

Employability Plan

Business Information Systems Program Activities

2024-2025 Year

1) **How will you ensure that all your majors are aware of the most common jobs and graduate study programs that stem from your major?**

There are a variety and combination of ways that in the Accounting and Business Information Systems Programs keep the students aware of the most common jobs and graduate programs. These include:

- A) **Senior capstone courses** of BIS 461- Seminar on Information Systems & Business Strategies are used to stress common jobs and graduate programs.
- B) **Program clubs' meetings and events** are more important venues [the BIS-Information Technology Students of America Club (BIS-ITSA)].
- C) **Special Employer-Alumni Events** such as the Biz-Tech Career Conversations as well as the Advanced Manufacturing, Ops & IT Info Session.
- D) **Student Advising Sessions** when registering for courses for the upcoming terms as well as **other one-on-one career advising sessions**.
- E) **Employability Jumpstart event** that alumni, Senior BIS Program students, and Company Representatives talk about job/internship searching, self-marketing strategies, and employability readiness strategies to program related First-Year, Sophomore, and Junior students. **(You should start early!)**
- F) **Program introductory courses** (BIS 205, etc.) are used to briefly highlight job opportunities, career path options, employability event announcements, as well as *course selection and sequence strategies that help facilitate different career paths.*
- G) **Announcing and stressing through emails and flyers** upcoming career related events and new career job postings, which are subsequently **reinforced by instructors** during being/end of class sessions.

2) **How will you identify top graduate skills and subject knowledge that employers/grad schools seek that relate to your major(s)?**

We use a variety of ways. The BIS major program **utilize recommended curriculum from their respective professional associations** (for BIS, the IS2020 recommended curriculum a joint recommended curriculum guideline by the Association of Computer Machinery (ACM); Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP); and IT Education Foundation]. Plus, for BIS, Dr. Citurs attends the ISECON (Information Systems Educators Conference) and ITSA/AITP Conference sessions on trends in IS/IT education. Additionally, both the Accounting and BIS faculty **maintain ongoing regular communication with a broad section of our employers and alumni**, who tell us what they see for both upcoming trends and current needs. We also utilize online career sites such as *CareerOneStop.org* by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; *Indeed*; *Monster.com*; *Burning Glass*; etc.; to spot out job and skillset growth trends as well as current internship and job openings in Connecticut and neighboring states or the home states of individual students in our programs. We are also in direct communication on a regular basis with numerous Connecticut based employers through feedback and interactions during our students' internships with them as well as from employers and alumni during our alumni's time in the employers' early career programs.

3) **How will you ensure that course syllabi include information on the skills training embedded in the course?**

We have adopted the new College of Business syllabus template and then for each specific course we verify that it incorporates the **stressed student learning outcomes, high impact practices, as well as platform tools used in the course**. We also bring out the specific topic areas covered as well as technical tools/platforms used or introduced in the courses in the course syllabi.

4) **How will you ensure that your students have created a post-graduation plan and know how to find a job in their field(s) of interest and region(s) of interest?**

- We do this through a combination of: **A) student advising sessions, B) capstone courses, C) internship courses, D) discipline student club meetings, and E) employability special events**. (See Appendix B).
- We also **stay in communication with the students/alumni to mentor them and encourage alumni networking and mentoring** of current students and each other.
- **Instruct students how to use LinkedIn as well as GitHub** to show their accomplishments, provide example demonstrations of their professional related work.
- We also discuss during their individual advising sessions **individualized tailored job search strategies** to help them find jobs matching their areas of interests.
- **Instruct students to utilize their data search, integrating, and querying skillsets** to: a) narrow, b) enhance with more info, & c) refine which job postings they look at & apply to.

- 5) How will your department ensure that department majors have the opportunity to engage in-person with representatives from industry, agencies, professional organizations, etc., to hear up-to-date information and personal perspectives on job trends, employer needs, best preparation for career success and job-seeking strategies?
- A) Encourage attendance at the **University-wide Fall** and **Spring Career Fairs**, as well as the **Fall Accounting Career Fair**. We highlight beforehand particularly relevant career fair businesses and their likely relevant job positions.
 - B) Host **company information and career development program sessions** held by the student clubs. (See Appendix B – The Hartford, Travelers, etc. info sessions)
 - C) Take advantage of **company visits and job shadow days** through program clubs.
 - D) Share **industry placement company contact information** (i.e. Kelly Tech Services, TKSystems, and Robert Half Technology) shared with students during student club meetings and individual advising sessions.
 - E) Bring in **classroom guest speakers** like in BIS 370 – Systems Analysis & Design, BIS 375 - Ecommerce; BIS 437 – Rapid IT Development Management, and BIS 490 – BIS Internship class, etc.
 - F) Facilitate **more informal interactions at student-alumni social events** such as the Annual Accounting Banquet, the BIS Program Banquet, the BIS-ITSA Fall Social, as well as other casual student-alumni events.
 - G) **Provide post student-alumni event summary writeups** so that students unable to attend the event can get some up-to-date perspectives on industry trends and strategy approaches such as the Employability Jumpstart (See Appendix B).
 - H) **Host Career Focus Group Events with multiple alumni from multiple organizations** sponsored by the program clubs that facilitate both individual and small group interaction between students, alumni, and company representatives. These events allow students at single events and potentially at individual tables to hear various perspectives on: **1) skillset needs (common & unique), 2) job trends, and 3) employer overall job role needs** from multiple employers across various career path areas. (See Appendix B – Biz-Tech Career Conversations, etc.)
 - I) **Facilitate students competing or participating in regional and national competitions**, conferences, expos as well as online seminar sessions. (See Appendix B – USITCC Conference, IBM Z-Day, etc.)
 - J) **Leverage the programs' Instagram accounts** with posting on relevant employability events.

Thus, through a combination of these opportunities, students can develop their own opinions and contrast the similarities and differences between the various employers and different career areas, and sometimes differences within the same organizations between career areas. Plus, through these opportunities, students can obtain firsthand perspectives and strategy insights from program alumni and employers.

6) How will your department provide a resumé template(s) for department majors that are appropriate for different career and graduate school destinations?

This is done every semester through the programs' clubs' events such as the BIS Program and BIS-ITSA **Resume Prep Workshop** conducted by Dr. Citurs a week before the BIS-ITSA Club **Alumni-Employer Representatives Resume Writing Workshops**. (See Appendix B)

Different job and graduate programs in biz-tech career areas and sometimes within a discipline require on resumes: A) unique prioritizations of experiences, qualifications and skillsets, B) different inclusions of skillsets, and C) special listing and description of high priority matching experiences to the specific job. (Alumni and company representatives provide additional feedback at the Mock Interview Workshops on trends and preferences.)

Note: ACC-BIS Department faculty work with the students individually on being references for career positions as well as for providing individual graduate program reference letters, forms, and survey recommendations.

7) How will your department organize a system of training for all majors that includes: 1) cover letter writing, 2) resumé creation and refinement and, 3) LinkedIn profile development?

This is done through a sequence of career preparation events initiated through the programs' student clubs, organized by the clubs' faculty advisors each semester such as:

- 1) **Initial resume preparation workshops**,
- 2) **Resume review workshops** done *with the support of program alumni and employers*,
- 3) **Mock interviews workshops** done in conjunction with program alumni and employers, and
- 4) **Employability Jumpstart** to encourage students to get an early start as Sophomores or even First Year Students on these activities in various breakout sessions in multiple rooms and areas in Webb Hall (410, 407, & 358). The sessions are developed and run by a combination of program Senior students, alumni, and employers.

If the Accounting and BIS major students are not able to attend the programs' clubs' career preparation events which go over creating-refining resumes, cover letter writing, and setting up a LinkedIn profile, it is done either through individual student advising or in the programs' internship classes such as BIS 490 – BIS Internship course. For example, in the BIS 490 course, we also go over setting up GitHub portfolios.

Additionally, we encourage students to attend workshops held by the Center for Internship and Career Development **before** receiving more tailored discipline specific advice through our special Accounting and BIS program and club events. At our program events with employers and alumni, the students are given individual advice on how to make their resumes stand out for specific types of internship and career positions.

Note: A key preparatory activity before holding these program events every year/semester is for the facilitating faculty advisor to stay in contact with program alumni and employer representatives about the trends and preferences they see for the different career areas. The different observations and preferences on resumes, cover letters, and LinkedIn profiles, need to be balanced out as well as individually tailored for students to the particular position.

See Appendix B for corresponding event writeups.

8) How will your department help students prepare for professional interviews?

It is primarily through our programs' student clubs that we help prepare students for the multiple rounds of interviewing that students will go through for accounting and biz-tech positions. For example, every semester, the BIS-ITSA Club organizes **mock interview workshops** with alumni and company representatives, where the students are exposed to questions that are behavioral, team-organizational practices, as well as technical skills and problem-solving. (See Appendix B for the Mock Interviews with Alumni & Reps writeups)

Starting in January 2025, the **Employability Jumpstart Event** was added with three major aims:

- 1) ***To get students to start earlier in their academic time at Eastern to think about the importance of career readiness*** (good grades in key courses and GPAs on transcripts when applying at the start of their Junior Year for internships; relevant key courses and skillsets for specific career areas; and relevant career-related experiences/work experiences/projects).
- 2) ***Encourage First-Year, Sophomore, and Juniors to learn from the internship and career search and work experiences and insights of program Senior students*** as well as alumni. Plus, let First-Year through Junior students glean what was of more value or more highly sought after in terms of skillsets taught in various programs or learned individually (certifications, tech company online short courses, e-portfolio items/GitHub, etc.)
- 3) ***Learn how students should best bring out their relevant capabilities, experiences and skillsets to better match employer needs and appear professional during multiple interview rounds.*** The Employability Jumpstart provides an additional early opportunity for younger students to interact with alumni and employers and gain additional insights and direction as to what employers are looking for in new hires for internships and career positions.

