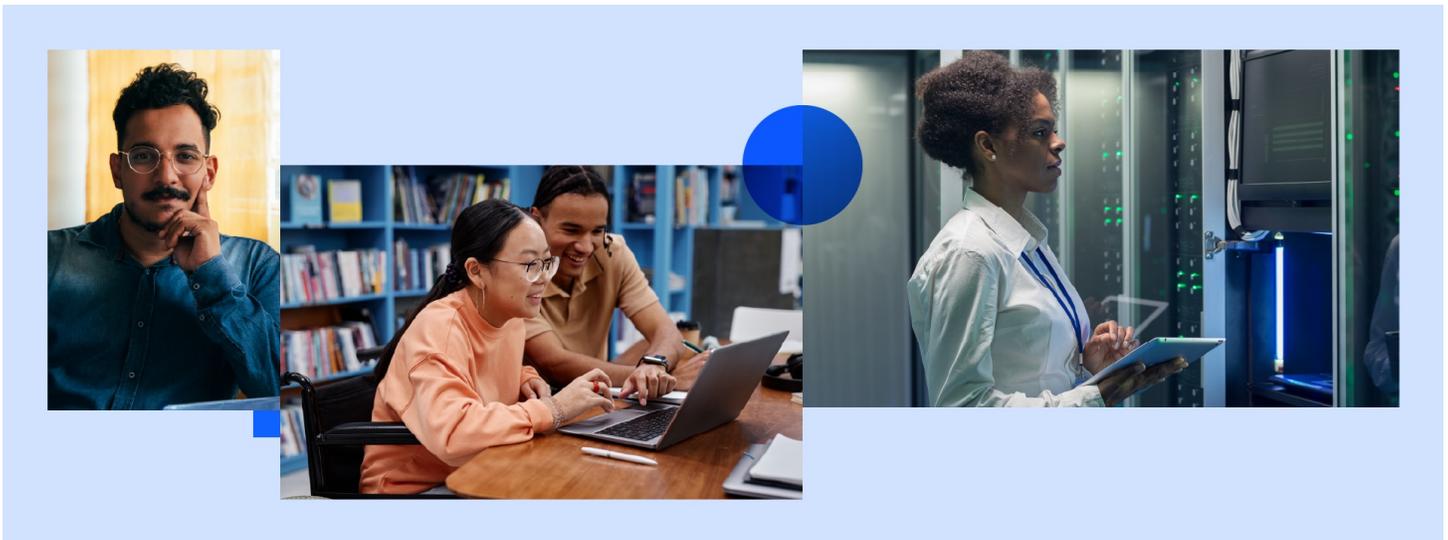


## New IBM SkillsBuild Cybersecurity and Data Analytics Certificates to be Deployed in Community College Systems across Alabama, California Bay Area, Colorado and Louisiana

- Alabama Community College System, Bay Area Community College Consortium, Colorado Community College System, and Louisiana Community and Technical College System will offer students access through IBM SkillsBuild this fall

- Credentials have been piloted and designed with community college experts, and have ACE recommended college credits



WASHINGTON, July 22, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- IBM (NYSE:IBM) today unveiled two new IBM SkillsBuild certificates in cybersecurity and data analytics, which have been piloted and designed with community colleges. These new IBM SkillsBuild certificates will be available to students across the Alabama Community College System, Bay Area Community College Consortium, Colorado Community College System, and Louisiana Community and Technical College System this fall.

Cybersecurity and data analytics skills are essential for [artificial intelligence \(AI\)](#) innovation, enabling professionals to extract insights, secure critical information, drive informed decisions, and create value across industries in an increasingly data-centric and security-conscious world. According to a [global study](#) conducted by IBM Institute of Business Value, executives estimate that implementing AI and automation will require 40% of their workforce to reskill over the next three years, mostly those in entry-level positions. This underscores the importance of creating public-private partnerships to help close the skills gap.

"Community colleges play a critical role in advancing the adoption of essential technology skills for the workforce," said Lydia Logan, Vice President for Global Education and Workforce Development, IBM Corporate Social Responsibility. "With these new credentials, IBM is helping learners gain the in-demand skills employers are seeking in a new AI-enabled workplace."

The certificates are designed to meet the needs of learners and have been developed with academic and industry experts. Community college programs can integrate them into existing curriculums for students to earn credits.

- Designed to meet the needs of learners: These certificates are accessible for first-time degree seekers, upskillers, or career changers who hold a high school degree or GED, associate degree, or a bachelor's degree in a non-technical field.

Self-paced, experiential learning across all levels helps effectively prepare learners for potential job opportunities such as junior information security analyst, network security technician, data visualization specialist, and entry-level marketing analyst.

- Developed together with academic and industry experts: Jobs for the Future (JFF) and a coalition of industry experts contributed to and validated the new competency-based IBM SkillsBuild certificates to align coursework and learnings with current employer demand as well as trends and expectations in the market to maximize job opportunities for students upon completion. The experts included representatives from employers including banks and tech firms, as well as schools and education nonprofits nationwide.
- Integrate into existing community college programs for college credits: Each certificate learning plan is 60-65 hours in length and can be integrated into a community college's curriculum. The American Council on Education (ACE) has conducted a Learning Evaluation Review of the certificates and recommends 12 credits for completion of the IBM SkillsBuild Cybersecurity Certificate and 8 credits for the IBM SkillsBuild Data Analytics Certificate. The coursework also aligns with CompTIA SEC+ certification topics and skills and is recognized by potential employers.

