



## Success Story: Central Maine Community College Building Student Engagement and Workforce Development with Digital Credentials

Central Maine Community College (CMCC), part of the Maine Community College System, launched a digital credentialing program in the spring of 2019 with goals focused on two key areas: workforce development and student engagement. With more than 3,200 students enrolled across programs like precision machining, early childhood education, and business administration, CMCC offers a mix of program-specific and soft skill-oriented digital credentials to help students forge learning and career pathways.

### **INCREASING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WITH DIGITAL CREDENTIALS**

A top goal for CMCC's digital credentialing program: increase student engagement. Pairing in-demand soft skills with digital credentials is helping the college achieve this goal. CMCC's curriculum includes a range of soft skills training, and the college incorporated digital credentialing for skills like collaboration, creative problem solving, information literacy, and critical thinking, to help them stand out to employers. Professors across programs are encouraged to add digital badges for soft skills into their courses.

"Introducing digital badges—with all other things constant and no curriculum changes—has increased student engagement. The moment we offered the badge for Information Literacy, we had students earning the badge, then asking 'what's next?'"

**KERN PHILGENCE** | CURRICULUM DESIGNER AT CENTRAL MAINE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The shareable nature of digital credentials also appeals to today's digital-native students, spurring another level of engagement. "Students are eager and competitive, and quick to share with other students what digital badges they've earned. This makes other students want to earn them, too," says Philgence.

### **BUILDING PATHWAYS THROUGH WORKFORCE-RELEVANT CREDENTIALS**

Central Maine Community College actively develops industry-recognized microcredentials to help its students build career pathways. With a focus on workforce training, the college collaborated with local business partners to learn more about what employers needed—and their pain points—when it came to hiring and training. After learning that employee retention was a big issue within precision machining jobs, CMCC developed six digital badges focused on workforce-relevant skills, like blueprint reading and line inspector, to meet the needs of both employers and prospective employees.

"Workforce-relevant digital badges are a win-win for institutions, students, and business. Students know the credentials are valuable with local employers because the employers helped the college create the badge," says Philgence.

### **MEASURING ROI**

While the digital credentialing program is in its early stages, it still has an eye toward measuring return on investment. The college plans to measure the success of its program with data available in Credly's Acclaim platform, including how many students are accepting and sharing digital badges, as well as internal data on program enrollment and completion.

Student demand also plays a factor in measuring program success. The college offers nearly 25 badge types that can be earned, with requests for more coming from students. To guide program expansion, CMCC looks to see where digital credentials can add value to students, for example highlighting skills needed to earn high-paying jobs or help students stand out on job interviews.



## Empower Your Learners

Credly connects the knowledge, skills, and abilities learners develop with employer demand. Learning and career pathways become more clear with digital credentials, and learners become more engaged, leading to increased persistence.

To learn more about empowering your learners with digital credentials, contact Credly.

[Credly.com](https://credly.com) | [sales@credly.com](mailto:sales@credly.com) | **800-841-5890** USA & Canada

