

PROCEDURE TITLE:	DEVELOPING A MICROCREDENTIAL OR NON-CREDIT CERTIFICATE
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RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATOR:	PROVOST
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APPROVED BY:	PRESIDENT

1.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

- 1.1 Microcredentialing is the process of issuing verification of learning, activity and accomplishments that are not transcriptable through the traditional academic process of course completion and degree attainment. Microcredentials are often verified using digital badges. Microcredentials can provide University graduates and others with a competitive advantage when seeking employment and advancement in their careers.
- 1.2 Candidates for a microcredential must meet all criteria for that microcredential as certified by the sponsoring department, office, or division.
- 1.3 Non-credit certificates are intended to allow students to pursue specific topics to supplement a degree program; gain knowledge in a chosen field of employment; earn continuing education units (CEUs) for workforce development; and/or prepare for exams for professional certification or for professional licensure. The Center for Lifelong Learning will offer certificates for non-credit programs.

2.0 NOTICE OF INTENT TO ISSUE MICROCREDENTIAL/ELECTRONIC BADGE

- 2.1 A department, office or division indicates a desired microcredential by submitting the online Request to Issue Microcredential/Electronic Badge form (see Appendix A). The Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning will review this form and advise the initiator if further development of the badge should proceed. Approval of the Request to Issue will result in the following offices being alerted to assist in the development of the Microcredential:
 - 2.1.1 Provost, or designee
 - 2.1.2 Director, Center for Lifelong Learning (CLL)
 - 2.1.3 Associate Provost, Personal and Professional Development
- 2.2 Badge Development Template
 - 2.2.1 The initiator develops the microcredential utilizing the Badge Development Template (Appendix B).

- 2.2.1.1 The initiator will develop learning objectives, assessments, and evidence required for satisfactory completion.
- 2.2.1.2 The initiator will verify with the Associate Provost for Personal and Professional Development and/or the Provost the industry demand considerations for the digital badge(s). Evidence of industry demand for skills associated with the microcredential will be included in the badge application.
- 2.2.2 The initiator submits the Badge Development Template to the Director of the CLL.
- 2.2.3 The Director of the CLL convenes a review panel consisting of the Director of the CLL, Provost (or designee), and the Associate Provost for Personal and Professional Development (Review Panel).
- 2.2.4 The initiator may be asked to meet with the Review Panel to answer questions about the proposed badge. Following approval by the Review Panel, the CLL will work with Information Technology Services (ITS) and Marketing and Communications regarding the design of the digital badge and advertising, the new microcredential.
- 2.2.5 In the event the Review Panel does not approve the proposed microcredential, rationale will be provided to initiator. Resubmission of the microcredential is permitted.
- 2.2.6 The initiating department, office or division is responsible for all aspects of delivery and verification of the microcredential including eligibility, criteria, and evidence of completion.

3.0 NOTICE OF INTENT TO ISSUE NON-CREDIT CERTIFICATE

- 3.1 A department, office or division indicates a desired certificate by filling out the online Request to Issue Non-Credit Certificate form (Appendix C). The Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning will review this form and advise the initiator if further development of the non-credit certificate should proceed. Approval of the Request to Issue will result in the following offices being alerted to assist in the development of the certificate:
 - 3.1.1 Provost, or designee
 - 3.1.2 Director, Center for Lifelong Learning (CLL)
 - 3.1.3 Associate Provost, Personal and Professional Development