The new certificates from IBM SkillsBuild require completion of the following courses:

**IBM SkillsBuild Cybersecurity Certificate:** governance, risk, compliance and data privacy, vulnerability management, system and network security, cloud security, security operations management, and incident response and system forensics.

**IBM SkillsBuild Data Analytics Certificate:** data classification, data usability for organizations, inferential and descriptive statistics, data collection and analysis, data preparation for analysis, and data visualization and presentation.

Additionally, students will have access to IBM SkillsBuild including other credentials and more than 1,000 free courses such as AI, sustainability, cybersecurity, data analytics, cloud computing, and workplace skills.

The new certificates were piloted successfully with students in Alabama, Colorado, California, and Louisiana in 2023.

*"I'm thrilled that, in collaboration with IBM, the Colorado Community College system is launching two new certificates in Cybersecurity and Data Analytics. These build on Colorado's workforce development efforts that connect Coloradans with skills needed to fill in-demand good-paying jobs in the innovative sectors of the future. Colorado students will now have more opportunities to gain critical skills for AI, innovative tech, cybersecurity jobs, and more," said Governor Polis.*

*"Alabama community college worked with IBM to pilot the Cybersecurity Certificate because of the strong need for entry-level competency-based credentials that help students start on a pathway for an IT career," said Dr. Courtney Monette, Special Programs Project Director, Alabama Community College System. "In 2021, Alabama adopted a skills-based workforce training program called Mobilizing Alabama Pathways, or MAPs, that allows new and returning adult education and career pathway students an opportunity to earn a credential like the IBM SkillsBuild Cybersecurity or Data Analytics Certificate; thus building confidence and basic employability skills for all high demand high wage career clusters."*

*"Using the IBM SkillsBuild Cybersecurity credential for my two community education Cybersecurity Fundamentals courses that I piloted at Diablo Valley College during last fall and spring semesters, proved to be a rewarding experience for the student participants, for me, and for the college," said Richard Grottegut, Computer Network Technology Faculty at Diablo Valley College, part of the Contra Costa Community College District and a member of the Bay Area Community College Consortium. "It confirmed the college's decision to offer the course as part of their academic offerings beginning this coming school year."*

*The credential proved to be a very good entry-level introduction to cybersecurity. While most of the participants enhanced their academic credentials and are pursuing further study, several of the course "career-changers" used their success in the class to gain employment in technical support positions with local companies. The rich course content and approach, with a strong focus on oral and written communication skills, was a key factor in building the confidence that helped the students land those jobs."*

*"Front Range Community College is thrilled to have been selected as one of four colleges nationally to collaborate in designing and launching the new IBM SkillsBuild data analytics credential," said Colleen Simpson, EdD, Front Range Community College President. "This collaboration with renowned technology leader IBM provides our students the opportunity to develop critical skill sets in this rapidly growing field."*

*"Baton Rouge Community College was excited to work with IBM in piloting this initiative last year," said BRCC Chancellor Dr. Willie E. Smith. "We look forward to continuing this collaboration and working with IBM to expand the initiative and offer it to Louisiana citizens through the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. Through this collaboration, we are demonstrating a commitment to equipping our residents with the skills and practical experience required to excel in the high demand fields of cybersecurity and data analytics. Together, we are paving the way for Louisiana to emerge as a national leader in these rapidly growing sectors, ensuring our talent is prepared to navigate the challenges and seize the opportunities of the future."*

*"In an increasingly dynamic economy shaped by fast-evolving technology, employers, learners, and workers need nimble and trusted ways to acquire and validate skills that will lead to quality jobs of the future," said Joel Vargas, Vice President of JFF's Education Practice. "JFF is proud to work with IBM and these innovative colleges to lead the charge on creating scalable solutions to meet this growing need."*

IBM's work with community colleges is an important component of the company's pioneering skills-first approach and part of [IBM's commitment](#) to providing 30 million people with new skills needed for the jobs of tomorrow by 2030.

Community colleges that are interested in offering these career certificates to their students can learn more here: <https://skillsbuild.org/college-students/college-certificates>.

## **About IBM SkillsBuild**

[IBM SkillsBuild](#) is a free education program aimed at increasing access to technology education. Through the program, IBM supports adult learners, and high school and university students and faculty, to develop valuable new skills and access career opportunities. The program includes an online platform that is complemented by customized practical learning experiences delivered in collaboration with a global network of partners.

The open version of IBM SkillsBuild is an online platform offering over 1,000 courses in 20 languages on AI, sustainability, cybersecurity, data analysis, cloud computing, and many other technical disciplines — as well as in workplace skills such as design thinking. Participants can earn IBM-branded digital credentials that are recognized by the market.

The enhanced version of IBM SkillsBuild may also include workshops, expert conversations with IBM coaches and mentors, project-based learning, access to IBM software, specialized support from partners through the learning process, and connection to career opportunities. Visit [skillsbuild.org](https://skillsbuild.org) to learn more.

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