COURSE SYLLABUS

Federal Cybersecurity Authorization Professional: Security Control Assessor Certificate Program

Build the RMF core first, then specialize as the independent assessor an authorizing official leans on.

Group classes in Live Online and onsite training is available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://www.graduateschool.edu/certificates/federal-cybersecurity-authorization-professional-security-control-assessor

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Course Outline

This package includes these courses

- RMF Foundations: From Risk to Authorization (8 Hours)
- NIST 800-53: Control Selection, Implementation, and Security Planning Course (12 Hours)
- FISMA & Continuous Monitoring Fundamentals Course (8 Hours)
- NIST 800-53: Advanced Assessment, Tailoring, and Enterprise Program Management Course (18 Hours)
- Security Control Assessor (SCA) Practitioner: The Assessment Lifecycle (14 Hours)

RMF Foundations: From Risk to Authorization

Work through every stage of the NIST Risk Management Framework, from setting a system's impact level to signing off on its authorization to operate.

- Describe what the NIST RMF is for and how it ties risk to an authorization decision
- Recognize the principal RMF roles and what each one is accountable for
- Set a system's impact level using FIPS 199
- Choose and tailor a control baseline against NIST SP 800-53B
- Trace how controls are implemented, assessed, and documented
- Read an authorization decision and the residual risk it accepts
- Account for the part continuous monitoring plays in keeping an authorization current

NIST 800-53: Control Selection, Implementation, and Security Planning Course

This course gives federal security practitioners what they need to choose, tailor, and document NIST SP 800-53 Rev 5 controls for federal information systems. Participants write implementation statements across the highest-impact control families,

prepare evidence that will stand up to assessment, and produce compliant POA&M entries rooted in 800-53A assessment procedures.

- Baseline selection and tailoring drawn from NIST SP 800-53B, covering scoping guidance, compensating controls, and organization-defined parameters.
- SSP implementation statements for the AC, IA, AU, CM, IR, and SC control families that satisfy 800-53A evidence sufficiency standards.
- Privacy controls and Supply Chain Risk Management (SR) family requirements for the federal systems they apply to.
- Assessment readiness through 800-53A procedures, covering evidence collection standards and finding severity classification.
- POA&M development with milestone tracking, resource estimates, and a clear link to FISMA reporting.

FISMA & Continuous Monitoring Fundamentals Course

An ATO is a beginning, not an ending — federal systems must be watched continuously, with weaknesses tracked and risk reported to leadership over time. This intermediate course grounds Information Security Continuous Monitoring (NIST SP 800-137) in FISMA accountability: design an ISCM strategy, work findings through POA&Ms, and build the metrics and reporting that make ongoing authorization possible.

- Explain how FISMA assigns accountability and structures oversight
- Design an ISCM strategy that aligns to NIST SP 800-137
- Put asset, configuration, and vulnerability visibility in place
- Keep control assessment and supporting evidence current
- Produce security metrics and risk reporting aimed at leadership
- Work findings and POA&Ms in priority order, driven by risk
- Describe ongoing authorization and how an ISCM program gets evaluated

NIST 800-53: Advanced Assessment, Tailoring, and Enterprise Program Management Course

This advanced course builds the practitioner command needed to lead a federal NIST 800-53 control program, from deep-dive assessment through to enterprise governance. Participants develop 800-53A assessment methodology, advanced ODP tailoring, control overlays for specialized environments, and cross-framework integration, leaving ready to run complex federal security programs.

- Advanced 800-53A assessment methodology, covering evidence sufficiency standards, determination statements, and assessment case mapping.
- Organization-Defined Parameter (ODP) tailoring with risk-based rationale and the documentation an Authorizing Official requires.
- Control overlays for specialized environments, including cloud, OT/ICS, AI/ML, and privacy-intensive systems.
- Automated assessment integration through SCAP, DISA STIGs, and vulnerability scanners alongside manual 800-53A evidence.
- Enterprise control inheritance architecture with Common Control Providers and cross-framework mapping to CSF, FedRAMP, and CMMC.
- Control program governance, covering ownership models, evidence management, metrics, and continuous improvement processes.

Security Control Assessor (SCA) Practitioner: The Assessment Lifecycle

An authorizing official's decision rests on the independent judgment of the security control assessor. This advanced course develops that craft end to end — establishing independence, setting scope, tailoring NIST SP 800-53A procedures, and carrying out examination, interview, and test methods — so findings survive scrutiny, culminating in a complete Security Assessment

Report.

- Explain an SCA's authority, independence, and exercise of professional judgment
- Set assessment scope and trace controls back to requirements
- Build a Security Assessment Plan and tailor SP 800-53A procedures to it
- Put examine, interview, and test methods to work effectively
- Weigh whether evidence is sufficient across control families and types
- Assess common, inherited, and hybrid controls
- Write up findings, determine control effectiveness, and produce a Security Assessment Report