PRESS RELEASE

From the University of Illinois Information Trust Institute

National Security Agency Declares UIUC a Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Research

The U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) has announced that the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is one of the inaugural recipients of their newly created National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Research (CAE-R) designation. The CAE-R designation is a renewable 5-year designation established to give formal recognition to universities whose outstanding graduate research programs in the field of information assurance demonstrate significant impact. Areas measured include engagement in Information Assurance (IA) research initiatives, community service and outreach, production of graduate-level students, student-based research in IA, faculty activity in current IA practice and research, contributions to IA literature, and related research funding received by the university.

Illinois Provost Linda Katehi expressed her appreciation of the recognition. "The CAE-R designation acknowledges the outstanding leadership in information assurance research at Illinois. We have exceptional strength in this area, which is so important to our nation and our society. Research in computer security, information trust, and information assurance is a priority for our campus, and we make important, state-of-the-art contributions that advance its dissemination and practice. Illinois is the home of the Information Trust Institute, which coordinates research and educational activities in information trust across campus, including both faculty and student-based research. The NSA designation recognizes this strength."

Computer Science and Information Trust Institute (ITI) Professor Roy Campbell will represent Illinois at a ceremony recognizing the achievement to be held on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 during the annual Colloquium for Information Systems Security Education. Professor Campbell is the Director of ITI's Center for Information Assurance Education, which coordinates educational activities in information assurance across the campus. The IA Education Center takes the lead in a variety of ongoing educational programs and special events, and also offers support to educational activities being led by other groups within the Information Trust Institute.

Professor Campbell explained that the term "information assurance" refers to efforts to manage and minimize the risks associated with information systems. "We're trying to push beyond the traditional boundaries of information assurance and computer security research to seek ways to make information technologies a trusted asset of society. Information assurance work at Illinois has really taken off in the last few years. The Information Trust Institute has added new dimensions to information assurance research at Illinois by examining secure, dependable, correct, safe, private, and survivable computer systems, networks, and software. The combination of research thrusts undertaken by ITI is perhaps unique in its depth and breadth."

The CAE-R program has been created as an enhancement to NSA's existing National Centers of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education (CAEIAE) program, which recognizes universities that offer students outstanding programs of academic coursework in information assurance. Illinois has held a

CAEIAE designation, which is a prerequisite for CAE-R designation, since 2000. The CAEIAE/CAE-R program is jointly sponsored by the NSA and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in support of the President's National Strategy to Secure Cyberspace. According to NSA's website, "The goal of the program is to reduce vulnerability in our national information infrastructure by promoting higher education in information assurance (IA), and producing a growing number of professionals with IA expertise in various disciplines."

The National Security Agency is America's cryptologic organization, performing specialized activities to protect U.S. government information systems and to gather intelligence. The Department of Homeland Security was created in 2002 with a primary mission of protecting the United States from terrorist attacks.

About the Information Trust Institute (ITI)

The Information Trust Institute is a multidisciplinary cross-campus research unit housed in the College of Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. It is an international leader combining research and education with industrial outreach in trustworthy and secure information systems. ITI brings together over 90 faculty, many senior and graduate student researchers, and industry partners to conduct foundational and applied research to enable the creation of critical applications and cyber infrastructures. In doing so, ITI is creating computer systems, software, and networks that society can depend on to be trustworthy, that is, secure, dependable (reliable and available), correct, safe, private, and survivable. Instead of concentrating on narrow and focused technical solutions, ITI aims to create a new paradigm for designing trustworthy systems from the ground up and validating systems that are intended to be trustworthy. www.iti.uiuc.edu

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