9) How will your department ensure that the department webpage includes careers and graduate school advice, success stories, testimonials and useful links related to employment and graduate school?

The **department program coordinators and club advisors work with University Relations** in the development and posting of success stories, testimonials, and other academic, career and employment advice. Some of this is done in conjunction with the help of the programs' student club members and club offices as well as department faculty.

The **program clubs also use Instagram accounts** with regular posting with success stories, testimonials etc.

10) How will your department share department alumni information with Alumni Affairs?

The Accounting and Business Information Systems Program Coordinators have long strong relationships with Alumni Affairs. ***We share information back and forth about alumni events and the event writeups, alumni testimonials, and including alumni information through spreadsheets.*** We respect the wishes of our program alumni on either sharing or not sharing their personal information such as cell phone numbers, personal emails, and information on their family members such as spouses, kids, etc. with university offices.

Thus, we are trying to preserve the long-term trusting relationships with our program alumni that we have worked hard to buildup and maintain over the years.

11) How will your department explore new ways to define and create experiential learning opportunities for majors and minors (internships, research, global field course, community outreach event, etc.).

Experiential learning opportunities have been built into multiple courses in the Accounting and BIS programs. Plus, through the programs' *clubs' experiential and service-learning projects* (i.e. BIS-ITSA Club – national competitions and projects with local non-profits on tech resources and skills.) Students now declaring a major in accounting must complete an *accounting related internship* overseen within a College of Business 490 internship course (BUS, BIS, FIN). The BIS Major has for several years required students to ***have a paid or unpaid internship***, working in the biz-tech units of businesses/ organizations. Additionally, the BIS 461 capstone course has been changed going forward into a *capstone practicum course* based upon system development/data analysis team projects, working with local area non-profits. Both Accounting and BIS Programs have strong longstanding community engagement traditions. BIS students ***take part in CREATE*** giving presentations or creating posters based upon their research projects in BIS courses (i.e. BIS 449 – Data Visualization). Students taking BIS 379 – Data Wrangling have been working with messy real-world data in their class projects. Groundwork is being laid to have class teams work with local non-profits on their messy data needs, as done previously through student BIS independent studies. The students will present their findings and experiences at CREATE or other professional venues.

Short fieldtrips by program student clubs to employer sites, regional tech companies, employer job-shadow days, regional tech expos, as well as area nonprofits with system-data needs are being planned for the 2025-2026 year through the programs' student clubs.

Project-based learning has been used for years both in Accounting and BIS for some courses. However, during the next couple of years the format of the projects, their usage in the courses, and assessment methodologies will be revamped to reflect new methodological approaches as well as new technology tools (**i.e. AI**) and platforms that correspond to the learning objectives of the specific individual courses. Below is a **sampling** of the programs' courses utilizing project-based learning.

BIS 205 – Information Management [Introduction to project-based learning reflecting the course's dual usage as an ELAC course and a required course for many majors and minors.]

BIS 370 – Systems Analysis & Design [This course is based upon the traditional system development life cycle (waterfall) project methodology that stresses analyzing system and information needs of businesses and their various stakeholder groups.]

BIS 379 – Data Wrangling [This course has students working on projects with real-world data for organizations *extracting, transforming* (cleansing and standardizing data based upon business rules), and *loading* data into integrated consistent data stores for data analysis by business analytics and data scientists and subsequently interpreting it for competitive advantage.]

BIS 437 – Rapid IT Development Management (Agile) [This course focuses in on agile (scrum, SAFe, and Kanban) modern project management methods and integrates modern project tech tools.]

BIS 449 – Data Visualization [This course enables students to develop better data visualization skills with tools such as Tableau for more effective data storytelling to project data stakeholder groups.]

BIS 461 – BIS Capstone Practicum [This course will have student teams work with area organizations in determining their information & systems needs by leveraging AI, to develop and create information solutions for them.]

Measurable Outcomes and Key Performance Indicators

In order to document and assess the efficacy of the Employability Plan, key performance indicators are identified below with 3-year and 5-year benchmark targets. The organizational units and personnel that are responsible for measuring the performance outcomes are also indicated.

	Key Performance Indicator	2024	Target 2026	Target 2028	Responsibility
1	Percentage of seniors who have: 1) completed a resumé; [club advisors – Dr. Citurs; and incorporated into BIS 490] 2) completed a LinkedIn profile; [club advisors – Dr. Citurs; and incorporated into BIS 490] 3) been trained in cover letter writing; [club advisors – Dr. Citurs; and incorporated into BIS 490] 4) mock-interviewed and received feedback on their performance; [Club Faculty Advisors & program alumni] 5) created a post-graduation plan. [Faculty Advisors also in BIS 490]	100% of SRs. 75% of JRs.	100% of SRs. 100% of JRs. 75% of SOs.	100% of SRs. 100% of JRs. 100% of SOs.	Employability Liaisons (EL), or if no EL, then Academic Departments and OCS
2	Number of academic departments providing employability and graduate school guidance on their department website, including an employability handbook, resumé template(s) and common career destination information. _____ _____	13	15	19	Employability Liaisons (EL), or if no EL, then Academic Departments and OCS
3	Number of academic departments providing alumni and/or other professional networking opportunities. NOTE: See Appendix B for writeups of a number of these events.	12	14	16	Academic Departments
4	Number of students completing experiential learning activity*. NOTE: for BIS SRs 100% if internships are included.	50	60	70	Academic Departments and Office of Dean of Analytics
5	Number of students using in-house and on-line OCS resources, especially ECN.	50	60	70	OCS
6	Percentage of juniors and seniors attending OCS workshops, presentations and campus-wide Career Events.	50	60	70	OCS and in some cases, EL
7	Percentage of seniors who have provided information on their first professional destination following graduation. [Note: Have some of information already, but will have more in Sept-Oct]	70	80	90	Institutional Research
8	Percentage of graduates who are documented to be employed or attending graduate school within 6 months after graduation. [Same as #7]	70	75	80	Institutional Research

*The full range of 'experiential learning activities' needs defining.

Appendix A: Graduates & Post-Graduation Careers

Graduated Undergraduate Accounting Program Students

Program/Academic Year	2024	2025^
Accounting Minor	25	25
Accounting Major	4	3
M.S. in Accounting	10	9

^ August 2025 numbers not included

Note: Of the Accounting 2024 Major Graduates, 9 students went out on to the Eastern MS Accounting Program.
Of Accounting 2025 Major Graduates, 9 students went on to the Eastern MS Accounting Program.

Graduated Undergraduate BIS Program Students

Programs/Academic Year	2024	2025^
BIS Major	12	17
Business Analytics Minor	18	27
BIS Minor	25	13
Operations & Supply Chain Minor	6	8
Healthcare Informatics Minor+	1	0
Social Informatics Minor~	1	0
BIS+BUAL Dual Minors*	4	4

^ August 2025 numbers not included

* Dual Minor Students listed under each minor as well

~ Minor being shut down

+ Minor being suspended/hidden due to pending grant funding & faculty sufficiency

BIS Program Major Alumni Post-Student Career Positions

Career Area/Academic Year	2024	2025^
Analytics	8	7
Networking/Cybersecurity	2	1
Operations Management	1	2
Graduate School	0	2
Unknown*	1	5

^ August 2025 numbers not included

* All but one of the unknown students in 2025 are students lacking U.S. Paperwork

Appendix B: Some Department Employability Event Writeups

BIS-ITSA Fall 2024 Student Meet and Greet

At the start of the Fall 2024 Semester, on August 28th from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, the BIS-ITSA club hosted their “Meet and Greet” event to welcome incoming First-Year Students into the BIS Program and help get them acquainted with the BIS-ITSA Club. This session was open to both students of the BIS program and any others who have an interest in the extensive and highly applicable discipline of Business Information Systems. This semester, the club reached an all-time high for attendance with this event, garnering over 50 participants! The Meet and Greet was a casual get-together type event, which allowed students from many different backgrounds, educations, and career aspirations to enjoy pizza and pop, converse freely, and meet members of the club. Alongside this, they got the opportunity to network with upper-level BIS students and gain knowledge about how to navigate through their four years at Eastern and what coursework they should focus on to succeed! This event takes place at the beginning of every fall semester.



BIS-ITSA Club Fair Wednesday September 4th, 5:30 – 7:30

Student Center Patio

The BIS-ITSA Club is dedicated to helping students enhance their career prospects through resume development, mock interviews, networking opportunities, and securing internships and jobs with top companies such as Travelers Insurance, The Hartford, IBM, Google, Pratt & Whitney, and General Dynamics. Business Information Systems (BIS) is the combination of technology, people, and processes used by businesses to collect, process, store, and share information. It helps organizations make better decisions, improve efficiency, and manage data. Competing against large schools, Eastern BIS students win and place very high nationally in IT skill competitions annually. With eyes set on the future, the BIS-ITSA Club is now in the process of adding new events such as community-tied tech service-learning projects and company visits for students.

At the 2024 Fall Student Club Fair, held on Wednesday, September 4th, several BIS E-Board members and club members were present to promote the club and its offerings. Logan French, Abdul Ajmal, Robyn Vetterkind, Jordi Cassar, Sam Hurlburt, Uzi Bhura, Amani Jones, Joe Hines, and Jason Weekes all played a crucial role at our table, engaging with students and highlighting the benefits of joining the BIS ITSA Club, garnering over 70 signatures from students and collecting emails for notifying students of upcoming events.





BIS-ITSA Fall 2024 Resume Preparation Workshop

A few weeks into the Fall 2024 Semester, on Wednesday, September 11, from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm, the BIS-ITSA club hosted their “Resume Prep” workshop to get both members of the club, and anyone interested in the field of biz-tech a head start on how they can write a resume that both stands out and highlights the best aspects of their education.

Dr. Citurs, led the presentation to a very large crowd of over 50 students, which is the most this event has had since before 2020! Dr. Citurs has a long history in the field of biz-tech and has fostered great connections with a plethora of major companies in Connecticut, who agree that the overall format of the biz-tech resumes from Eastern are superb. The real importance of this workshop will come next week, on September 18th, when former biz-tech alumni who are now company representatives will visit the campus and provide feedback on the newly crafted resumes.

