



# hack\_state

# 2017 Participant Guide

Hosted by



# hack\_state

## Welcome!

Welcome to the first annual Major League Hacking (MLH) hackathon in Mississippi! The HackState Leadership Team and Mississippi State University are so excited that you're hacking with us.

A hackathon is a sprint-like coding competition. Over the course of the 24-hours, you and your team will design and build a new computer-oriented project, such as a web application, mobile application, or a hardware innovation. Near the end of the event, you will show your progress to judges and possibly win some neat prizes.

If you're a beginner, this is the perfect opportunity to learn something new! There will be workshops geared towards beginners and mentors to help you throughout the event. If you're more seasoned, this is an opportunity to share your knowledge and mentor others, or maybe try something that's new for you too.

Remember that hackathons are like marathons. Some people go to compete but most people take part to better themselves and have fun. Whatever the reason you're participating in HackState, make sure you're upholding the hacker spirit by collaborating with other teams, helping beginners, and having fun. Don't worry about coming up with the next big idea or building the next Facebook. You'll have plenty of time for that outside the hackathon. Just focus on learning, having fun, and making new friends. At the end of the day the skills you learn and the friends you make might lead to the next big thing—but you don't have to do that to win a hackathon.

Be sure to read through the entire participant guide for some really important information. You can visit us at the registration/information table or reach us by email [contact@hackstate.org](mailto:contact@hackstate.org). Please reach out if you have any questions!

Happy hacking!  
*The HackState Leadership Team*



# [ Sponsors ]

## Maroon Tier (Co-Hosts)

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## White Tier

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## Gray Tier

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## Local Pride Tier and Product Sponsorship

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## Partners

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# [ Schedule ]

All events are held in the Ballroom (S&U) unless otherwise noted

## Saturday

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10:30 AM	Hacker Check-in and Networking Begins
12:00 PM	Opening Ceremony
1:00 PM	Hacking Begins
1:00 PM	<b>Lunch and Teamforming Event</b> Sponsored by the Mississippi State University James Worth Bagley College of Engineering
2:00 PM	<b>Web Development 101</b> Ballroom (M)
3:00 PM	<b>Android App Development 101</b> Ballroom (M)
5:00 PM	<b>OSINT - Babel Street</b> Ballroom (M)
6:00 PM	Dinner
8:00 PM	Cup Stacking (Stack Overflow)
11:30 PM	Late Night Snack

## Sunday

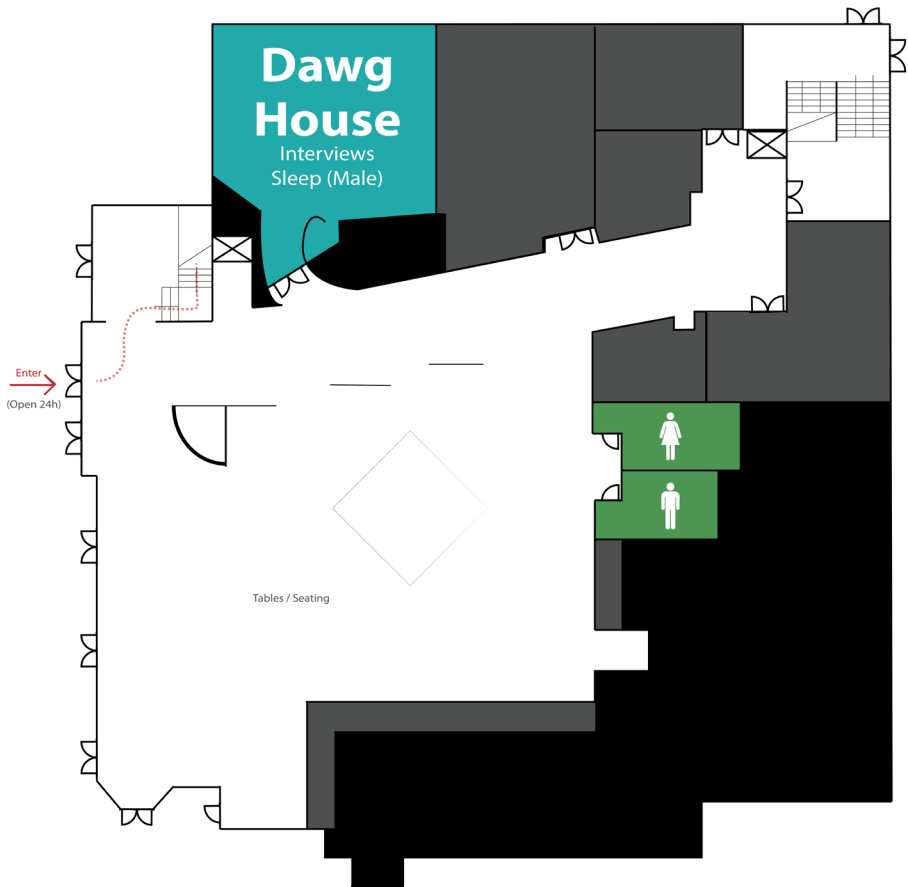
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8:30 AM	Breakfast
1:00 PM	Hacking Ends - Submit to DevPost
1:00 PM	<b>Lunch</b> Sponsored by HORNE Cyber
1:45 PM	Demo Presentations Begin
3:45 PM	Closing Ceremony



