

Course: Allegany: Security+

Cyber Pathways Across Maryland SME Rubric

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This course is offered by Allegany College of Maryland (<https://www.allegany.edu/x3313.xml>) This course is also meant to prepare students for the CompTIA Security+ certification. The goal for this review is to validate that the curriculum is complete, current, and relevant to industry cybersecurity needs. Please use the comments sections to explain your overall impressions, whether positive or negative.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND SYLLABUS	Y	N	N/A
Course description is factually complete and accurate		N	
Course structure includes major lessons and assignments	Y		
Prerequisite requirements are included and appropriate		N	
Required facilities and equipment are included and appropriate		N	
Required course texts are listed	Y		
Appropriate supplementary materials and resources are provided	Y		
Course organization and design is clear, coherent, and appropriately structured	Y		
Concepts and skills build logically, with appropriate transitions between course sections	Y		
Learning outcomes are clearly stated, measurable, and appropriate for the level of the course	Yes but		
Learning outcomes emphasize application of knowledge and skills	Y		

Comments about the course:

This course is designed to prepare students for a specific industry exam (CompTIA Security +). The instructor has selected an excellent text as the foundation of the course. The Security + exam itself and the text have clear objectives/outcomes that are part of what is to be covered by the exam. The text lists those objectives and even has a “chapter to objective mapping” that shows where in the book material may be found to match objectives. Given a base of specificity, why doesn’t the instructor leverage these objectives more in the course objectives?

The weekly activities are detailed and tied to the book chapters (that have test prep objectives).

An course objective of “Describe and use professional ethics” seems out of place with the text, overly broad and hard to measure. It’s one of 13 course objectives in the syllabus. The text mentions “ethics” in one instance in over 500 pages. The other suggested reading does mention it multiple times but I don’t believe that other book is assigned. I’m not saying ethics isn’t important but it isn’t central to the main text. Aren’t there better and central objectives? 12 videos about key people in the field and no linkage to a course objective?

There is no clear explanation as to how “Discussion Questions” will be handled. Online? If so where? The Practice Exams in the main text book come with answers. Do the Module Exams come from the second textbook (Kim)? Are they applied after reading and studying a different text (even if content aligns in cases?) I assume that the “module exams” the same as “Exams” but different from practice exams. (students need consistency to avoid confusion). Is there a rubric for grading “homework”. How are watching videos and doing simulations graded? Rubric for class participation? How to measure attendance since it is graded?

The ISSA Labs provide the students with a virtual lab environment which is terrific and an important supplement for a course like this. I suspect that the secondary text is there is to enable the instructor and students to access the accompanying ISSA Labs from the publisher.

Can all the simulations run on any PC?

Are there technical or browser requirements that could be spelled out?

Prerequisites that only describe “...completed basic courses in computer hardware, software, and networking.” seems unclear. It is more clearly stated in the suggested syllabus document that it is recommended for success. Most colleges are strict in listing actually prerequisite requirements. Recommendations can be listed elsewhere.

There is a reference in the Suggested Syllabus to a Learning Management System which is not identified or listed for any requirements or accessibility issues. Even if it is a long standing LMS on campus, it needs to be identified clearly. What else is in the LMS? More context is needed as to how the overall environment will work. Do students go to the LMS and then to the ISSA labs? Are the exams there too?