Dr. Citurs gave many valuable insights during the presentation, some of which include: relevant skills, coursework and projects one should present on their resumes, formatting options such as modifying the margins and changing vertical spacing to fit more content on your resume, along with organizing skills and coursework into tables, then deleting the borders to give it a clean and structured look. This workshop is held a few weeks into every semester, along with pizza, cookies, and pop being provided.



BIS-ITSA Resume Writing Workshop

On Wednesday, September 18th, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted their fall resume writing workshop. This is a follow-up event from the resume preparation workshop, which allows students to further refine their resumes and get professional advice on how to best format and present their accomplishments to employers. This event featured both company representatives and Eastern alumni, who work with several major companies in Connecticut, including The Hartford, Travelers, Arch Insurance Group, Hass Automation, and ISO New England. Those in attendance were granted a unique opportunity to sit down in a personal one-on-one session with an alumnus and receive feedback on the strengths and areas for improvement with their resumes. Along with being given feedback, students were also taught key points for allowing their resumes to really stand out, such as using specific keywords, quantifying their work experience, highlighting biz-tech skillsets, and showcasing projects on their resume from both school and outside of the classroom.

In today's job market, where companies regularly receive hundreds of resumes for a single job position, it is integral to have a well-crafted resume that stands out above the competition. The BIS-ITSA Club hosts this event every semester to give Eastern students an advantage and a sense of confidence when applying for these positions! Alongside being a great professional networking event, it lets the students gain additional insights as to what skillsets are highly sought by Connecticut employers for specific positions.





The Hartford Info Session | Tuesday, September 24th

The Eastern BIS alumni and other Hartford Insurance representatives presented their Early Career Development Program, offering opportunities for all college years:

- **First Year Experience:** Designed to help first year students build their personal brand and gain insights to position themselves for future internships and full-time roles.
- **Sophomore Immersion Program:** A hands-on program where students work on case studies in teams and present their solutions to professionals at The Hartford, gaining practical experience and exposure.
- **Junior Internships:** 10-11 week full-time summer internships that offer meaningful work assignments, mentorship, and opportunities for skill development across various departments.
- **Full-time Rotational Programs for College Graduates:** Graduates rotate through different roles to develop a broad skill set and identify their career interests.

The session highlighted various program areas such as Actuarial, Claims, Enterprise Risk Management, Finance, Investment Management, Operations, and Product Development. All of which involve some information systems and technology skills. Students can expect regular coaching, mentoring, and feedback during their internships.

A popular Leadership Development Program (LDP) called **Tech, Data, Analytics, Cyber, and Operations (TDAC&O)**, as well as **Tech Catalyst**, were discussed. TDAC&O offers rotations in application development, cybersecurity, compliance, data analysis, and software/environmental engineering, while Tech Catalyst participants focus on data or software engineering.

Benefits of working at The Hartford include unique aspects of the programs, meaningful work assignments, training, mentoring, competitive compensation, perks, and executive-level exposure.

Several employees and alumni shared insights on their career paths and the company's offerings, reinforcing The Hartford's reputation as a great place to work and grow professionally.





Mock Interviews with Alumni and Company Representatives

On Wednesday, September 25th, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted their Mock Interview event, this event is catered towards Eastern Students with an interest in the field of Biz-Tech and hoping to sharpen their interviewing skills. The Mock Interview event featured both company representatives and Eastern alumni from several major companies in Connecticut such as The Hartford, Travelers, General Dynamics, Hass Automation, ISO New England, and Boehringer Ingelheim. Many of the alumni who were present at this event have attended this same event in prior years as students and are now frequently part of the interviewing teams for their companies. Thus, the questions asked, and the overall experience of the event are representative of actual interviews at these companies.

This event coincides with the recent Resume Writing Workshop, in that students can present their further refined resumes to their interviewers. The questions they are asked are both based on the content of their resumes, and actual questions that get asked in Biz-Tech interviews. The structure of this interview process models that of the usual first-round interview at the alumni's companies. The students obtain important insights on how they conducted themselves, along with any improvements they could make in their answers.

This event allows students to connect with interviewers from companies that Eastern has a good reputation with. It also gives students a safe environment to gain confidence in being interviewed, test their interviewing skills, as well as obtain constructive feedback. These mock interviews are held every semester in Webb 410, and along with having pizza, pop, and cookies, gives students much needed help and a boost in confidence to succeed in their interviews!





IBM System Z Day Virtual Conference

Tuesday, October 1, 2024, was the annual IBM System Z Day. This year, multiple BIS-ITSA people actively participated in the daylong virtual conference along with over 38,900 viewers/participants from 167 countries around the globe! The primary focuses of the System Z Day Conference was to share best practices and trends on the use of IBM System Z mainframe computers in the 6 conference track areas of: Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, Application Modernization, IBM Z Skills Acceleration, Security, and Trends in Academic System Z Educational Opportunities and Best Practices. For Eastern BIS-ITSA students, it made for a very busy day, given that Eastern's Fall 2024 Internship-Career Fair, was being held at the same time in the ECSU Student Center BTR.

Current series of IBM System Z computers have 40 Terabytes of Random Access Memory (RAM) and support thousands of concurrent users. System Zs are used to host massive AI platforms, including the famous computer "Watson", the best Jeopardy gameshow player of all time and data mining applications. IBM System Zs are famous for serving as the integrative backbone computers for large corporations' critical core operational business systems, corporate data warehouses, and business transaction AI driven ultrafast models and apps. Systems Z, with their huge RAM capacity, are famous for hosting huge cutting edge analytical models and complex simulations used in application areas such as advanced manufacturing, cancer research, weather forecasting, financial market research, and global customer analysis. The BIS-ITSA Club typically visits and tours IBM Poughkeepsie, where the System Zs are researched and built every few years.

Both Luis Vazquez (CS major) and Dr. Alex Citurs (BIS faculty and BIS-ITSA club advisor), served as panelist for the Z-Day Conference session of: "Inspire and Empower the Next Generation of IBM Z". Luis Vazquez, Computer Science major and BIS-ITSA Member, currently serves as Eastern's IBM Student Ambassador. Luis spoke about how students can earn IBM certifications and badges, subsequently opening up internship and career opportunities. He encouraged students to leverage the IBM Z Xplore Program and the other free fundamentals and concept badges. Dr. Citurs first started working on IBM System Zs when he worked at the corporate headquarters of State Farm Insurance, where he learned and worked with IBM System Z computer languages of PL/1, JCL, CLISTS, as well as the ZOS and ISPF tool suites, and IBM DB2 relational databases. He expanded his IBM System Zs skillsets while working as a developer in the research lab of IBM Rochester, Minnesota. Every few years, large Connecticut employers such as Aetna, Cigna, and Travelers and Eastern alumni, have requested Dr. Citurs to teach independent study groups on writing IBM Cobol business applications utilizing access to IBM System Zs at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York, because of their System Z needs.

Thus, the demand for IBM System Z trained young talent will continue to grow in Connecticut and beyond as the need for ultra-fast, massive memory, data hungry applications in artificial intelligence, business intelligence, and business analytics are increasingly developed and deployed across the business and research worlds.



Left: Luis Vazquez & Dr. Citurs were panelist in the IBM Z-Day session of: "Inspire & Empower the Next Generation of IBM Z".

Right: Sheila McInerney, Sr. Development Manager at Infor, and panelist with Luis Vazquez & Dr. Citurs, discussing application development career opportunities on IBM System Zs at the BIS-ITSA Biz-Tech Career Conversations, October 2, 2024.

BIS-ITSA Fall 2024 Biz-Tech Career Conversations

On Wednesday, October 2nd, the BIS-ITSA club hosted another successful BIZ-Tech and IT Career Conversations event at Eastern's Johnson room in the library. The event, in collaboration with the Office of Career Success, provided students majoring in business and technology with a unique opportunity to engage with professionals and alumni from a wide array of industries. Representatives from companies such as Travelers, Cigna, General Dynamics (Electric Boat), and Hartford Healthcare, as well as many other major organizations, participated in the event.

The career conversations were organized into nine distinct tables, each representing a different field of interest. Students had the chance to rotate among the tables, with a set amount of time at each, allowing them to explore various career paths. The event encouraged in-depth discussions about the career prospects and challenges of each field, with students rotating tables every 12 minutes.

The career paths represented were:

- Cloud Apps and Ecommerce
- Network Administration, Tech Support, & Cybersecurity
- Operations & Supply Chain Techs
- Financial Tech
- Business Intelligence/Analytics, Data Engineering, & AI
- Healthcare IS/IT, Healthcare Info Management
- Database Administration, SQL & Enterprise Architecture
- Business/Systems Analyst, Tech Consultant
- Project Management, Scrum Masters, & Agile Coaches

This event allowed students to gain insights into different areas of business and technology, providing them with valuable information on potential career paths. The structured yet flexible format of rotating between interest fields ensured that students could engage with multiple industries and perspectives, building valuable connections and expanding their understanding of the skills and knowledge required in their fields of interest.

Many students stayed after the formal rotations ended to continue conversations, illustrating the success of the event in fostering meaningful interactions between students and industry professionals.















Travelers BI&A Info Session, Thursday October 3rd

On October 3rd, students from the BIS program attended the Travelers BI&A Info Session to learn about internship and career opportunities within the Business Insights and Analytics (BI&A) Leadership Development Program. The event featured representatives from Travelers who shared their experiences and insights on various career paths, including roles in Business Analysis, Data Engineering, Data Management, Information Delivery, Geospatial, and Project Coordination.

The session provided attendees with detailed information about the skills and technologies most valued at Travelers, such as Python, SQL, AWS, and Snowflake. Students were able to explore how their academic work in areas like data analytics, business intelligence, and project management can be applied in real-world settings.

