CCSC
CONSORTIUM FOR COMPUTING SCIENCES IN COLLEGES
South Central Region

CCSC South Central Conference 2026 Schedule

Friday, April 24, 2026

Location: McNeese State University

4205 Ryan St, Lake Charles, LA 70605
College of Engineering and Computer Science
Drew Hall
500 Joe Dumars Drive, Lake Charles, LA 70605
https://www.mcneese.edu/campusmaps/

Registration (8:30 am – 4:00 pm)
Location: TBA

Opening Session (9:00 am – 10:00 am)

Location: TBA

Keynote Spreaker: Doug Pickle, President Global Data Systems

Mr. Doug Pickle is President of Global Data Systems, where he leads the company's shift from managing IT to helping organizations make better decisions with technology.

Under his leadership, GDS has evolved from a traditional managed service provider into a Managed Intelligence Provider. The focus moved from tickets and uptime to insight, execution, and measurable business outcomes. Technology is no longer the product. Discipline, clarity, and applied intelligence are.

Before joining GDS, Doug served as Senior Director of National Sales for Optimum Business, leading a national team delivering telecommunications and connectivity solutions to mid-market, enterprise, and wholesale customers. He attended McNeese State University with a focus on Electrical Engineering and has spent more than 30 years in the technology industry.

Beyond his corporate role, Doug serves on nonprofit boards focused on leadership development, education, and technology advancement across Louisiana. His guiding belief is consistent across business and community work: progress comes from clear direction, accountability, and sustained investment in people.

Break with Refreshments (10:00 am – 10:15 am) – Location: TBA

CCSC South Central Conference 2026 Schedule
Friday, April 24 (continued)

Concurrent Session 1 (10:15 – 11:30 pm)

Room: TBA
Professional Paper Session
Moderator:

10:15 ***When Discomfort Teaches: Using Cognitive Dissonance to Develop Adversarial Thinking in AI-Driven Computing Courses***
Christian Servin; Nadia Karichev; Ivan Alonso, El Paso Community College

10:40 ***Not Quite Dead Yet: Strategies to Mitigate the Detrimental Effects of LLMs on CSE***
Michael P. Rogers; Christopher L. Groves; Aziz Fellah; Hannah M. Hillberg, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

11:05 ***Infusing AI Literacy Across Disciplines Using a ChatGPT-Based POGIL Module***
Rebecca Zulli; Adrienne Smith; Sambit Bhattacharya; Bogdan Czejdo; Xiaochen Hu; Khalid Lodhi; Zahra Shekarkhar

Room: TBA
National Platinum Level Partner: College Board Session
Moderator:

10:15 ***Scoring Like a Reader: Bringing AP CSA Exam Insights Into Your Classroom***
Lisa Phillips, CSA Course Champion, College Board

This presentation offers Computer Science educators an applied introduction to the practices used to score AP Computer Science A free-response questions (FRQs). The session will cover how official rubrics, benchmark samples, and scoring guidelines support reliable evaluation of student work. Participants will consider how these insights can inform the design of open-ended programming tasks, strengthen classroom assessment practices, and better align instruction with expectations for authentic, rubric-based evaluation of student code.

Break with Refreshments (11:30 am – 11:45 am) – Location: TBA

CCSC South Central Conference 2026 Schedule
Friday, April 24 (continued)

Concurrent Session 2 (11:45 am – 1:00 pm)

Room: TBA
Professional Paper Session
Moderator:

11:45 ***Evaluating LLMs for SQL Instruction: A Comparative Study of Five Commercial Models***
Shristi Thapaliya; Gang Qian; Fei Zuo, University of Central Oklahoma

12:10 ***LLM-Assisted PDF-to-LaTeX Conversion for Academic Document Management***
Brandon Dean; Adithya Kulkarni, Ball State University

12:35 ***AI-Assisted Development of Interactive Web Applications for Online STEM Education***
Andrew Pownuk, El Paso Community College

Room: TBA
Tutorial Session
Moderator:

11:45 ***Using Excel to Teach Simple Machine Learning Modeling***
Penn P.Wu, Cypress College

This session explores the use of Microsoft Excel as a transparent and accessible tool for teaching foundational machine learning concepts to business and CIS students without a computer science background. Unlike traditional black-box approaches, Excel enables students to manually explore algorithms such as gradient descent, loss optimization, and feature selection. By focusing on conceptual understanding rather than programming syntax, students gain a practical and intuitive grasp of machine learning principles that supports workforce readiness.

12:40 **National Gold Level Partner: ACM2Y/CCECC**
Christian Servin, El Paso Community College

Lunch 1:00 pm – 1:30 pm
Location: ETL Student Lounge

CCSC South Central Conference 2026 Schedule
Friday, April 24 (continued)

Concurrent Session 3 (1:30 - 2:45)

Room: TBA
Professional Paper Session
Moderator:

1:30 ***Beyond Binary Detection: Evaluating Transformer and Hybrid Architectures for Multi-Class Classification of AI-Generated Phishing***
John Burris; Sushovan Adhikari, Southeastern Louisiana University

1:55 ***DNA Encryption: Leveraging AES and RSA to Increase Data Safety and Sustainability***
Petros Stavroulopoulos; Jennifer Lavergne; Vipin Menon; Gerard Ornas, McNeese State University

2:20 ***Improving Network Hardening and Vulnerability Detection using CUDA Parallel Graph Algorithms in Network Courses***
Quoc-Nam Tran, Southeastern Louisiana University

Room: TBA
Tutorial Session
Moderator:

1:30 ***Club Zero: A Comprehensive Cybersecurity and Networking Fundamentals Simulator***
Cesar Valenzuela and Ivan Alonso, El Paso Community College

Club Zero is a browser-based cybersecurity simulation platform that enables hands-on learning without requiring virtual machines or local installations. Through a command-driven interface, students interact with simulated Linux environments to execute commands, manage filesystems, configure networks, and respond to security incidents. The platform supports customizable scenarios, system hardening exercises, and guided playbooks. Additional tools include a chmod calculator, network traffic visualization, and activity logging for assessment. Club Zero lowers infrastructure barriers while promoting experiential and self-directed learning.

