

# BLACKSTONE



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## STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Updated December 13, 2021

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **History of the Blackstone Training Academy**

Blackstone Training Academy is a private institution founded in 2021 in Virginia to provide students higher education and practical training in intelligence and counterintelligence studies.

### **Vision**

The vision of the Blackstone Training Academy is to offer a distinctive, quality academic experience in partnership with the needs of intelligence agencies and private organizations.

### **Mission and Values**

Blackstone Training Academy seeks to provide students an exceptional specialized educational opportunity to prepare them for national security careers, and to deliver highly professional, practical, and relevant training for career progression and self-enrichment. Blackstone Training Academy's Department of Strategic Intelligence offers Counterintelligence Studies, a unique academic experience, combining formal education with practical training and experiences.

### **Purpose**

Our goals focus on knowledge and skills for real life application. Blackstone Training Academy provides a career-oriented educational experience that can be directly applied to those working in national security and related fields in private industry.

### **Principals**

Blackstone Training Academy develops students with the ability to research and analyze information, apply critical thinking, and make informed, unbiased, and relevant assessments to support rational conclusions and decision-making in analysis, investigations, operations, collection, risk management, and other relevant areas.

We encourage creativity and freedom of expression but also promote listening, observation, and careful thought to promote innovative ideas and respond to workplace and personal challenges.

While Blackstone Training Academy endorses political and social issues which support national security and defense, justice, freedom, protection of personal liberties and democracy, we strive for a nonpartisan classroom where faculty and students are discouraged from discussions which support one political party or candidate, but rather promote the freedom to have different opinions and independent thought based on the issue at hand, and where analysis is based on consideration of facts and science and not personal agendas.

Through a variety of teaching methods, Blackstone Training Academy teaches students to work independently and collaboratively in teams. Our program includes lecture with visual materials, practical exercises, role playing, research, briefing, writing, individual and group projects, presentation of case studies, guest speakers and field trips. Instruction is based on the level and needs of the students and the best method for learning the material being taught.

Our students have a greater calling, and we encourage a foundation of strong character and integrity, with a sense of responsibility and conviction to support national security efforts while protecting personal freedom.

### **Certification**

Blackstone Training Academy is certified by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia as a postsecondary school of higher learning in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### **Offerings**

Blackstone Training Academy offers certificate programs and courses for self-enrichment, vocational training, and academic advancement, each resulting in a Certificate of Completion. We also provide guest speakers to private organizations upon request.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND REQUIREMENTS**

### **Absences**

Students are expected to attend all classes as courses may be condensed and missing even one day could result in failure to learn all required information. If students have conflicting priorities, they are advised to take a course at a time which allows them to focus fully on their studies.

### **Course Schedule**

See our Course Schedule for a current list of course offerings.

### **General Competencies**

Core certificate program courses focus on a particular area of study. Electives allow students to discover other areas that are not part of their certificate program. Blackstone Training Academy offers some of the most unique and interesting courses available. Students select from a variety of courses relevant to your learning goals and interests.

## **Graduation**

Completion of all identified core courses is required to graduate from the certificate program.

## **Internships/Externships**

Blackstone Training Academy programs do not include internship or externship programs. Students may propose an internship to the Director.

## **Programs of Study**

Counterintelligence Fundamentals Certificate

Counterintelligence Studies Certificate

Certificate in Counterintelligence Analysis

Certificate in Counterintelligence Collection

Certificate in Offensive Operations

Certificate in Counterintelligence Investigations

Certificate in Behavioral Support to Counterintelligence

Certificate in Counterintelligence in Cyber

Certificate in Risk Management

*See our Course Catalog for a complete listing of courses.*

## **ADMISSION INFORMATION**

### **Acceptance & Transfer of Credits**

Blackstone Training Academy does not currently accept the completion programs or classes currently offered from public or privately owned colleges and universities in substitution of courses required for certification.

The transfer of courses to another school is at the sole discretion of the receiving school.

## Admission Procedures

Blackstone Training Academy seeks to enroll students who have the academic attributes and personal qualities to serve in national security roles. Enrollment in a certificate program requires a formal application process.

**Admission Qualifications.** The Academy will have open admission for individuals who have a high school diploma or a GED.

Certificate admission standards require a high school diploma or GED; minimum GPA of 2.0, and a 250-word statement from the student identifying why they are seeking attendance at our Academy, and their future career and academic plans.