After the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to ask questions and engage in networking with the presenters, while enjoying pizza and refreshments.

This session offered a valuable perspective on careers in BI&A, giving students a clearer understanding of the opportunities available at Travelers and how they can align their skills to meet industry demands.



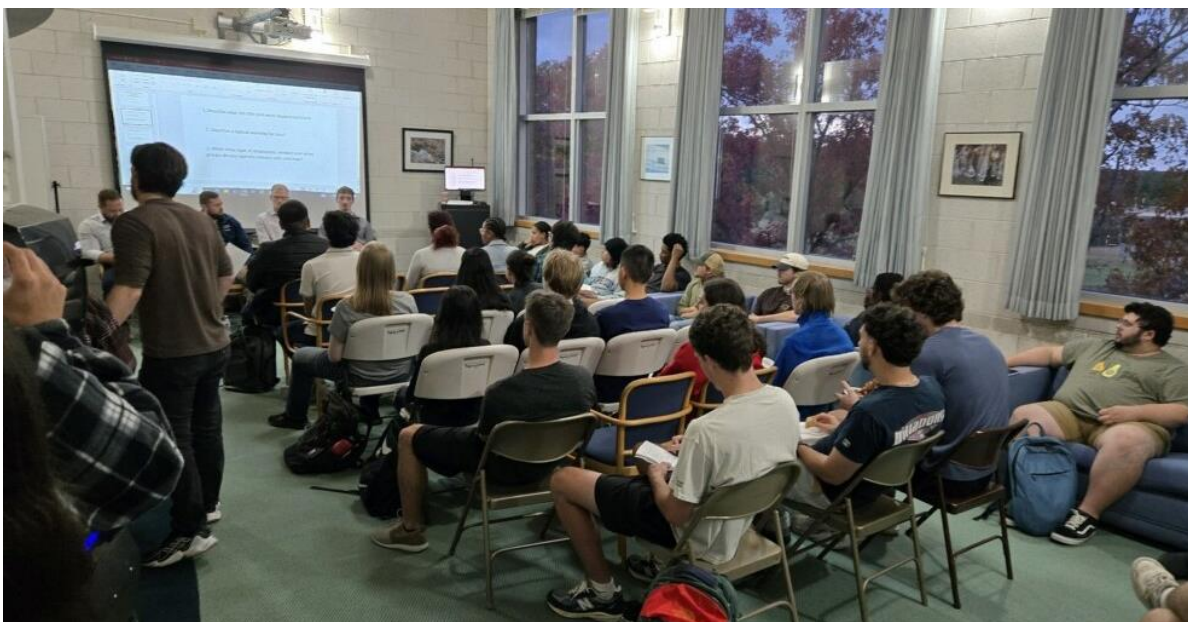


Advanced Manufacturing, IT, and Operations ECSU Alumni

On October 23, 2024, the ECSU BIS-ITSA club hosted a panel event featuring alumni from top Connecticut advanced manufacturing companies, including Pratt & Whitney, SPIROL, and Electric Boat. Notable BIS alumni Mike Trapp as a Supply Chain Manager at Pratt & Whitney, Henry Bigl as a Business Intelligence Developer at SPIROL, Ryan Conley as a Systems Engineer at General Dynamics Electric Boat, and John Conley as a Commodity Integration Manager Raytheon Pratt & Whitney, shared insights into their roles and highlighted how courses at Eastern, such as Enterprise Resource Planning (BIS 430), Agile (BIS 437), and Business Database Management (SQL) prepared them for success in their careers.

The panel emphasized the importance of diversifying skill sets, encouraging students to step out of their comfort zones by joining unfamiliar clubs or courses. They discussed the significance of balancing technical and soft skills, particularly in roles that require collaboration across various fields. Company leadership development programs (LDPs), including those in various types of engineering, business, and applied user groups, were highlighted as essential for students seeking growth, especially in companies with rotational roles, as these programs help navigate shifting technologies while enhancing both technical and social skill sets.

The key message of the event was to embrace risks, stay adaptable to new technologies, and remain open to new opportunities—there is no single “right” path to career success. The panelists collectively stressed the importance of technical skills, such as data management and data wrangling alongside soft skills like communication and resilience under pressure. Overall, the event provided valuable insights into opportunities in advanced manufacturing and operations for BIS students, and attendees enjoyed networking with the speakers over pizza and refreshments with over 50 students attending during the two-and-a-half-hour period the event took place.





BIS-ITSA Fall Social

The BIS Program and BIS-ITSA Club hosted their fall social gathering on October 25th, 2024, in the Fine Arts Instructional Center Lobby. The event brought together over 50 participants, including current students, faculty, and alumni, showcasing the strong community within Eastern's BIS program. Dr. Citurs opened the evening with updates on the program's growth, highlighting increased enrollment and new partnerships with leading technology companies. He emphasized how the curriculum continues evolving to meet industry demands, particularly in areas such as artificial intelligence, data analytics, and cybersecurity. As well as being modified to more closely follow the Information Systems 2020 recommended international IS curriculum guidelines.

During the networking portion, alumni shared invaluable insights about current industry trends and essential technologies driving business innovation. They emphasized the growing importance of Generative AI in transforming business processes and decision-making. Alumni discussed their experiences with various database platforms, as well as Snowflake for data warehousing and as data sources for advanced analytics and business intelligence. The alumni also brought out how some of the database platforms like PostgreSQL, SQL Server, and DB2 are being used for databases and business processes. Plus, they brought out how cloud computing platforms like AWS and to a lesser degree MS Azure are becoming fundamental to modern business operations.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on project management methodologies, with alumni highlighting how Agile practices thoroughly dominate IT and cross-functional projects across IT and other business/e-commerce sectors. Although some organizations still utilize Waterfall, and some have adopted Kanban approaches depending on specific project requirements. They shared their experiences with various project management tools, including JIRA, Rally, Microsoft Project, Trello, and custom-built solutions. Alumni stressed the importance of student project portfolios that demonstrate practical applications of these technologies and methodologies. They also discussed emerging IT trends, highlighting the growing use of GenAI, custom cloud services, SQL, analytics, critical thinking skills, and the importance of adaptability to new tools and trends, as well as the value of having GitHub portfolios. Some alumni brought out that certifications matter only if supported by applied projects. The event concluded with announcements of upcoming BIS-ITSA initiatives, including technical workshops and professional development sessions focused on these in-demand skills and technologies.



Prince Tech High School IT Students Have College Day Hosted by Eastern BIS Program & BIS-ITSA Club Students

Getting well into the Fall 2024 semester, on October 29th, from 9:15am to 1:00pm, students from A.I. Prince Technical High School, Hartford, Connecticut visited Eastern for a college day. The Prince Tech IT students were hosted by the BIS Program and the BIS-ITSA Student Club. BIS Associate Professor Dr. Citurs serves on the Prince Tech High School IT Advisory Board. The day started out with an Admission Office guided tour around campus buildings, with accompanying BIS students providing additional insights relevant to biz-tech interested students. The students were given a presentation of various biz-tech related academic program options by Dr. Citurs in a Science Building computer lab. Majors, minors and courses presented and discussed were from the Business Information Systems, Computer Science and Data Science Programs as well as Geographical Information Systems. The Prince IT students then attended a BIS 205 – Information Management class section session of Prof. Kevin Donohue's, where they focused in on data forms, reports and charts.

For lunch, the Prince IT students met in Web 358 for Pizza, Pop, and Cookies to eat while discussing amongst themselves and with the BIS-ITSA Club members (BIS/CS/Data Science) students about the programs at Eastern and career development options. The Eastern BIS-ITSA students navigated through the different tables in a rotational manner, getting to know all of the visiting high school students. Discussing issues related to the high school students' interests, and trying to narrow in on what their future options holds for them. A reoccurring future interest of students seemed to be Game Design! After exploring everyone's circumstances, giving recommendations, and sharing a meal together, the students from Prince Tech shared appreciations and departed back to Hartford.

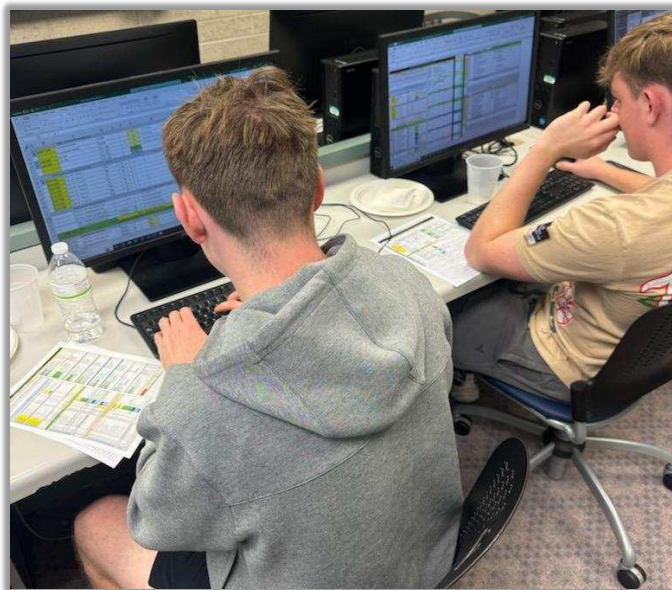


BIS-ITSA Fall 2024 Eastern-In-4 Advising Workshop

Reaching the halfway point in the Fall 2024 semester, on Wednesday, October 30, from 5:30 to 7:00pm, the BIS-ITSA club hosted their first Eastern-In-4 ELAC (Enhanced Liberal Arts Curriculum) advising workshop for new BIS Program related students and transfers interested in the BIS Programs and other related programs. This was so they may be more adequately prepared for their next four years of advising and course registration.

