

Business Information Systems Program

Employability Plan

Department Activities

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?

The primary way we ensure that all students are aware of the most common jobs stemming from the Accounting and Business Information Systems majors are through a combination of the following methods:

- A) Student advising is where we as faculty advisors discuss the common jobs related to our majors. We take them to online job sites (i.e., CareerOneStop.org by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Indeed; Monster.Com, etc.) and step them through common job titles and number of job openings in Connecticut with those titles are skill sets. Plus, we as BIS discuss graduate programs while advising the students and point out which Connecticut employers will often pay for graduate school or graduate courses.
- B) Student involvement in the major clubs [BIS-ITSA Club [Information Technology Students of America, the former national name was Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP)]. The BIS-ITSA Club hold weekly meetings most weeks of the fall and spring semester, where job openings are discussed and presentations from alumni and other representatives of businesses looking to hire for certain types of positions are discussed.
- C) Invite all major students and other students from the programs' minors and closely related majors to employer alumni events such as the following:
 - a. Biz-Tech Career Conversation – this event typically held the first Tuesday or Wednesday in October is done in conjunction with OSC, since about 2017 or 2018. OSC helps with the event, since they are allowed to send out email messages more broadly than student clubs or regular faculty. Plus, they have more funding for promotional flyers and food both of which tend to encourage students to show up at events. The BIS faculty provide the alumni for this event. It is based upon the concept of career area “speed dating”, where there are most years 10 tables each based upon a different Biz-Tech career cluster area. Multiple alumni from multiple employers working in that career cluster sit at each table. Students rotate between the tables that they are interested in every 10 to 12 minutes. This “come n’ go” event starts at 5 pm and lasts until 8 pm. In Fall 2022, students were still around asking alumni questions until after 9 pm and alumni stuck around until after 10 pm chatting about career trends and providing feedback on students and making suggestions on curriculum changes and tech tools.
 - b. Student Club Sessions with alumni and other representatives of firms come to visit and present information about their job openings and the skillsets that they are looking for in internship and job candidates.
 - c. Take students to regional or national seminars (physically or virtually) on career trends in our fields.
- D) When we receive information on job openings from employers, we try to have that information shared and emailed to the students taking the relevant courses providing the more relevant skillsets for the job opening shared with us. We also utilize brief announcement times just before the start of classes to share information on job openings, skillsets trends, and upcoming career related events.

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 methods. The BIS Major are following recommended curriculum of 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]. For BIS, Dr. Citurs attends the ISECON (Information Systems Educators Conference) and ITSA/AITP Conference sessions on trends in IS/IT education. Plus, the BIS faculty maintain ongoing regular communication with our employers and alumni, who tell us what they see both for upcoming trends and current needs. We also utilize online career sites such as sites like CareerOneStop.org by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; Indeed; Monster.Com, Burning Glass, etc., to spot out job and skillset growth trends. Sometimes we do data mining, SQL querying and analytics to spot out trends and combination of skillsets in demand by Connecticut employers and beyond. We also stay engaged through magazines (paper & online) as well as podcasts in our respective fields such as CIO, Wired, Tech Trends, Tech Tent, etc. For the Biz-Tech Career Conversation Event, we put the CT job opening numbers, expected job growth trends, and common skillsets and tools on flyer for each of the 10-career area tables. (Note: In October 2022, two tables in the Johnson Room were broken or very unstable so we had to combine two tables/career areas into one table). We also have student club sessions where we go over these skills and subject knowledge. This is also brought out in the BIS 370 and BIS 490 courses where we bring in guest speakers on the specific skills and skillset areas in demand.

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

All courses are supposed to incorporate the student learning outcomes (SLOs) into the course syllabi as well as highlight which high impact practices are utilized in the course. The BIS syllabi include a section on software and other tech tools utilized in the course and which type of computer (PC and/or Mac support or remote access to IBM Mainframe) supports the software and tech tool platforms. The BIS Program and major are in the middle of a major curriculum streamlining and overhauling, each course syllabus will be carefully reviewed during Summer 2023 for currency of student learning outcomes, high impact practices, software and tools, and skills training before submitting them to the Curriculum Committee, etc.

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?

For the BIS Majors, this is done first through faculty academic advising one-on-one sessions. For both majors, a large number of the students have secured a career position before they graduate. Most of the students have discussed with their faculty advisor their general career strategy plan. All of our upper-level majors have attended classes and/or club sessions on job search strategies. In the BIS 490 – BIS Internship class, we have incorporated a couple of class sessions on job searching and an additional session on career-progression planning.

4) 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?

In addition to the course information, student club activities and special events outlined previously in the answer to **Question 1** of this document, we also encourage our majors to attend:

- A) The University-wide Fall and Spring Career Fairs,
- B) Company information and career development program sessions held by the student clubs,
- C) Take advantage of company visits and job shadow days,
- D) Industry placement company representatives brought in to talk at student club meeting on Wednesdays at 3 pm such as: Robert Half Technologies, Kelly Tech Services, and others,
- E) Classroom guest speakers like in BIS 370 – Systems Analysis & Design; BIS 490 – BIS Internship class,
- F) More informal interactions at Student-Alumni social events such as the Annual Accounting Banquet, the BIS Program Banquet, the BIS Fall Meet and Greet, as well as other casual student-alumni events,
- G) Please see Appendix A – 2022-2023 BIS Program – BIS-ITSA Club Event writeups. For example, the “How to Succeed in an Internship” event.

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

The template/example resumes for BIS majors are shared and discussed at student club events every semester. For example, for BIS, the Biz-tech resume common template and customization consideration features are gone over every semester at a “Resume Prep Workshop” led by Dr. Citurs and assisted by upper-level BIS students. This is followed every semester by a “Resume Writing Workshop” where BIS alumni and sometimes other company representatives from multiple employers individually review students’ resumes and make suggestions for students applying for different types of internship and job positions. (See Appendix A – write-ups for Resume Prep sessions and Resume Writing Workshops.). The Resume Prep Workshop information is also incorporated into the first and second sessions of the BIS 490 – BIS Internship class, in which stress is placed on how to keep a resume current as a student progresses through their internship position(s) and project(s).

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?

