

Excerpt from the Report of the SUNY Micro-Credentialing Task Force

Definition, Parameters, Taxonomy, Guiding Principles & Recommendations (Abbreviated)

SUNY Micro-Credential Definition:

Micro-credentials verify, validate and attest that specific skills and/or competencies have been achieved and are endorsed by the issuing institution, having been developed through established faculty governance processes and designed to be meaningful and high quality.

Parameters:

Micro-credentials may represent the content of credit or noncredit study; they may take the form of digital badge or micro-award, and can be offered online, on-campus, or a hybrid of both. Micro-credentials may be specifically recognized by certain industries, in which case they may have the advantage of providing validation and attestation of industry-specified and frequently highly sought-after competencies. Each micro-credential awarded must be represented clearly and accurately, addressing associated costs, financial aid, transferability, and stackability toward a formal award(s).

Taxonomy of Terms:

To provide the SUNY community with a common taxonomy around micro-credentials, a list of definitions for common micro-credentialing terms is provided as Appendix A of this report. This list may be expanded or revised over time and will be maintained online at: <http://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/microcredentials>.

Guiding Principles:

1. Academic quality is paramount for micro-credentials, and faculty governance participation is required.
2. Micro-credentials are initiated locally, developed, and approved according to local campus policies and procedures, consistent with campus mission and strategic goals.
3. Micro-credentials designed to meet market needs should be informed by current data from appropriate markets and align with relevant industry/sector standards.
4. Micro-credentials can provide opportunities for industry/education connections and partnerships.
5. Micro-credentials are inherently more flexible and innovative.
6. Micro-credentials should be portable.
7. Micro-credentials should be stackable.

Recommendations:

1. Development consistent with Task Force Guiding Principles.
2. Develop a process/practices for articulating (stacking) credentials that includes faculty governance.
3. Partnerships between Continuing Education, Workforce Development, and Academic Affairs will assure optimum results.
4. Consider ACE Quality Dimensions for Connected Credentials: transparency, modularity, portability, relevance, validity, equity. Details on cost, financial aid, learning outcomes, assessments, and stackability for all micro-credentials.
5. Use of SUNY Definition of Micro-Credentials & common taxonomy.
6. Seek support and counsel from liaison in the System Program Review and Planning Office.
7. System Provost to launch a formal policy review process to address identified barriers/opportunities for micro-credentials.
8. SUNY to join advocacy efforts for quality micro-credentials for financial aid; explore System-wide approach to digital transcripts and portability.
9. Charge FACT2 with development of readiness assessment tools.
10. Define reporting structure in SIRUS so progress can be followed.