
Procedure **Micro-Credentials and Badges**

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Approved by: Faculty Senate
Reference: BOR Policy (203.30; 301.19; 304.1; 304.2; 309.1)

Overview

This document outlines processes and procedures for new micro-credential programs to be offered in pilot mode for a period of up to three academic years. Ongoing assessment of micro-credentials is conducted as part of periodic review of the academic program/unit with which they are associated.

Definitions:

Micro-credential: To demonstrate your mastery of a skill or specific competency area or field of study, micro-credentials are mini-certifications.

Badge: Upon completion of micro-credential coursework criteria set by a unit/department, individuals can receive a searchable, digital badge authorized and awarded by [credly](#). This badge contains meta-data¹ and is certified by UM Registrar's Office if it is completed for credit. If non-credit, UM Online oversees. This badge can be displayed upon completion electronically (e.g. LinkedIn and other social media outlets of the participants' choice). There are set criteria established by each pilot program for a student/learner in order to receive a badge.

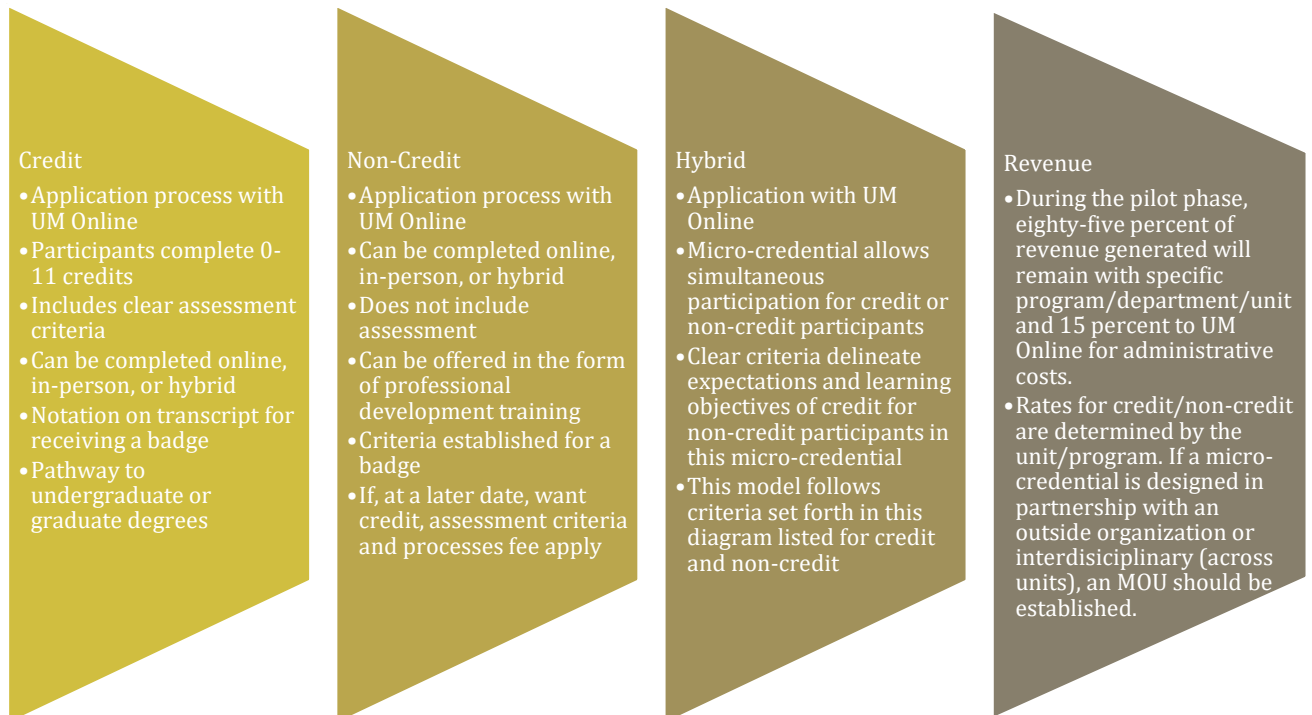
Additional Explanation:

1. Micro-credentials differ from traditional degrees and certificates - they are offered in shorter or more flexible timespan or are more narrowly focused. Click [here](#) for samples.
2. Micro-credentials can be offered in different modalities (online, in-person, or hybrid).
3. Micro-credentials can be offered as credit bearing coursework, non-credit bearing coursework, or a combination of the two. Participants in these options can receive a badge upon meeting specified criteria.

¹ The meta-data in a badge includes the information completed by the participant.