For both the Accounting majors and BIS majors, special student club sessions are held on these topics. For BIS majors this is done through every semester the “Resume Prep Workshop”, which focuses mostly on resume creation and refinement, but a final portion and examples on cover letters (note: in biz-tech entry-level positions are less frequently requiring or even facilitating the submission of cover letters). Creating LinkedIn profiles and refining them are gone over in club meetings as well. Often these sessions are led by alumni or upper-level students that have already completed an internship and landed a career position. In the BIS 490 – BIS Internship class, most of one class session is devoted to creating a LinkedIn profile and strategies on incorporating different features and making professional network connections through LinkedIn. Multiple alumni/BIS people who have LinkedIn accounts chime in, during an informal group discussion as the class progresses through the features of LinkedIn and the benefits of paying extra money for a premium account.

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

For BIS majors, special student club sessions are held on these topics. For BIS majors this is done every semester through the “Mock Interview Workshop”, where alumni and other representatives come to Webb Hall and conduct mock interviews with individual students and provide feedback after each interview question. The students are interviewed both one-on-one and if time allows multiple-on-one as is the common practice for biz-tech sector jobs. Students’ resumes are shared with the alumni and other reps before the start of the interviews. Samples of both behavioral and technical interview questions are given to the student, with the technical interview questions and individual student discussions varying depending upon the career area(s) of interest of the individual student. (See Appendix A for the writeups for the “Mock Interview Workshops”).

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?

This has been a very challenging issue for the Department of Accounting and Business Information Systems. University Relations posts success stories and testimonials on the major pages. Over the past few years, we have tried to add in links to additional information pages, however, we were told that it would not be allowed because other departments and programs do not have nor want the equivalent. Just in the last couple of months, we have sensed a change in attitude for allowing more pages and information to be added to department websites by the new head of University Relations. Hence, this summer (2023) we will be adding in the additional information pages, PDFs, etc., that we attempted to get added starting back in Fall 2021. BIS student workers, as well as myself, Dr. Citurs, have the technical capabilities to update the department website; it is just a matter of having sufficient permissions in Cascade and the time to keep things current. Summer 2023 will be a good opportunity to get the additional information posted. We used to provide much more information through the Business Key Planner, which we hosted in Blackboard and made available to all the students in what is now the College of Business as well as Computer Science, at one stage it was about 1,800 students. Multiple BIS student workers had permission to add and update content to the Business Key Planner, thus helping to ensure

that it was current and accurate. It also incorporated locations for students to submit documents for review like resumes, event writeups, etc. The Business Key Planner was dropped when there was a change in ITS staff and they did not want it to persist as a class spanning multiple terms. The BIS student workers every semester would add in new students and remove graduating students.

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

For BIS Program, we have had a good working relationship for multiple years with Alumni Affairs. We work together at putting on the annual banquets of our programs. We have an ECSU Foundation account, which is largely funded by alumni of our program, which Alumni Affairs captures at the time of receiving the donations. We chat and email back and forth as to what is going on with alumni. We have let Alumni Affairs know that we post many of the write-ups of our alumni visit events on the student club websites. We will continue to increase our sharing of information and files back and forth with Alumni Affairs, but we will remain respectful of our alumni wishes in who they want us to share or not share personal information with, for example not sharing cellphone numbers unless the alumni says it is OK to share it. We want to remain on good terms over the long run with our programs' alumni.

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 long been key components of BIS Program as well as our associated student clubs. The annual BIS-AITP Club database driven website projects with area nonprofits starting back in 2008 up through 2017 provided updateable websites that the nonprofits could not otherwise afford. The BIS-AITP Club also refurbished PCs and gave them to area nonprofits. However, the losing of a room to refurbish the PCs ended that project, which both current students and BIS alumni would like to restart if space becomes available again for the project.

Internships have been a requirement for multiple years for students majoring in BIS.

BIS faculty over the years have conducted research with BIS students and have submitted joint papers for publication and presentations at conferences. The Covid Years and lack of full-time faculty temporarily halted these activities. It is hoped that research projects started in the summer or fall by students working with faculty will be submitted to CREATE and conferences (i.e. ISECON, EDSIG, NABET, COPLAC) next winter or spring again like done in past years.

A global field course in BIS is something long dreamed of by BIS faculty. There was BIS student interest a year ago for a field course on Innovative Tech Hubs and Startups, like in Europe, especially given existing contacts both in academia and industry at tech hubs in the UK, Ireland and Germany.

Historically, the BIS Program have had significant community outreach and worked closely with the Center for Community Engagement directed by Kim Silcox. For the BIS Program, this has been through designing websites in the BIS 375 – Ecommerce course and through the BIS-AITP now BIS-ITSA Club activities (website design, PC refurbishment, and computer training events). However, due to Covid and lack of fulltime faculty and lack of physical space for the projects, these activities had to be suspended. However, it hoped with support from BIS alumni and employers, that many of these activities can be restarted in this upcoming year.

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	2023	Target 2026	Target 2028	Responsibility
1	Percentage of seniors who have: 1) completed a resumé; [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; [Dr. Citurs; and program alumni] 5) created a post-graduation plan. [Faculty Advisors also in BIS 490]	100% of SRs. 70% 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. <u>NOTE: Need to add these items to the BIS major webpages.</u>	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. <u>NOTE: See Appendix A for writeups of a number of these events.</u>	12	14	16	Academic Departments
4	Number of students completing experiential learning activity*. <u>NOTE: for BIS SRs 100% if internships are included.</u>	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. <u>[Note: Have some of information already, but will have more in Sept-Oct]</u>	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: Some Department Employability Event Writeups

Warrior Welcome Weekend Information Sessions for the BIS Program

On Sunday, August 28, 2022, during the 2022 Warrior Welcome, the Business Information Systems Program held an informational session for new incoming first-year and transfer students in Student Center 217 Meeting Room. This session provided new BIS Program students information about the academic and extracurricular opportunities that the program and related student clubs have to offer. During the information session, program faculty were introduced by Dr. Citurs, who gave an overview presentation on not only all of the BIS Program's academic majors, minors, and concentrations, but also academic and social activities relevant to the students' career and other areas of interest. This Program info session introduced new students to program faculty, the specifics of their academic programs, and the related student clubs and organizations.