Tool Link: https://epcc-itsy-cybernodes-e7ehubehdemcxbk.centralus-01.azurewebsites.net

Break with Refreshments (2:45 – 3:00 pm) – Location: TBA

CCSC South Central Conference 2026 Schedule
Friday, April 24 (continued)

Concurrent Session 4 (3:00 - 4:15)

Room: TBA
Professional Paper Session
Moderator:

3:00 ***From Dorm Room to Deployment: A Faculty-Mentored, Student-Led Case Study in Early Undergraduate Computing Education***
Augustus Scarlato; Ryan Ouardaoui; Oybek Ablakulov, Stetson University

3:25 ***GLIDE: Developing a Usability-Driven Programming Environment for Novices***
Mika Morgan; Stephanie Ludi; Tina Johnson, Midwestern State University

3:50 ***How Students Use AI in Project Development***
Catherine Stringfellow; Thor Lang; Jose Marquez; Mekhi Prospere; Cooper Ricketts, Midwestern State University

Room: TBA
Tutorial Session
Moderator:

3:00 ***On-Prem on a Budget: Building Affordable AI Infrastructure for Teaching***
Lucas Moody, Arkansas Tech University

After receiving vendor quotes for a small on-prem AI lab, it became clear that commercial solutions were misaligned with teaching needs. This resentation introduces a cost-effective alternative using open-source software, scripting, and automation to maximize hardware efficiency and student access. The proposed solution demonstrates how to build scalable, affordable AI infrastructure tailored to educational environments. The session may also be expanded into a workshop covering governance issues and trade-offs between on-prem and cloud-based models.

3:30 ***Transforming Accreditation with AI: Practical Approaches***
Jennifer Lavergne, McNeese State University

This workshop explores how artificial intelligence and prompt engineering can support ABET accreditation and continuous improvement processes. Participants will learn foundational AI concepts, best 3 practices in prompt design, and ethical considerations. The session demonstrates how tools such as Microsoft 365 Copilot can assist in rubric development, data analysis, and documentation. Hands-on activities guide participants in visualizing assessment data, extracting insights, and applying findings to curriculum improvement while emphasizing faculty oversight and data validation**.**

Break with Refreshments (4:15 – 4:30 pm) – Location: TBA

CCSC South Central Conference 2026 Schedule
Friday, April 24 (continued)

Concurrent Session 5 (4:15 pm – 5:45 pm)

Student Poster Displays (4:15 – 5:45 pm)

Location: ETL Student Lounge

Note: Student posters must be up by 3:00 pm

Nifty Assignments

Location: TBA

4:30 ***Using Evaluation of Adherence to Newcomb–Benford's Law to Differentiate Threads and Processes***

Karen Works, Florida State University

In a 4000-level required undergraduate Computer Science course, students learn to design and develop secure, parallel, and distributed systems. By the end of the course, students can explain threads and processes and implement applications using both approaches. Following K¨oppe et al., exposure to multiple solutions helps students understand implementation trade-offs. In this assignment, students develop both threaded and process-based solutions to identify the most frequent leading digits in a dataset and evaluate adherence to Newcomb–Benford's Law. This activity deepens students' understanding of concurrency concepts and design decisions.

5:00 ***Enhancing University Information Accessibility Through Retrieval-Augmented Generation: A Semester-Long Research Project***

Lopamudra Roychoudhuri, Midwestern State University

University information systems are essential but often difficult to navigate because content is distributed across multiple pages and tabs. This semester-long undergraduate research project involved designing and implementing a Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG) system to improve information access. The student developed a modular architecture integrating tools such as LangChain, Hugging Face, and OpenAI. The indexing pipeline gathered and organized institutional data using web scrapers, parsers, text splitters, embedders, and vector databases. The retrieval and generation pipeline then produced contextual responses using a LangChain retriever and GPT-4. Overall, the project provided valuable experience in both cutting-edge AI tools and rapid software development practices.

5:30 ***CS 4790: Formal Languages and Automata Theory | Assignment 3.1415: Engineering the "Dough-minator 4790" Control Logic***

Steele Russell, Southeastern Louisiana University

This assignment challenges students to design the formal control logic for an automated pizza assembly machine, the "Dough-minator 4790," using either a Deterministic or Nondeterministic Finite Automaton (DFA or NFA). Tasked as Lead Systems Architects, students must navigate a specific "grammar" of ingredient signals—including dough prep, sauce, cheese, and optional toppings—while enforcing strict quality control rules like thermal locking and proper termination. Beyond the mathematical definition of a 5-tuple and state transition mapping, the assignment emphasizes engineering pragmatism by requiring a technical justification for the chosen model's suitability for physical hardware and incentivizing professional diagram rendering through tools like TikZ or JFLAP.

Reception and Banquet (6:15 - 7:30) **Location: SEED Center (2nd floor) Willis Noland Conference Room** SEED Center, 4310 Ryan Street, Lake Charles, LA 70605
Steering Committee Business Meeting (7:30 pm – 8:00 pm) **Location: SEED Center (2nd floor) Willis Noland Conference Room**

CCSC National Partners

Platinum Level Partner

CollegeBoard

Gold Level Partners

Rephactor

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BLOSSOMS

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MISSION-ALIGNED PROGRAMS IN COMPUTER SCIENCE