

DoD Information Assurance Scholarship Program

2017 – 2018

Application Deadline: 15 May 2017

1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Defense (DoD) Information Assurance Scholarship Program (IASP) was established, in accordance with provisions of Chapter 112, "Information Security Scholarship Program," of title 10, United States Code, added by Public Law 106-398, The National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2001. The purpose of the program is to increase the number of qualified students entering the fields of information assurance, information technology, and cybersecurity to meet the DoD's increasing dependence on cybersecurity for war fighting and the security of its information infrastructure. Northeastern University will submit a proposal to manage a full-time, institution-based, grant-funded scholarship program in the disciplines underpinning cybersecurity for Academic Year 2017- 2018.

To continue the development of a strong foundation for the scholarship program during the Academic Year 2017-2018, competition will be limited to full-time students entering their third or fourth years of undergraduate education; students in their first or second year of a master's degree program; students pursuing doctoral degrees.

2. TERMINOLOGY

- A. Cybersecurity: For purposes of this program at Northeastern University, the term Cybersecurity encompasses the scientific and technical disciplines required to ensure computer and network security including the following functions:
- System/network administration and operations
 - Systems security engineering
 - Information assurance systems and product acquisition
 - Cryptography
 - Threat and vulnerability assessment, to include risk management
 - Web security
 - Operations of computer emergency response teams
 - Information assurance training, education and management
 - Computer forensics
 - Defensive information operations
 - Critical information infrastructure assurance
- B. The opportunity exists for part-time Government (DoD) employment while receiving scholarship (see Student Application), through the Agency intern and hiring options, to include the authority

to employ individuals completing Department of Defense Scholarship or Fellowship programs, and/or the related “r” waiver authority.

3. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM SCOPE

- A. The DoD Role: While Northeastern is required to provide the DoD an assessment of each applicant, the actual selection of student scholars will be made by DoD evaluators. Students selected as Information Assurance Scholars will receive the full cost of tuition, books (from the institution/degree specific required book list, not books which are optional for the class), required fees (including health care), and a stipend to cover room and board. The stipend levels are \$22,500 for undergraduate students and \$30,000 for graduate (Master’s/PhD) students. Awards will be made via a grant to the University. Selecting agencies will also provide sponsors who will maintain contact with the student during the scholarship period, and who will facilitate the student’s entry into internships, if applicable, and eventually DoD employment. The DoD IASP Program Office will contact the University to develop agreements governing the character, scheduling, and periodic assessment of student internships.
- B. Future Opportunities for Returning Students: Contingent on adequate funding appropriations, it is anticipated that current CAE grantees and successful scholarship recipients will receive follow-on support to complete their degree program. Returning students will be required to re-apply each year by submitting the entire student application, one copy of their official transcripts, reflecting maintenance of the required grade point average and an endorsement/ recommendation letter from the Principal Investigator.

4. STUDENT OBLIGATION

Students selected to participate in the DoD IASP will be required to sign a written agreement obligating them to work for the DoD, as a civilian employee for one calendar year for each year of scholarship assistance. However, should a student apply for only one semester (or six months) of scholarship, the student must still agree to work for the DoD for one year. This agreement is provided to the selecting agency for their records to ensure compliance with the service commitment. Students will also be required to serve in internship positions, if timing permits, with the DoD organizations during the time they are receiving scholarship support until they complete the course of study provided for by the scholarship. These internships will be arranged by the DoD to occur during the summer or other breaks between school terms, as appropriate to the individual’s circumstances and the institution’s calendar. The internship does not count toward satisfying the period of obligated service incurred by accepting the scholarship. Students will be required to formally accept or decline the scholarship within 15 days of notification. Non-acceptance by this date will mean the scholarship will be offered to the next available student.

