Voluntary Guidelines for New Micro-Credentials and Digital Badges

These guidelines, based on the recommendations of the Digital Badging Committee in its December 23, 2020 report to the Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, are designed to support local unit decision-making, while helping to ensure some university-wide standards and adherence to the Rutgers brand. Need help setting up a badge? For more information, visit https://evpaa.rutgers.edu/digital-badging. For guidelines and other information specific to your unit, contact your local Digital Badging Administrator.

Badge essentials:

- Identify the target audience(s) for whom the micro-credential and digital badge is designed; for example, is the micro-credential and digital badge limited to specific audiences, such as a training badge exclusively for Rutgers employees or a badge requiring a previous badge award as a prerequisite?
- Research market information related to the need and/or usefulness of the micro-credential and digital badge for students/participants and employers.
- Decide on a name of the micro-credential and digital badge.
- Create a description of the micro-credential and digital badging program, to illustrate the scope and focus of the learning. Consider whether the digital badge is:
  - permanently awarded or time limited, and if time limited, whether the digital badge is renewable.
  - expected to be available at no cost or for a fee.
  - associated with a for-credit course.
- Choose and design the badge visual identity following University Communications and Marketing (UCM) guidelines.

Learning outcomes and assessment:

- Clearly identify the learning goals and the expected learning outcomes for the student/participant in the badging program, listing the skills, knowledge, or experience objectives the awardee must achieve.
- Clearly articulate the level of mastery of the micro-credential or digital badge, to support scaffolded skills development. As an example, for illustration purposes: novice, intermediate, expert.
- Clarify whether the micro-credential or digital badge is competency (practice)-based, awarded for the development of a demonstrable skill or knowledge base, or activity (participation)-based, awarded for gaining experience in an activity or area.
- Develop a strategy to document achievement and periodically assess micro-credential learning objectives: how will achievement of the stated learning outcomes be measured?

Considerations:

- Avoid duplicating micro-credential(s) offered elsewhere within Rutgers. Information on which badges and micro-credentials are already offered can be found on the current list of Rutgers Digital Badges.
• Make participants aware of the expected modalities that the micro-credential and digital badging program will offer – face-to-face experiences, online asynchronous, online synchronous, or hybrid.
• Have a plan in place to conduct annual assessments of the micro-credentialing and digital badging program.
• Units that offer a badging or micro-credentialing program should prepare an annual assessment report that is submitted to the appropriate governing unit (i.e., provost, dean, vice president, etc.).