In late June, the Norwich University campus is particularly beautiful. Set among the verdant, rolling hills of central Vermont, we are blessed with temperate weather, gorgeous country scenery, no traffic, no pollution, and lots of brilliant people. The brilliant people are the students in our online graduate programs and this year, we are proud to see the first two classes of the MSIA program graduating. The MSIA is the Master of Science In Information Assurance, the 18-month long program focusing on the management of information assurance for which I am Program Director.

We have an exciting week planned for our students. They will arrive on Friday the 18th of June and plunge immediately into a two-day workshop on Saturday and Sunday. I will be leading them in the annual INFOSEC Update to discuss recent developments across the entire field of information assurance.

On Monday morning the 21st of June, the students will be working on debate preparations; they will be in teams and preparing to argue pro or con on a number of interesting topics. On Monday evening, the distinguished security experts Stephen and Chey Cobb, CISSP will speak on privacy policy. Our students are excited at the prospect of meeting Stephen and Chey because both of them contributed to course development throughout the MSIA and because Stephen has been an Adjunct Professor in many of the courses for these students.

Most of Tuesday the 22nd will be devoted to vigorous debates. These are great fun, especially since the students don't know whether they are to argue pro or con on the specific topic they have been assigned. This is the intellectual equivalent of running sprints: intense and exhausting.

On Wednesday the 23rd, several of our students will be presenting case studies at the graduate security conference. We are thrilled and honored to announce that Dr. Peter Neumann of SRI, the world-famous security leader, author, moderator of the Risks Forum, and inveterate punster, will deliver the keynote address in the morning. This conference is open to the public at no cost and will be of particular interest to members of the Vermont InfraGard. Dr. Neumann will also be our after-dinner speaker that evening.

On Thursday the 24th of June, some of our students will be taking the CISSP (Certified Information Systems Security Professional) exam at Norwich. As always with CISSP exams, it is open to all candidates who register with the (ISC)^2.

Now, this is where I need some help from companies who are looking to hire information security professionals. At the request of some of our students, I am soliciting readers of this column who are looking for new employees or who know (or are) recruiters in the information assurance field to contact us. We would like anyone interested in our students to either show up on Thursday afternoon (by arrangement) or to send us documentation that we can give to any of our interested graduates. There would be no cost to anyone for such arrangements. If you would
like to be present or to send documents, please contact Dr. John Orlando, Associate Program Director of the MSIA at Norwich University; his e-mail address is <jorlando@norwich.edu> and his telephone number is 802-485-2729. John will tell you where you could make reservations to stay in the local area and will provide you with instructions on where to be between noon and 3 p.m. on Thursday the 24th. For those sending materials, he'll tell you where and how to ship a couple of dozen fliers or folders.

By the way, on Thursday evening, we are taking the students and selected guests on a gala cruise on Lake Champlain.

On Friday the day is devoted to the graduation itself, with practices, lectures about the Alumni Association, and then the ceremonies. I was there last year and found the whole event profoundly moving and joyful.

If you would like to know more about our MSIA program, you can visit <http://www3.norwich.edu/msia>. For lots of information and pictures about our residency and graduation week, visit <http://www3.norwich.edu/grad/residency2004/> and follow the links to Day-by-Day for all the details.

Maybe I’ll see some of you in June!

* * *

A Master’s degree in the management of information assurance in 18 months of online study from Norwich University – see <http://www3.norwich.edu/msia> for details.

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