this video to Taskstream. If Taskstream is not part of your student experience, please disregard, and locate your task(s) within your course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate applies foundational elements of effective communication.*
- *The graduate applies appropriate communication strategies in interpersonal and group contexts.*
- *The graduate utilizes appropriate presentational communication strategies in personal and professional settings.*

Ethics in Technology

Ethics in Technology examines the ethical considerations of technology in each of four categories: privacy, accuracy, property, and access. The course presents a range of technologies and issues that challenge technologists in the field of information ethics. Students are introduced to a decision-making process as informed by ethical frameworks that outline key ethical considerations within the technologies presented. Students will study specific cases to help inform their professional responsibilities in how to navigate the important controversies in topics such as surveillance, social media, hacking, data manipulation, plagiarism and piracy, artificial intelligence, responsible innovation, and the digital divide. This course has no prerequisites.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate explains the role of ethical principles (i.e. theories, concepts, frameworks) in ethical decision-making in the information age.*
- *The graduate explains how IT professionals address ethical challenges regarding data privacy.*
- *The graduate explains how IT professionals address ethical challenges regarding data accuracy.*
- *The graduate explains how IT professionals address ethical challenges regarding data property.*

- *The graduate explains how IT professionals address ethical challenges regarding data access.*
- *The graduate explains how IT professional address the role of professional standards and codes of conduct in ethical decision-making.*

Secure Systems Analysis & Design

Fundamentals of Information Security

This course lays the foundation for understanding terminology, principles, processes, and best practices of information security at local and global levels. It further provides an overview of basic security vulnerabilities and countermeasures for protecting information assets through planning and administrative controls within an organization.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate defines security principles and cyber defense concepts to support security practices within an organization.*
- *The graduate identifies how security principles and cyber defense concepts impact organizational policies and practices.*
- *The graduate identifies security principles and cyber defense concepts that have been violated in common security failures.*
- *The graduate identifies security principles and cyber defense concepts to protect an organization's assets.*
- *The graduate identifies how confidentiality, integrity, and availability define security requirements for an organization.*
- *The graduate identifies guidelines in privacy and compliance as applied to cybersecurity.*

Information Systems Security

IT security professionals must be prepared for the operational demands and responsibilities of security practitioners including authentication, security testing, intrusion detection and prevention, incident response and recovery, attacks and countermeasures, cryptography, and malicious code countermeasures. This course provides a comprehensive, up-to-date global body of knowledge that ensures students have the right information, security knowledge, and skills to be successful in IT operational roles to mitigate security concerns and guard against the impact of malicious activity. Students demonstrate how to manage and restrict access control systems; administer policies, procedures, and guidelines that are ethical and compliant with laws and regulations; implement risk management and incident handling processes; execute cryptographic systems to protect data; manage network security; and analyze common attack vectors and countermeasures to assure information integrity and confidentiality in various systems. This course prepares students for the Systems Security Certified Practitioner (ISC2 SSCP) certification exam.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate manages control access to privileged, confidential, or proprietary resources.*
- *The graduate evaluates security operations concepts, and policies to ensure the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information assets is applied.*
- *The graduate proposes security risks mitigations processes to identify, evaluate, prioritize, and prevent potential security threats.*
- *The graduate evaluates security incident handling plans to protect and preserve organization assets and data.*
- *The graduate evaluates cryptographic systems and operations to protect data security.*
- *The graduate defends the security of a network by maintaining the confidentiality, integrity, and availability (CIA) of the information transmitted over communication networks.*
- *The graduate evaluates security concerns with countermeasures to guard against the impact of malicious activity to end-point device security, virtualization, cloud, and large-scale distributed systems.*

Business of IT

Business of IT - Applications

Business of IT—Applications examines Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL®) terminology, structure, policies, and concepts. Focusing on the management of information technology (IT) infrastructure, development, and operations, students will explore the core principles of ITIL practices for service management to prepare them for careers as IT professionals, business managers, and business process owners. This course has no prerequisites.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate understands the key concepts of service management.*
- *The graduate understands how the ITIL guiding principles can help an organization adopt and adapt service management.*
- *The graduate understands the four dimensions of service management.*
- *The graduate understands the purpose and components of the ITIL service value system.*
- *The graduate understands the activities of the service value chain, and how they interconnect.*
- *The graduate recognizes the purpose and key terms of 15 ITIL practices.*
- *The graduate understands 7 key ITIL practices.*