The BIS Info Session focused on informing new students about the BIS major, its requirements, career opportunities, and relevant minors that complement and enhance other academic and career fields. The discussion included information on the BIS Faculty and their areas of teaching and research specialization. Each new BIS student had an opportunity to introduce themselves and ask questions of the BIS faculty and current BIS student representatives at the event.. Some of the existing current BIS students attending the session brought out the companies and positions they had worked at during Summer 2022 as well as their career interests. The current BIS students also talked about the BIS New Student Meet and Greet Reception hosted by the BIS-ITSA Club for new BIS students to be held the evening of Wednesday, August 31st, 2022, in Webb Hall 358 - Faculty Lounge.



BIS-ITSA New Student Meet and Greet

On the first Wednesday of Fall 2022 Semester, August 31st from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm, the BIS-ITSA Club held a “Meet and Greet” to welcome new students into the BIS Program and invite them to the BIS-ITSA student club. This session introduces new students to current BIS students and BIS-ITSA Club members and Business Information Systems faculty. During this social event, new students learned about the BIS-ITSA Club activities and the career options that the BIS related career fields offer, while enjoying pizza and soda in the Webb Faculty Lounge. Most importantly, new students gained insight into the BIS field from current upper-level BIS major and BIS-ITSA Club members who have completed BIS internships at area companies including Cigna, COCC, Travelers, The Hartford, HSB, IBM, Yale Medical Center, and others, during this come and go event.



Student Club Fair and President's Picnic Business Information Systems – Information Technology Students of America Club BIS - ITSA

The 2022 Fall Student Club Fair and President's Picnic was held on Tuesday, September 6th. The department business administration had several tables for the related student clubs and organizations. The business related student clubs represented at the fair include the BIS Information Technology Students of America, American Marketing Association, Eastern Accounting Society, the Finance Student Association, Entrepreneurship Club, Women in Business, Institute of Management Accounts, and the Society for Human Resources Management. The goals of these clubs are to get students engaged in student-run academic organizations thus helping them develop their leadership and discipline skills as well as provide them insights into the opportunity that exists in their field of study and ultimately to advance their future careers.



BIS-ITSA Resume Preparation Workshop

On Wednesday, September 14th, 2022, BIS-ITSA club members, as well as several BIS non-members and other students attended the Fall 2022 semester BIS-ITSA Club hosted resume prep workshop event. The head of the BIS Program, Dr. Citurs, provided students with a presentation with tips on how to prepare an outstanding resume.

Attendees were given the opportunity to receive feedback from Dr. Citurs, who has connections to several companies and knows what the employers expect from a biz-tech resume. The purpose of this session was to prepare the students' resumes for when alumni and company representatives provide feedback in the upcoming Resume Writing Workshop. Dr. Citurs discussed many necessities for technology- based resumes such as using tables to present skills, the "hidden" vertical spacing feature in MS Word, the importance of font and style selection, and ordering headers based on content importance for the type of job position. This workshop is held every semester.

BIS-ITSA Resume Writing with Alumni

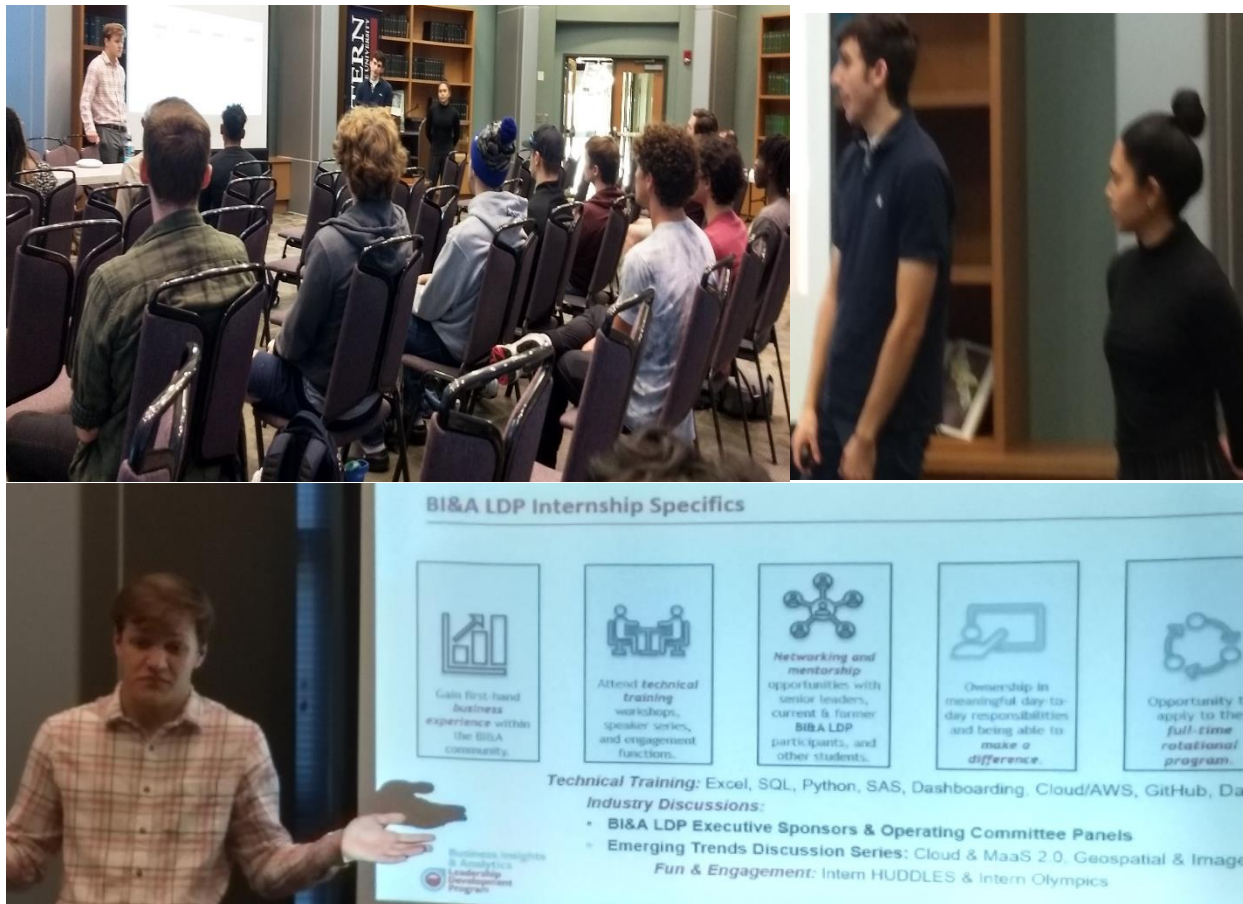
On Wednesday, September 21st, 2022, alumni from Travelers, The Hartford, and Cigna came to help students with their resumes from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. This workshop was hosted by Eastern's BIS-ITSA Club as an opportunity for those majoring or minoring in Business Information Systems and related majors and minors to receive help with their resume for the internship application and interviewing season. Each club member was paired with an alum, and they had a one-on-one in-depth discussion of their resume. The alumni gave tips on how to make the resumes look more professional, gave out lists of action verbs to use, and advice on things to add to make each student stand out more for different types of biz-tech positions. Resumes are so important when it comes to internships and job opportunities, so the alumni come every year to do this event. This BIS-ITSA workshop is a twice yearly event that better prepares students for the fast-changing biz-tech related technical fields and for their various rewarding future career goals.