Dr. Citurs led the demonstration of the recently improved Eastern-In-4 Worksheet for all the attending first-years, sophomores, and transfers. Earlier in the year, Dr. Citurs became aware of the trouble that new ELAC students were having at their normally scheduled Eastern-In-4 sessions when planning out their four years of coursework. To hopefully ease the process, he spearheaded a new project that incorporates additional functionalities as well as numerous quality-of-life features. This is the first event of its kind for the BIS-ITSA Club, serving as an examination and pilot appraisal group for the new worksheet developed over the summer. The session and tool, met with great success, all of the attending students commented or made note of the efficiency and benefits that came with the new planning tool.

With the introduction of the new ELAC requirements, Dr. Citurs gave valuable insight and direction during the demonstration. This included how to plan around having a second major or minor(s). Plus, he stressed the importance of taking key classes early, how to strategically double count courses, and what to expect with ELAC requirements.



BIS-ITSA Club Fair Wednesday January 29th, 2:00 – 4:00

Student Center (Betty Tipton Room)

The purpose of the BIS-ITSA Club is to support students in advancing their career opportunities by providing resources like resume building, mock interviews, networking events, improving tech skills and helping secure internship and job placements with leading companies in Connecticut and beyond. Business Information Systems (BIS) integrates technology, people, and processes to enable businesses to gather, process, store, and distribute information effectively. This approach helps organizations enhance decision-making, increase efficiency, and manage data more effectively. Despite competing with larger institutions, Eastern BIS students consistently achieve high rankings in national IT skill competitions each year and job placements. Looking ahead, the BIS-ITSA Club is working to introduce new initiatives, including resuming more community-focused tech service-learning projects and additional company visits for students such as Google.

At the 2025 Spring Student Club Fair, was held on Wednesday, January 29th, from 2:00-4:00 in the Betty Tipton Room of the Student Center. Several BIS E-Board members and club members were present to promote the club and its offerings. Uzair Bhura, Mitchell Peterson, Logan French, Robyn Vetterkind, and Gage Duarte all played a crucial role at our club table, each person taking shifts throughout the duration of the club fair. The E-Board members present engaged with students and highlighted the benefits of joining the BIS-ITSA Club, garnering over 29 signatures from interested students and collecting emails for notifying those students of upcoming events.



BIS-ITSA Employability Jumpstart

The BIS-ITSA Club hosted its first ever Employability Jumpstart Event on Wednesday, January 29, 2025 from 5:30 to 8:30 PM in Webb Hall rooms, 358 – Faculty Lounge, as well as Webb 407, and 410 labs. It was attended by 92 undergraduate students, who devoured over 22+ boxes of donated pizzas and pop! The main purpose of the Employability Jumpstart is to provide newer college students with more timely biz-tech related advice, assistance, information and tools coming from BIS program alumni, employers, Senior BIS students, and BIS faculty on how to be better and more prepared to interview, obtain internships, and land career position job offers. The event was organized into six different topic venues.

The first venue option was in Webb Hall 358 Faculty Lounge with a theme of **“Employer/Alumni Recommended Strategies and Tools”**. Employer reps and alumni from The Hartford, General Dynamics and Travelers provided information and gave advice to help students be better positioned to obtain internships. The second venue was the Webb 407 Lab with a theme of **“Better Planning & Monitoring Your Courses”**, where BIS major Senior, Logan French with the assistance of other BIS major Seniors demonstrated and shared an Eastern Four-Year Plan tool, that Dr. Citurs had created. The BIS Senior team helped students populate their plans with courses and their grades so as to better schedule key courses in time to help land internships/jobs and calculate major and minor GPAs to put on their resumes. The four remaining venues were held in the big Webb 410 study lab, where the 4 topics were:

“LinkedIn/HandShake” (NW quadrant) for building professional presence, networks and connections,

“Strategies on Courses & CLEP/DSST” (NE quadrant) for taking more career interest relevant courses.

“Resumes and Job Searches” (SE quadrant) for better positioning oneself for the right internship/job.

“GitHub, ePortfolios, & Certifications” (SW quadrant) for demonstrating and validating one’s skillsets.

A team of BIS major Seniors was at each of the four theme areas to give advice, offer assistance getting setup up with the tools, and making recommendations based upon their experiences with the respective topics and tools as relevant to the interests expressed by the individual newer students.

Student feedback on the event was very positive with students wanting it held again next year. Students thought that the four-year plan tool was very helpful and that it should be introduced and used in the LAC 100 First Year Program courses in the upcoming academic year.

“Employer/Alumni Recommended Strategies and Tools”:

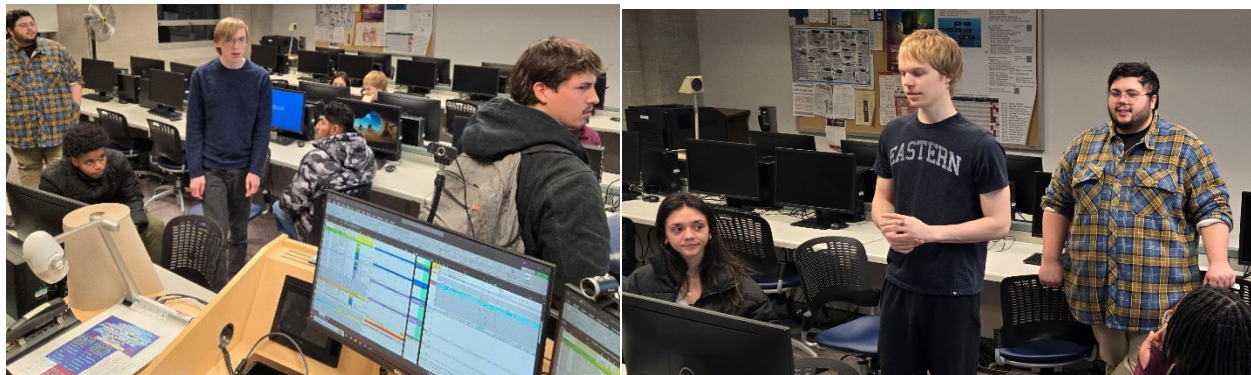


“Employer/Alumni Recommended Strategies and Tools” (below):

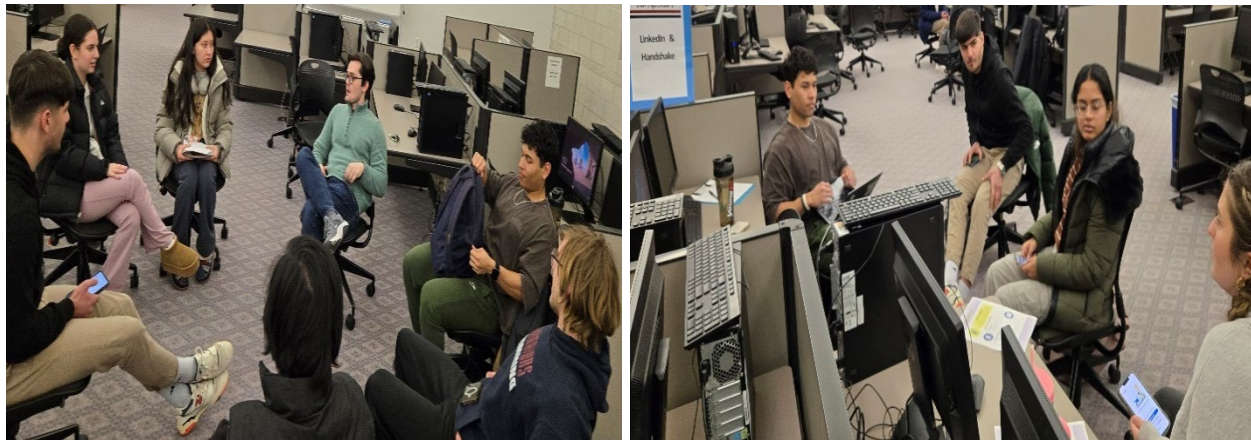


“Better Planning & Monitoring Your Courses – Four-Year Plan Tool” (below):





“LinkedIn/Handshake” (below):



“Strategies on Courses & CLEP/DSST” (below):



“Resumes and Job Searches” (below):



“GitHub, ePortfolios, & Certifications” (below):



BIS-ITSA Spring 2025 Resume Preparation Workshop

On Wednesday, February 5th, from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm, the BIS-ITSA club hosted their “Resume Prep” workshop to get both members of the club, and anyone interested in the field of biz-tech a head start on how they can write a resume that both stands out and highlights the best aspects of their education.

The Spring Resume Prep workshop gathered a very large crowd of over 30 students. Dr. Citurs has a long history in the field of biz-tech and has fostered great connections with a plethora of major companies in Connecticut, who agree that the overall format of the biz-tech resumes from Eastern are superb. The real importance of this workshop happened on February 12th, when former biz-tech alumni from different Connecticut companies visited the campus to provide feedback on the newly crafted resumes.

Throughout the presentation, many valuable tips were given, some of them include: relevant skills, coursework and projects one should present on their resumes, formatting options such as modifying the margins and changing vertical spacing to fit more content on your resume, along with organizing skills and coursework into tables, then deleting the borders to give it a clean and structured look. This workshop is held a few weeks into every semester, along with pizza, cookies, and pop being provided.