# [ 1<sup>st</sup> Floor ]

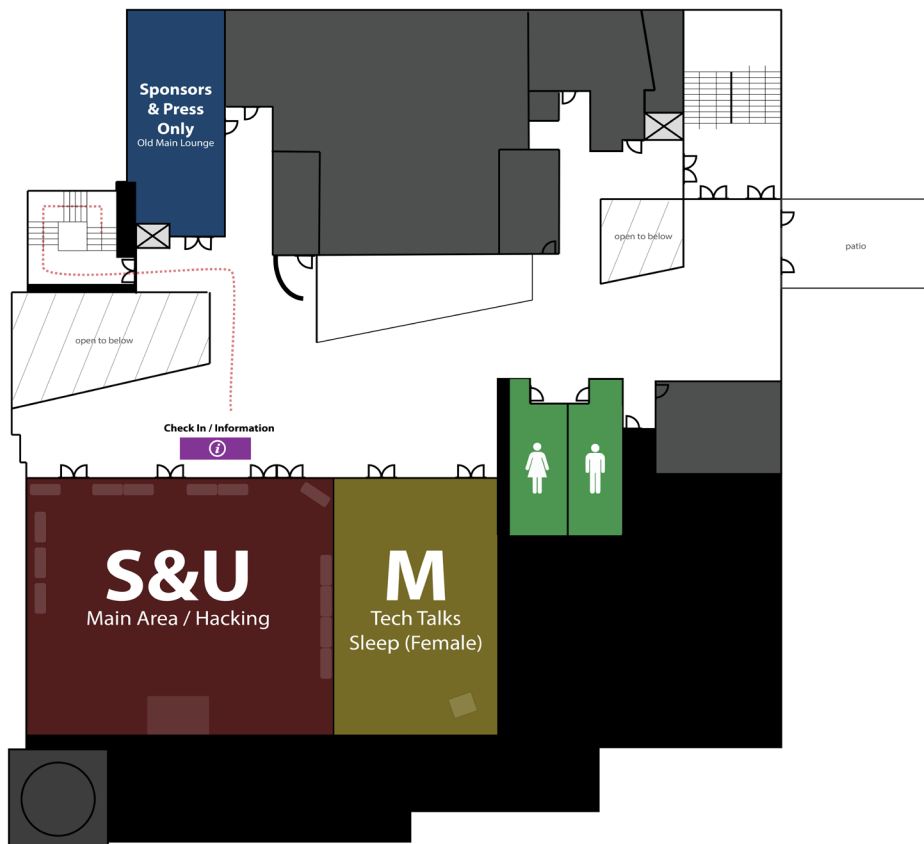
Mississippi State University Colvard Student Union



0011

# [ 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor ]

Mississippi State University Colvard Student Union



0100

# [ Things to Know ]



## **Photo ID**

You must bring a government-issued photo ID (sorry, no school-issued IDs) with you to check in, and the name on the ID must match the name entered during registration.



