Practical Lessons for Government Service that GW CyberCorps Students Learn

Our Students learn DIACAP/FISMA regulations *before* their summer internship.

DIACAP is an acronym for Department of Defense Information Assurance Certification and Accreditation Process. It is the process by which systems are *certified* as meeting a set of security requirements and then *accredited* for operation by a designated official.

FISMA is the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002, a United States federal law enacted in 2002 meant to bolster computer and network security within the Federal Government and affiliated parties (such as government contractors) by mandating yearly audits.

A testimonial to the class (from a 2008 student who graduated and went on to work in the government):

"…This is just a [commentary on] the online FISMA class I took with Professor Mischel Kwon. Let me start off by saying that the class in and of itself was an excellent way for students to get familiar with how the Government does IT Security.

This monster, as some people would say, known as FISMA, and others such as NIACAP and DIACAP were all broken down and explained to us in a manner that we could easily comprehend. Week by week we grew stronger of the terms used, supporting documents, references, and so on and so forth. By the end of the class, we were all able to understand FISMA and form our own SSPs for Major Applications or General Support Systems.

During this past summer, I interned with the US Government Printing Office and to my surprise, they were performing FISMA compliance! I stood out from the crowd of IT security employees as I dug in and performed risk assessments, network documentation and the SSP for their PKI system. At the end of the internship, I was offered a job based on my performance of FISMA compliance within GPO. …"