Admission to the Academy does not guarantee admission into all programs and courses. Some courses require agency and instructor approval to register. Admission may be denied for students lacking the prerequisite course(s) or training, or with a history of academic disciplinary action. Some courses may require access to cleared or sensitive materials for which special permission or agency/organizational approval may be required. Because of the unique nature of our program, we may deny students admission when a significant issue exists which may threaten the well-being of students and/or staff, or who pose a threat to national security. The issue must be of such significant concern that would make it unlikely the student would qualify for a position in national intelligence or related private industry field.

Students may appeal denial of admission to the Director, who has the final authority to confirm or reject the denial of admission.

*Is Blackstone Training Academy right for you?* Working in national security requires a high level of trust and integrity. Most positions in the intelligence community will require individuals to have a security clearance or background investigation. Although you don't have to have a perfect background, you must be reliable, trustworthy, of good conduct and character, and loyal to the United States. While Blackstone Training Academy does not determine who has the appropriate level of trust to work in various positions, we do encourage prospective students to consider whether they meet the suitability standards for positions of public trust.

To apply, complete an *Application for Admission*. If applying for the certificate program, submit a copy of your high school diploma or GED and a 250-word essay on why you would like to work in national security or related corporate field.

## **Certificate of Completion**

Certificates for completed courses and programs are granted once the individual meets the course or program requirements and receives a passing grade. By definition, a passing grade is a C or minimum of 70% average in an individual course or in all required courses for a program.

Testing is not permitted in lieu of retaking a course in the event a student fails to meet the minimum passing grade. The student is permitted to retake at his own expense.

Costs per course can change over time. Please review pricing if you anticipate on retaking a class.

## **Identification Cards**

When in residence at some facilities, ID cards may be provided to students.

The first ID is provided at no charge. If treated properly, the card will last your entire enrollment. There is a \$25 replacement fee for lost, damaged, and stolen ID cards. You must notify the ID office immediately to make your lost badge inactive.

Student IDs are not transferable. The IDs are for Academy use and intended to be used only by the individual whose name and photo appears on the front of the card. Misuse is subject to judicial proceedings.

## **Leave of Absence**

Students may take a leave of absence between classes without notification, providing they return to the Program within three years of admission. After three years, students must reapply to the Program.

## **Student Information System/Learning Management System**

Blackstone Training Academy provides students access to our student information system which allows students to apply for admission, enroll in classes, check out library materials, and pay/view financial records. The Academy manages assignments in Canvas, our learning management system, which provides students and faculty an interactive environment.

## **Student Records**

Proper record keeping is essential for decision-making and efficiently processing, viewing, and sharing information to meet the needs of students and the Academy.

Blackstone Training Academy maintains records on all students containing:

1. Each student's application for admission and admission records containing information regarding the educational qualifications of each student admitted that are relevant to admission standards; these applications are kept for a minimum of three years.
2. A transcript of the student's academic coursework at the Academy, which is permanently retained.
3. A record of student academic progress, including programs of study, dates of enrollment, courses taken and completed, grades, and student status, which is permanently retained.
4. A record of all financial transactions between the student and the Academy, including student payments, payments from other sources and refunds.
5. Student records are available upon request. Transcripts will be provided to students in good financial standing.

## **FACILITIES**

When in residence, courses may be held at government or private facilities or in the Academy space in Ashburn, VA. In-residence courses in Ashburn are held in One Loudoun, which is a diverse collection of offices, residences, shops and restaurants with ample parking.

Academy staff are available to provide information to prospective students about the Academy and the application process and support students in registering for classes and maintains students' records, including transcripts. We will assist students with career planning and job placement, disability assistance, student activities and veteran's benefits.

The Blackstone Library contains books and students may access online resources.

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **Application Fee**

The application fee to establish a student account is \$100. If your account is inactive after three years, you are required to apply again. This fee is nonrefundable.

### **Fees, Charges and Expenses**

In addition to tuition, students may have other expenses. This may include textbooks, books, copies, supplies, equipment, lab fees or other fees and expenses. Unless otherwise specified, all materials are included in the course fee.

### **Financial Aid Information**

Blackstone Training Academy does not currently offer financial aid.

### **Nonpayment of Debts**

Students who fail to pay full tuition, fees, and charges, including late fees, on the due date are subject to one or more of the following actions at Blackstone Training Academy's option:

- Denial of readmission, including further registration
- Withholding of official transcripts
- Withholding a degree to which the student would otherwise be entitled
- Withholding of grades
- All penalties and actions authorized by law

No further services of Blackstone Training Academy will be provided until all obligations are cleared.

