

Microcredentialing Task Force End of Year (2023) Report

Membership:

Chair(s): Nick Swartz, School of Professional and Continuing Education, Chair

Members: Alysia Davis, Honors College; Michele Estes, College of Education; Lori Gano-Overway, College of Health and Behavioral Studies; Gilpatrick Hornsby, Center For Faculty Innovation; Sarah MacDonald, School of Professional and Continuing Education; Meg Mulrooney, Faculty Affairs and Curriculum; Leigh Nelson, College of Arts and Letters; Scott Paulson, University Studies; Sam Prins, College of Science and Mathematics; Rhonda Syler, College of Business

Charge:

Goal 3, Objective 2 of the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan identifies continuing to develop JMU's online capacity, presence and expertise as a priority for our division. Higher education institutions, including many R2 universities, are responding quickly to the changing post-COVID economy and workplace expectations. One significant movement is towards micro-credentials as a "new currency of learning," where employers and students expect "demonstrated skills and competencies completed through more stackable pathways of higher education" (UPCEA & Modern Campus, 2021).

This task force will:

- Establish clear goals and vision for JMU's approach to micro-credentials that responds to industry and employer needs while maintaining JMU's institutional identity and brand.
- Make recommendations for both specific topic areas to explore and procedures and guidelines for development, including funding, curricular approval, issuing digital badges, and other institutional policies.

Summary of Current Semester Activity:

- The microcredentialing taskforce received their charge and met for the first time in April 2023.
- During this kickoff meeting, the taskforce discussed the following 3 items:
 - What are microcredentials?
 - Who are they for?
 - Types of microcredentials we may want to provide.
- We also identified next steps (discussed below).

Future Work Planned:

- The group will likely only meet once over the summer since some group members are on 10 month contracts. Over the summer, we will develop a survey to send to alumni and regional employers.
- We will reconvene in the fall and complete the following tasks:
 - Develop a work plan to carry out our work.
 - Administer alumni survey.
 - Administer regional employer survey.