## **Rest & Sleep**

From 9:30 pm Saturday night to 9:30 am on Sunday, the Dawg House (for the guys) on the 1st floor and Ballroom Section M (for the ladies) will be reserved for resting and sleeping. Please be respectful of those in the sleeping areas during this time and keep noise to a minimum (no hacking in these areas). You can choose to hack through the night in Ballroom Section S&M if you want. Local residents are encouraged to sleep at home if they so desire.



## **Badges**

Your HackState badge gives you access to the reserved HackState areas and food. In addition, you must have your badge if you need to re-enter the Colvard Student Union for any reason after 10:00 pm Saturday night until 7:00 am Sunday morning (see the map for the proper door).



## **Mentors**

Mentors are available to help any team! These individuals have experience in a variety of fields and can be a valuable resource. Don't hesitate to ask someone with a mentor badge to help. If you can't spot a mentor, stop by the information table.



## **Your Stuff**

Please don't bring valuables inside the Colvard Student Union. The HackState Leadership Team, Mississippi State University, and all other affiliated/sponsoring organisations are not responsible for lost or stolen items.





## Attending Solo

No team yet? No problem! While individuals can hack in a team of one, you are encouraged to take advantage of the teamforming event at 1:00 pm Saturday during lunch to form a team with other hackers.



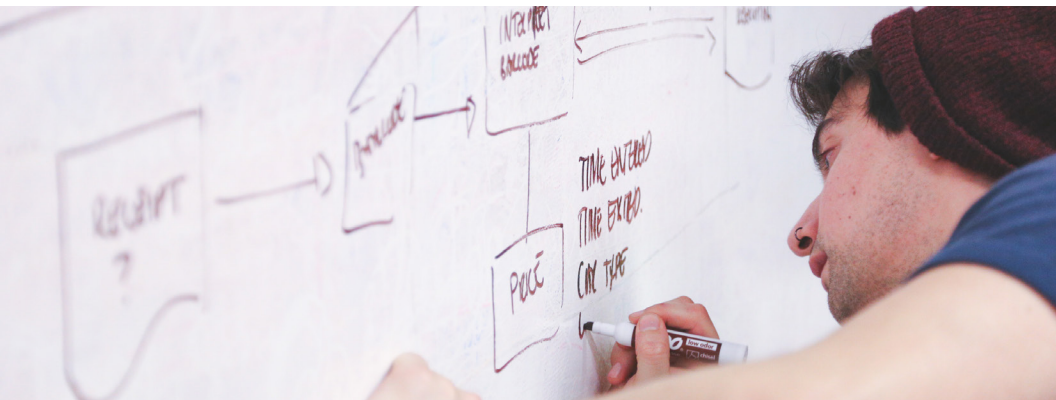
## Internet/WiFi

- **msu1x** - This WiFi network is for MSU students, faculty, and staff. An MSU "NetID" and password are required to join.
- **eduroam** - This WiFi network is for students with an account at a different college/university. Try connecting with your school email and password.
- **msuguest** - This WiFi network is for anyone who cannot connect to either of the other two networks. When you open your web browser and attempt to visit any website, you will be prompted to enter the "password of the day." You may have to enter a new password on Sunday. This password will be provided at the opening ceremony or can be found at the info table outside the ballroom.



## Allergies & Dietary Restrictions

If you indicated specific food allergies or dietary restrictions during registration, please inform the food attendant near the serving line at each mealtime. While all meals will be free of many allergens, we have prepared specific meals in separate packaging for the individuals who we know cannot eat the general meal.





# [ Tools & Resources ]

## DEVPOST

DevPost is a popular, purpose-built hackathon organization tool. By 1:00 pm on Sunday, each team should submit their project to [hackstate.org/devpost](https://hackstate.org/devpost). Only on-time submissions will be entered into the first round of in-person judging. Fill in all the project information and provide relevant images, videos, and links to allow your fellow hackers and the world see your team's amazing work.



