Positioning the CTU BSCYS vs. BSIT-S, 30 July 2014, by Bruce Harmon

Ref: CTU “degree programs” catalog and addendum may be downloaded from this link http://www.coloradotech.edu/admissions/documents-resources?form=degreetype.

The BSIT with a specialization in security (BSIT-S) contains many of the same courses as may be found in the BS cyber security (BSCYS) and its concentrations in computer systems security (BSCYS-CSS) and information assurance (BSCYS-IA). I am often asked why a student might choose one of these vs. another. This happened again yesterday, so I thought I would post my response.

The student is in BSIT-S, which has been around longer, and is considering changing to BSCYS-CSS.

A BSIT is a well-respected and recognized degree for graduates seeking any number of jobs and careers in the development and maintenance of IT infrastructure for corporations, government, and NGOs. A specialization in security does not diminish that but also would demonstrate skills and competencies in this rapidly-growing field of cyber security or information assurance or computer systems security. All three terms are commonly used as synonyms, though they are subtly different.

Our BSCYS ran on the ground campuses for about a decade under the names computer systems security and information assurance security before it was renamed and transplanted to our online delivery mode. Our market research shows a preference by the Federal Government and many other employers for the terms “cyber” and “cyber security”. Both BSCYS concentrations have a higher emphasis on security than BSIT-S but at the expense of other BSIT topics.

The BSCYS-CSS is further differentiated from BSCYS-IA in that it has a heavier emphasis on programming and database implementation where IA emphasizes systems and networking.