

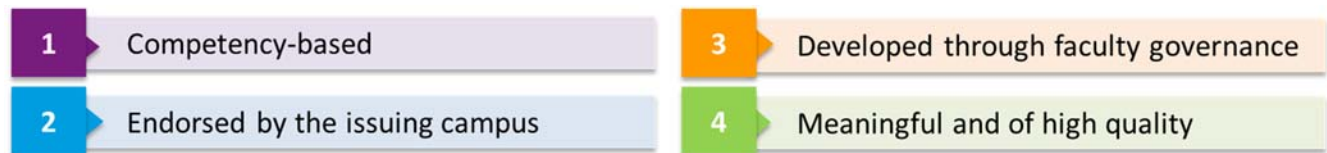
Highlights: The State University of New York (SUNY) Micro-Credential Policy

(adopted January 2018)

SUNY MICRO-CREDENTIALS

Through a collaborative process, endorsed by the SUNY Trustees, the 64-campus system created a SUNY-specific definition of micro-credentials that would both distinguish its efforts and underscore a commitment to rigor and quality.

SUNY Micro-Credentials are:



A FLEXIBLE FRAMEWORK RECOGNIZING BROAD MICRO-CREDENTIAL USES AND BENEFITS

In creating its policy framework, SUNY worked to ensure that campuses would have the autonomy and flexibility necessary to leverage multiple uses of micro-credentials across different audiences:

- Motivating current students toward completion of a degree program by highlighting progressive attainment of competencies;
- Supplementing an existing degree program with new, complementary skill sets;
- Inviting new students to (or back to) campus by way of smaller sets of curriculum that have value on their own *and* when stacked toward another credential (laddering from non-credit to credit and/or from a stand-alone credential to a degree program);
- Supporting academic/industry partnerships through new credentials that meet industry requirements and/or are designed to meet a specific need;
- Providing more specificity to potential employers about skills and competencies learned; and
- Providing short-term offerings geared toward professional development/life-long learning.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SUNY'S MICRO-CREDENTIAL POLICY (abbreviated)

1. Academic quality is paramount for micro-credentials; faculty governance participation is required.
2. Micro-credentials are initiated locally, developed and approved according to local campus policies and procedures, and consistent with campus mission, SUNY policy, and state/federal regulation.
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 are inherently more flexible and innovative.
6. Micro-credentials should be portable and stackable.

GETTING STARTED

Ideas for micro-credentials can come from any number of sources. SUNY campuses have begun to develop micro-credentials in response to an idea from an individual faculty member, a department working together as a team, even a special President's Task Force charged with discussing micro-credentials with campus business and industry partners. It could be students or alumni who have identified a need, the enrollment or admissions office that is getting frequent requests about



credentials in a certain area, or the career development officers who have made a new industry contact. No matter what the source of the idea, the importance and value of collaborative design, quality assurance, and a thoughtful communications plan apply—this is true whether the intent is non-credit, non-credit to credit, or a for-credit credential. A potential model is shown above.

NEXT STEPS

Four implementation teams are currently hard at work to support campus efforts:

1. Policy/Financial Aid: A formal policy review process to include representation from faculty and student governance and an open-comment period for any proposed policy revision in areas identified as potential barriers to micro-credential implementation;
2. Readiness and Assessment: Developing readiness assessment tools and information resources to support faculty development of micro-credentials;
3. Data Reporting: Developing standard definitions and reporting structures for all types of micro-credentials in SIRIS ("SUNY Institutional Research Information System");
4. Transferability & Portability: Exploring best practices, existing platforms, and feasibility of a system-wide approach.

QUESTIONS

Contact Cynthia Proctor, Director of Communications and Academic Policy Development, for additional information or with any questions at: cynthia.proctor@suny.edu.

Key resources are available online at: www.suny.edu/microcredentials.