

CAE PMO

2025 Welcome Handbook



# National Centers of Academic Excellence **IN CYBERSECURITY**



*The key to our success is  
teamwork and collaboration!*

The National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity (NCAE-C) program (established in 1999) is managed by the National Cryptologic School at the National Security Agency. Federal Partners include the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)/National Initiative on Cybersecurity Education (NICE), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the Department of Defense Office of the Chief Information Officer (DoD-CIO), and US Cyber Command (CYBERCOM).

The mission of the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity (NCAE) program is to create and manage a collaborative cybersecurity educational program with community colleges, colleges, and universities that:

- Establishes standards for cybersecurity curriculum and academic excellence,
- Includes competency development among students and faculty,
- Values community outreach and leadership in professional development,
- Integrates cybersecurity practice within the institution across academic disciplines,
- Actively engages in solutions to challenges facing cybersecurity education.

## Program Office manages the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity Program, with three designations:

- **CAE in Cyber Defense (CAE-CD)** The CAE-CD Designation is awarded to regionally accredited academic institutions offering cybersecurity degrees and/or certificates at the Associates, Bachelors and graduate levels.
- **CAE in Cyber Research (CAE-R)** The CAE-R designation is awarded to DoD schools, PhD producing military academies, or regionally accredited, degree granting four-year institutions rated by the 2025 Carnegie Classification system as either a Research 1: Very High Spending and Doctorate Production, Research 2: High Spending and Doctorate Production, or Research Colleges and Universities (Institutions in R1 or R2 categories are not included).
- **CAE in Cyber Operations (CAE-CO)** The CAE-CO program is a deeply technical, inter-disciplinary, higher education program firmly grounded in the computer science, computer engineering, and/or electrical engineering disciplines, with extensive opportunities for hands-on applications via labs and exercises.

**NOTE:** All CAE designation candidates must fill out and submit the online [CAE Program Applicant Checklist](#) on the CAE Community website for entry into the Candidates Program.

## NSA CAE Program Management Office (PMO):

- **CAE PMO email alias** [caepmo\\_uwe@uwe.nsa.gov](mailto:caepmo_uwe@uwe.nsa.gov)
- Renae Weathers [rpweath@uwe.nsa.gov](mailto:rpweath@uwe.nsa.gov) (Chief, CAE Program Manager)
- Annie Becker [ambeck3@uwe.nsa.gov](mailto:ambeck3@uwe.nsa.gov) (Cyber Defense Lead)
- Angie Painter [arpaint@uwe.nsa.gov](mailto:arpaint@uwe.nsa.gov) (Cyber Defense Co-Lead & Cyber AI Lead)
- Michelle Isenhardt [mjisenh@uwe.nsa.gov](mailto:mjisenh@uwe.nsa.gov) (Cyber Operations Lead & Cyber Research Lead)
- **CAE Grants email alias** [NCAECGrants@nsa.gov](mailto:NCAECGrants@nsa.gov)
- Akhirah Padilla [aapadil@nsa.gov](mailto:aapadil@nsa.gov) (Grants Manager)
- Lindsey Benjes [lavandy@nsa.gov](mailto:lavandy@nsa.gov) (Gencyber Program Manager)

## CAE National Resource Centers (CNRCs):

- **CAE in Cybersecurity Community National Center** - California State University, San Bernardino (CSUSB): Dr. Tony Coulson [tcoulson@csusb.edu](mailto:tcoulson@csusb.edu), Amy Hysell [ahysell@caecommunity.org](mailto:ahysell@caecommunity.org), Vanessa Zaldivar [vzaldivar@caecommunity.org](mailto:vzaldivar@caecommunity.org)
  - Provide technical and logistical support for CAE events, activities, and curriculum
  - Provide a portal of CAE resources for the community, geographic regions, and the Nation as a whole