Business of IT - Project Management

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate applies key project management processes to guide business initiatives.*
- *The graduate determines the impact of project constraints and influences to manage risk.*
- *The graduate applies communication methods and change control processes to maintain clarity of project plans, activities, and changes for stakeholders.*
- *The graduate determines project tools and documentation methods to measure and monitor project performance.*

Ethics & Cyber Law

Legal Issues in Information Security

Security information professionals have the role and responsibility for knowing and applying ethical and legal principles and processes that define specific needs and demands to assure data integrity within an organization. This course addresses the laws, regulations, authorities, and directives that inform the development of operational policies, best practices, and training to assure legal compliance and to minimize internal and external threats. Students analyze legal constraints and liability concerns that threaten information security within an organization and develop disaster recovery plans to assure business continuity.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate describes the legal requirements to address compliance with cybersecurity policies and procedures within an organization.*
- *The graduate analyzes applicable laws and policies to legally protect the organization against security incidents.*
- *The graduate outlines legal issues that should be included within the security awareness training and education program of an organization.*
- *The graduate discusses the implications of ethical issues for specific cybersecurity actions within an organization.*

Web Development

Web Development Foundations

This course introduces students to web design and development by presenting them with HTML5 and Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), the foundational languages of the web, by reviewing media strategies and by using tools and techniques commonly employed in web development.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate creates web pages using a graphic user interface (GUI) editor as well as basic HTML5 and CSS 3 elements.*
- *The graduate develops a plan for creating and maintaining a website that addresses specific business needs while maintaining industry and ethical standards.*

Network and Security

Network and Security - Foundations

Network and Security - Foundations introduces students to the components of a computer network and the concept and role of communication protocols. The course covers widely used categorical classifications of networks (e.g., LAN, MAN, WAN, WLAN, PAN, SAN, CAN, and VPN) as well as network topologies, physical devices, and layered abstraction. The course also introduces students to basic concepts of security, covering vulnerabilities of networks and mitigation techniques, security of physical media, and security policies and procedures. This course has no prerequisites.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate identifies fundamental networking concepts to support an organization.*
- *The graduate identifies the fundamentals of network security concepts to support an organization.*
- *The graduate determines appropriate network security operations to protect an organization's assets.*

Networks

Networks for undergraduates focuses on the general concepts and applications of computer operating systems and network topologies. The fundamental knowledge and skills gained in this course prepares students for the CompTIA Network+ (N10-007) certification exam. C172 is a prerequisite for this course and should be completed prior to beginning Networks, C480.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate configures basic networking components to support an organization's operations.*
- *The graduate manages a network infrastructure to support an organization's operations.*
- *The graduate manages networks to support an organization's operations.*
- *The graduate troubleshoots network issues in support of an organization's operations.*
- *The graduate manages network security to protect an organization.*

Network and Security - Applications

Network and Security - Applications prepares students for the CompTIA Security+ certification exam. Successfully completing the course ensures the student will demonstrate the knowledge and skills required to install and configure systems to secure applications, networks, and devices; perform threat analysis and respond with appropriate mitigation techniques; participate in risk mitigation activities; and operate with an awareness of applicable policies, laws, and regulations. The following course is a prerequisite: C480 Networks

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate examines the impact of threats, attacks, and vulnerabilities to organizational security.*

- The graduate configures network hardware and software to support organizational security.
- The graduate implements secure system design to secure organization networks.
- The graduate executes identity and access management controls to prevent unauthorized access to organizational resources.
- The graduate executes data security and privacy practices to manage organizational risk.
- The graduate manages security settings to secure organization networks.

Information Assurance

Introduction to Cryptography

Introduction to Cryptography provides students with knowledge of cryptographic algorithms, protocols, and their uses in the protection of information in various states. This course has no prerequisites.

This course covers the following competencies:

- Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.
- The graduate compares types of Encryption Standards.
- The graduate performs encryption with symmetric and asymmetric algorithms.
- The graduate describes applications of cryptography and their supporting attributes.
- The graduate details cryptanalysis techniques.

Data Management

Data Management - Foundations

This course introduces students to the concepts and terminology used in the field of data management. Students will be introduced to Structured Query Language (SQL) and will learn how to use Data Definition Language (DDL) and Data Manipulation Language (DML) commands to define, retrieve, and manipulate data. This course covers differentiations of data—structured vs. unstructured and quasi-structured (relational, hierarchical, XML, textual, visual, etc); it also covers aspects of data management (quality, policy, storage methodologies). Foundational concepts of data security are included.

This course covers the following competencies:

- Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.
- The graduate explains how data, databases, and data management are used in today's organizations.
- The graduate analyzes the relational model of data.
- The graduate implements SQL concepts and coding.
- The graduate demonstrates an understanding of the concepts involved in the modeling of data.
- The graduate demonstrates appropriate strategies to normalize data.
- The graduate interprets the concepts of analytical processing within the context of business intelligence.