4. Credit-bearing micro-credentials should require between 0-11 credits, including an assessment to verify skill development.
5. Credit-bearing micro-credentials may “stack” into a larger certificate or degree program. Students who earn a credit-bearing micro-credential will receive a notation on their transcript, in recognition of the achievement, and can be awarded a digital badge upon completion.
 - a. The Office of the Registrar will record micro-credentials on academic transcripts, utilizing a trackable Academic Event Code approved by the governing academic body.
6. Non-credit bearing micro-credentials can result in a digital badge but, no transcript notation. Non-credit micro-credentials have the opportunity to move to credit bearing status with the partnership of an academic unit and UMOonline. Academic programs are welcome to work with non-credit micro-credentials to award credit at a later date though and administration fee and issuing another form of assessment as described on policy 304.1(e.g. project or exam).
7. Academic units/programs can partner with outside organizations (e.g. business, nonprofit, government) to develop credit or non-credit micro-credentials.
8. Micro-credentials can be offered at the undergraduate or graduate level, or as continuing education for working professionals such as non-traditional students, adult-learners, or the general public seeking additional skills.
9. **Important Notes:** Programs of study requiring completion of 12 credits or more are recognized as certificates per university policy. These are evaluated and approved through separate procedures.

How Micro-credentials Work



Proposal Processes & Steps

Proposal Process for Pilot Programs

A team of at least two (faculty or staff) may propose a new, pilot micro-credential at any time by completing an online form on the UOnline website. The form includes the following information and must be approved by supervisor, section head (Dean, VP, or designee).

- Names of proposers
- Department/Unit/Program
- Statement of purpose and need (500-800 words):
 - o Clearly explains career applications of skills, industrial or professional standards that drive the proposed micro-credential (credit, non-credit, or hybrid)
 - o Description of type of badge and requirements to receive badge
 - o Resource generation and allocation (financial and human; rate for micro-credentials based upon research)
 - o Evaluation plan to assess achievement of skills-based learning outcomes (sample template below)
- Include a syllabus (or syllabi) with identified experience or skills-based learning outcomes that are matched to the target micro-credential earners (differentiate for credit, non-credit, and badge versus non-badge)
- If approved by supervisor and UM Online for the pilot phase, at the end of each year, a program review form should be submitted to UOnline

Important Notes: Advertising of a micro-credential cannot occur until approval of pilot program; can only be 1-11 credits (beyond 12 credits requires UM approval); on or before the fall semester of the 3rd pilot year a full proposal must be submitted to faculty senate for review and approval; faculty senate office/UOnline will track pilot programs

Post-Pilot Phase Review and Established Program Process

On or before fall semester of 3rd year of pilot, participants must notify UOnline if the unit/program would like to proceed with a full proposal or remove for consideration. At this time, a full proposal (detailed below) is submitted for approval by an interdisciplinary, sub-committee comprised of one member from ASCRC, one member from Graduate Council, 1-2 other faculty, 1-2 staff, and 1-2 students. At least one person on the committee has experience with running a micro-credential. The recommended established program proposals move into the full faculty senate committees prior to faculty senate and provost review.

Full proposal online submission should include:

- Names of proposers
- Department/Unit/Program
- Statement of purpose and need (500-800 words):
 - o Pilot data to demonstrate program purpose and market need for micro-credential
 - o Resource generation and allocation (financial and human)
 - o Evaluation plan to assess achievement of skills-based learning outcomes (sample template below)

- Include a syllabus (or syllabi) with identified experience or skills-based learning outcomes that are matched to the target micro-credential earners
- Approval signatures from supervisor/section head, UOnline
- Approval of this phase includes:
 - o Assigned to interdisciplinary subcommittee
 - o Recommended to full ASCRC/Graduate Council as appropriate
 - o Recommended to FS for sent to Provost for adoption
- Periodic assessment/review
 - o Micro-credential programs to be reviewed/assessed during periodic review of unit

Sample Assessment for Adoption

This sample assessment template modifies Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model², which was developed to analyze the impact of training, how well students learned, and to improve future iterations of trainings. It includes an emphasis on the importance of making training relevant to student's professions.

Level 1: Reaction. These questions focus on measuring how engaged students were, their perception of their contributions, and how they reacted to the micro-credential program, as a measure of how they perceived its value.

These are short-term questions that students can answer immediately following the completion of their micro-credential program, or can be asked after each course or module has been completed. Questions like the below could be posed:

- Did you feel that the training was worth your time? Why?
- In what ways were the training activities engaging?
- From what you learned, what do you plan to apply in your job or workplace going forward?

Level 2: Learning. These metrics focus on measuring what students in the micro-credential program have and haven't learned.

Level 2 is about measuring what students in the micro-credential program have and haven't learned. This demonstrates how the training they received developed their skills, attitudes and knowledge, as well as their confidence and commitment.

To measure how much students in the micro-credential program have learned, please begin with your learning objectives and identify 2-3 metrics that you believe identify whether students have reached those objectives.

It is helpful to measure these areas both before and after training. Before the training begins, assess students' knowledge, skill levels and attitudes with a written or oral assignment. Test students a second time at the end of the training. This provides a comparison for you and your students to measure their success or identify areas requiring further study.

² Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1994). Evaluating training programs: the four levels. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Level 3: Behavior and Results. These questions focus on understanding how well people apply the micro-credential training outside of the classroom.

These are longer-term questions that will require the micro-credential program director to keep in touch with graduates, and should take place over the weeks, months or years following the initial training. Questions like the below could be posed:

- Did you put any of your training from the micro-credential to use? If yes, how?
- Have you taught your new knowledge, skills or attitudes to other people?
- What are the three main ways you feel the micro-credential affected your work or life?