

NCAE Cybergames 2026

The University of Memphis' cybersecurity team, **Cyber Tigers**, competed again this year in the 2026 NCAE Cyber Games. This is a national collegiate competition sponsored by the National Centers of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity and the National Security Agency. Our region round ran remotely on March 15th, 2026, with approximately 140 teams from NCAE-designated institutions across the country.



Heba Saleh, Esteban Barbosa, Saukun Thika You, Adrien Jones, Alissa Martini, Katherine Hearsh, Truc

Nguyen, Brianna Armstrong, and Nick Redmond (Captain). (Not pictured) Faculty Advisor, Dr. Dipankar Dasgupta.

Competition Format

Just like previous years, the competition has two tracks. The first format is **defensive**. Each team is given a small network of misconfigured and already-compromised systems and must keep the services running while a red team works against them. Points come from two places: service uptime scored continuously throughout the day, and malicious injections and various attacks handed down as the competition progresses.

The second track is a traditional, jeopardy-style CTF with challenges being handed down throughout the day as well. Although the competition focuses heavily on the networking and defensive track, many students are more comfortable with this familiar track. For this reason, the NCAE Cybergames remains a wonderful way for students to dip their toes in a wide range of cybersecurity topics.

Educational Benefits

The competition lasts ten (10) hours in total, benefiting students' stamina required to excel in the cybersecurity field. Many elements of the competition are also time-based, which in turn helps participants begin to prioritize their methods of problem-solving. With a field as large as cybersecurity, it is important for beginning students to be exposed to as many subsets of topics as possible early on. The NCAE Cybergames continues to be an excellent way to do this, receiving excitement and high praise from participants year over year.