Micro-Credentials: Professional Development, but Fun-Sized

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Published by *K20 Center*

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Time Frame 60m

Essential Question(s)

- How can micro-credential courses benefit teachers?

Summary

In this professional learning session, participants will discuss barriers to traditional professional development and explore how micro-credential courses can help them overcome those barriers. Participants will discuss the pluses and deltas of micro-credentialing, explore a sample course activity, learn how to enroll in classes, discuss how badges can be used, and identify topics they would like to see addressed in future micro-credential courses.

Learning Goals

- Discuss the pluses and deltas of micro-credentialing.
- Identify the steps to enroll in, access, and complete a micro-credential course.
- Reflect on how micro-credential courses could inform your practice.

Attachments

- How People Learn Flowchart—Professional Development, but Fun-Sized.pdf
- Micro-Credential Course Interest Form—Professional Development, but Fun-Sized.docx
- Micro-Credential Course Interest Form—Professional Development, but Fun-Sized.pdf
- Mirror, Microscope, Binoculars—Professional Development, but Fun-Sized.docx
- Mirror, Microscope, Binoculars—Professional Development, but Fun-Sized.pdf
- Presentation Slides—Professional Development, but Fun-Sized.pptx

Materials

- Presentation Slides (attached)
- How People Learn Flowchart handout (attached; one per participant)
- Mirror, Microscope, Binoculars handout (attached; one per participant)
- Micro-Credentialing Course Interest Form handout (attached; one per participant)
- Device with internet access (one per participant)
- Pen or pencil (one per participant)
- Sticky notes, two different colors (one of each color per participant)
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Current micro-credential course flyers (see Facilitator's Note in the Explain portion)

10 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Presentation Slides** to guide the session. Display **slide 2** and introduce the session and yourself to the participants.

Transition to **slide 3** and invite participants to reflect on the prompt on the slide: "What barriers prevent you from seeking professional learning opportunities outside of school hours?" Use the Think, Pair, Share instructional strategy and have participants individually consider their response for a moment. Have participants then find a partner near them. Invite pairs to have a short discussion about their individual responses, then ask volunteers to share their thoughts with the whole group.

Move through **slides 4–5** and share the essential question and learning objectives.

10 minutes

Explore

Facilitator's Note: Activity Preparation

Prior to this activity, prepare a T-Chart on a large piece of chart paper or whiteboard. Label one side of the T-Chart "Pluses of Micro-Credentialing" and the other side, "Deltas of Micro-Credentialing."

Display **slide 6** and tell participants they will watch a short video about micro-credentialing and complete a related activity. Play the video, *What is Micro-Credentialing?*

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=ZNOr-0o7ink

Transition **to slide 7** and have participants review the image on the slide, which details the typical sequence of activities in a micro-credential course. Display **slide 8** and pass out the attached **How People Learn Course Flowchart** handout to each participant. Have participants individually read the chart. Explain that this flowchart details the course activities participants complete during the *How People Learn* micro-credential course.

Facilitator's Note: Sticky Note Colors

Prior to this portion of the activity, edit **slide 9** to replace the highlighted text with the colors of the sticky notes you are using.

Move to **slide 9** and introduce the Plus Delta Chart instructional strategy. Pass out two different colors of sticky notes to each participant. Have participants write one "plus" of micro-credentialing on one sticky note and one "delta" of micro-credentialing on the other sticky note. Start the 3-minute timer on the slide and allow participants time to work.

Display **slide 10**. Have participants bring their sticky notes to your prepared T-Chart and have them place their pluses in the plus column and their deltas in the delta column. Choose a few sticky notes to read aloud from each column. If time permits, invite participants to expand upon their pluses and deltas.

Move to **slide 11** and share the variety of pluses and deltas of micro-credentialing on the slide. Highlight points that participants did not previously address and share that these are all things participants may keep in mind when completing a micro-credential course.

15 minutes

Explain

Facilitator's Note: Micro-Credential Course Flyers

Prior to the session, contact the K20 Center to obtain flyers with the current micro-credential course offerings. Share flyers with participants during this phase of the session.

Move to **slide 12** and direct participants to use the displayed QR code or short link to access a digital Card Sort.

Tell participants the digital Card Sort is demonstrative of a typical micro-credential course activity. Explain that they should complete the activity by dragging and dropping the steps necessary to complete a micro-credential course in chronological order from beginning to completion. Have participants select "Run Game" to begin. Start the five-minute timer on the slide.

Display **slide 13** and have participants find a partner. Have participants share how they sorted the cards individually, then have pairs work together to re-sort their cards, if necessary. Allow as much time as you believe necessary for pairs to complete the task. Consider using the Fist to Five instructional strategy to have participants demonstrate how much time they need to finish re-sorting the cards.

Display **slide 14** and reveal the correct order of steps to complete a micro-credential course.

Move to **slide 15** and play the *Micro Creds Testimony* video featuring testimonials from teachers that have completed micro-credential courses.

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=yokb3XMHOqg?feature=shared

Display **slide 16** and provide time for participants to review the current course offerings.

15 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 17** and pass out the attached **Mirror, Microscope, Binoculars** handout. Have participants use the Mirror, Microscope, Binoculars instructional strategy to reflect on their view of micro-credential courses. Allow participants approximately two to three minutes to work, then show **slide 18**. Invite participants to share out some of their reflections.

5 minutes

Evaluate

Move to **slide 19** and pass out the attached **Micro-Credential Course Interest Form** handout to each participant. Tell participants this form is optional, but they are encouraged to use the form to ask questions, express interest in a specific course, or suggest courses they would like to see offered in the future. Collect forms and review responses, then answer any outstanding questions if time permits.

Research Rationale

Micro-credential courses are used for any level of learning and for any topic (Rimland & Raish, 2019). Micro-credential courses are useful for teaching learners specific skills and for filling in gaps in job-related knowledge (West & Cheng, 2023). These courses allow participants the opportunity to apply their learning to job-specific situations, which might have better results than a typical professional development training (Bartz & Kritsonis, 2019).

Learners are given a goal to achieve in order to successfully complete a micro-credential course and earn the associated badge (Carbaugh et al., 2022). A badge provides proof that a skill has been learned (Clausen, 2022; Rimland & Raish, 2019), and serves as a visual representation of that skill (Clements et al., 2020; Fanfarelli, 2020; Leaser et al., 2020). Earning a badge could provide motivation for a learner to finish the course and might also create a sense of achievement (Newby & Cheng, 2020; West & Cheng, 2023).

Resources

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