BIS/ITSA - Travelers Business Insights and Analytics Internship and Career Program Info Session

On Monday, September 26th, 2022 at 5:00 pm, BIS, CS, and ITSA students gathered in Science 301 to attend an information session on the Travelers Business Insights and Analytics (BIA) Programs. The info session focused on Travelers BIA internship and early career development programs. The BIS and CS Travelers BIA alumni conducting the info session and giving the presentation included: Connor Chute (BIS) -Data Engineer; Peter Ershena (BIS) – Data Engineer; Vanessa Zetino (CS) – Data Engineer; with provided input from Mike Zisk (BIS) – Business Analyst.

Attendees were exposed to details of Traveler's BIA programs, previously known as the Business Intelligence and Geospatial program. The alumni went over the five different areas of BIA (Business Analyst, Data Engineer, Data Management, Information Delivery, and Geospatial). The Travelers alumni went over information systems skills such as database, SQL, business intelligence and analytics, as well as business, coding and communication that proved helpful to them in Travelers BIA internship program. The alumni discussed the many cool and interesting technologies and types of systems in Travelers BIA. The alumni also brought out how they receive great mentorship in Travelers BIA and throughout the internship process as well as from BIS faculty. Students were shown a presentation and had the opportunity to ask questions. The session lasted about an hour and included pizza and soda provided by Travelers.

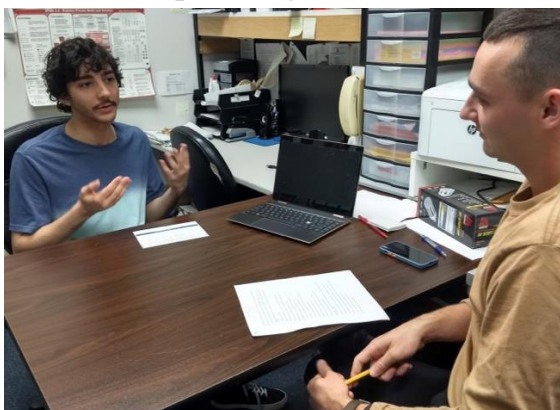


Mock Interviews with Alumni and Company Reps

On Wednesday, September 28th from 5:30pm to 7:30pm, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted a mock interview event with Eastern alumni. Alumni that attended this event worked for large insurance companies such as Travelers and Cigna. This event is held annually by the BIS-ITSA Club to prepare students for both business and technical interviews. Many of the alumni that came have interviewed potential employees at their own respective companies, so the questions asked were directly from real interviews.

The event started with brief introductions in room Webb 407, while both students and alumni enjoyed pizza and soda. Once introductions were done, students were split off into multiple rooms across Webb Hall for one-on-one mock interview sessions. These one-on-one sessions consisted of resume review, questions about the companies, behavioral interview questions and most importantly, feedback from the interviewers. These mock interviews allow students to recognize and learn from their mistakes so that the same mistakes are not made in real internship and career position interviews. This event, for some students, may have been the first time they encountered having to answer behavioral interview questions, which have become an important and common first stage interview technique in the biz-tech field followed by more job-position specific technical rounds. All students were able to complete one interview with employer alumni.

This educational event creates an opportunity for Eastern's Business Information Systems and Computer Science majors and minors to practice their interviewing skills, while getting to know representatives from some of the top companies in Connecticut. Mock interviews will remain part of the BIS-ITSA Club's annual events so that biz-tech students now and in the future can be better prepared for important job interviews.



Biz-Tech & IT Career Conversations

On Wednesday, October 5th, 2022 the BIS-ITSA Club partnered with Eastern's Office of Career Success to bring together students, alumni and faculty for Biz-Tech and IT Career Conversations. At this event, students were able to talk to alumni and representatives from Cigna, Travelers, Pratt & Whitney, RMI Corp., Webster Bank, The Hartford, Aetna, Northeast District Department of Health, Hartford Steam Boiler, RecDesk Software, and smaller start-up businesses. This event was from 5 pm to 8 pm and many students enjoyed it so much, they stayed later to keep talking to company reps.

At the event, we split the tables up by career. We had 13 different career areas attendees could talk about. These careers included:

- Application Development
- Business Intelligence Analytics / Big Data Mining
- Business Analyst / Systems Analysis
- Business Cloud / E-commerce App / Web Development
- Cyber Security & Network Administration
- Database Administration, SQL, & Data Architecture
- FinTech
- Healthcare IS/IT & Healthcare Info Management
- Internet Marketing, Social Media & Web Design
- Project Managers / Agile / Scrum Masters
- Operations / Supply Chain / Logistics Tech
- Accounting Info & Technology
- Other Biz-Tech / Consulting & Other Technologies

Students could stay at the tables for as long as they wanted, but we rotated about every 10 minutes. This event was Come-n-Go format and was also catered by Chartwells.