- Engage and facilitate strategic initiatives for the Nation in the areas of research, student and faculty development, diversity, and other workforce development activities
- **CAE Candidates National Center (CCNC)** – Whatcom Community College: Director: Stephen Troupe [stroupe@whatcom.edu](mailto:stroupe@whatcom.edu) and Project Manager: Emma Graves [EGraves@whatcom.edu](mailto:EGraves@whatcom.edu)
  - Guides university and college administrators and faculty through the rigorous application process to be designated as CAEs in Cybersecurity.
  - Assigns mentors and cycle assignments. Tracks the front end of processing before the final application is submitted to NSA for approval
    - <https://www.ncyte.net/resources/cae-designation-resources>
- **CAE Peer Review National Center (PCNC)** – Eastern New Mexico University - Ruidoso Branch Community College & Whatcom Community College: Director: Stephen Miller [SMiller@whatcom.edu](mailto:SMiller@whatcom.edu) and Checklist Coordinator: Joel Hutchins [joel.hutchins@enmu.edu](mailto:joel.hutchins@enmu.edu)
  - Trains peer reviewers, manages peer process, and assigns peer reviewers to applications for Academic Endorsement and/or NCAE-C Designation. Whatcom College and Eastern New Mexico University-Ruidoso Branch Community College collaborate to manage peer review panels based on readiness of Candidates to submit applications or Designated institutions to apply for re-designation.
- **Careers Preparation National Center (CPNC)** – Norwich University: Sharon Hamilton [shamilto@norwich.edu](mailto:shamilto@norwich.edu)
  - Responsible for efforts to foster the development of college students with the knowledge, skills and competencies required for government and industry employment
  - Key role is to lead the integration of new competency development requirements for NCAE-C re-designation
- **Education Pathways National Center (EPNC)** – Moraine Valley Community College: John Sands [sands@morainevalley.edu](mailto:sands@morainevalley.edu)
  - Coordinator for NCAE-C initiatives that prepare secondary-level students for transition to post-secondary education at community college and/or university academic programs of study
  - Advocate and contributor to the RING initiative
  - Leader in Teacher Development initiatives for continuity and awareness

## CAE Communities of Practice (CoP) POC's:

- CAE-CD – Dr. Yair Levy (Nova Southeastern University) / Dr. Anne Kohnke (University of Detroit Mercy) [levyy@nova.edu](mailto:levyy@nova.edu) [kohnkean@udmercy.edu](mailto:kohnkean@udmercy.edu)
- CAE-R – Dr. Susanne Wetzel (Stevens Institute of Technology) / Dr. Agnes Chan (Northeastern University) [swetzel@stevens.edu](mailto:swetzel@stevens.edu) [ag.chan@northeastern.edu](mailto:ag.chan@northeastern.edu)
- CAE-CO – Dr. Seth Hamman (Cedarville University) / Dr. Drew Hamilton (Texas A&M University) [shamman@cedarville.edu](mailto:shamman@cedarville.edu) [hamilton@exchange.tamu.edu](mailto:hamilton@exchange.tamu.edu)



- CAE-CyberAI Programs of Study (PoS)- Dr. Sidd Kaza (Towson University) / Dr. Blair Taylor (Towson University) [skaza@towson.edu](mailto:skaza@towson.edu) [btaylor@towson.edu](mailto:btaylor@towson.edu)

## DoD Cyber Service Academy (DoD CSA)

DoD CIO sponsors the . Only students from designation NCAE-C institutions are eligible. Students receive tuition, a stipend, a laptop, travel to one event per year, and are offered a job with their DoD sponsor at the time of receiving the scholarship. Students owe one year of service for one year of scholarship.

- [osd.mc-alex.dod-cio.mbx.dod-csa@mail.mil](mailto:osd.mc-alex.dod-cio.mbx.dod-csa@mail.mil) <[osd.mc-alex.dod-cio.mbx.dod-csa@mail.mil](mailto:osd.mc-alex.dod-cio.mbx.dod-csa@mail.mil)>
- <https://public.cyber.mil/wid/csa/>
- <https://www.dodemergingtech.com/dod-programs/cyber-service-academy-csa/>

## NICE Challenge Project

The NICE Challenge Project develops real-world cyber challenges within virtualized business environments. It is primarily designed for use as culminating experiences and assessments.

- <https://nice-challenge.com>
- <https://caecommunity.org/initiative/nice-challenge>
- Dr. Vincent Nestler [vnestler@csusb.edu](mailto:vnestler@csusb.edu) , Tony Coulson [tcoulson@csusb.edu](mailto:tcoulson@csusb.edu) , James Ashley [jashley@nice-challenge.com](mailto:jashley@nice-challenge.com)

## CLARK:

CLARK is the largest platform that provides free cybersecurity curriculum to any educator with a .edu email address. Curriculum is created by top educators and reviewed for relevance and quality, then periodically curated for currency.

- <https://clark.center/home>
- [Info@secured.team](mailto:Info@secured.team) [leadership@secured.team](mailto:leadership@secured.team)
- Dr. Blair Taylor [blair.taylor@secured.team](mailto:blair.taylor@secured.team) Dr. Sidd Kaza [sidd.kaza@secured.team](mailto:sidd.kaza@secured.team)

## NSF's CyberCorps Scholarship for Service (SFS):

The CyberCorps scholarship offers scholarship to NCAE-C students for up to five years. Recipients are required to find a federal government position, owing the government one year for each year of scholarship.