Slack is a communication platform for organizations that groups topics into "channels." All participants will receive an email invitation to join the HackSate Slack ([hackstate.org/slack](https://hackstate.org/slack)) before the event. Use this resource to receive official announcements, ask questions on a topic, or coordinate with other hackers.

## MLH | Hardware Lab

Teams can borrow some cool hardware from the Major League Hacking (MLH) table for incorporation into a project. To reserve some hardware, visit [hackstate.org/hardware](https://hackstate.org/hardware) once the event starts. You'll need to create an account then select the item you want to check out. Finally, visit the MLH table to pick up the item. You'll probably need to leave your government-issued ID with the MLH representative until you return the hardware.



# [ Emergency Information ]

**Report an emergency:** Dial 9-1-1

**Mississippi State University Police Department:** (622)-325-2121

**MLH Incident Reporting:** (409)-202-6060 or [incidents@mlh.io](mailto:incidents@mlh.io)

**Emergency situation status & updates:** [emergency.msstate.edu](http://emergency.msstate.edu)

## [ Parking ]

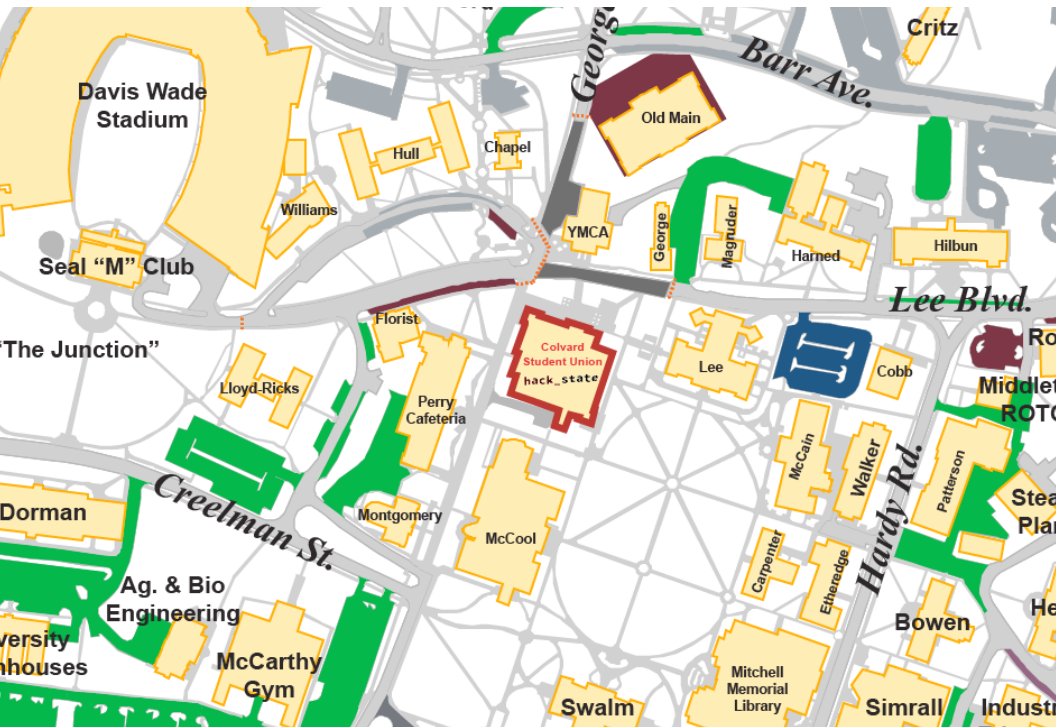
Participants and volunteers, park in one of the green areas below or simply navigate to the parking lot at [33.454169, -88.792418](#) and walk to the Colvard Student Union.

Sponsors, mentors, and press may park in the blue area shown below, which is located at [33.454856, -88.788078](#).

■ Recommended General

■ Sponsor / Mentor / Press

■ Restricted / Metered



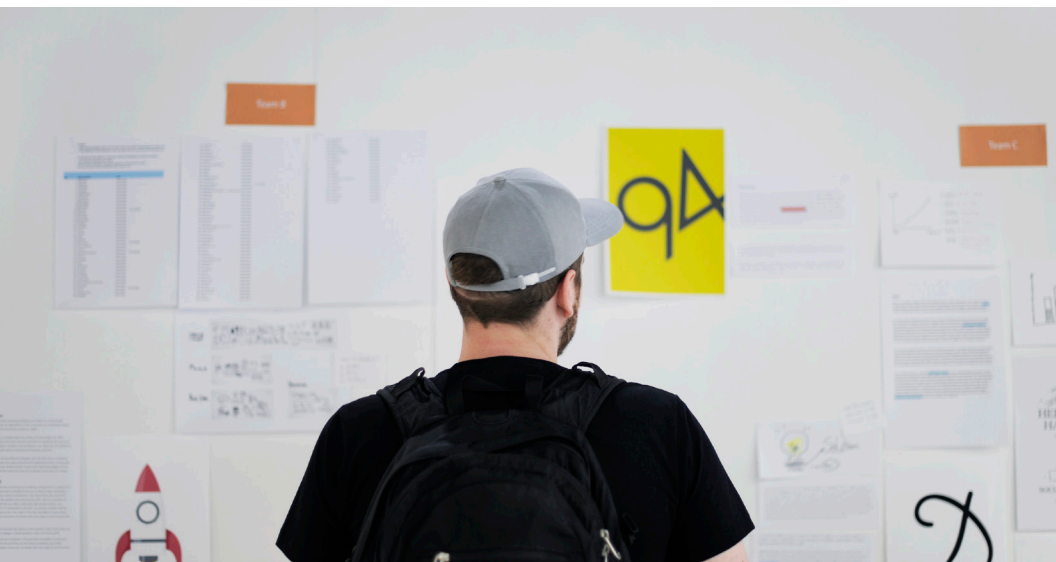
## [ Demos ]

After hacking finishes, teams will show their projects each other and to the judges.

You are strongly encouraged to present a demo of what you have built. Since you are only judged on what you done, you'll only hurt yourself by not showing a demo. Even if your hack is broken or your team wasn't able to finish, you are encouraged to present what they have done. It's okay if you didn't finish your hack—that happens all the time!

Also, demoing is not just about the competition. It's a chance to share with others what you learned and what you tried to build—that's what hacking's all about! For being courageous enough to demo, you'll receive a special MLH "I Demoed" sticker—it doesn't matter how good the demo is! In the case that you don't have anything to demo, you can give a presentation about what you tried and what you learned. Hearing what other people learned is interesting and inspiring for other attendees.

There will be two rounds of demos. All teams will show their projects to judges and each other during the "Demo Presentations" beginning at 1:45 pm on Sunday in a science-fair style. To be entered into this first round of demos, teams only need to submit their project to [DevPost](#) no later than 1:00 pm on Sunday. During the second round, five teams will be invited to demo to everyone on stage. The judges will deliberate and the prize-winners will be announced at the closing ceremony.



# [ Judging Criteria ]

Teams will be judged on the following five criteria weighted equally. During judging, participants should try to describe what they did for each criterion in their project. These criteria will guide judges in the first round, but, especially in the second round, judges are more free to make decisions based on their gut feeling of which projects are the most impressive and most deserving.

- **Product:** Were the project's features impressive given the time frame of the hackathon? Did the team put thought into the user (end-user or developer) experience and the interface (whether graphical, command-line, physical, motion controlled, etc.)?
- **Technology:** Were there difficult technical problem(s) the team tackled and solved? Did the technology used and/or the technical complexity involved make you go "wow"? Did the project use a particularly clever technique? Did it integrate several different components?
- **Coolness & Ambition:** Is the project intriguing, ambitious, creative, and/or innovative? Were there interesting additions/features to the project that made it special or unique? Remember, real-world applicability is not scored.
- **Teamwork & Exploration:** Did one or more team members try to learn something new? Was the team stretched outside of their comfort zone? Is it apparent that the team worked together? Did the team members help each other learn?
- **Discretionary:** Did the team effectively convey their work and/or give an remarkable demonstration? Overall, does the project/team deserve an award for their work?

