



Boulder Faculty Assembly

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

BFA Academic Affairs Committee Notice of Motion

Resolution on Micro-Credentials Policy

BFA-R-1-120224

Whereas requests across campus for innovative, flexible, and accessible curricular offerings have increased; and

Whereas increased curricular and co-curricular flexibility can help spur innovation and collaboration within and across existing institutional boundaries; and

Whereas many of the skills our students acquire can be difficult to articulate by means of traditional academic records and transcripts; and

Whereas the University of Colorado Boulder is already emerging as a national leader in the micro-credential space; and

Whereas we are committed to the transparency and verifiability of our issued credentials; and

Whereas the Boulder Faculty Assembly plays a role at multiple stages of reviewing and recommending new academic policy, per the policy on Academic Affairs Policy Proposal and Adoption,

Be it Resolved that the Boulder Faculty Assembly endorses the creation of a new academic policy on Micro-credentials and Digital Badges that codifies existing successful practices, indicates appropriate pathways for review in the micro-credential space, and ensures that all micro-credentials are approved and assessed according to institutionally defined standards.

Submitted by the BFA Academic Affairs Committee: December 2, 2024

Approved for submission to Assembly by the BFA Executive Committee: December 2, 2024

Submitted to the BFA General Assembly: December 5, 2024

Approved by Assembly on February 6, 2025 with 43 vote in favor; 1 opposed; and 1 abstention

Campus Administrative Policy

Policy Title: Micro-credentials and Digital Badges

Policy Number: [TBD]

Functional Area: Academic Affairs

Effective:

Date Last Amended/Reviewed:

Date Scheduled for Review:

Supersedes: N/A—New Policy

Approved by:

Prepared by: Assistant Vice Provost and University Registrar

Reviewing Office:

Responsible Officer: Assistant Vice Provost and University Registrar

Applies to: CU Boulder

A. INTRODUCTION

Micro-credentials are tailored, short and outcome-based learning opportunities that offer competency or skills based recognition. A micro-credential is generally a set of measurable and assessed learning achievements or outcomes.

Digital badges are representations of earned skills, accomplishments or proficiencies acquired by a learner through a micro-credential program*. Digital badges are verifiable and portable, and empower learners to independently use, share and display their credentials.

A. POLICY STATEMENT

The framework for micro-credentials at the University of Colorado Boulder adheres to the following guiding values:

- Micro-credentials foster creativity and innovation in recognizing learning and achievement.
- Micro-credentials achieve consistency by stating clear learning outcomes and declaring measurable earning criteria.
- Micro-credentials serve as meaningful recognitions and credentials of specific skills and competencies. They inspire confidence and trust by ensuring that earning criteria is assessed and that learner achievements are verifiable.
- To preserve the integrity of the CU Boulder name and brand, and to increase their value by academic institutions, hiring managers, and other external stakeholders, the quality and criteria of CU Boulder micro-credentials are approved and assessed according to institutionally defined standards.

- Micro-credentials are proposed by campus units and approved by appropriate oversight authorities, such as college/school curriculum committees.
- Applicable tuition and/or fees assessed for micro-credentials adhere to established university guidelines and approval protocols.

1. Credit-based Micro-Credentials Criteria:

- Smaller (fewer credits) than academic [certificates](#)
- Typically larger than a single course and may include:
 - Two or more courses
 - A single course bundled with content/competencies external to the course, such as experiential learning, capstone projects, case competitions, industry certifications, internships, and other meaningful opportunities to acquire and demonstrate skills and competencies
- Competencies and learning outcomes are clearly identified.
- Criteria for earning micro-credentials are measurable and assessed.
- Evidence artifacts that demonstrate how learners met the earning criteria are encouraged, but optional.
- May be stand-alone or stackable into other credentials (i.e., certificates).
- May only be offered by academic units on campus.
- Learners are assessed tuition/fees according to their status, program and level.

2. Non-Credit Micro-Credentials Criteria:

- Competencies and learning outcomes are clearly identified.
- Criteria for earning micro-credentials must be measurable and regularly assessed.
- Evidence artifacts that demonstrate how learners met the earning criteria are required. Examples include:
 - Portfolios, presentations or reflective activities that demonstrate learning
 - Supervisor testimonials
 - Completion of industry/association certifications
 - Performance tasks and experiential components that demonstrate learning
 - Other badges with evidence artifacts
- Time (such as contact hours) may be included, but is not required as it cannot be the sole factor in validating or assessing learners. (General guidance is that noncredit micro-credentials are at least 10 hours.)
- Non-credit micro-credentials may be stand-alone or stackable into larger micro-credentials.
- Non-credit micro-credentials may be offered by academic or non-academic campus units.
- Learners may be assessed program fees for non-credit micro-credentials, upon approval, and in accordance with university guidelines and policies.

*In addition to the digital badges awarded to learners completing academic and non-academic micro-credentials, *Recognition Badges* are another category of digital

badge that are distinct from and not associated with micro-credentials. They are artifacts that recognize attendance- or participation-based activities and do not require the same formal approval as micro-credentials. Recognition Badges are distinguishable in design and description from digital badges awarded for approved micro-credential programs.

B. PROCEDURES

Similar to other academic credentials, micro-credential proposals follow a review and approval process through the institution's curriculum management system. Information and proposal forms are published on the micro-credentials administration [page](#).

The micro-credentials intent proposal form allows for a high level review and feedback of proposed elements of the program before a full proposal is submitted.

Non-credit and credit-based micro-credentials programs proposed by **academic units** require the approval of relevant curriculum review and approval by department chair(s), academic Dean(s), the Dean and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (for undergraduate certificates) or the Dean of the Graduate School and Vice Provost for Graduate Education, and the Senior Vice Provost.

Non-credit micro-credentials proposed by **non-academic units** require the approval of the heads/directors of divisions/departments out of which the micro-credentials are being proposed.

Both credit- and non-credit micro-credential programs must be regularly assessed to ensure they are current and meet the objectives and intended learning outcomes.

Notes

1. Dates of official enactment and amendments:
2. History:
3. Initial Policy Effective Date:
4. Cross References/Appendix: