

Dhruv Kandula

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EDUCATION

University of California, Irvine

Irvine, CA

Bachelor of Science in Computer Science; GPA: 3.96

Sep. 2023 – June 2027

AWARDS

Collegiate Penetration Testing Competition (CPTC) 2026 Global Champion

National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition (NCCDC) 2025 Champion

Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition

EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate Student Researcher

Oct. 2024 – Aug. 2025

AS2Guard Lab, University of California, Irvine

Irvine, CA

- Built a Python-based drone security research platform to simulate and reproduce real-world cyberattacks in **ArduPilot SITL**, using **MAVLink telemetry** analysis to measure impact on flight stability and mission execution
- Applied **agentic AI** to amplify exploit severity and developed a **React + D3** visualization tool mapping chained vulnerabilities (**CWE/CAPEC**); presented at VehicleSec '25, winning **Best Demo Award**

Backend Software Engineer Intern

July 2024 – Sep. 2024

Slang Labs

- Developed a multi-platform documentation generation API using **Python and FastAPI**, automating content creation for Python, Android, Flutter, and Swift SDKs to enhance developer efficiency and user experience.
- Integrated a Large Language Model (**LLM**) observability solution into the backend infrastructure, enabling real-time monitoring of token usage and latency to enhance system reliability and cost management.

ACTIVITIES

Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition | Linux Lead, National Champion

Oct. 2023 – Apr. 2025

- Led threat hunting and Linux operations for UCI's CCDC team, defending enterprise networks against professional red teams and winning **1st place** out of 200 universities nationwide.
- Hardened Linux servers, websites, databases, and Docker/Kubernetes deployments while implementing real-time monitoring with Falco, Sysmon, Graylog, and Splunk.
- Developed Python, Bash, and Go automation to enumerate, configure, patch, and firewall **30+** vulnerable systems in parallel, reducing remediation time by **90%**.

Collegiate Penetration Testing Competition | Captain, Global Champion

May. 2025 – Present

- Founded and captained UC Irvine's CPTC team, winning the **Global Finals** against 100 university teams.
- Led full black-box penetration tests of simulated enterprise environments, including Linux, Windows, Active Directory, AWS, and web applications.
- Leveraged **agentic orchestration** tooling to automate and coordinate end-to-end penetration testing workflows.
- Produced a **120+** page comprehensive vulnerability report and presented findings to a simulated executive leadership team.

Cyber at UCI Club Vice President

May. 2025 – Present

- Designed and delivered hands-on technical workshops for **50+** students covering penetration testing, Docker container escapes, malware analysis, and video game security.
- Organized and led **red team engagements** for mock CCDC-style competitions, simulating realistic adversary behavior, persistence techniques, and attack chains to train defenders in incident response and threat hunting.
- Competed in Capture the Flag (CTF) competitions as the lead web exploitation specialist, ranked **45th** in the US.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Languages & Frameworks: Bash, C/C++, Go, HTML/CSS, Java, JavaScript, Python, SQL (MySQL, Postgres), NoSQL, FastAPI, Flask, Node.js, React, TensorFlow, Keras

Technical Knowledge: Agentic AI, Application Security, AWS, Computer Networking, Databases, Deep Learning, Digital Forensics, Docker, Git, Incident Response, Infrastructure, Kubernetes, Linux, Machine Learning, Penetration Testing, Threat Hunting