### **Tuition**

Tuition is listed for individual students, government (10% discount), and full mobile training teams for up to 30 students at our facility or your organization (travel costs may be incurred)

4 hour prerequisite course: no charge when enrolled in any other CI course  
16 hour course: \$893; gov't \$804; MTT \$16,080  
24 hour course: \$1339; gov't \$1205; MTT \$24,100  
40 hour course: \$2232; gov't \$2009; MTT \$40,180  
60 hour specialized course: (Surveillance & Countersurveillance): \$8125; gov't \$7913\*  
80 hour course: \$4464; gov't \$4018; MTT \$80,360

*\*Specialized courses may be tailored and have varied tuition rates; students may be assessed additional fees for some courses or seminars.*

## **Tuition Payment**

Blackstone Training Academy accepts payment by check, money order, credit card or ACH payment. We do not offer payment plans; payment must be made in full prior to the beginning of the course. Failure to pay tuition by the deadline will result in you being dropped from the course(s).

Blackstone Training Academy accepts payments from third parties, such as the government or a private company or organization.

## **Tuition Refunds/Student's Right to Cancel**

### **Individual Students**

The student applicant shall have **three business days** from the date of signing this enrollment agreement to **cancel** this enrollment agreement without financial obligation other than the nonrefundable fee stated above.

Following the cancellation period described above, a student applicant may cancel his enrollment agreement, by written notice, at any time prior to the first day of class of the session for which application was made. When cancellation is requested under these circumstances, Blackstone Training Academy will refund all tuition paid by the student, less a maximum tuition fee of 15% of the stated costs of the course or program or \$100, whichever is less.

A student applicant will be considered a student as of the first day of classes. Beginning on the first day of class, a student who withdraws from the class, is subject to the tuition refund policy stated below. A student must provide a written and signed letter stating his/her intention to withdraw. The school will process any applicable refund to individuals who have terminated their status as students within 45 days after receipt of a written request or the date the student last attended classes whichever is sooner.

The minimum refund policy is as follows:

- a. A student who enters the school but withdraws or is terminated during the first quartile (25%) of the program shall be entitled to a minimum refund amounting to 75% of the cost of the program.
- b. A student who withdraws or is terminated during the second quartile (more than 25% but less than 50%) of the program shall be entitled to a minimum refund amounting to 50% of the cost of the program.
- c. A student who withdraws or is terminated during the third quartile (more than 50% but less than 75%) of the program shall be entitled to a minimum refund amounting to 25% of the cost of the program.

d. A student who withdraws after completing more than three quartiles (75%) of the program shall not be entitled to a refund.

An exception to the refund policy may be made for the following circumstances:

- Student's death or death of a student's immediate family (mother, father, sister, brother, husband, wife, child, or grandparent) immediately before class start. The request must be submitted within 90 days of the date of death and include a copy of the death certificate, obituary, or applicable court documents.
- Permanent re-assignment/transfer, national emergency, or mobilization declared by the President of the US and in accordance with Section 23.1-207 of the Code of Virginia. Requests must be submitted within 90 days of the date of your orders and include a copy of military activation orders.
- Administrative error by the Academy. Requests must be submitted within 90 days of the date the error was first discovered, or made known, and include an explanation of the circumstances of the error, including dates, names of employees and publications, if applicable.
- Extreme financial hardship of the student. The request should explain the circumstances, outlining significant financial issues and provide documentation as appropriate. No refund of previously paid tuition will be granted.

The following circumstances DO NOT qualify for an exception to Blackstone Training Academy:

- Failure to drop a class by assuming it would be dropped for you due to non-payment or non-attendance.
- Misunderstanding or lack of knowledge about Blackstone Training Academy policies and procedures.
- Dissatisfaction with the course content or instructor and/or your academic progress in a class.
- Inadequate investigation of course requirements, including prerequisites.
- Requests based on pre-existing medical conditions prior to the start of the semester.
- Change in personal work schedule, geographic location, or transportation.
- Financial difficulties that are not of an extreme nature.
- Disagreements with faculty, teaching methods or style, treatment or grading procedures are not considered administrative errors and must be resolved by contacting the administrator.

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

When complaints are not resolved between students, staff and faculty, students may file a formal grievance to the Director. Any grievances must be in writing to the Director of Blackstone Training Academy via email or certified letter, who will evaluate the situation and render a written decision within 30 days. If additional time is needed to investigate an issue further, the student will be notified in writing. A student may appeal the decision of the Director to the President of the Academy. The appeal must be in writing and submitted no later than 30 days from the decision of the Director. Students have the right to file formal complaints to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) James Monroe Building, 101 N. 14 St. 10th Floor, Richmond, VA 23219



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