- <https://new.nsf.gov/funding/opportunities/cybercorps-scholarship-service-sfs>
- Dr. Victor P. Piotrowski [vp Piotrow@nsf.gov](mailto:vp Piotrow@nsf.gov)
- [Info@nsf.gov](mailto:Info@nsf.gov)

## INSuRE:

The INSuRE program is a collaboration between government agencies, national labs and CAE institutions to provide students with an opportunity to work on real-world applied problems.

- <https://caecommunity.org/initiative/insure>
- Dr. Agnes Chan [ag.chan@northeastern.edu](mailto:ag.chan@northeastern.edu)



- Dr. Susanne Wetzel [swetzel@stevens.edu](mailto:swetzel@stevens.edu)

## WEBSITE LINKS:

- NCAE-C DoD Cyber Exchange: <https://public.cyber.mil/ncae-c/>
- CAE Requirements Documents <https://public.cyber.mil/ncae-c/documents-library/>
- CAE Initiatives <https://caecommunity.org/about-us/cae-initiatives>
- CAE Application Tool: <https://nsa-ncae.com/login>
  - Institutions will complete their PoS Validation & CAE designation applications
  - CAE PMO will review and approve applications
- CAE Community: <https://caecommunity.org/>
- CAE Map: <https://www.caecommunity.org/cae-map>
- Communities of Practice: <https://www.caecommunity.org/about-us/cae-communities-practice>
- CAE National Centers: <https://www.caecommunity.org/about-us/cae-national-centers>
- CAE Style Guide: <https://www.caecommunity.org/resources/cae-community-style-guide>
- National Cybersecurity Training & Education Center (NCyTE CENTER): <https://www.ncyte.net/institutions/centers-of-academic-excellence>
  - Designation resources to include the application timeline, mentor and advisor information (mentor/reviewer application)
- Video Series on the application process and the CAE Application tool <https://www.ncyte.net/institutions/centers-of-academic-excellence/cae-cd-resources/cae-cd-videos>

## The following links are for related programs and resources:

- GenCyber: <https://public.cyber.mil/gencyber/>
- CLARK: <https://clark.center/>
- NICE Challenge: <https://nice-challenge.com/>
- National Cyber Teaching Academy: <https://teachcyber.or/ncta-information/>
- Workforce Development: <https://cyberskills2work.org/>
- RING: <https://www.caecommunity.org/initiative/k12-ring/>
- CISA: <https://niccs.cisa.gov/>
- NICE: <https://www.nist.gov/itl/applied-cybersecurity/nice/>
- National Science Foundation (NSF): [https://www.nsf.gov/news/special\\_reports/cybersecurity/index/jsp/](https://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/cybersecurity/index/jsp/)
- CYBER SEEK: <https://www.cyberseek.org/>

## RESPONSIBILITIES:

CAE institutions are expected to complete the following minimal requirements to maintain designation:



1. Maintain current contact information in the program management tool database for: designation POC, alternate POC, the POCs supervisor(s), Dean and President. (PMO cannot update or change this information on an institution's behalf)
2. Submit an annual/status report with all required information into the Program Development Tool; correct any deficiencies noted by the CAE Program Management Office (PMO). Failure to submit annual report can result in probationary status, notification to institution President and ineligibility for travel assistance to NCAE-C sponsored events etc.
3. All new POCs and Alt POCs are required to attend a designation orientation meeting within three (6) month's notification of designation (or re-designation) date.
4. Attend (or send a representative) the annual CAE Symposium and/or PMO meeting
5. Participate in NCAE-C program (and CAE Community) by:
  - a. Contributing time and expertise to outreach, events and activities that advance cybersecurity education and the betterment of the NCAE-C program
  - b. Contributing time/expertise to the NCAE-C community's programs, projects and initiatives and forums
  - c. Pursuing continuous improvement to designated institution' accreditation requirements, including maintenance of a continuous improvement plan
  - d. Incrementally implement student, competency and faculty development opportunities
  - e. Ensure CAE students have received sufficient resources, counseling, career awareness and other opportunities/experiences to prepare for a career in cybersecurity

