



ALAMO
COLLEGES
DISTRICT

Texas Higher
Education
COORDINATING BOARD

TEXAS MICRO-CREDENTIAL LEARNING NETWORK

2023 INSIGHT GUIDE

In the summer of 2023, a collaborative initiative was unveiled by the [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#) (THECB) and [Alamo Colleges District](#) (ACD). The Micro-Credential Learning Network (MLN) presented participating Texas institutions with a unique opportunity to gain insights into and receive assistance for the creation of an actionable micro-credential strategy.

Spanning 10 weeks, this intensive sprint aimed to:

- Provide a comprehensive understanding of the micro-credentialing process,
- foster collaboration among institutions, and
- ensure the micro-credentials met both industry and learner requirements.

The growing significance of micro-credentials cannot be overstated. As the educational landscape evolves, there's a palpable shift towards these modular, specialized qualifications. Micro-credentials not only offer targeted learning experiences but also ensure that individuals, often from non-traditional backgrounds, are equipped with skills that are immediately relevant in the workforce.

Participating Institutions

A diverse group of project teams from eleven colleges and universities across Texas participated in this groundbreaking initiative. These institutions, renowned for their commitment to innovation and excellence in education, assembled cross-functional teams from academic and workforce departments, student services, and administrative units.



ALAMO
COLLEGES
DISTRICT



DALLAS COLLEGE



Lamar State College
Orange



LAREDO
COLLEGE
EST. 1947



NORTHEAST TEXAS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Paris Junior College
Paris, Greenville, & Sulphur Springs, Texas



Approach

COHORT LEARNING

All institutions came together for six sessions, where they learned from national and local leaders about the purpose, definition, value, and application of micro-credentials. Sessions provided an opportunity to strategize and work as a project team and hear from others.

Session 1: Orientation

Session 2: Defining Your Micro-Credential Strategy

Session 3: Understanding & Designing Your Personas

Session 4: The Learner Journey

Session 5: Defining Success

Session 6: Institutional Presentations and Reflections

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Participants also utilized a Canvas course module for additional learning, resources, and engagement, which was developed to support the inaugural MLN cohort, with future inclusion in the [OER Texas Repository](#).

MENTORS

Each institution was paired with a seasoned mentor who offered firsthand experience and tailored guidance to catalyze the conceptualization and roll out micro-credential strategies. Mentors included:

Dr. Benjamin Brand

Senior Director, New Ventures
University of North Texas

Devon Kodzis

Dean, Academic Incubator
Dallas College

Dr. Michael Webster

Associate Vice Chancellor
Workforce Instruction
Houston Community College

NATIONAL AND LOCAL FACILITATORS

A team of facilitators worked together to design, implement, and deliver all MLN programming and final products.

National Team

[Micro-Credential Multiverse](#)
Leah Moschella Consulting
[StrategyForward Advisors](#)

Local and State Team

Dr. Luke Dowden, ACD
Dr. Michelle Singh, THECB
Dr. Kylah Torre, THECB

Key Insights

1. **SHARED LANGUAGE IS IMPERATIVE.** Establishing a common understanding of micro-credentials with clear definitions and shared terms laid the foundation for success.
2. **INCREASING CAPABILITY IS NEEDED.** Participants repeatedly noted how gaining exposure and experience with micro-credentials created new capability for cross-sector teams in each institution to move forward collectively.
3. **ACCELERATION WORKS.** Institutions were able to collaboratively learn, strategize, and meticulously design industry-aligned and learner-centered micro-credential plans in a very short time frame.
4. **DEDICATED AND SUPPORTED LEARNING COMMUNITIES ARE EFFECTIVE.** Each institution brought their unique strengths and perspectives, making MLN an enriching experience. This, coupled with the right support systems, simplified the process of designing credentials.
5. **STARTING SMALL IS A GOOD STRATEGY.** Planning for growth and scale begins with a first step. This initial effort will lead the way to future expansion.

Micro-Credentials Developed

In less than 90 days, each team crafted comprehensive plans to roll out their micro-credentials. As a testament to their dedication and engagement, participants were awarded a badge. Micro-credential strategic plans developed through the Micro-Credential Learning Network included:

TECHNOLOGY

- Cisco Networking Academy credentials in Cybersecurity and Networking
- Cybersecurity micro-credential certificate
- IT Support certificate in Computer Support Tech certificate and Networking AAS degree



SOFT SKILLS

- SkillsPro micro-credential



PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS

- Rodeo Business Management
- Project Management certificate
- Project Management certificate



PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

- Electrical Tech micro-credential with NCCER Certification
- Robotech micro-credential with FESTO Industry 4.0 Certification



Experience

100%

of the participating institutions rated the Micro-Credential Learning Network as either Excellent (82%) or Good (18%)

9 out of 10

said the Micro-Credential Learning Network was instrumental in shaping their future micro-credential plans

94%

would endorse the Micro-Credential Learning Network to their peers and fellow institutions



Hear From Participants

“I have a much better understanding of micro-credentials and how to create them.”

Kevin Morris, Dean of Business and Technology, San Jacinto College

“I learned so much about micro-credentials and their role in industry.”

Diane Dotson, Instructor/Program Director, Lamar State College Orange

“Working as a team helps to know you are not alone and brings other insights into the work.”

Dr. Michael Erny, Vice President of Workforce Education, Paris Junior College

“It was so valuable to have our mentor, be able to ask questions, and know that we were on the right track.”

Special Projects Coordinator and Rural Communities Liaison

“I did love having the resources available to go back and refer to when needed.”

Dr. Christi Esquivel, Division Chair of Business Programs, McLennan Community College

“I learned a lot about micro-credentials and the impact they can have on our college, students, faculty, and community partners. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this!”

Dr. Elizabeth C. Rodriguez, Dean of Academic Innovation & Technology, Laredo College

