

Sean O'Brien

Cyber Innovator

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Short Bio

Sean O'Brien is an Associate Research Scholar at **Yale Law School** and Director of the Cybersecurity and Computer Science Programs, as well as Assistant Professor, at **Bay Path University**. He is founder of **Yale Privacy Lab** and Deputy Director of the **Free Software Foundation**. Sean has more than two decades of experience in the private and public sectors in areas such as infrastructure management, Free/Libre and Open Source Software (FLOSS), and blockchain security. At **Ivy Cyber**, "Prof Diggity" delivers digital self-defense trainings and guides the **PrivacySafe** secure hardware and software products. Sean's expertise has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Wired*, *AP*, *NBC*, *Popular Science*, *Forbes*, *The Financial Times*, and more.

Education

01/2013 - Present
New Haven, CT USA

Associate Research Scholar in Law, Founder of Privacy Lab
Yale Law School
Research Fellow of the Information Society Project since 2013. Founded Privacy Lab initiative in 2017. Mobile forensic analysis with press in 100+ global outlets.

01/2023 - 05/2025
Stanford, CA USA

AI, Blockchain, Cybersecurity | Executive Education
Stanford University
Professional Certificate: Machine Learning
Professional Certificate: Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Healthcare
Professional Certificate: Advanced Cybersecurity & Blockchain Technologies

01/2016 - 12/2022
Cambridge, MA USA

AI, Cybersecurity | Executive Education
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Professional Certificate: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Leadership
Professional Certificate: Cybersecurity Technology, Application and Policy

01/2021 - 12/2021
Cambridge, MA USA

Data Privacy | Executive Education
Harvard University
Professional Certificate: Data Privacy and Technology

06/2007 - 08/2008
Storrs, CT USA

Educational Technology | Master of Arts in Education (MA Ed)
University of Connecticut
Focus: Command Line Literacy

08/2001 - 05/2005
Storrs, CT USA

Interactive Digital Media | Bachelor of Arts (BA)
University of Connecticut
Concentration: Creative Writing

Select Certifications & Memberships

01/2025 Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)
ISC2, Member #970696

10/2022 Certified in Cybersecurity (CC)
ISC2

01/2025 Senior Expert, Cybersecurity
GeoRisk Solutions

04/2023 Cybersecurity Exam Expert
ISC2

04/2024 **Mensa High IQ Society Lifetime Member**
American Mensa

01/2022 **Linux Foundation Certified IT Associate (LFCA)**
Linux Foundation

10/2021 **Data Privacy Officer (DPO)**
Association for Data and Cyber Governance

07/2022 **Certified Blockchain Security Professional (CBSP)**
Blockchain Council

12/2021 **Certified White Hat Hacker (WHH)**
Global Tech Council

01/2020 **Legal Observer**
National Lawyers Guild

Work Experience

07/2025 - Present
Longmeadow, MA USA

Director, Cybersecurity and Computer Science Programs & Assistant Professor
Bay Path University
Ranked #5 Cybersecurity program in USA (Forbes 2024). Lead NSA CAE-CD program aligned with NICE and NIST standards.

01/2026 - Present
Boston, MA USA

Deputy Director
Free Software Foundation
Senior leadership in globally-respected 501(c)(3) charity for software freedom advocacy. Operational oversight, advancing institutional mission, and long-term strategy.

04/2023 - Present
New Haven, CT USA

Founder & CEO
Ivy Cyber
Driving delivery of the PrivacySafe secure hardware and software products. Teaching as "Prof Diggity" & consulting in Europe, Hong Kong, New York, Dubai.

03/2026 - Present
Branford, CT USA

President
PrivacySafe Foundation
501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity advancing access to cybersecurity education, decentralized technology, Free/Libre and Open Source Software (FLOSS), and public-interest research.

06/2025 - Present
New Orleans, LA USA

Adjunct Faculty, School of Professional Advancement
Tulane University
"AI Implementation in Workplace" CPST-4913-15. Delivering synchronous online instruction emphasizing practical AI strategies.

07/2025 - 08/2026
Cambridge, MA USA

Director, Cybersecurity & Assistant Professor
Cambridge College
Oversaw Digital Forensics and Networking & Security programs. Coordinated faculty, curriculum, and program operations.

08/2025 - 10/2025
New Haven, CT USA

Instructor, Digital Forensics, Yale Law School
Yale University
Created curriculum for "Cyber Threats & Digital Forensics" LAW 50100-01. Encryption, static analysis, smartphones, open source intelligence (OSINT).

06/2025 - 10/2025
Sacramento, CA USA

Instructor, Artificial Intelligence
MTI College / Campus.edu
"AI for Business" COLL 121 and "Business Law" BUSN 215. Lead live online sessions with 100+ students on prompt engineering and AI.

01/2025 - 06/2025
New Haven, CT USA

Instructor, Artificial Intelligence, Yale Law School
Yale University
Created curriculum for "Artificial Intelligence: Creativity & IP" LAW 50100-25. Focus on GenAI such as ChatGPT, Claude, Midjourney, DeepSeek, Github Copilot.

04/2025 - 06/2025
Longmeadow, MA USA

Adjunct Faculty, Cybersecurity
Bay Path University
"Emerging Cybersecurity Threats" CBY 630. "Cyber Governance: Privacy, Ethics, & Digital Rights" CBY 202.

08/2018 - 06/2024
New Haven, CT USA

Lecturer, Cybersecurity, Yale Law School
Yale University
Developed class with Prof. Scott J. Shapiro for Cybersecurity, LAW 20310 & 21314. Encryption, Kali Linux pentesting, Metasploit, hacking & cyber attack demos. Lecturer in Law 2018-2019, Visiting Lecturer in Law 2022 & 2023-2024.