Photos Below



Fall 2022 Majors and Minor Fair

The annual Fall Majors and Minors Fair was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2022 this year. This fair is held in the Student Center once every academic year to make students aware of all the amazing majors and minors Eastern has to offer. Dr. Citurs, Dr. RuJoub, and a few BIS major students from the BIS Club were in attendance to help promote the Accounting and BIS Department! Below from left to right, there are senior Daytona Rizzo, sophomore Amani Jones, and senior Hunter Vetterkind. They spoke to students about their experiences in classes, internships, the department professors, how a BIS major or minor could benefit their career, and the BIS Club. There was a lot of buzz at the table from both First Years and upperclassmen. The BIS Program recruits many minors from this fair, and this year was another success!



The Hartford Internship & Career Info Session with Alumni and Company Reps

On Wednesday, October 26th, 2022, from 3:00pm to 4:30pm, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted an info session with the large insurance company, The Hartford. This info session featured a presentation about The Hartford from University Relations Specialist, Alex Martinez and a Q&A panel with Eastern BIS alumni and other company representatives. The panel members included Emily Vieten (BIS major alumni, Performance Analyst Consultant), Greg Platosz (BIS major alumni, FLDP Associate), and non-alumni, Kaira Ramon (Data Engineer), and Emily Korzendorfer (Data Analyst). These panel members offered a lot of different insight about their various job roles, advice for internships, and their stories on how they became so successful.

This event was a great opportunity for students to learn about the different internships and careers The Hartford might have in store for them. Many students asked questions during the panel and the alumni did not disappoint with their answers. This was also a great event for networking; many students stayed after the info session to connect with the panel members one on one. This was the first info session that The Hartford has had in person at Eastern in many years due to Covid, and the BIS-ITSA club hopes to have them back again next year.





Travelers IT Leadership & Development Programs

Information Session – November 30th, 2022

On November 30th from 5:00 to 7:00, four Travelers company representatives (Jeremy Pakalnis, Megan Garofalo, Jamie Cores, and Peter Ereshena), visited the BIS-ITSA Club members in the Library Johnson Room and were joined by other BIS and Computer Science students to talk about the opportunities at the Travelers company within the different path areas of their Technology Leadership Development Program. These included career paths in the Travelers IT Leadership and Development Program such as Business Analyst, Cloud Services, Data Engineer, Infrastructure-Architect, Software Engineer, and Tech Value Stream. Two of the Travelers representatives were Eastern alumni who graduated with a major in either Business Information Systems or Computer Science with Business Information Systems minor. Through the use of their first-hand experience at Eastern and Travelers, the representatives were able to make a strong connection with our current students to be able to provide them with helpful information regarding the advantages of participating in their program, with a few helpful tips and advice based on their own experiences.

The company reps introduced the club members to different program opportunities within their leadership programs. The first of which is the Information Technology Internship Program or **ITIP**, an internship program around 12 weeks long for students during the summer break. Hence, this allows for students to simultaneously attend school without any interruption to their studies while providing them with real life experience and knowledge. They also talked about the Technology Foundational Development Program, also known as **TFDP**. This is a program for recent college graduates who are looking for full time positions. It consists of a one-year focus where the employee is paired up with a senior employee to serve as a mentor. The purpose of this program is to help facilitate the transition to full-time work and regular project teams and

units. The Information Technology Leadership Development Program, **ITLDP**, was also introduced. This program is structured around a three-rotation system where the interns are rotated three times throughout, where the complexity of each role increases with each rotation. The goal of this program is to provide students as well as recent graduates with additional skills when entering a work field in the real world.

The alumni also provided students with insights regarding the plethora of employee benefits that the company provides, plus the growing opportunity for employees to opt for a hybrid schedule giving them the opportunity to work remotely part time, and the overall excellent pay across different company roles.

The event ended by alumni answering questions about their roles, the company itself, what their regular day looks like, and so on. Students were also treated to pizza and pop in addition to the guidance they received overall from the alumni to wrap up the event.

Final BIS-ITSA Club Meeting Fall of 22, with Soda and Pop Social Gathering – December 7th, 2022

On Wednesday December 7th, BIS-ITSA Club held its last club meeting of the Fall 2022 semester, where club members were treated to some pizza and pop. Students discussed and shared ideas for future club events for the coming semester and were also informed about some ideas the E-board had in mind such as the Boston Trip, the Wing Fling, and FIFA tournament fundraisers, and future volunteer opportunities like the PC refurb project for area nonprofits.

Students were then able to socialize; some shared information about the internships they landed, others about the career positions that they had accepted. These positions included at big companies where they had been interning at such as Travelers, The Hartford, Hartford Steam Boiler, COCC, Spiral International, Massachusetts Mutual, and CVS-Aetna. Some efforts and events that the club held had assisted in helping those students achieve their internship and career positions.



BIS-ITSA Resume Prep Workshop

On Wednesday, February 8th, the BIS-ITSA club hosted this semester's club members and other Eastern students attending this semester's BIS-ITSA Resume Prep Workshop event. The head of the BIS department, Dr. Citurs, provided students with a presentation with tips on how to prepare an outstanding resume.

Attendees were given the opportunity to receive feedback from Dr. Citurs, who is a seasoned professional and knows what companies expect from a resume. The purpose of this session was to prepare the students' resumes for when alumni provide feedback in the resume writing workshop. Dr. Citurs discussed everything necessary for biz-tech resumes such as using tables to present skills, the "hidden" vertical spacing feature in word, the importance of font and style selection, and ordering headers based on importance. This workshop is held every semester.