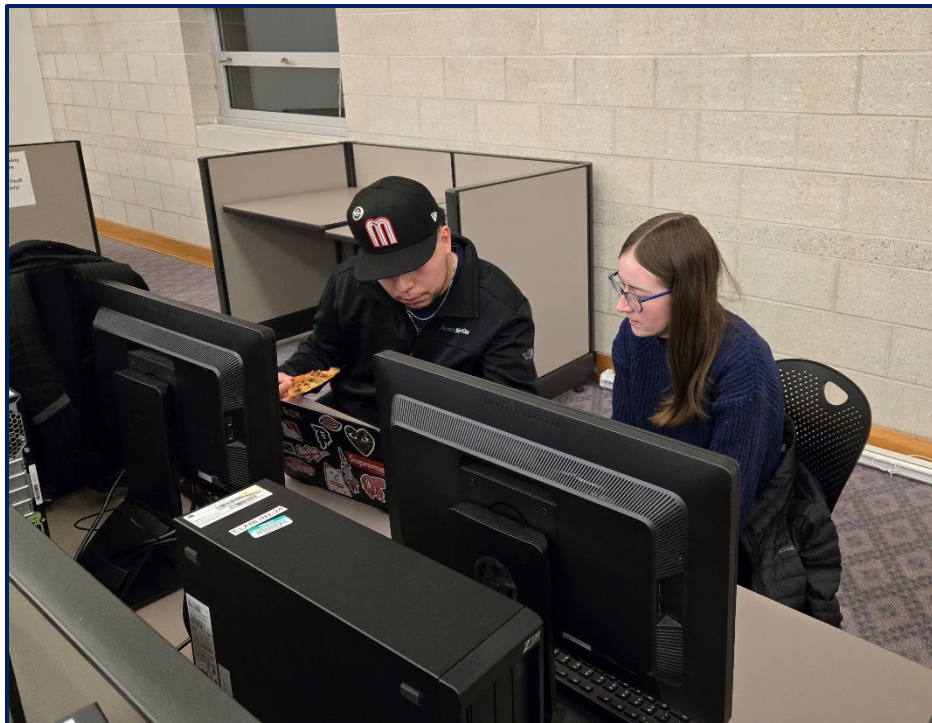


BIS-ITSA Spring 2025 Resume Writing Workshop

On Wednesday, February 12th, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted their fall resume writing workshop. This is a follow-up event from the resume preparation workshop, which allows students to further refine their resumes and get professional advice on how to best format and present their accomplishments to employers. This event featured both company representatives and Eastern alumni, who work with several major companies in Connecticut, including The Hartford, Travelers, Arch Insurance Group, Hass Automation, and ISO New England. Those in attendance were granted a unique opportunity to sit down in a personal one-on-one session with an alumnus and receive feedback on the strengths and areas for improvement with their resumes. Along with being given feedback, students were also taught key points for allowing their resumes to really stand out, such as using specific keywords, quantifying their work experience, highlighting biz-tech skillsets, and showcasing projects on their resume from both school and outside of the classroom.

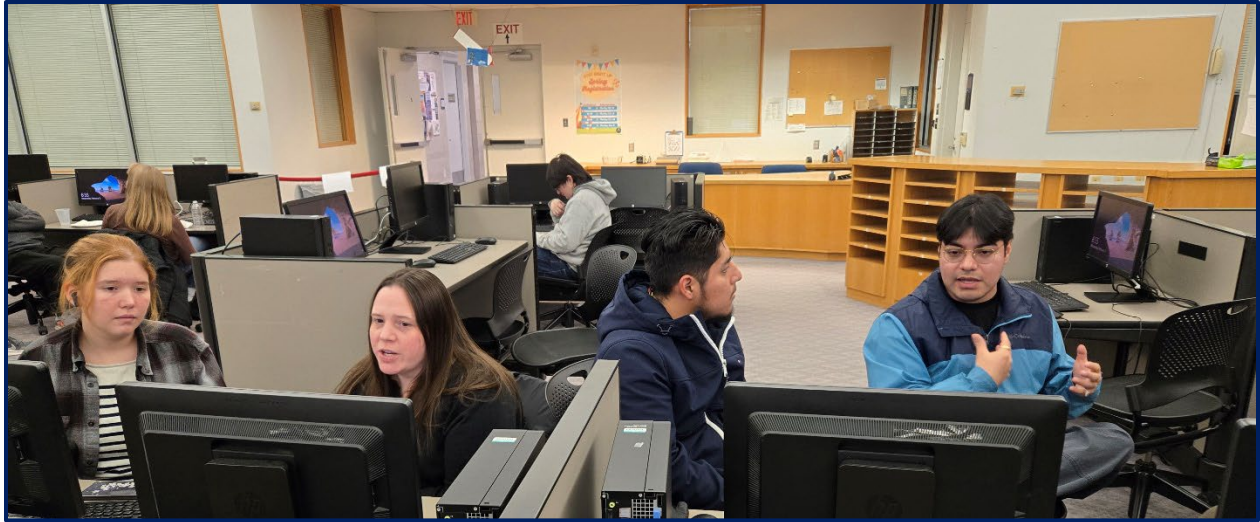
In today's job market, where companies regularly receive hundreds of resumes for a single job position, it is integral to have a well-crafted resume that stands out above the competition. The BIS-ITSA Club hosts this event every semester to give Eastern students an advantage and a sense of confidence when applying for these positions! Alongside being a great professional networking event, it lets the students gain additional insights as to what skillsets are highly sought after by Connecticut employers for specific positions.







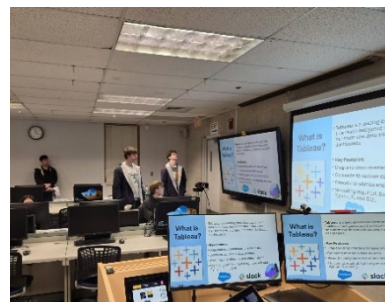
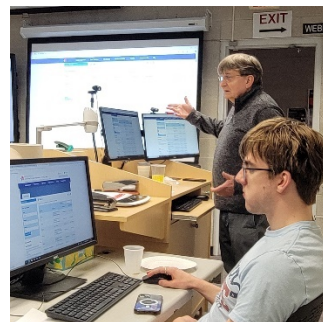




BIS-ITSA Club: Internship Search Events

2/19/2025 at 3:00 PM and 3/6/2025 at 4:00 PM

The Internship Search events using CareerOneStop (and other platforms such as Indeed, LinkedIn, Monster, Glassdoor, etc.) were great opportunities for students to learn how to find internship options in their fields of interest. During the event, participants learned how to effectively use the free CareerOneStop tool, a comprehensive career and job search resource, to identify and apply for internships in their areas. Dr. Citurs guided students through the platform's extensive resources, providing tips on how to leverage their tech skills to enhance their search effectiveness. Using technologies such as Microsoft Excel and Access, students were able to find the opportunities which suited them best across multiple skillsets and areas of interests. For the February 19th event, it concluded with Marcos Hernandez explaining to students the process to become certified in Tableau, a heavy used data visualization tool in the industry. Participants left with the knowledge and confidence needed to begin searching for their future internship. 20 to 30 students attended.



BIS-ITSA Mock Interviews Event

On Wednesday, February 19th, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted their Mock Interviews event. This event is catered towards Eastern Students with an interest in the field of Biz-Tech and hoping to sharpen their interviewing skills. The Mock Interview event featured both company representatives and Eastern alumni from several major companies in Connecticut such as The Hartford, Travelers, Hass Automation, and Boehringer Ingelheim. Many of the alumni who were present at this event have attended this same event in prior years as students and are now frequently part of the interviewing teams for their respective companies. Thus, the questions asked, and the overall experience of the event are representative of actual interviews at these companies.

This event aligns with the recent Resume Writing Workshop, as students can present their refined resumes to interviewers. The questions they face are both based on the content of their resumes and typical questions asked in Biz-Tech interviews. The interview structure mirrors the usual first-round interviews conducted at alumni companies. Students gain valuable insights into their performance and receive good feedback on how to improve their responses to certain questions.

This event allows students to connect with interviewers from companies that Eastern has a good reputation with. It also gives students a safe environment to gain confidence in being interviewed, test their interviewing skills, as well as obtain constructive feedback. These mock interviews are held every semester in Webb 410, and along with having pizza, pop, and cookies, gives students much needed help and a boost in confidence to succeed in their interviews!





The Hartford Info Session with Alumni & Company Reps

On Tuesday, February 25th, 2025, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted a valuable event in partnership with The Hartford, a leading insurance company. The event was designed to inform students about internship and career opportunities within the organization. This event took place from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm in the Webb Hall Faculty Lounge. It provided a detailed overview of The Hartford's operations, company culture, and potential career paths. Alex Martinez, University Relations Specialist at The Hartford, led the session, delivering an in-depth presentation on the company's values, initiatives, and professional development opportunities available for emerging student talent.

A standout feature of the event was the interactive Q&A panel, which included notable Eastern alumni and representatives from The Hartford. Panelists Ryan Saidon (Data Engineer – BIS and CS alumni) and Joseph Hines (OTD&A LDP Associate – BIS alumni) shared valuable insights into their roles, career journeys, and advice for students aspiring to join the industry. Attendees had the chance to explore various aspects of The Hartford's business, learn more about internship programs, and gain insights into the skills and qualities needed to succeed.

The event also provided an excellent networking opportunity, with students engaging in one-on-one conversations with panelists and company representatives. This allowed them to deepen their understanding of potential career paths, while establishing important connections in the industry. As always, pizza and soda were provided. The Hartford Info Session with Alumni & Company Representatives proved to be an invaluable platform for students to expand their professional networks and gain insights into the dynamic world of information technology. The BIS-ITSA Club is excited to continue organizing similar events in the future to help students confidently navigate their career journeys.





LinkedIn Level-Up Event with Career Center

On Wednesday, February 26th, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, the Office of Career Services and with the BIS-ITSA Club hosted the LinkedIn Level Up event. It was designed to help students enhance their professional presence with guidance from career services staff, peer coaches, and the BIS-ITSA faculty advisor, Dr. Citurs. Students had the opportunity to receive professional headshots for LinkedIn portraits, explore the career closet for professional attire, and participate in resume and cover letter reviews with the professor. Additionally, Career Service Center staff provided personalized assistance for LinkedIn setup and profile reviews to ensure their online presence best reflects their skills, experiences, and career goals. This hands-on event provided valuable insights on how to present themselves effectively in a professional setting, with free morning snacks and beverages to all participants. For more information about future career development events, students can contact Career2@easternct.edu or visit Room 144 of the library.



