

ACI CADET COMPETITIVE CYBER 9/12 POLICY TEAM



West Point
READY 

READY TO SERVE. READY TO LEAD.



2018 US Cyber 9/12 Student Challenge



Cyber-policy case competition at New York University



Cyberspace operations are a critical part of war fighting, and cyber warriors seek direct engagement with humans and their machines to influence the way they perceive, think, and behave. Properly executed, cyberspace operations preclude the adversary’s ability to direct its own machines or to carry out its own operational strategy.

Despite a great need, important policy, doctrine, and law surrounding cyberspace operations remains unsettled. For more than a decade, West Point has been preparing cyber-savvy leaders for the Army and the nation. But the need for more leaders and experts is greater than ever. As Army Secretary John McHugh stated at West Point in 2014, “In the past few years, cyber has escalated from a Department of Defense issue of moderate concern, to one of the most serious threats facing our national security.”

West Point has responded to these challenges with the creation of a range of cyber initiatives aimed at better educating and preparing cadets, the Army, and the nation. Among these, cadet cyber enrichment programs augment the development of West Point cadets through opportunities to participate in several activities that inspire and motivate while simultaneously honing critical technical and leadership skills. These programs allow cadets to pursue solutions to real-world challenges and promote dialogue and interaction between students around the country undertaking cyber studies.

Cyber officers need to be technically competent, but must also have a broad view and understand how cyber policy fits into the larger strategic picture. The Cadet Cyber Policy Team serves to cultivate future leaders and their understanding of cyber strategy by engaging in cyber challenges. These competitions provide the cadets with an opportunity to confront the emerging policy challenges associated with cyber operations in competition, crisis, and conflict.

The Cyber Policy Team is a multidisciplinary team comprised of cadets from academic departments, including Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Foreign Languages, Law, Civil and Mechanical Engineering, and Military Instruction. The Cadet Cyber Policy Team is coached by staff of the Army Cyber Institute and rotating faculty from the Department of Social Sciences who have expertise in the domain.

The Cyber Policy Team competes annually in the domestic and international Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenges in addition to the National Security Agency Cyber Exercise (NCX) policy module. Past competition locations include Canberra, Australia; Columbia University, NY; University of Texas at Austin, TX; Lille, France; Washington, DC; Geneva, Switzerland.

Members of the Cadet Cyber Policy Team compete to develop effective responses to policy scenarios where they must confront a serious cybersecurity breach of national and/or international importance. Based on this scenario, our multidisciplinary Cadet teams compose unique policy recommendations, present their decision-making process, consider the role and implications for relevant civilian, military, law enforcement, and private sector entities. They are then challenged to adapt their recommendations as the policy situation evolves. As a result, the Cadets gain invaluable interactive exposure to multidisciplinary considerations in cyberspace that further enables additional rigorous study within their academic disciplines. Additional partnerships are also expanded through interactions with other teams, judges, and event organizers.

Each year, the West Point Cadet Cyber Policy Team trains for and competes in the National Security Agency Cyber Exercise (NCX) policy module. The policy module is one of five in NCX, a year-round education, training, and exercise program that culminates in a three-day cyber competition that challenges participating service academy and military service college students in near full-spectrum cyber operations. In the policy

module, the teams adopt the standard lexicon used by U.S. policy makers, draft policy recommendations, and present their recommendations. Cadets are tested on applicable laws, treaties, and norms in an operational environment, considering relationships and interconnected systems at work in the cyberspace environment and geographical regions in question.

NCX is designed to enhance the cyber operational capabilities of the service academies, senior military colleges, and current employees in NSA development programs. NCX is structured to provide both predictable and unexpected scenarios that ensure agility against the backdrop of an ever-evolving cyber landscape and enhances cadets' cybersecurity skills, teamwork, planning, communication, and decision-making.

The West Point Cadet Cyber Policy Team has become an extremely successful multidisciplinary venture focused on advancing the body of knowledge in cyberspace. This team has won five international competitions in three different countries and placed in the top three at numerous domestic competitions in recent years. Participating in these Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenges also presents a strategic engagement

opportunity with prominent members of the cybersecurity community in academia, industry, and government.

The Cadet Cyber Policy Team requires dedicated funding to continue to compete in annually scheduled Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenges. Funding constraints often restrict both the number of cadets that can attend these competitions and the number of competitions that the team can enter. A dedicated endowment to support the team will allow for consistent participation in the annual cyber strategy competitions and potentially allow for additional cadet attendance. This endowment will ensure that Cadets continue to gain exposure to multidisciplinary challenges in cyberspace, build individual expertise, and continue their development into the capable well-rounded leaders of character that the Army and the nation needs.



The Cyber Policy Team, Team Black Knights, takes first place at the 2019 European Cyber 9/12 Strategy Challenge in Geneva, Switzerland, beating out 22 other teams from 13 countries.



Photo: Lee Ross '73

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

ACI Cadet Competitive Cyber 9/12 Policy Team	\$2.6 million
Cyber Strategy Challenge Initiative	\$300,000 endowment/\$12,000 annual
Cadet Scenario Training	\$150,000 endowment/\$6,000 annual
Cadet Research	\$150,000 endowment/\$6,000 annual
National Security Agency Cyber Exercise <i>(under consideration)</i>	\$300,000 endowment/\$12,000 annual
Competition Travel	\$1 million endowment/\$40,000 annual
Domestic	\$400,000 endowment/\$16,000 annual
International	\$600,000 endowment/\$24,000 annual
Cadet Competitive Cyber 9/12 Policy Team Naming	\$1 million

MARGIN OF EXCELLENCE



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