Students will be required to complete a security investigation questionnaire to initiate the process for a background investigation in preparation for their internships, if applicable, and as a condition of future employment with the DoD. Drug tests or other suitability processing will occur as appropriate. Students will also be required to sign an agreement stating that they will accept assignments requiring travel or change of duty stations as interns or employees. Individuals who voluntarily terminate employment during intern appointments or before the end of the period of obligated service required by the terms of Chapter 112, title 10, United States Code, will be required to refund the United States, in whole or in part, the cost of the educational assistance provided to them. Web pages have been provided in the

Application Background and Application Package for review about security clearances to assist both the PIs and the students in understanding these requirements before they apply.

An opportunity also exists for scholarship payback through military service. Individuals choosing to enlist or accept a commission to serve on active duty in one of the Military Services shall incur a service obligation of a minimum of 4 years on active duty in that Service upon graduation. The Military Services may establish a service obligation longer than 4 years, depending on the occupational specialty and type of enlistment or commissioning program selected.

Undergraduate scholarship recipients will be required to maintain a 3.2 out of 4.0 grade point average or the equivalent; graduate students will be required to maintain an overall 3.5 out of a 4.0 grade point average, or equivalent. Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress will constitute grounds for termination of financial assistance and termination of internship and/or employment appointment. Additionally, students who fail to complete the degree program satisfactorily or to fulfill the service commitment upon graduation shall be required to reimburse the United States, in whole or in part, the cost of the financial (scholarship) assistance provided to them. The University will be responsible for monitoring student progress and will notify the DoD IASP Program Manager should any student scholar fail to attain minimum academic standards required for continuing scholarship support.

Except for small achievement awards, not to exceed \$5,000 in any academic year, a student may not accept simultaneous remuneration from another scholarship or fellowship.

Graduate programs may include a reasonable amount of teaching or similar activities that are, in the University's opinion, contributory to the student's academic progress; however, the development of students, not service to the University, will govern the assignment of these activities.

5. ASSESSING SCHOLARSHIP CANDIDATES

Northeastern University is required to verify each applicant's eligibility for scholarship and academic sufficiency, to evaluate each eligible candidate's knowledge and ability in certain competency areas important to successful information assurance work, and to provide a relative endorsement level for each eligible candidate.

1. Eligibility for Scholarship and DoD Appointment. The Principal Investigator shall verify documentation of the eligibility of each applicant for scholarship and appointment and shall exclude from further evaluation any applicant unable to meet the minimum administrative requirements which are noted in Attachment C, DoD Information Assurance Scholarship Application Background and Requirements. Current DoD/Federal Employees, Active Duty Military/Reserves/Guard, or students with an existing service obligation are not eligible to apply.
2. University Endorsement. The Principal Investigator (PI) shall provide an endorsement of each applicant meeting administrative and academic sufficiency requirements that is based on the overall evaluation of all applicant materials, including the competency evaluations described above. The PI shall indicate only one of the following three levels of endorsement for each applicant:
 - a. Not Recommended

- b. Recommended
- c. Highly Recommended

STUDENT APPLICATION MATERIALS

1. Application Form: Attachment D NEW Student Application 2017-2018.pdf
2. Official Transcript (hardcopy is needed)
3. Resume
4. Award, Honors and Distinctions list
5. Letters of Reference (must be on letter-head and signed, at least one from an academic faculty member)
6. Assessment of your own knowledge and ability on the 6 competency areas:
 - a. Knowledge of the techniques of the cybersecurity discipline, including encryption access control, physical security, training, threat analysis, and authentication.
 - b. Knowledge of the human factors in cybersecurity, including human computer interaction, design, training, sabotage, human error prevention and identification, personal use policies, and monitoring.
 - c. Ability to identify and analyze problems, distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information to make logical decisions, and provide solutions to individual and organizational problems.
 - d. Ability to consider and respond appropriately to the needs, feelings, and capabilities of different people in different situations; is tactful, compassionate and sensitive, and treats others with respect.
 - e. Ability to make clear and convincing oral presentations to individuals or groups; listens effectively and clarifies information as needed; facilitates an open exchange of ideas and fosters an atmosphere of open communication.
 - f. Ability to express facts and ideas in writing in clear, convincing and organized manners appropriate to the audience and occasion.

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