BIS ITSA Spring 2025 Travelers BI&A Case Competition Kickoff

On Wednesday, February 26th, Travelers hosted its annual Analytics Kickoff, introducing students to the world of data-driven decision-making and innovative problem-solving. This event served as an opportunity for students to learn more about Travelers' case competition, an annual challenge where participants tackle real-world business problems using analytics and strategic thinking in-person at one of Travelers agencies in Hartford, CT.

During the kickoff, students were introduced to key competition details, including the timeline to submit their application and an outline as to how the day would go if chosen at Travelers. If chosen, students would be in teams across different CT universities and receive help from a Travelers mentor who is skilled in certain technical applications and software. Attendees of the kickoff also had the opportunity to engage with a Travelers employee, Eastern alumni and spearhead of the competition, Connor Chute; gaining insights into industry expectations, best practices in business insights and analytics, and how to effectively approach the application for the competition. The event fostered valuable networking, allowing students to connect with company representatives.

With business insights and analytics playing a crucial role in today's business landscape, events like this provide students with a competitive edge by enhancing their problem-solving, data analysis, and presentation skills. The Travelers Analytics Kickoff not only set the stage for the upcoming competition but also equipped students with the knowledge and confidence to excel in the field of business insights and analytics.



BIS-ITSA wins top honors at national IT conference

Students excel at USITCC - Published on April 14, 2025



Six students from Eastern's Business Information Systems/Information Technology Students of America (BIS-ITSA) club traveled to Springfield, MI, this past March to compete in the United States IT Collegiate Conference (USITCC), which welcomed 15 colleges and universities from across the country.

According to the USITCC website, the conference featured six competitions in different areas of IT, including database design, Microsoft Office, security, PC troubleshooting, business analytics, and a "hackathon." Winners received prize money, trophies, certificates, and formal recognition from the Foundation for IT Education.

Jake Cohen, a senior studying BIS, business analytics, and finance, along with Sam Hurlburt, a junior studying BIS and business analytics, earned major accolades at the conference. The duo won first place in the business analytics competition and placed second in the database design competition.

"The weather was great, the competitions were intense, and the midwestern food was good," said Cohen.

"It was a great experience being able to represent Eastern and the BIS program at the national level," said Hurlburt, who credited part of his success to Eastern faculty. "While

competing, I could point to specific classes in the BIS department that prepared me to do well."

In addition to individual honors, BIS-ITSA also won the Student Organization Award for Model Student Organization, along with Georgia Gwinnett College. In recent years, Eastern's BIS students have placed in the top five nationally in multiple areas such as Microsoft Office solutions, database design, and business analytics — skills highly valued in a competitive, high-paying job market, according to Alex Citurs, BIS professor and BIS-ITSA faculty advisor.

Eastern's BIS-ITSA faced off against much larger colleges and universities, such as Texas State University, Missouri State University, and the University of Iowa.

Citurs noted, "The students faced strong competitors. Considering the size of these institutions, the Eastern students' standout performance speaks to their hard work and abilities."



The duo of Jake Cohen and Sam Hurlburt took first and second place in two competitions. Here they stand for a photo with BIS-ITSA faculty advisor Alex Citurs (middle).



Above: One of the competition rooms. For many of the competitions, a pair of two students could work as a team. Most competition sessions last four hours.

Although large institutions were present at the conference, many institutions prefer to compete at regional IT conferences due to increased post-COVID transportation costs. New England, having only three campuses with ITSA organizations, lacks a regional conference. Citurs discussed the possibility of competing in the Midwest regional conference in the near future.

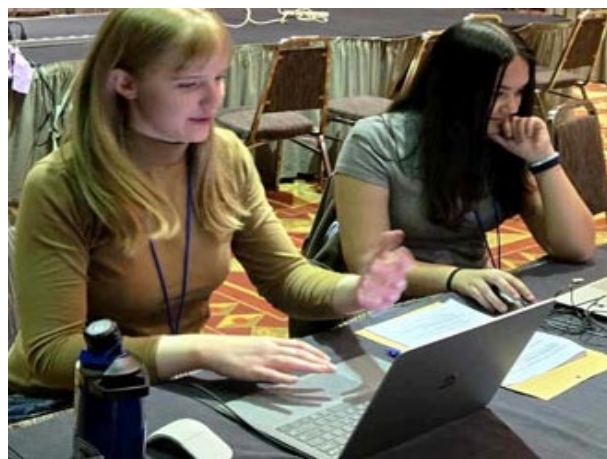
The conference also taught students valuable skills for application in the field. For Robyn Vetterkind, a junior studying BIS, business analytics, and data science, USITCC taught "the

value of hands-on learning, how to manage high-pressure situations, and refined my skills and understanding of what works and what doesn't in real-world scenarios.”



Vetterkind also pointed out that there is still a lot to learn in the field. “It quickly became clear that while there are things I know, there's even more I still need to learn,” she said.

“Attending the USITCC was an incredible opportunity to put my technical skills to the test,” said Allison Kazmier, a sophomore studying BIS, business analytics, and accounting.



Kazmier emphasized that the conference gave her a clearer vision of job opportunities in the field. “It allowed me to dive deeper in different areas, helping me recognize where I can improve and what I'd like to explore further.”

Students also noted important networking opportunities from the trip. “Going on a trip like this is also a great way to network with other students from around the country,” said Mitchell Peterson, a junior studying BIS and business analytics.

Written by Kyle Berson '26

Travelers – Business Analytics Competition Finals Hartford, CT – Friday, April 4, 2025

The Travelers' Business Analytics Case Competition presents an amazing opportunity for students to participate and demonstrate their business-analytics problem-solving abilities working in team settings. This year's competition was structured in a new way unlike past years. After the case competition kickoff sessions which were held on February 26, 2025, at ECSU, Quinnipiac University, UConn and other Connecticut schools, students were directed to a website URL to submit their application to compete in the contest. Unlike past years, the top 16 accepted students from the schools were formed into four person teams by school.

The accepted 16 students from the schools took part in the Business Analytics Case Competition on Friday, April 4, 2025, at Travelers Headquarters in Hartford. There was a total of four four-person teams. Three undergraduate teams (1 Quinnipiac University, 1 UConn, & 1 Eastern) as well as 1 UConn graduate business analytics team competed. The schools' student teams were presented with the case and supporting data files in the morning. They worked on their analysis and presentations until giving their presentations at 3 PM in the afternoon. The Eastern student team consisted of: Samuel Hurlburt (BIS/MAT), Liam Shanley (BIS/ECO), Gage Duarte (BIS/FIN), and Oscar Molina (BIS). The Eastern team finished second place behind the UConn graduate student team. The Travelers judges had high praise for the quality and thoroughness of the Eastern's team's analysis and findings. Eastern students look forward to competing in next year's Travelers Business Analytics Case Competition!



Travelers BI&A Info Session, Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Wednesday evening, April 9, 2025, students from the BIS Program and the BIS-ITSA Club were treated to a Travelers Business Insights & Analytics Info Session. The Travelers' Eastern alumni led the information session were James Collin (CS Major, Dual Minors BIS & Business Analytics), Brendon Steen (CS Major, Dual Minors BIS & Business Analytics), and Hunter Vetterkind (Dual Majors – BIS & Data Science). The trio spoke about internship and career opportunities within the Business Insights and Analytics (BI&A) Leadership Development Program at Travelers. They heavily stressed the integration of business, data, and technical skills that they are using in their jobs at Travelers. The trio also brought out the various roles and career paths open through the Travelers BI&A Program such as Business Analytics, Data engineering, Data management, Information Delivery, Geospatial, and Project Coordination. The session provided attendees with detailed information about the skills and technologies most values at Travelers, such as Python, SQL, AWS, and Snowflake as well as agile scrum project management methods and tools such as Jira and Confluence. Students had a lengthy question and answer session with the Travelers alumni that helped provide a better understanding of what the alumni were doing in their job roles and what they were using from their Eastern education. The aim was to encourage current students to better align their skillsets to meet growing industry needs. Travelers provided pizza and refreshments for the event.

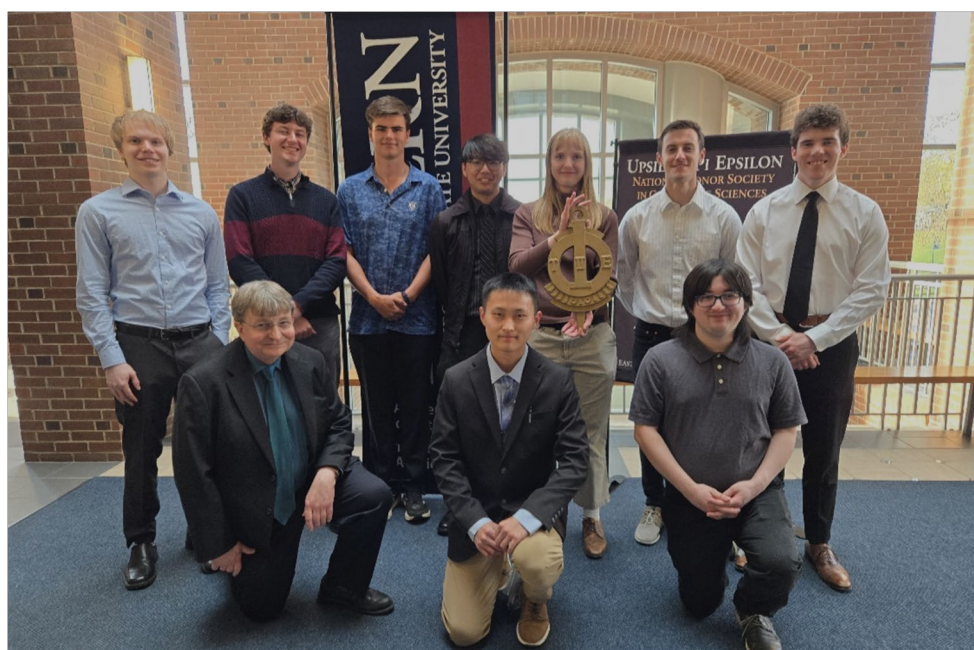


Upsilon Pi Epsilon Honor Society – April 23, 2025

On Wednesday, April 23, 2025, the Business Information Systems (BIS) Program, Department of Computer Science (CS), and the interdisciplinary Data Science Program held the induction ceremony into the Connecticut Alpha Chapter of Upsilon Pi Epsilon (UPE). Nine students majoring in BIS along with eight students majoring in Computer Science, and four students majoring in Data Science were inducted into Alpha Mu Alpha. Many of the inductees had dual majors or minors.