## ACTIONS:

- Register and attend CAE Community of Practice Events:
  - CD leads host monthly events to include: Getting to Know Your Fellow CAE and Meet Your Cyber Competition
    - Events can be found here: <https://caecommunity.org/community-of-practice/cyber-defense>
  - CAE-R leads hosts a monthly Get to Know Your Fellow CAE-R.
    - Event details can be found here: <https://www.caecommunity.org/community-of-practice/cyber-research>

## COMPETITIONS:

- For a list of competitions available to CAE designated institutions and beyond, please visit: <https://cyber-atlas.caecommunity.org/>

## CAE EVENTS:

- **Program Management Office (PMO) Meeting** – Held annually in the fall, the PMO Meeting is planned to convey the latest program information, national events, initiatives and opportunities, and is generally held in the same week as the ELF (see below) and the CAE





Research Symposium. If funding is available, a major competition is organized for CAE teams to compete during the event. *The CAE Community offers travel reimbursement for the PMO Meeting and the CAE Symposium depending on available funding.*

- **CAE Symposium** – Either the CAE Symposium (in the spring) or the annual PMO meeting (in the fall) is required for CAE designated institutions. Location changes each year. The CAE Symposium is organized by the CAE Community Lead, currently Tony Coulson with University of California, San Bernardino.
- **CNRC hosted CAE Program Development and Designation Workshop** – This event is hosted by the Candidates Center at Whatcom Community College. The audience is for schools that are interested in becoming a CAE and for newly assigned Institution POC's to become familiar with the application process and program requirements. The workshop includes an overview of the PoS and CAE applications.
- **Peer Review Workshop** – Brings together peer reviewers to work on completing CAE designation applications. These events are held in person or virtually, as needed.
- **Executive Leadership Forum** – This event brings together leadership from the designated institution at the President (or designee) level. Location changes in each year.
- **CAE Designation Ceremonies** – Multiple events hosted throughout the year. It may be in conjunction with the CAE Symposium or other events.
- **CAE Lecture Series**– CAE Lecture Series are conducted virtually once a month during the spring and fall semesters. NSA's CAE PMO office hosts the presentations via MS Teams which employs slides, VOIP, and chat for live interaction. These virtual sessions are open to faculty and students in the CAE community. A call for speakers is sent out to the community in December for the next calendar year.
- **CAE Designation Orientation Meeting** – This quarterly event is hosted by the CAE PMO for newly designated institutions. An overview of the mandatory program requirements and expectations will be discussed along with opportunities for participation in the CAE community.

## BENEFITS OF BECOMING A CAE:

- Receive national recognition for the institution's cybersecurity program and curricula.
- Ensure student confidence in degree programs as a top choice to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in cybersecurity workforce.
- Serve as a source and facilitator for government-academic researcher exchanges.
- Join the CAE community of cybersecurity professionals, educators, researchers and advocates to grow the cyber field and develop a collaborative network with top schools.





- Qualify to compete for student scholarships and grants through the Department of Defense Cyber Service Academy (CSA) and CyberCorps Scholarships for Service program managed by National Science Foundation (NSF).
- Participate in the monthly CAE Lecture Series and listen to NSA SME's and CAE SMEs give lectures on interesting topics as well as information sessions on student internships/full time positions with CAE government agencies
- Opportunity for student participation in the NCAE Cyber Games competition

## FAQs:

**IMPORTANT: Institution POC Changes - In the event you need to change the institution POC, you must notify the CAE PMO via email [caepmo\\_uwe@uwe.nsa.gov](mailto:caepmo_uwe@uwe.nsa.gov).**

**Alt POC and Data Access Managers must also be kept current. Please remove accounts that are no longer needed.**

CAE Application Tool Help link: <https://nsa-ncae.com/login>

## How do I start my Application?

To start a new application, the access manager must follow the steps below:

1. Select “New Program” under: Application > All Applications > Programs

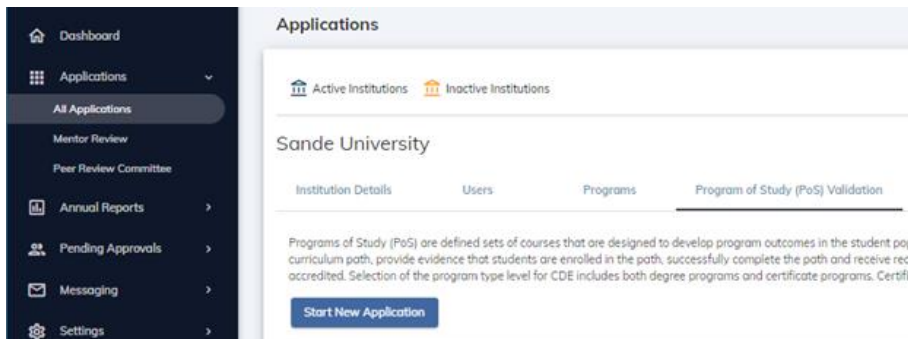


2. Add + New Program Information

**Note: Program Name:** Must be *official* Program Name (ex. *Bachelors in Science in Computer Information Systems*.)



- Please allow up to 48 hours for new program to be approved.
3. Start New Application under: **Application > All Applications > Program of Study (PoS) Validation**



