

IDS 493 Course Reflection

My time as a student in ODU's cybersecurity program has been nothing short of incredible. The friends I have made, the connections that I have established, and the coursework I have participated in have all been a big part of my experience. I came as a transfer student from TCC and had no idea what would be next for me, starting out at a new school and picking up where I left off with classes. As I navigated through my courses, I learned more about the field of cybersecurity and ODU itself. The cyber program has made more things available to me, like job and career fairs and opportunities to get myself out there more as I look for a professional career. Throughout my time at ODU, I have cultivated not only technical proficiency but also critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective communication skills, which are invaluable in the realm of cybersecurity.

During my time at ODU, the most valuable learning experiences have stemmed from the hands-on projects and real-world simulations embedded within the curriculum. These practical exercises have allowed me to apply theoretical knowledge to solve complex cybersecurity challenges, preparing me for the dynamic nature of the field. Additionally, collaborating with peers from diverse backgrounds has broadened my perspective and enhanced my problem-solving skills.

However, like any educational journey, I have encountered obstacles along the way. Balancing coursework with other commitments, such as internships or part-time jobs, presented a significant challenge. To overcome this, I developed strong time management skills and sought support from professors and classmates when needed. Moreover, staying updated with rapidly evolving technologies and emerging threats required continuous learning and adaptability.

There have been so many classes that have helped me shape and hone my skills in the realm of cybersecurity. To start out, CYSE 270 has been one of the most enjoyable classes I have taken here at ODU. This class was Linux Systems for Cyber, and it allowed me to further sharpen my skills when it came to Linux systems and command line interfaces. I had previously taken a few Linux and Unix classes at TCC and found myself learning more than I thought I would with hands-on labs and experiences in the classroom. Throughout this class, I was able to further develop my scripting skills and learn more about the different distributions of Linux that we used in our classroom setting.

As mentioned above, several classes have shaped my time at ODU. CYSE 425W is no different. This course was my introduction to cyber strategy and policy, which I have come to enjoy learning about. This class took several looks at how cyber policies are made and how they are introduced in a government and civilian setting. The course assignments are some of the more memorable ones as we had to choose different cyber policies and write about them. Topics for the papers included the ethical nature of these policies, societal impacts of the proposed policies, and the overall effectiveness of these policies.

Another class that made my time here at ODU meaningful was CRJS 310; Cybercriminology: Foundations. This course was the first course I took when I added my cybercrime minor to my academic goals. While taking this course, I was introduced to the many definitions of cybercrime and what each one entails. Class discussions were held often even though most students did not participate. There were several that took place that actually sparked a debate among class members and the professor of the class which made it more enjoyable. This class took a look at the impacts that cybercrimes have on individuals and families. It was

interesting to see the contrast between the victimization of people as it came to cybercrimes vs cybersecurity.

IDS 493, or Cybersecurity Capstone, serves as the culmination of my academic journey in cybersecurity. It integrates knowledge and skills acquired throughout the program into a comprehensive final project. Throughout the course, I have designed and implementing a cybersecurity solution for a real-world problem, applying techniques learned in previous coursework.

One of the most valuable aspects of IDS 493 has been the opportunity to work on a large-scale project from start to finish. This hands-on experience has allowed me to demonstrate proficiency in various cybersecurity domains, from risk assessment and threat modeling to system implementation and testing.

In my portfolio for IDS 493, I am particularly proud of the depth of work that I have put into the design and content side of the project. Taking classes and ensuring I have all of the necessary parts for this portfolio has been crucial in not falling behind and making sure I am providing an adequate product.

Challenges within IDS 493 have primarily revolved around project management and balancing competing priorities. To address these issues, I have utilized project management tools and techniques, such as Agile methodologies and Gantt charts, to stay organized and on track. Given more time, I think I would be able to further refine design elements by using a different platform or tool to create the website. This was my first use of WordPress and found it to be simpler than the alternatives.

Interdisciplinary methods and theories have been crucial in my understanding of cybersecurity coursework. Drawing connections between various disciplines such as computer

science, mathematics, and psychology has provided a holistic perspective on cybersecurity challenges and solutions.

Being an interdisciplinary thinker in the field of cybersecurity is essential due to the multifaceted nature of security threats. By integrating knowledge from diverse domains, cybersecurity professionals can develop comprehensive strategies to mitigate risks effectively.

After completing my bachelor's program, I will be returning to ODU to start my Master's in Cybersecurity. I am still debating on what I want to do after my academic days are finished. I have been keeping eyes on the Department of Homeland Security as a possibility. I have not closed the door on joining a service by direct commissioning as an officer just yet, but I am unsure if I can go through basic training just yet. Government contracting would be an excellent opportunity for me as well. I understand that they are a conditional way of working but I think it would be an effective way for me to put my skills on display.