Data Management - Applications

This course covers conceptual data modeling and provides an introduction to MySQL. Students will learn how to create simple to complex SELECT queries including subqueries and joins, and students will also learn how to use SQL to update and delete data. Topics covered in this course include exposure to MySQL; developing physical schemas; creating and modifying databases, tables, views, foreign keys/primary keys (FKs/PKs), and indexes; populating tables; and developing simple Select-From-Where (SFW) queries to complex 3+ table join queries.

This course covers the following competencies:

- Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.
- The graduate creates conceptual data models and translates them into physical schemas.

- The graduate creates databases utilizing SQL Data Definition Language (DDL) in MySQL environment.
- The graduate writes code to create and modify tables and views employing SQL Data Definition Language (DDL) in MySQL environment.
- The graduate writes code to create and modify Primary Keys (PKs) and Foreign Keys (FKs) and Indexes with SQL Data Definition Language (DDL) in MySQL environment.
- The graduate populates tables with insert, update, and delete using DML in MySQL environment.
- The graduate creates simple Select-From-Where (SFW) and complex 3+ table join queries with Data Manipulation Language (DML) in MySQL environment.

Scripting and Programming

Scripting and Programming - Foundations

Scripting and Programming - Foundations provides an introduction to programming, covering basic elements such as variables, data types, flow control, and design concepts. The course is language-agnostic in nature, ending in a survey of languages and introduces the distinction between interpreted and compiled languages. There are no prerequisites for this course.

This course covers the following competencies:

- Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.
- The graduate examines basic computer programming elements, including data types, constants, variables, operators, and expressions.
- The graduate determines how to achieve programming goals through functions and control structure.
- The graduate interprets algorithms.
- The graduate describes steps of the software design process.
- The graduate compares various scripting and programming languages.

Wireless & Mobile Technologies

Emerging Technologies in Cybersecurity

The continual evolution of technology means that cybersecurity professionals must be able to analyze and evaluate new technologies in information security such as wireless, mobile, and internet technologies. Students review the adoption process that prepares an organization for the risks and challenges of implementing new technologies. This course focuses on comparison of evolving technologies to address the security requirements of an organization. Students learn underlying principles critical to the operation of secure networks and adoption of new technologies.

This course covers the following competencies:

- Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.
- The graduate determines how to address vulnerabilities and threats in cellular and mobile network technologies.
- The graduate determines how to address vulnerabilities and threats in wireless architectures.
- The graduate executes network mapping and monitoring procedures using industry-standard software for identifying vulnerabilities and threats.

Digital Forensics and Incident Response

Digital Forensics in Cybersecurity

Digital forensics, the science of investigating cybercrimes, seeks evidence that reveals who, what, when, where, and how threats compromise information. This course examines the relationships between incident categories, evidence handling, and incident management. Students identify consequences associated with cyber threats and security laws using a variety of tools to recognize and recover from unauthorized, malicious activities.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate identifies types of digital evidence, digital evidence examination rules, and digital evidence consideration by crime category.*
- *The graduate describes digital forensics procedures from the initial recognition of an incident through the steps of evidence gathering, preservation, analysis, and through the completion of legal proceedings.*
- *The graduate identifies laws, rules, policies, and procedures that affect digital forensics.*
- *The graduate conducts analysis on gathered evidence using forensic cyber tools to determine the nature of a security breach.*
- *The graduate executes recovery procedures for deleted data.*
- *The graduate identifies steganography and its techniques as it relates to concealed data.*
- *The graduate identifies common methods and concepts for password cracking, email tracking, file logging, and mobile forensics.*

Web and Cloud Security

Managing Cloud Security

Managing Cloud Security will prepare students to design solutions for cloud-based platforms and operations that maintain data availability while protecting the confidentiality and integrity of information. Many of today's companies and organizations have outsourced data management, availability, and operational processes through cloud computing. Topics include security controls, disaster recovery plans, and continuity management plans that address physical, logical, and human factors. It is recommended that the following course be completed before attempting this course: Networks and IT Applications.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate evaluates secure cloud data solutions to safeguard data, personally identifiable information, and information resources.*
- *The graduate validates security controls, disaster recovery plans, and continuity management plans to ensure a secure infrastructure for the protection and restoral of information resources.*
- *The graduate critiques plans to secure and manage physical and virtual infrastructures for legal and secure cloud operations.*
- *The graduate examines security in cloud software to improve security and define secure procedures.*
- *The graduate manages the critical requirements of cloud architecture to build and run that infrastructure.*
- *The graduate describes legal and compliance requirements of cloud operations to protect the organization and ensure ethical behavior.*

