



**ATHENS STATE**  
UNIVERSITY

# Computer Science & Information Technology

Program Advisory Board Meeting

April 18, 2025





# Welcome & Introductions



# Learning Partnerships & ALSO

- **Benefits**
  - 10% tuition discount on all classes, including those held through the Center of Lifelong Learning
  - Waived application fee
  - Evaluation of previous education for transfer credit consideration
- Benefits extend to parents, spouse, and children of the learning partner employee/member
- **Adult Learner Services Office**
  - Reviews certifications, training, and work experience
  - Determines if Prior Learning Credit may be awarded
  - Dependent on degree being pursued
  - Credit for work experience is awarded on a case-by-case basis



# Grants at Athens State

- Progress to Date
  - 6 years - \$18.4 million, 33.5% Total Funding Success, 56.9% Proposal Success
- Shifting Focus
  - Federal to Private
  - Continued State Support
- Supporting Students & the University
  - Innovative resources that may otherwise be unavailable
- Growing Partnership Opportunities
  - Corporate & Local partners
- Increasing Faculty Leadership & Capacity
  - Training (FUTURE), Tools (Athens Aspire), Partners



# NSF EPIIC - FUTURE

- Enabling Partnerships to Increase Innovation Capacity
  - 3 Years, \$400,000
  - Currently in Year 1
- Primary Goals:
  1. Increase Faculty Innovation Capacity
    - Training & Mentorship (Summer 2025)
    - Mapping and Growing Existing Partnerships (Ongoing)
    - Showcase Student & Faculty Capabilities (April 24<sup>th</sup>)
  2. Grow Industry Partnerships
    - Program Advisory Boards (In Development)
    - Experiential Learning (Ongoing)
  3. Improve University Policies and Capacity
    - Grant Management & Procedures
    - Technology Transfer Framework (In Development)
- FUTURE Partners – Georgia College & State University, Southern Utah



# Strada – Athens Aspire

- Strada Education Foundation
  - 3 Years, \$300,000
  - Currently in Year 1
- Primary Goals:
  1. Integrate Innovative Career Development into Curriculum
    - 7 Programs: Computer Science & IT, Nursing, Graphic Design, Instructional Design, Management of Cybersecurity Operations, Human Resources, Accounting
    - Embed industry skills and certificates within Courses
  2. Prepare & Showcase Student Achievements
    - AI Career Coach embedded in curriculum
    - Showcase student skills & experience
    - Expand Experiential Learning opportunities



# Undergraduate Program Updates



- Computer Science and Information Technology programs flattened
  - No longer require concentrations
  - Block of electives – allows for stackable certificates
- Certification for credit through PLA starting Fall 2025
  - Security+ or CCNP Security → ITE 420 Foundations of Cybersecurity
  - Network+ or CCNA → ITE 305 Fundamentals of Networking
  - Google UX Design → ITE 350 UX Design
- Changes to pre-professional requirements to allow acceptance of additional courses from Community Colleges
- Simplify pathway for students to be able to earn AS, BS, and MS in 4 year period
  - Through dual enrollment in high school and community college



# Undergraduate Program Updates

- Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity is currently pending ACHE approval (June 13, 2025 meeting)
  - Combination of Computer Science, Information Technology, and Management of Cyber Operations courses
- Certifications through PLA will be the same as CS & IT programs
- Structured to allow stackable credentials
- Similar simplified pathway for AS → BS → MS
- Cybersecurity studies at Athens State
  - BS in Cybersecurity
  - BS in Computer Science with Cybersecurity certificate
  - BS in Information Technology with Cybersecurity certificate
  - BS in Management of Cyber Operations



# Undergraduate Program Updates

- Certificates currently offered
  - Foundation of Software Development
  - Advanced Software Development
  - Cybersecurity
- Additional certificates Fall 2025
  - Computer Networking
  - Human Computer Interaction
  - Health Information Technology
  - Game Design
  - Game Development
  - Artificial Intelligence
  - Web Development
  - Software Systems



# Graduate Program Updates

- No current changes to degree plans
- Planned change – remove requirement of “grouping” from CS elective requirement.
  - Require straight elective courses
  - Allows for graduate stackable certificate development
- Enrollment

Program	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
Cybersecurity	7	14
Computer Science	5	16



# Cyber Lab Updates

- Outreach with
  - Decatur Morgan County Leadership Class
  - Decatur Morgan County Chamber of Commerce
  - Buckhorn High School Students
- Current plans to establish Cyber Range





# ABET – Undergraduate Programs

- Re-affirmation 2027
  - Possible visit Fall 2027
  - No major required changes
  - Radar:
    - Artificial Intelligence
    - Sustainability
  - If Cybersecurity BS approved – will require one graduate to apply for ABET accreditation
- Program Educational Objectives
    1. Are academically prepared to continue to graduate study or advance in their workplace,
    2. Are skilled, competent, and capable of contributing to the workforce in their specialty,
    3. Use the background they have acquired from their study of a wide range of areas in computer science as a basis for continued self-motivated growth of their professional skills and knowledge,
    4. Model high ethical standards within the community and profession,
    5. Use teamwork skills effectively in the development of computer software systems



# ABET – Graduate & Credential Programs

- ABET has published standards for Graduate program accreditation.
  - Question for industry: Is industry seeing increase in number of applicants making career changes based on Master's degrees vs. Bachelor's degrees?
  - Requirements –
    - Same as undergraduate outcomes – shown at a graduate level
    - 30 semester credit hours beyond baccalaureate level
    - Project/Research activity
      - Set of deliverables that demonstrate subject mastery and high level communication
- ABET will begin to **recognize** certificates beginning Fall 2025
  - Question for industry: Would an ABET recognized certificate be beneficial for positions where employees are working to upskill?



# Center of Academic Excellence

- National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education
- CAE-CD –Cyber Defense Designation
  - Emphasis on protection and resilience
    - Management of Cybersecurity Operations
    - Information Technology
    - Computer Science
- Discussion – CAE-CO – Cyber Operations Designation
  - Emphasis on collection, exploitation, and response
  - Must be based on Computer Science degree plan



# Student Update & Presentations

- Eight graduate students presented projects
  - Three being encouraged to submit projects for conference publication
- One graduate student presented thesis
  - Will be submitting paper for conference publication
- Fall 2025 BAMSI Capstone Partnership
- Master's Graduates
  - 2 Computer Science graduates
  - 3 Cybersecurity graduates
- Expected graduates Spring '25
  - 6 undergraduate computer science
  - 3 undergraduate information technology
  - 1 graduate computer science
  - 5 graduate cybersecurity

**Undergraduate Capstone Presentations**

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**CB 204 or Zoom 6:00 pm – 8:00pm**



# Industry Perspective

- Microsoft and LinkedIn Reports

- **66%** of leaders say they wouldn't hire someone without AI skills.
- **71%** say they'd rather hire a less experienced candidate with AI skills than a more experienced candidate without them.
- **45%** of US executives are not currently investing in AI tools or products for employees.
- Only **39%** of people globally who use AI at work have gotten AI training from their company.
- Only **25%** of companies are planning to offer training on generative AI this year, further cementing this training deficit.

- What are your thoughts on AI tools?

- Which tools are expected for usability?
- Challenges you have noticed with the use of AI tools?
- Challenges you have noticed due to lack of knowledge of use of AI tools?



# Additional Discussions?

Lunch?