07/2023 - 09/2024
Reykjavík, Iceland

Chief Technology Officer (CTO)
Global Technology Firm
Launched privacy-respecting B2C service and led development of B2B products. Designed a blockchain social messaging service.

09/2021 - 07/2023
Reykjavík, Iceland

Chief Security Officer (CSO)
Global Technology Firm
Security, privacy, and Free/Libre and Open Source Software (FLOSS) compliance. Managed internal systems and advised on Web3 components and consensus.

05/2022 - 07/2023
Nashville, TN USA

Open Source Lead
Tari Labs & Yat Labs
Security leader for two global Web3 orgs. Managed VDP with 300+ bugs squashed. Managed git collaboration with open source developers and security researchers.

09/2022 - 05/2023
Washington, DC USA

Instructor, Hacking & Cybersecurity
Lawfare Institute
Developed Lawfare Hacking & Cybersecurity class with Prof. Scott J. Shapiro. 120+ remote students. CLI, malware, DDoS, The Dark Web, and cybercrime.

09/2020 - 09/2021
British Virgin Islands, UK

Principal Researcher, Digital Security Lab
ExpressVPN
Founder of a research center focusing on privacy and cybersecurity. Investigations of privacy harms and open source reports about security issues.

12/2019 - 01/2021
New Haven, CT USA

Faculty Mentor
Prepared AI
Mentor for Michael Chime, Neal Soni, Dylan Gleicher at Yale Tsai CITY incubator. Company raised $130m+ in Series A, B, C led by Andreessen Horowitz.

12/2019 - 05/2020
Gibraltar, UK

Managing Editor, The Privacy Issue
IVPN
Founding editor of "The Privacy Issue," a privacy industry vertical for IVPN. Writing, editing, and curating long-form articles and guides on cybersecurity.

08/2022 - 12/2022
New Haven, CT USA

Instructor, Blockchain, Yale Law School
Yale University
Created curriculum for "What is Web3? Blockchain & NFTs" LAW 50100-13. Introduces Yale Law School students to emerging Web3 technology.

06/2020 - 08/2022
Oxford, England, UK

Head Tutor, Cyber Security for Business Leaders
Saïd Business School, University of Oxford
Founding Head Tutor 2020, Tutor 2021, Head Tutor 2022. Leading team of tutors in a remote, global class with 86 NPS & 100% completion.

08/2017 - 12/2017
New Haven, CT USA

Instructor, Yale Law School
Yale University
Created curriculum for "Cyber Freedom & Security" LAW 50112. Discussed the Internet within the context of surveillance and targeted attacks.

01/2017 - 06/2017
New Haven, CT USA

Instructor, Yale Law School
Yale University
Created curriculum for "Citizen FOSS: What Snowden Knew" LAW 50110. Introduced security within the context of the 2013 Edward Snowden disclosures.

10/2018 - 05/2019
San Francisco, CA USA

Director of Business Development
Purism
Fostering partnerships in open hardware and open source software industries. Sales and marketing strategy for enterprise B2B and consumer B2C hardware.

01/2013 - 10/2018
New Haven, CT USA

Director of Technology, International Students & Scholars
Yale University
Drupal development and design of custom Web applications. Implemented decentralized and P2P protocols like Jabber/XMPP, Jitsi/WebRTC.

08/2001 - 01/2013
Storrs, CT USA

Website Manager, Student Financial Aid Services
University of Connecticut
Development and admin of servers & apps on Red Hat, Debian, Apache, nginx. Python, PHP, JavaScript, jQuery, MySQL, PostgreSQL, and Oracle/PeopleSoft.

06/2003 - 07/2003
Storrs, CT USA

Orientation Leader, Student Orientation Services
University of Connecticut
Provided guidance and support for hundreds of incoming students at UConn. Trained in transition strategies for students that result in increased retention.

Additional Training

- AI / LLM Model Training and Evaluation
- Internet of Things (IoT) Hardware
- Firmware Programming, BIOS & Bootloader
- Digital Forensics & Code Audits
- Penetration Testing & Ethical Hacking
- International Privacy Regulation & Policy
- Homebrewing Beer & Wine
- Hospitality, Bartending, Serving (Cicerone CBS)

References

Scott J. Shapiro
Charles F. Southmayd Professor of Law and Professor of Philosophy at Yale Law School. Author of *Fancy Bear Goes Phishing: The Dark History of the Information Age*.

law.yale.edu/scott-j-shapiro

John Kiriakou
Professor of Contemporary Intelligence Studies, University of Salamanca. Former CIA Analyst, Case Officer, and Counterterrorism Consultant.

whistleblower.org/bio-john-kiriakou

Laurin Weissinger

Lecturer, Fletcher School at Tufts University; Cybersecurity Fellow and Visiting Fellow, Information Society Project at Yale Law School; CISSP, CCSP, CISM, CISA, CIPT, CIPM, CIPP/E, CIPP/US.

laurinw.com

Cory Doctorow

Author of *Little Brother*, *Homeland*, and *Walkaway*. Special Advisor to the Electronic Frontier Foundation, former European Director of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, co-founder of UK Open Rights Group.

pluralistic.net

Ben Wizner

Director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project.

aclu.org/bio/ben-wizner

Nikolas Guggenberger

Assistant Professor of Law at the University of Houston Law Center, former Executive Director, Information Society Project at Yale Law School.

law.yale.edu/nikolas-guggenberger-0

Lucia M. Sommerer

Researcher and Teaching Fellow at the University of Göttingen, Affiliated Fellow, Information Society Project at Yale Law School.

uni-goettingen.de

Joshua Gay

Senior Manager, SA Open Source Community and Infrastructure at IEEE.

opensource.ieee.org/jgay