Risk Management

Managing Information Security

This course expands on fundamentals of information security by providing an in-depth analysis of the relationship between an information security program and broader business goals and objectives. Students develop knowledge and experience in the development and management of an information security program essential to ongoing education, career progression, and value delivery to enterprises. Students apply best practices to develop an information security governance framework, analyze mitigation in the context of compliance requirements, align security programs with security strategies and best practices, and recommend procedures for managing security strategies that minimize risk to an organization.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate recommends modifications to established information security governance to increase information assurance levels within an organization.*

- *The graduate recommends risk mitigation strategies that meet regulatory and ethical compliance.*
- *The graduate recommends changes to established security management programs in response to a cyber-related incident on an organization.*
- *The graduate develops security incident response plans that align to an organization's security goals and objectives and maintain business continuity.*

Hacking Countermeasures and Techniques

Cyber Defense and Countermeasures

Traditional defenses such as firewalls, security protocols, and encryption sometimes fail to stop attackers determined to access and compromise data. This course provides the fundamental skills to handle and respond to the computer security incidents in an information system. The course addresses various underlying principles and techniques for detecting and responding to current and emerging computer security threats. Students learn how to leverage intelligence and threat detection techniques, analyze and interpret data, identify and address vulnerabilities, suggest preventative measures, effectively respond to and recover from incidents handle various types of incidents, risk assessment methodologies, and various laws and policy related to incident handling. This course prepares students for the CompTIA Cybersecurity Analyst (CySA+) certification exam.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate identifies key concepts of information security and incident categories.*
- *The graduate describes the principles of incident recovery and continuity planning in order to evaluate business impact.*
- *The graduate distinguishes the purpose and elements of a security policy in order to comply with the laws and regulations related to handling a security incident.*
- *The graduate applies NIST's risk assessment methodology to conduct IT risk assessment.*
- *The graduate describes steps in incident response and handling procedures.*
- *The graduate defines the purpose, protocol, and functions of a Computer Security Incident Response Team (CSIRT).*
- *The graduate describes security incident types and procedures for handling them.*
- *The graduate describes malicious codes and methods of its incident containment and prevention.*
- *The graduate describes steps in detecting and preventing insider threats.*
- *The graduate describes the role of forensics analysis in incident response and prevention plan.*
- *The graduate describes the purpose, key elements, and procedure for creating an incident report.*

Technical Writing

Technical Communication

This course covers basic elements of technical communication, including professional written communication proficiency; the ability to strategize approaches for differing audiences; and technical style, grammar, and syntax proficiency.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate integrates basic elements of professional discourse, including audience analysis, the writing process, correct grammar, and appropriate design elements, into technical communication artifacts.*
- *The graduate makes strategic and appropriate communication decisions based on the audience.*
- *The graduate creates various technically written artifacts using appropriate technical communication concepts.*

Penetration Testing

Penetration Testing and Vulnerability Analysis

Penetration Testing and Vulnerability Analysis introduces students to the skills necessary to perform penetration testing and

vulnerability management within an organization. The course covers widely used penetration testing techniques that focus on planning and scoping, information gathering, vulnerability identification, and attacks and exploits. The course also introduces students to tools that can be used for penetration testing and reporting and communication. The prerequisite for this course is C178.

This course covers the following competencies:

- *Begin your course by discussing your course planning tool report with your instructor and creating your personalized course plan together.*
- *The graduate explains the importance of planning and key aspects of compliance-based assessments.*
- *The graduate demonstrates information gathering and vulnerability identification techniques.*
- *The graduate develops techniques to exploit physical, digital, and social vulnerabilities.*
- *The graduate executes penetration testing tools for information gathering and analysis.*
- *The graduate recommends tools for communicating discovered vulnerabilities based on appropriate mitigation strategies.*

Capstone

IT Capstone Written Project

The capstone project consists of a technical work proposal, the proposal's implementation, and a post-implementation report that describes the graduate's experience in developing and implementing the capstone project. The capstone project should be presented and approved by the Course Instructor in relation to the graduate's technical emphasis.

Accessibility and Accommodations

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If you have inquiries or concerns that require technical support, please contact the WGU IT Service Desk. The IT Service Desk is available Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., mountain standard time. To contact the IT Service Desk, please call 1-877-HELP-WGU (877-435-7948) or e-mail servicedesk@wgu.edu. The support teams are generally closed in observance of university holidays.

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