BIS-ITSA Resume Writing with Alumni

On Wednesday, February 15, 2023, alumni from Travelers, The Hartford, and Cigna came to help students with their resumes from 5:30pm to 8pm. This workshop was hosted by Eastern's BIS-ITSA Club as an opportunity for those majoring or minoring in Business Information Systems and related majors and minors to receive help with their resume during internship season. Each club member was paired with an alum, and they had a one-on-one in-depth review of their resume. The alumni gave tips on how to make the resumes look more professional, gave out lists of action verbs to use, and advice on things to add to make each student stand out more. Resumes are so important when it comes to internships and job opportunities, so the alumni come every year to do this event. This BIS-ITSA workshop is an annual event that better prepares students for fast-changing biz-tech related technical fields and for their various rewarding future career goals. *Photos from event:*

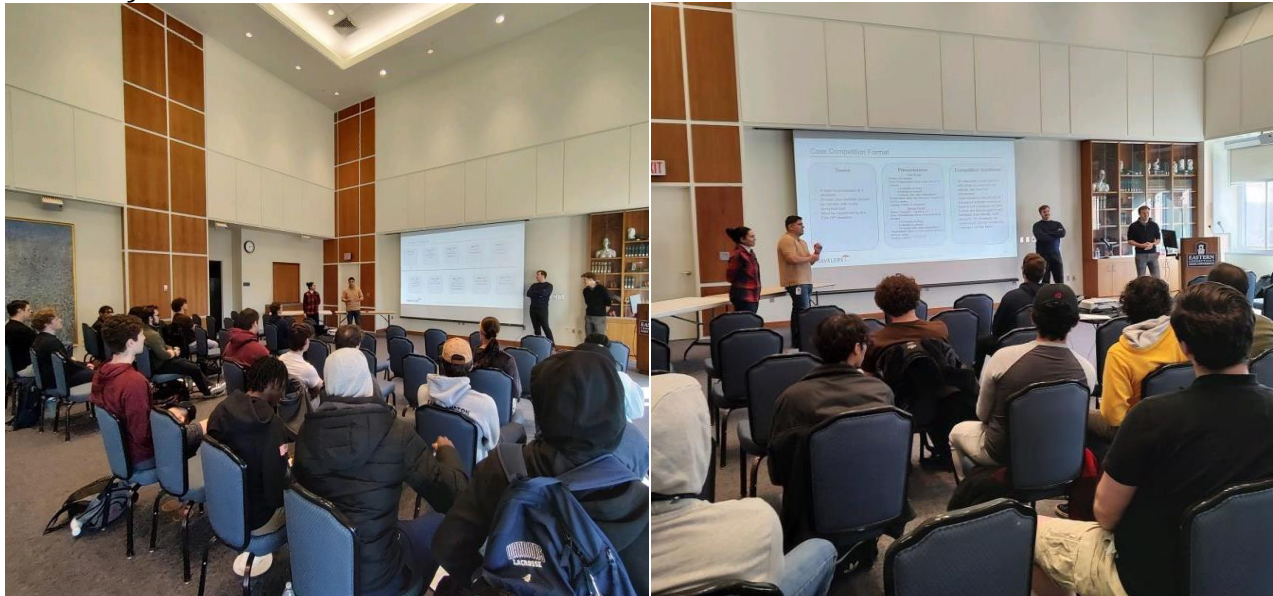


Travelers Business Analytics Case

Competition Kickoff

Due to Covid, a lot of the BIS, BIS-ITSA Club, and other academic program opportunities had been cancelled. including many hands-on outside the classroom projects, due to safety concerns. Consequently, students have greatly missed having more hands-on, outside the classroom projects. However, this year Travelers changed that. Travelers is a Fortune 500 insurance company that has very strong ties to Eastern, especially the Business Information Systems Program. With this, they partnered with Eastern to hold a Business Analytics Case Competition! On February 15th, four Travelers employees came to give a presentation on what the structure of the competition would look like, resources, and the timeline. The BIS-ITSA Club also served pizza and refreshments. It was very informative and there was a lot of buzz from excited BIS and other biz-tech students!

Photos from the event:



Mock Interviews with Alumni and Company Reps

On Wednesday, March 1, 2023, from 5:30pm to 7:30pm, the BIS-ITSA Club hosted a mock interview event with Eastern BIS and alumni. This event is held annually by the BIS-ITSA Club to prepare students for both business and technical interviews. It creates an opportunity for Eastern's BIS and Computer Science majors and minors to practice their interviewing skills, while getting to know representatives from some of the top companies in Connecticut. Many of the alumni that came have interviewed potential employees at their own respective companies, so the questions asked were directly from real interviews.

Students were split off into multiple rooms across Webb Hall for one-on-one mock interview sessions. These one-on-one sessions consisted of resume review, questions about the companies, behavioral interview questions and most importantly, feedback from the interviewers. These mock interviews allow students to recognize and learn from their mistakes so that the same mistakes are not made in real internship and career position interviews. This event, for some students, especially those that missed the fall events and interviews might be first time they encountered the variety of interview question types brought up in biz-tech interviews.

Photos from the event:



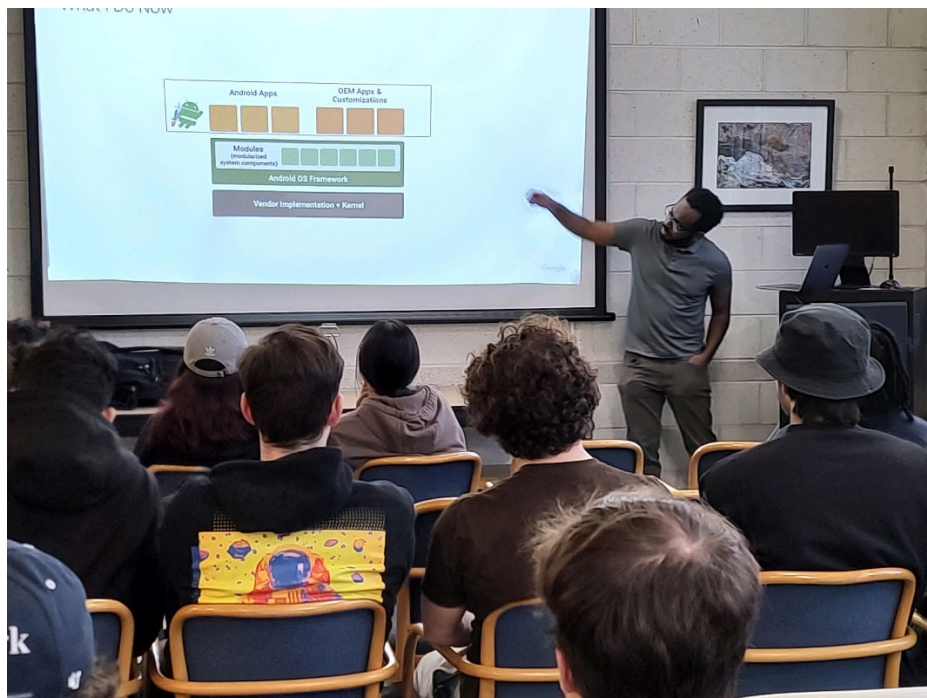
Traveler's BI&A Q&A Panel

On Thursday, March 2, 2023, three alumni from Travelers came to Eastern to hold an information session about the Traveler's Business Insight and Analytics Leadership Development Program (BI&A LDP), which was a delay from February 28th due to a winter storm. This was unlike other info-sessions in the past though. Each alumni sat down and spoke to us about what they do in their day-to-day role, and club members were able to ask specific questions about their roles. The three different roles discussed most extensively were Business Analyst, Information Delivery, and Data Engineer, because the alumni panelists had worked in one or more of those roles. In BI&A there are a total of 6 different career roles, the previous roles mentioned along with Business Performance Analytics, Data Management, and Geospatial. During and after the event, we ate pizza with the alumni. This was a great opportunity for students to learn more in-depth information about potential job roles they could go into and make personal connections with alumni at Travelers. *Photos from the event:*



Google Technical Program Manager Q&A

On Tuesday, March 23, 2023, the BIS Club welcomed a proud alumni guest speaker: Nate Belay. Nate graduated Eastern in 2020 as a Computer Science and Business Information Systems double major in the Honors Program. He emphasized how important courses such as BIS 370 Systems Analysis and Design, BIS 373 Business Database Management, BIS 437 Rapid IT Development and Java were to his career and overall employability. He started his journey in 2020 as a Program Manager at PTC. He said he took a lot of great things from this job and really liked being able to directly talk to the leaders at the company. In 2022, Nate started at Google! At Google, Nate is a Technical Program Manager in the Android Engineering department. He gave a presentation on all the cool things he does at Google and then answered student questions for an hour. We learned a lot of insightful information about him and the students loved eating pizza and pop with him!





BIS-ITSA Students Compete at National U.S. IT Collegiate Conference in Plano, Texas

On Wednesday, March 29th, 2023, four BIS students of Eastern Connecticut State University and members of the ECSU BIS-ITSA (Information Technology Students of America) Student Chapter (formerly AITP) embarked on a trip to Plano, Texas in the greater Dallas-Fort Worth Metro Area. The four BIS students competed in multiple IS/IT related competitions over a three-day period. Meanwhile, BIS-ITSA Club Advisor, Dr. Citurs, took part in the simultaneously running sessions of the Information Systems Education Conference (ISECON), where many sessions were dominated by topics related Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) such as ChatGPT (Generative Pre-trained Transformer).

The BIS/ITSA students representing Eastern at the 2023 USITCC were Andrew Cavar, Jake Cohen, Marcos Hernandez, and David Marciczkiwicz. None of the four Eastern representatives had attended any of the previous USITCC/AITP Conferences. Many of the other schools' representatives had competed in regional conferences in Fall 2022. The Eastern students competed as pairs in the 3-to-4-hour competitions held in multiple large conference/banquet rooms some of which lasted until 11 PM Central Time! The IS/IT competitions the Eastern BIS students competed in were the following: Microsoft Office Solutions, Database Design, Business Analytics, and Systems Analysis and Design. At the closing USITCC Awards Banquet, Drew Cavar and Jake Cohen received Honorable Mention being in the top five pairs in the nation in the Database Design Competition! Congratulations Drew and Jake!!!

While at the conferences, both the Eastern students and Dr. Citurs attended joint conference sessions on career readiness and trends in the fields of IS/IT. The students also checked out the exhibit area of employer sponsors and professional IS/IT certification organizations. Thursday evening, the first night of the conference, Buddy Kaiyala, 2020 Club President and BIS alumni, who competed and presented at the last national conference in 2019, stopped by to wish the current Eastern students well in the competitions. Buddy currently works at an agile project and analytics startup in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metro Area, specializing in civil engineering projects. After the last seminars on Saturday were over, the Eastern BIS students were able to talk with fellow competitors and presenters from the conferences and see the surrounding area. The BIS-ITSA students consider the conference a success and are looking forward to competing and hopefully presenting at next years' 2024 USITCC and ISECON national conferences, tentatively scheduled to be held in either San Antonio, Kansas City or St. Louis.



BIS Program & BIS-ITSA Club

How to Have a Successful Internship

Insights from BIS Travelers & Cigna Alumni

On Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at 5:30 pm, BIS, CS, and ITSA students gathered in the Webb 358 Faculty Lounge to attend a question-answer panel discussion with Travelers and Cigna Alumni on strategies to have a successful internship. This event was the brainchild of BIS alumni, Peter Ereshena, Data Engineer in Traveler's Business Insights and Analytics Program, who brainstormed with Dr. Citurs the format of the event. During the event, through an internship issues focused open-ended questions formatted presentation created by Dr. Citurs, discussion progressed through the presentation questions with each of the alumni panelists being given their opportunity to answer the current question or comment on the suggested strategies of their fellow panelists, who represented multiple career position roles at the two companies.

Students likewise jumped in with their follow-up questions and their own observations from some of them who had already done internships. The event was opened with pizza and pop for all, and lasted until almost 8:00 pm, with students coming and going to fit their evening class and sports practice schedules. Panelists included Peter Ereshena (BIS) – Data Engineer; Vanessa Zetino (CS) – Data Engineer; Mike Zisk (BIS) – Business Analyst, and John Burchard (BIS) - Risk & Analyst and former Developer. Topics included: getting started in the internship, efficiently working in teams, common tech help sites and tools, effective professional networking, getting recognized, and finishing and presenting your key projects to top management in an outstanding and professional manner.

