Guiding Principles of Seneca's Micro-Credential Program

Published 3/9/2021 by Anh Lam

1. Micro-credentials add value to a learner's current formal education (degree, diploma, certificate as issued by Seneca or other institution)
2. The aforementioned "value" gains its merit from industry needs and standards and micro-credentials are aligned with skills and/or competencies that are valued by industry trends.
3. Micro-credentials can be stacked or combined and this stacking can contribute to alternative pathways or other credentials (possibly credit bearing).
4. Micro-credentials are designed with Seneca's Values, Strategic Plan, and in mind.
5. Micro-credentials reflect flexibility and innovation in their delivery and demonstration as they are designed to reflect societal trends (i.e. heavily technological and recognizing innovative ideas for the application of the desired competencies).
6. Seneca will provide the Quality Assurance when issuing a micro-credential. The college will be responsible for making sure that the evidence required to earn the micro-credential is provided.

Value-Added	Seneca recognizes the enormous diversity in its learners, realizing that they are all at different places on the continuum of learning. To accommodate this fact, a micro-credential can be earned to recognize a very specific skill and/or competency without the need of earning an entire degree, diploma or certificate. The micro-credential can be used to add value to one of those currently held credentials, or it can stand on its own, directing industry to the fact that certain skills and/or competencies have been acquired.
Industry Endorsed	The two driving forces of micro-credential need are the learner themself and the employer/industry. A micro-credential really only has extrinsic value in as much as the employer values the skills and competencies that the learner has acquired. This is why each micro-credential's learning outcomes are aligned with industry needs. Each micro-credential will be industry endorsed, supported and recognized.
Stackable	The idea that a micro-credential could be combined with other micro-credentials. This combination can occur both vertically and horizontally. A vertical stack would indicate a more specialized or advanced micro-credential where the learner digs deeper into a set of skills and competencies to become even more skilled and competent in that area. A horizontal stack would be where a learner attains a greater breadth of skills across an area of interest but maybe not reaching as deeply into each skill and/or competency. An example of this could be a learner who earns a micro-credential in Educational Leadership and a micro-credential in Corporate Leadership. Theoretically, these two micro-credentials could be stacked to earn a Macro-badge simply called Leadership.
Seneca Branded	The imagination, creation, delivery, and expectations to earn, should all flow through the main tenets of Seneca. These would be the Values that Seneca adheres to in all that its name goes on; its Strategic Plan; and its Digital Learning Strategy. The first two are guiding ideas that impact all decisions made at Seneca and the third adds to the innovative nature of Micro-credentials.
Innovative and Flexible	In an ever-advancing technological world, micro-credentials should reflect this trend. They should be innovative in their delivery and in their ability to be earned. A micro-credential should be flexible enough in its innovation to allow for anyone to be able to earn it, regardless of where they might be on their learning continuum. Anyone from a first-year student to someone in an established career, looking to upgrade employment skills, should be able to equitably earn the micro-credential.
Quality Assurance	Seneca will take responsibility in ultimately deciding if the micro-credential has been designed and delivered according to this framework. Micro-credentials, although varying in their topics and learning outcomes, should all expect an equal level of scrutiny in accordance with this outline. Expectations in getting a micro-credential approved will be standardized across all micro-credentials. On top of this, there will be a standard in earning a micro-credential. Although individual assessments and expectations could look different from one micro-credential to another, the core types of evidence that will need to be collected should be standard.

	There are three things that will be looked when determining if a micro-credential has been earned: An Educational Component (usually some type of an online or in-class course (or courses); and Demonstration component (how will the learner demonstrate that they have the outlined skills and/or competencies); and a Reflective component (personal impact of the learning and how it applies to the reasons for wanting the learning in the first place). See diagram below. Three Necessary Components to Complete a Micro-credential

tags : micro-credential-framework, microcredential-framework, micro-credential-guiding-principles, microcredential-guiding-principles, microcredentials, micro-credentials, teaching-and-learning, teaching-and-learning-centre