Projects will **NOT** be judged on:

- **Code Appearance:** It doesn't matter if your code is messy, not well commented, or uses inefficient algorithms. Hacking is about playing around, making mistakes, and learning new things. If your code isn't production ready, that's ok.
- **Real-world Applicability:** You can build something totally useless and as long as you're learning and having fun, that's a good hack! Hackathons are about building and learning. Sometimes a pointless (yet creative and ambitious) project is one of the best hacks!

# [ Competition Rules ]

1. Teams can be up to four people. Hacking alone is allowed, but participants are encouraged to step out of their comfort zone.
2. Teams must be made up exclusively of college students (or those who graduated college within the last year) who are at least 18 years old, and not organizers, volunteers, judges, mentors, or sponsors.
3. Team members must be present and check in to contribute to a project, although temporarily leaving the venue is fine. Only individuals present at closing ceremony are eligible to receive a prize.
4. Teams may gain advice and support from organizers, volunteers, official mentors, sponsor representatives, and other teams.
5. All work on a project must be done at the hackathon event.
6. Teams may use an idea (but not code) they had before the event.
7. Teams may work on unoriginal and/or common ideas. It's hard to find something that's fully original and teams might not know an idea has been done before anyway.
8. Teams may work on an idea that they have worked on before (as long as they do not re-use code).
9. Teams may use libraries, frameworks, or open-source code in their projects. Working on a project before the event and open-sourcing it for the sole purpose of using the code during the event is against the spirit of the rules and is not allowed. Also, teams must be forthcoming and honest about what portions of the project were pre-existing.
10. Adding new features to existing projects is allowed. Judges will only consider new functionality introduced or new features added during the hackathon in determining the winners.
11. Teams must stop hacking once the time is up. However, teams are allowed to debug and make small fixes to their programs after time is up. For example, if while demoing your hack, you find a bug that breaks your project and the fix is only a few lines of code, it's okay to fix that. Making large changes or adding new features is not allowed.
12. Teams can be disqualified from the competition at the organizers' discretion. Reasons might include, but are not limited to, breaking the Competition Rules, Attendance Rules, MLH Code of Conduct, or other unsporting behaviour.



# [ Attendance Rules ]

Use common sense. Know that a violation of any of the following will almost certainly result in dismissal from HackState, a law enforcement referral, a future attendance ban, and/or other repercussions.

While at HackState or on Mississippi State University (MSU) property, you are subject to applicable law and MSU policy ([policies.msstate.edu](https://policies.msstate.edu)), which supersede these rules; excerpts are provided for your convenience.

- You are required to comply with the MLH code of conduct. Be sure to read it at [hackstate.org/code-of-conduct](https://hackstate.org/code-of-conduct).
- MSU is a smoke-free campus. Visit [smokefree.msstate.edu](https://smokefree.msstate.edu) for more information.
- Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in the Colvard Student Union. MSU staff/operating personnel have retained the right to have any person removed who is in violation of this policy or who appears to be intoxicated.
- Unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs is prohibited.
- Possession of any weapon (including firearms) is prohibited on MSU property unless explicitly authorized MSU. Possession of any type of explosive, fireworks, or the like is also prohibited on MSU property.
- Pets are not permitted in the Colvard Student Union, with the exception of service animals with advance notice to the HackState Leadership Team who will inform any appropriate personnel.
- You must comply with the MSU policy on the use of technology resources and network. Examples of prohibited uses are:
  - Illegal downloading or sharing of copyrighted materials
  - Harassing or threaten others
  - Downloading or displaying obscene or pornographic material/images
  - Negligently, or intentionally and without authorization, accessing or attempting to access, altering, interfering with the operation of, damaging, or destroying all or part of any IT resource
  - Use or attempted use of electronic accounts, access codes, passwords, or other electronic identification credentials assigned to others or electronically impersonating others

# hack\_state

September 23-24, 2017  
Mississippi State University



Organized by the Mississippi State University Student Chapter of the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM). Copyright © 2017.

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The information contained in this publication is subject to change with or without notice. In many cases, the electronic version of this publication will be updated and/or an announcement will be made.

For disability accommodation, please contact Charles Boyd at [charles@hackstate.org](mailto:charles@hackstate.org).

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