3.2 Non-Credit Certificate Development Template

- 3.2.1 The initiator develops the certificate utilizing the Non-Credit Bearing Certificate Development Template (Appendix D).
 - 3.2.1.1 The initiator will develop learning objectives, assessments, and evidence of satisfactory completion.
 - 3.2.1.2 The initiator will verify with the Associate Provost for Personal and Professional Development as well as the Provost the industry demand considerations for the certificate(s). Evidence of industry demand must be included in the certificate application.
 - 3.2.1.3 If a certification or credential exam from a third-party vendor is required as part of certificate completion, the initiator will consult with the Student Success Center regarding availability and cost of testing. This information will be included in the certificate application.
- 3.2.2 To apply for non-credit bearing certificate approval, the initiator submits the completed Certificate Development Template to the Director of the CLL.
- 3.2.3 The Director of the CLL convenes a review panel consisting of the Director of the CLL, Provost (or designee), and the Associate Provost for Personal and Professional Development (Review Panel).
- 3.2.4 The initiator may be asked to meet with the Review Panel to answer questions about the proposed certificate. Following approval by the Review Panel, the CLL will work with Marketing and Communications to advertise the availability of the new certificate.
- 3.2.5 In the event the Review Panel does not approve the proposed certificate, rationale will be provided to initiator. Resubmission of the certificate is permitted.
- 3.2.6 The initiating department, office or division is responsible for all aspects of delivery of the certificate and must work with the CLL to ensure reporting, verification, and issuance of the certificate.
- 3.2.7 The Center for Lifelong Learning is responsible for all aspects of reporting, verification, and issuance of the certificate.

History

Effective: 04/22/22

Revised: 05/24/2026

Appendix A: Request to Issue Microcredential/Electronic Badge

Microcredentialing is the process of issuing transportable verification of learning, activity and accomplishments that are not transcriptable through the traditional academic process of course completion and degree attainment. Microcredentials are often verified using digital badges. Institutions of Higher Education are increasingly utilizing microcredentials to provide their graduates with a competitive advantage when seeking employment and advancement in their careers.

Candidates for a microcredential must meet all criteria for that microcredential as certified by the sponsoring department, office, or division. The initiating department, office, or division is responsible for delivery of and verifying all aspects of the microcredential including eligibility, criteria, and evidence of satisfactory completion. The Center for Lifelong Learning will award the microcredential.

Initiator:

Department, Office or Division:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Name of Badge:

Anticipated Start Date for Issuing Badge:

Briefly Describe the Badge Being Proposed:

This notice of intent will be reviewed by the Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning. The Director will contact the initiator to advise if further development of the badge should proceed.

Appendix B: Badge Development Template

Section 1: Considerations for Designing Badges

Making a Meaningful Badge:

The focus for developing an electronic badge should be on clearly identifying the competencies the earners will obtain or build upon by earning the badge. When developing a badge, the focus should be on equipping the earners with the competencies that will be the most beneficial for them. These benefits should be clearly defined and easily understandable for potential earners. Please take the following points into consideration:

- Badge steps should be clearly defined, clearly related to the purpose of the badge, and measurable.
- Specific goals and objectives should be clearly stated.
- Badges should be focused on specific outcomes.
- Assigned tasks or Steps should be divided into attainable units of information.
- The time allocated to a badge should be reasonable and not intimidate potential earners. Badges taking longer than 6 months of effort should consider being broken up.

Badge Creation Pitfalls:

To assist you in creating badges that are highly detailed, effective, and valuable for your earners, there are a number of approaches that should be avoided.

- Avoid linking out to external websites for the majority of your badge content.
- Avoid providing the earner with a wide variety of activities for a single step.
- Avoid having rigorous criteria that must be adhered to, while leaving the submission guidelines open-ended.
- Avoid creating badges that have unrealistic expectations for badge steps.
- Badges should not be issued for credentials that are already provided via a student transcript (i.e.: awarding badges for completing an existing course).

Section 2: Designing Badge Content

During the badge design process, your content will be divided into three parts: Badge Basics, Steps and Criteria, and Graphics. This document will walk you through the steps required to design each of those sections.

Badge Basics: The first step is to prepare some basic information about the badge: Badge Title, General Description, Estimated Time to Complete, and Expiration Date. Use the information below to help you establish these items for your badge.

Badge Title: Create a title for your badge that is reflective of the general skills, knowledge and competencies that the earners will be working to develop. The title should be meaningful, interesting and clearly understood by potential earners. Typically, the title consists of 2 to 3 words. *Do NOT use titles that correlate to a course offering.* Badge titles should not replicate or be substantially similar to badge names that have already been copyrighted and/or are the intellectual property of any other entity.