4. Complete New Application information:

Application ▼

POC  
Select POC ▼

Alternate POC  
Select Alternate POC ▼

Data Entry  
Select Data Entry ▼

### How do I add additional users to the NCAE application tool?

Create an account by following the below instructions:

1. Go to <https://nsa-ncac.com/login>
2. Select **Create Account**
3. Select **I am an organizational User**
4. Select either **organization Point of Contact (POC)**, **organization Alternate POC (Alt-POC)** or **organization Data Entry**
5. Complete the New User Registration Form and Press **Create Account**
6. The organizations User Access Manager will need to approve the request, thereby enabling your account

The organization's User Access Manager, will follow the below instructions for approval:

1. Login at <https://nsa-ncac.com/login>
2. Select **Pending Approvals** on left hand side
3. Select **Pending User Registration**



4. Press **Approve** for the person you would like to grant access

**Note:** The User Access Manager cannot approve a new Institution POC. Contact the [CAEPMO\\_uwe@uwe.nsa.gov](mailto:CAEPMO_uwe@uwe.nsa.gov) to request the account approval request

## How do I assign additional users (Alternate POC / Data Entry) to my application?

**Note:** All users must have an account before granting access to an application.

1. The organization's Access Manager will log in to: <https://nsa-ncae.com/login>
2. Select **Type of Application (POS, CAE, Annual Report)** - top tab
3. For each Application, grant access to other users, select the **3 vertical dots** option near "view Application".
4. Select **User Access**

Note: There can only be 1 POC and 1 Alternate POC for each application. All other users must be assigned as Data Entry.

POS-CD Program 1 - CD-Associate						<a href="#">User Access</a> <a href="#">Generate Annual Report</a> <a href="#">Delete Application</a> <a href="#">View Application</a>
Title	Created Date	Designation Date	Expiration Date	Status	User Access	
Program of Study (POS) Validation	07/22/2021			Submitted for Pre-Submission	POC: sabitha2 polsani3 Alternate POC: sabitha2 polsani3 Data Entry: test user	

5. Choose each type of user (POC, Alternate POC, Data Entry) and **check** the appropriate user for access
6. Select **Save**

## Who should be assigned as the organization's User Access Manager, what is their role and how can I tell who it is?

The organizations User Access Manager is an individual who is responsible for approving user account requests, can update the President and organizations information. The organization User Access Manager is identified by the green check box (shown below)

Role	Institution's User Access Manager?
Institution Alternate Point of Contact (Alt-POC)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Institution Point of Contact (POC)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



## How can I change the User Access Manager?

The current organization User Access Manager can change this by navigating to the Users tab and select the pencil icon under Actions. You can check the “Mark this user as organizations User Access Manager” and save.

## What user role is right for my team?

### Primary Point of Contact (POC):

Each application will have one primary POC assigned to it. The Primary POC must be a full time faculty member directly involved with the representative academic program and available during the entire application process.

Responsibilities include:

- Full application edit privileges.
- Primary contact and manager of assigned Program of Study/CAE application.
- Responsible for submitting Program of Study/CAE application.
- Responsible for assigned Program of Study / CAE annual reports.

### Alternate Point of Contact (POC):

Each application must have one alternate POC assigned. The alternate POC is the secondary contact to primary POC. The Alternate POC must be a full-time employee of the institution associated with the PoS and/or designation, such as a Dean, a Center Director, Faculty member or other management position with a working knowledge of the CAE program and the institutions curriculum.

Responsibilities include:

- Secondary contact and manager of assigned Program of Study/CAE application.
- Full application edit privileges.

### Data Entry:

Data entry users are not required. This role is given to additional users to assist with program of study /CAE application.

Responsibilities include:

- Partial application edit privileges (cannot submit application)

## Where can I add the President’s contact information?

The requested information is located in the “organization Details” tab.



**Note:** The organization's User Access Manager is the only person that is able to update this information.

## Notes:

