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Introduction

Developing a microcredential provides faculty with a flexible framework to create high-impact, skill-focused learning experiences while maintaining their teaching style. This guide is intended to serve as a support tool rather than a set of strict requirements, offering best practices that faculty can tailor to their subject areas.

Microcredentials should be skill-based and prepare learners for real-world applications. This guide provides recommendations, self-checks, and key considerations to ensure microcredentials meet industry, learner, and institutional expectations. Faculty are encouraged to adapt these principles to fit their discipline and teaching philosophy.

Faculty Autonomy and Flexibility

This guide provides recommendations based on best practices in skill-based learning. However, faculty remain the subject-matter experts and have the flexibility to design microcredentials that align with their unique teaching style, disciplinary needs, and student audience.

Microcredentials are not intended to replace traditional courses or degrees; rather, they offer an additional tool to help students demonstrate competencies in new and emerging areas. Faculty retain full control over the content, structure, and delivery.

1. Defining Your Microcredential

A strong microcredential should:

- Focus on skill-based learning rather than just knowledge retention.
- Require 10 hours of engagement with structured activities.
- Be modular and able to stand alone while contributing to a broader learning pathway.
- Include industry-aligned assessments (e.g., projects, case studies, demonstrations).
- Offer flexible formats (online, hybrid, or in-person) to meet learner needs.

V Self-Check: Getting Started

- □ Have I clearly defined the learning outcomes in skill-based terms (e.g., "Learners will be able to analyze, create, design...")?
- Does this microcredential fill a workforce need or align with industry expectations?



□ Is my microcredential a standalone skill-building unit but also part of a broader stackable pathway?

2. Structuring an Engaging Microcredential

A well-structured microcredential blends traditional teaching with interactive, applied learning experiences. While lectures provide valuable foundational knowledge, microcredentials benefit from activities that allow students to apply what they learn.

Best Practices for Engagement

- Case studies where learners solve real-world problems.
- Hands-on projects that require them to apply their skills.
- Simulations or labs for technical skill-building.
- Peer collaboration through discussions, reviews, or teamwork.

Self-Check: Engagement & Learning Experience

- Am I using at least two interactive elements (case studies, projects, labs, etc.)?
- Does my content encourage learners to demonstrate skills, not just recall information?
- ☐ Have I provided structured opportunities for learners to practice and apply their knowledge?

3. Assessment: Measuring Skill Mastery

Assessments should evaluate how well learners can apply their skills, rather than just what they remember.

Good Assessment methods include:

- Real-world projects (e.g., coding challenges, case studies, portfolio submissions).
- Skill demonstrations (e.g., presentations, simulations, hands-on exercises).
- Applied problem-solving exercises

Traditional vs. Skill-Based Assessments



Multiple-choice quizzes	Case studies with applied problem-solving
Short-answer tests	Hands-on projects
Final exam	Portfolio submissions
Written essays	Peer-reviewed research briefs
Oral presentations	Industry-focused presentations with feedback

Self-Check: Assessment Quality

- Do my assessments mirror real-world applications of the skill?
- □ Are learners required to demonstrate their skills through a tangible outcome?
- □ Can learners revise and improve their work based on feedback?

4. Industry & Workforce Alignment

Microcredentials should prepare learners for immediate skill application in the workforce.

- Partner with industry experts or review job postings to align content with industry needs.
- Use tools, software, or methodologies commonly found in professional settings.
- Ensure learners can articulate how they will use this skill in their career.

Self-Check: Industry Alignment

- Does this microcredential teach skills employers are looking for?
- □ Have I integrated real-world tools, software, or case studies?
- □ Can learners connect their learning to career growth or advancement?

5. Designing for Flexibility & Accessibility

A great microcredential is inclusive, flexible, and accessible to diverse learners.

- Make content mobile-friendly and easy to navigate.
- Use closed captions, transcripts, and clear visuals for accessibility.



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• Provide multiple ways to engage (videos, readings, interactive exercises).

Self-Check: Accessibility & Delivery

- □ Can learners access my content on different devices?
- □ Are there alternative ways to engage for students with different learning needs?
- □ Is my delivery format (online, hybrid, in-person) appropriate for the audience?

6. Strengthening Your Microcredential

Even well-designed microcredentials can be improved with small adjustments. Below are some common challenges and strategies to enhance engagement, assessment, and real-world application.

Common challenge	Effect on learning	Enhancement strategy
Passive Learning (Lecture-Heavy)	Learners mostly watch videos/read without active participation.	Add hands-on activities like case studies, projects, or peer discussions.
Overuse of Quizzes for Assessment	The microcredential mostly relies on multiple-choice tests.	Use real-world assessments like portfolio work, coding challenges, or project submissions.
Unclear Learning Outcomes	Outcomes are vague or knowledge-based instead of skill-based.	Rewrite outcomes using Bloom's Taxonomy (e.g., "Learners will be able to create, analyze, design").
Industry Misalignment	Content doesn't clearly connect to workforce needs.	Consult job postings, industry partners, or professional organizations to refine content.



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Rigid Structure (Not Modular or Stackable)	Learners must follow a strict sequence that limits flexibility.	Ensure microcredentials stand alone but also fit into broader learning pathways.
No Opportunity for Feedback & Revision	Assessments are one-and-done, without room for improvement.	Allow learners to revise their work based on feedback from instructors or peers.

Final Checklist for Faculty

Before submitting your microcredential, ensure it meets the following:

- □ Clearly defined learning outcomes using skill-based terms.
- □ 10 hours of structured engagement, incorporating interactive elements.
- □ Industry alignment, using tools and real-world applications.
- Assessment that measures skill mastery, not just recall.
- ☐ Flexible, accessible, and engaging for all learners.

Need Help?

GOEE's support team is available to assist with course design, industry alignment, and assessment strategies.

Contact: Professional & Executive Education - exec-fseonline@asu.edu