

## STUDENTS MEET EXPERTS IN THE FIELD

In its first academic year, students studying in Anderson University’s security studies program are not only learning quality skills needed for employment but how to integrate a faith perspective into their vocation.

As one of the few interdisciplinary, undergraduate programs in the country, faculty from computer science, engineering, and political science developed the curriculum for the national



security studies and information security majors.

“Liberal arts universities are great places to intellectually explore security matters,” said Dr. Dan Allen, associate professor in the Department of History and Political Science. “Intelligence agencies aren’t interested in having graduates learn spy ‘tradecraft’ at universities, for example. They want those they hire to have research skills, thinking and writing ability, and a holistic education. This is where schools like ours stand out. Christian views on foreign policy are woven into each of our courses in a way you won’t encounter at other schools.”

Dr. Kyle Tarplee, assistant professor of electrical engineering, said that many different companies, including Rook Security, New America Corp., and GEM Companies, have been interested in partnering with AU through the information security major, commonly called cybersecurity.

Delving deeper into the information security major requires coursework in statistics and a large selection of electives in political science and related fields.

With AU President John Pistole’s background in

government, the program has already had former members of Congress, the Department of Homeland Security, and U.S. Senator Dan Coats visit and talk to classes. They have also booked several guests for the upcoming year from agencies in the federal government.

Experiential learning for students in the program has also already had an impact in classwork for the fall semester.



FAR LEFT:

*Alejandro Mayorkas, deputy secretary of Homeland Security, was on campus this year to speak with Anderson University students studying political science and security studies.*

LEFT:

*Former U.S. Senator Dan Coats addresses Anderson University students during his visit to campus.*

On election night, a team of students and faculty from AU’s security studies, computer science, and political science majors were invited to Indianapolis-based Rook Security to participate in monitoring the presidential election. The team looked for threats made on social media and hacker forums, with AU students identifying key counties in key states that Rook should monitor.

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“It is a whole new world,” Rook Security CEO and founder J.J. Thompson said. “Cyber threats are front and center.” This speaks to the relevance of the new security majors at AU.

Dr. Michael Frank, professor of political science, said, “Students participated in real cybersecurity work during a national election working alongside the Rook team as they monitored for evidence of hacking.”

For students entering security studies, AU’s program mixes academics, faith, and external experiences to create a program for successful career placement. —MEG FIELDS