- Pictures below from event:



Upsilon Pi Epsilon Honor Society – April 26, 2023

On Wednesday, April 26, 2023, 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). Seven students majoring in BIS along with twelve students majoring in Computer Science students and three in Data Science were inducted into Alpha Mu Alpha. Many of the inductees had dual majors or minors in the other programs. 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. Jenifer Brown (Assistant Provost), Dr. Alex Citurs (BIS Program Coordinator), and Dr. Garrett Dancik (Dept. of Computer Science Chair). The induction ceremony was followed by a reception. BIS students inducted into UPE on April 26, 2023, included the following students:



Inducted BIS Major Students:

Brady Bennett
Andrew Cavar
Rachel Hughes
Daytona Rizzo
Jaelynn Schroder
Alexander Warfield



BIS Program - BIS-ITSA Banquet – Friday, May 5, 2023 – 6 to 8:30 pm – Fine Arts Center Lobby

The joint BIS Program, BIS-ITSA Club Banquet was held on Friday, May 5, 2023, from 6:00 PM to 8:30 PM in the Fine Arts Instructional Center Lobby. Current Eastern students majoring in BIS or pursuing BIS related minors along with BIS Program associated alumni and faculty were invited to the event. The Eastern BIS Program Alumni at the banquet represented numerous biz-tech companies throughout Connecticut and beyond in a variety of business-related information systems and technology roles.

The event started with greetings on behalf of the ECSU Administration and a short welcome message from Dr. Citurs, BIS Program Coordinator and Co-Chair of the Department of Accounting and Business Information Systems. This was followed by the banquet dinner being served to the crowd, being about equally split between BIS Program Alumni and current BIS students, with tables being about full.

The dinner was followed by recognition of BIS faculty and instructors. Presentations of Certificates of Appreciation were given to BIS major alumni, John Burchard and Peter Ereshena. John Burchard was recognized for his support of the BIS Program through his donations to the ECSU Foundation – BIS Fund and helping with BIS-ITSA events. Peter Ereshena was recognized for his initiating new events as a BIS-ITSA Club Event Partner. Special recognition was also given to 2022-2023, current BIS alumni instructors for their support of the program (Troy Marrotte, Brittany Noonan, and Matthew Webb); all working fulltime with master's degrees and fulltime experience in the areas they taught this year.

Alumni Connor Chute, Travelers Business Insights and Analytics Data Engineer, gave a presentation on Analytical Career Trends, which was followed by comments from Dr. Citurs on trends in Enterprise Architecture and Cross-Disciplinary Skills. Presentations of Student Awards, Honors, and Certificates of Appreciation was overseen by Marcos Hernandez, 2022-2023 BIS-ITSA Club President. Receiving special recognition were Drew Cavar and Jake Cohen, who finished in the top five pairs in the Database Design Competition at the 2023 USITCC National Conference in Texas. The evening program concluded with Dr. Citurs providing closing remarks and announcing of upcoming events.



Above Left–John Burchard BIS: Foundation Support; Center–Peter Ereshena: BIS-ITSA Event Support; Right–Connor Chute: Speaker
Below left to right: Jake Cohen, Dr. C., Marcos Hernandez, Drew Cavar (Jake & Drew - Top 5 USITCC National DB Design)



Summer 2022 BIS Student & Alumni Exchange Ideas, Tech-Tool Tips, & Strategies Over Casual Lunches & Coffee Near Employers

One of the long-standing favorite traditions of the BIS Program (interrupted during the Covid Years) is for Dr. Citurs, BIS Program Coordinator, to visit the communities/areas where current BIS students and BIS alumni are working by meeting up over “come-n-go” lunches. These “Dutch-treat” (no expense to Eastern) lunches, coffees, and sometimes dinners, allow current BIS students additional opportunities to obtain feedback and suggestions, from not only Dr. Citurs, but numerous BIS alumni working in a variety of the area biz-tech careers and companies, on how to improve their biz-tech skillsets, work performance, learn about new tech-tools, and build up their professional networks. At these events BIS alumni share with the current BIS students their strategies for dealing with challenging technical and organizational project issues. The BIS alumni also share with Dr. Citurs their observations and perceptions of technology tool/platform and project management adoption trends and best practices, so that they might possibly be incorporated into upcoming semesters’ courses’ content and future BIS Program curriculum changes. The technology and project management practices trends common across multiple organizations in multiple business sectors are also of great interest to the current BIS students at the sessions and are also more likely to be adopted into the BIS Program than those unique to niche areas of just a few companies.

Below are pictures from just two of the multiple casual-over food/coffee events held during Summer 2022 by current BIS students, alumni, and Dr. Citurs. At the table at Bear’s Barbeque (a BIS alumni favorite) in Hartford, pictured below, are current BIS students and alumni from four downtown Hartford companies (Aetna-CVS Health, The Hartford, Hartford Steam Boiler, Travelers, as well as Dr. Citurs. To the right below are BIS students/alumni from Spirol International in Danielson, CT.



Industry Guest Speakers in BIS 370 – Systems Analysis & Design Course Discuss Strategies for Young Professional Success

On the evening of Thursday, April 20th, students and BIS-ITSA guests were treated to young biz-tech guest speakers in the BIS 370 – Systems Analysis and Design sections. Kris Wright, Data Analyst at Sikorsky (ECSU – Business Economics major & Master's Boston U.) spoke on the importance, technical skillsets in demand as well as strategies in using data at companies. He stressed the importance of continued lifelong learning of new technical skills. Although he did not major or minor in BIS, he brought out the value of BIS skills including those taught in BIS/BUS 205 – Information Management, when he was a student here at Eastern. Brian DeMaio, Senior Risk Analyst, at The Hartford, brought out the value of data in dealing with business resilience in their operations as well as value of data in assessing policy risk by insurance companies and in good communication practices at companies such as The Hartford.

Tim Ross, Associate Software Engineer at Travelers, with a Bachelor of Science from SCSU, provided additional insight on software tools, programming languages and project skills that he found helpful in his career at Travelers. Students asked the Zoom guest speakers numerous questions and found their insights and answers beneficial. BIS 370 Professor, Matt Webb, a BIS Major Alumni, MBA U. of New Haven, Risk Analyst at Intelliflo, through multiple guest speakers brought out the importance of obtaining multiple perspectives and using multiple approaches when being a data analyst and project manager in corporations.

Below left is Brian DeMaio and below right is Kris Wright.