These information systems/science and computer science students were recognized for their outstanding academic achievements. At the ceremony, addresses to the inductees and their families were given by Dr. Karim Ismaili, Dr. Sarah Tasneem (Computer Science), Dr. Garrett Dancik (Dept. of Computer Science Chair), Dr. Niki Kunene (ACC-BIS Department Chair), and Dr. Alex Citurs (BIS). The induction ceremony was followed by a reception. BIS students inducted into UPE on April 23, 2024, included the following students (note some had to leave for their classes and are not in the picture below):



New UPE inductees majoring in BIS listed alphabetically are: Logan French, Daniel Gallagher, Samuel Klein, Felix Li, Mitchel Peterson, Alexander Saranich, Liam Shanley, Robyn Vetterkind, and Nicolas Washburn.

BIS 449 - Data Visualization Students Present at CREATE 2025

On Friday, April 25, 2025, thirty-four BIS Program students from Dr. Kunene's BIS 449 – Data Visualization course sections presented at CREATE 2024 held on Friday, April 19th in the Student Center. CREATE provided a great opportunity for the student teams to present their visual, written, and oral topic-issue stories to an audience with members from different perspectives (student, faculty, administrators, and off campus guests) that can relate to these campus issues. The presentations and posters were on the following research topics:

Conference Presentations

Commuter parking at Eastern - Hayes, R., Merrill, A., & Tlahuel, M.

Course scheduling conflicts for athletes - DeSabella, A., Furgalack, M., Lee, T., & Pyle, J.

Eastern laundry system issues & perceptions - Laliberte, K., Milot, C., & Saranich, A.

Improving parking at Eastern - Bouchard, J., Byers, A., & Falasco, J.

A modernized eWeb design - Ajmal, A., Li, F., Peterson, M., & Vetterkind, R.

Renovating the sports center - Cafferty, S., Davis, T., & Lombard, D.

Second dining hall initiative - Doherty, M., Flores, A., Gallagher, D., & Lukow, J.



Poster Presentations

Academic major inequality - Flynn, D., Molina, O., Selimaj, E., & Shanley, L.

Disruptive high school students - Hickey, J., Klein, S., & Rivard, J.

Panic! Course section availability is not meeting student demand: student and professor perspectives - Arriaga, J., Kopycinski, E., Ferraiolo, J., & Bustamante, E.



BIS-ITSA Club Banquet – Friday, May 9th, 2025

FAIC Lobby – 6:15 PM

On Friday, May 9, 2025, from 6:15pm to 8:30pm, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted the annual BIS Banquet in the FAIC Lobby, with current students, faculty, as well as alumni invited. The flood warning, road closing, heavy monsoon like rain, wind, and lightning damped attendance, but not spirits of the people making it to the event! The Banquet gave students the opportunity to sit down and converse with alumni with educational paths very similar to their interests. This in turn allowed them to see the wide array of opportunities that their education can offer them.

In addition to valuable discussions and insights into potential career paths, this event also presented awards to both alumni and the current E-Board members of the BIS-ITSA Club for their efforts, help and accomplishments. Among the alumni who received awards were 2024-2025 BIS-ITSA Club events. Special recognition was given to Dr. Jeffrey Schaller for his twenty-nine years of service to Eastern in the area of Operations Management and for teaching BIS courses such as IT Project Management and Enterprise Resource Planning.

Towards the end of the banquet, major announcements were made. Plus, the BIS-ITSA Fall 2025 Social was announced for Thursday, September 18th to be held in the Fine Arts Center Lobby at 6:15 PM.

Along side the dinner, awards, and discussion, was the Second Annual BIS Kahoot Game which featured a variety of trivia about the BIS Program, people, and BIS skillset knowledge. This event was hosted by the BIS-ITSA Club, with the Burrito Buffett food and beverages provided by Chartwells.



Connecticut Advance Manufacturing Expo Connecticut State Capital – Hartford – May 15, 2025



On the afternoon of Thursday, May 15, 2025, despite it being the middle of Final Exam Week, about a dozen BIS-ITSA Club members and other BIS Program students took time to attend a Connecticut advanced manufacturing expo and career fair at the Connecticut State Capitol. The event was organized by the legislative caucuses, with the date of the event determined by the topic agenda sequence of legislative bills. Thus, this year's career fair was far from an ideal date for students and manufacturing firms realized this too. Approximately, 40 advanced manufacturing Connecticut firms were anticipated to have exhibits about their products, operations, and manufacturing services in the capitol. The firms at the capitol had internship and career employment information on the various types of engineering, IT, machine-control, operations, and logistics/supply-chain internships and career positions that they are looking to fill.

Many of the BIS-ITSA students took their resumes to the event. Because of the mid-May date this year of the event, student attendance from other Connecticut schools was down as well. Again, this year, numerous advanced manufacturing employers brought out the challenges they face in trying to find qualified talent at the intersecting skillsets of various types of engineering, computer aided design, computerized machine control programming and operation, along with information systems skillsets in enterprise resource planning, logistics and supply chain management as well as automated assembly and warehousing systems programming and process customization. Some of the ECSU BIS students attending the event felt that they gained insights and leads into potential internship and career opportunities in or close to the Connecticut towns and cities where they grew up. Next year's draft legislative topic agenda has advanced manufacturing being scheduled in March, which will be a better timeframe for Eastern BIS Program students.

Intern to employed: BIS alum explains journey with The Hartford

An alumnus of Eastern's business information systems program (BIS) recently advanced from his summer 2024 internship with insurance company The Hartford to a career position with the company. Joe Hines '25 now serves as a process analyst for the company's leadership development program.

"Now that I've graduated, I'm looking to expand my professional connections as well as develop further key skills with Eastern's master's program in applied data science," said Hines. "I'm looking forward to where the road takes me and I'm thankful for everyone who's helped me along the way."

Hines credited the support of Eastern's faculty, namely business information systems Professor and Associate Chair Alex Citurs for assisting in developing his resume and refining his skillset for the professional world.

"Landing an internship can be a tough task, but it's always important to use your resources, be they from Eastern or external," said Hines. "Dr. Citurs sat down with me to help develop my resume as well as key skills I would need (and still use) on and off the job."

Hines lauded his connections with Eastern's College of Education and Professional Studies, including Administrative Assistant Paula Goyette, Dean Niti Pandey, and Assistant Dean Ryan Colwell: "I found that my connections with the dean's office helped me further develop and hone my skills in the professional space."

According to Hines, he picked up key industry knowledge not only from Eastern's faculty and staff but also from his peers. "A lot of people currently in school have a small (but significant) background in business and industry," said Hines. "It's important to maintain those connections and make sure to honor them."

Hines advised that future business majors should take advantage of the connections they make and maintain the lessons they learn from them beyond surface level once they gain their internships. "Learn, listen, and pay it forward," he said.



Joe Hines '25

Summer 2024 BIS 490 – BIS Internship Class Related Events

Exchanging Ideas, Tech-Tool Tips, & Strategies Over Lunches & Coffee Near Employers, Plus in Class-Lab & Virtually

The BIS 490 – BIS Internship class sessions again incorporated on-campus in person class sessions that accompanied the traditional BIS Program's more individualized independent study style BIS Internships. Historically, the summer BIS Internships had multi-time group get togethers to exchange internship experiences, strategies, and tech tool tips, and resource suggestions. Dr. Citurs, BIS Program Coordinator and BIS 490 Faculty Instructor, visited the companies/communities/areas where the BIS students were interning and working by having meetups over "come-n-go" lunches or coffee. These "Dutch-treat" (no expense to Eastern) lunches and coffees allowed interning BIS students additional opportunities to obtain feedback and suggestions, from not only Dr. Citurs, but numerous BIS alumni working in a variety of biz-tech careers potentially within the same companies or other nearby companies. The suggestions by Dr. Citurs and BIS alumni to the interns would often include how to improve their biz-tech skillsets, work performance, learn about new tech-tools, and tech help websites. At these events BIS alumni shared with the current interning BIS students their strategies for dealing with these challenging technical and organizational issues. These gatherings also helped build the interns' biz-tech professional networks with the companies where they were working and other companies in the area. The BIS alumni also shared with Dr. Citurs their observations and perceptions of tech tools, platforms, project trends, and best practices, for suggestions to be considered for future course content incorporation.

The Summer 2024 - BIS 490 Internship class sessions, held in the Science 115 lab, incorporated hands-on exercises with biz-tech professional platform tools like GitHub, LinkedIn, and tech sites useful in solving technical issues such as W3Schools, StackOverflow, etc., Microsoft, IBM and other vendor sites. The class sessions often had alumni guest speakers that are experts at the week's topics. BIS interning students can text, call or email, Dr. Citurs to get individualized tech help and advice not only during the class sessions and daytime, but evenings and weekends for more urgent and pressing issues they are facing in their internship projects and teams. Below are pictures from just a few of the multiple casual-over food/coffee events held during Summer 2024 with current BIS interning students, alumni, and Dr. Citurs. The locations for meeting were chosen based upon their proximity to the internship company locations and the restaurants'/coffee shops' come n' go settings. Guest speakers for class sessions were mostly in person, but with some virtual Zoom, and mixed physical-virtual sessions to facilitate guest speakers' and interning students' work schedule needs and locations. BIS professionals have dynamic work locations and schedules. Plus, they need to be skilled at operating in a variety of team modalities (i.e. all on-ground, online synchronous, online asynchronous, and mixed on-ground and remote).