- *Examples of effective badge titles:*
 - *Information Literacy*
 - *Personal Leadership*
 - *Essential Career Skills*
 - *Community Service*

General Description: This brief description is intended as a general overview of badge content. Do not go into specific details about the actual steps/objectives included in the badge, rather provide some information that will give prospective earners an idea of what competencies they will need to demonstrate in order to earn the badge. The general description should answer the following questions:

- What is this badge about?
- How will this badge be earned?
- Why is this badge important?
- Is there evidence of need?
- What skills are demonstrated by obtaining this badge?
- Is there a cost to the earner associated with earning this badge?
- *Example: The Information Literacy Badge recognizes students who have demonstrated their skill at finding and evaluating information in a wide variety of formats from scholarly and non-scholarly sources. Analyzing information sources for strengths and weaknesses is a critical skill of information literacy that is important for academic work at Shawnee State and in future employment. Using resources offered by the Clark Memorial Library, students will develop critical information literacy and library research skills as they work with a subject area specialist to pursue their own unique research question and produce a critical annotated bibliography.*

Estimated Time to Complete: How long will it take for the learner to complete the badge? If there are other considerations or restrictions regarding timeline for badge completion, describe those here.

Expiration Date: Specify the length of time that the badge remains valid. If the badge does not have an expiration date, please write “none.” It is expected that most badges will have no expiration date. Badges that verify competency in foundational skills may have no expiration date. Badges that verify competency in rapidly evolving fields and professional skills, like software proficiency, may have an expiration date to ensure skills remain relevant and up to date.

Steps and Criteria: This section of the Badge Development Template will help you work through the process of outlining the individual steps and criteria for your badge. The steps in the badge should be specific and meaningful to the overarching competency that is being acquired or developed by the earner. Each badge can have a total of 12 steps (but most badges will likely not need all 12). Each step has 6 components:

- **Step Number:** Number the badge’s steps in the order in which they should be completed.
- **Step Title:** The step title should be concise and accurately reflect the competency being developed. If developing multiple badge steps that have similar titles, consider adding a specific differentiator (i.e. - Step 1, Step 2) as a prefix to the step title.
- **Objective:** A single statement that describes the importance or relevance of the step. It is recommended that your objective be written utilizing the SMART method (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-based).
- **Embedded Content (optional):** Each step can display some form of embedded content for the earner to view. Indicate the link or filename for the embedded content here.
- **Assignment:** The actual assignment the earner will be required to complete in order to successfully complete the step and progress toward earning the badge. The assignment description should be clear, concise, logically sequenced, and describe the entire process necessary to complete the step.
- **Evaluation Criteria:** The evaluation criteria should articulate the initiator’s expectations for measuring an earner’s demonstration of the competency being acquired. It should identify ways to measure the thoroughness or completeness of the assignment, while providing ample opportunity for feedback and remediation of the earner’s work. If the student is required to provide evidence of

completion of the assignment, a description of what constitutes appropriate evidence should be noted here.

Graphics: Once the content has been developed, it is time to determine the visual look of your badge.

While each badge should be unique, badges issued and verified by Shawnee State University will have a degree of uniformity. As such, it is important to consult with a graphic designer in the office of Marketing and Communications to assist you in developing a badge that is both individual and appropriately Shawnee-branded.

While it is anticipated that most initiators will have little graphics design experience and will leave most of the design up to graphics artists in the Marketing and Communication office, initiators with a graphics design background may wish to do some of the design themselves. Please be aware if you are developing your own design that the graphics must conform to the following specifications:

- Graphics must fit into a 200x200 pixel square
- Graphics must conform to uniform Shawnee-branding specifications (see above)
- Icon must be white
- Background must be transparent
- All graphics files must be .png

Section 3: Department/Office/Division Review and Signature Authority

Prior to submitting the completed Badge Development Template to the Director of the CLL, the badge initiator must submit the form for review to the Chair, School Director, Director, or Chief Officer/VP who serves as the immediate supervisor of their department or office.

This immediate department/office supervisor will provide feedback on revisions, as needed, and will provide their signature on the form indicating their recommendation to offer the badge.

Section 4: Badge Development Template Form

1. Initiator:

- a. Name
- b. Email
- c. Phone

2. Responsible Department or Office: _____

3. Badge Title:

4. General Description and Rationale:

- a. What is this badge about?
- b. How will this badge be earned?
- c. Why is this badge important?
- d. Is there evidence of need? Include any evidence of employer or industry demand for the skills developed by completing this badge.
- e. What are the skills demonstrated by obtaining this badge?
- f. Is there a cost to the earner associated with earning this badge?

5. Estimated Time to Complete: _____

6. Expiration Date (if applicable): _____

7. Steps (repeat as needed for all steps in earning the badge):

- Step Number:
- Step Title:
- Objective:
- Assignment:
- Evaluation Criteria:
- (Optional) Upload sample instructional materials:

8. Graphics (insert a link or embed graphic here):

Signatures:

Initiator

Date

Signatory Authority for Responsible Department, Office or Division

Date

Review Panel Meeting Date:

Decision and feedback:

**Associate Provost,
Personal and Professional
Development:**

Date

Provost, or designee:

Date

**Director, Center for
Lifelong Learning:**

Date

Appendix C: Request to Issue Non-Credit Certificate

Non-credit certificates are intended to allow students to pursue specific topics to supplement a degree program; gain knowledge in a chosen field of employment; earn continuing education units (CEUs) for workforce development; and/or prepare for exams for professional certification or for professional licensure. The Center for Lifelong Learning will offer certificates for non-credit programs.

The initiating department, office or division is responsible for all aspects of delivery of the certificate, and must work with the Center for Lifelong Learning to ensure reporting, verification, and issuance of the certificate. The Center for Lifelong Learning is responsible for all aspects of reporting, verification, and issuance of the certificate.

Initiator:

Department, Office or Division:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Name of Certificate:

Anticipated Start Date for Issuing Certificate:

Briefly Describe the Certificate Being Proposed:

This notice of intent will be reviewed by the Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning. The Director will contact the initiator to advise if further development of the badge should proceed.

Appendix D Non-Credit Bearing Certificate Development Template

Department/Office/Division Review and Signature Authority

Prior to submitting the completed Non-Credit Bearing Certificate Development Template to the Director of the Center for Lifelong Learning, the initiator must submit the form for review to the Chair, School Director, Director, or Chief Officer/VP who serves as the immediate supervisor of their department or office. This immediate department/office supervisor will provide feedback on revisions, as needed, and will provide their signature on the form indicating their recommendation to offer the non-credit certificate.

1. Initiator:

- a.* Name
- b.* Email
- c.* Phone

2. Responsible Department or Office:

3. Certificate Title:

4. General Description and Rationale:

- a.* What is this certificate about?
- b.* How will this certificate be earned?
- c.* Is there evidence of need among learners and industry? If so, please provide a summary of the employer or industry demand.
- d.* Does this certificate lead to obtaining a valid Industry Recognized Credential as defined by Shawnee State University Policy 5.44REV section 1.2.1.4?
 - i.* Is there a standardized exam or industry-recognized third-party exam required to earn this credential?
 - ii.* If so, please provide details on the exam administrator, how to purchase, proctoring needs, and estimated cost per exam.
- e.* Is there a cost to the earner associated with earning this certificate?

5. Estimated number of clock hours to complete the steps and assignments to earn the certificate:

6. If this certificate is at least 900 clock hours, does it meet the criteria for being designated as a Less Than One Year Technical Certificate or Short-Term Technical Certificate as defined in Shawnee State University Policy 5.44REV section 1.2.1.3?

- a. Once approved by the Review Panel, the institutional Accreditation Liaison Officer should be notified so that they may contact the Ohio Department of Higher Education to submit the certificate for technical designation.*

7. Expiration Date (if applicable):

8. List the learning outcomes associated with the certificate:

9. Steps to complete the certificate (repeat as needed for all steps in earning the certificate):

- Step Number:
- Step Title:
- Objective:
- Assignment(s):
- Evaluation Criteria:
- (Optional) Upload sample instructional materials:

Signatures:

Initiator

Date

Signatory Authority for Responsible Department, Office or Division

Date

Review Panel Meeting Date:

Decision and feedback:

**Associate Provost,
Personal and Professional
Development:**

Date

Provost, or designee:

Date

**Director, Center for
Lifelong Learning:**

Date