



CASE STUDY

Expanding an Effective Digital Credentialing Program

As an early adopter of digital credentials, Madison College has nearly a decade's worth of experience building a successful badging program. The college's program has evolved—and steadily grown—since it launched in 2011. It initially focused on issuing digital credentials to provide rigor in the non-credit area, and interest in the program caught on quickly. The college expanded its badging to the credit space and experienced a 25% growth in badges issued every semester.

130+
TYPES

Digital Badge Types

7,500
ISSUED

Digital Badges Issued

25
PERCENT

25% Growth In Digital Badges Issued Every Semester

Today, Madison College offers more than 130 types of badges that can be earned and is regularly creating new badging opportunities college-wide and at the program level to meet the demand from students. To identify opportunities, the college looks at skills training happening in existing coursework where digital credentials can bring skill mastery to the forefront. Many of these opportunities tie to technical skills, workforce skills, and soft skills that make students more marketable to prospective employers, while others help students demonstrate skills needed to utilize the latest technology on campus. For example, after demonstrating they are properly trained in using the 3-D printer in the college's STEM center, students earn a digital credential that will provide them future access.

Measuring Program Success

Madison College relies on several sources to track the progress of its digital credentialing program. For quantitative data, the college relies on Credly's Acclaim platform to provide insights into the number of digital badges issued, accepted, and shared—all of which have increased since the program launched.

As awareness of digital credentials increases, so does acceptance and sharing of them. *"Students are driving demand for new badges. They want that digital badge to add to their portfolio—and they want to know how to earn more,"* says Lesley Voigt, Director, Digital Credentials Institute, Madison College.

The college also regularly surveys its earners to collect qualitative insights to help determine how well the

program is working for students. Students consistently respond positively to digital credentials—and the impact shows in improved student engagement and retention.

Connecting Credentials to Jobs

Another component behind the college's program success and expansion: opportunities digital credentials create for earners.

“Students are working harder and staying longer because of digital credentials. And students are asking for more digital credentials.”

Lesley Voigt

Director, Digital Credentials Institute
Madison College

Access to workforce analytics via Labor Market Insights on Credly's Acclaim platform provides students with job opportunities, salary ranges, and related skills employers are looking for in prospective, well-rounded candidates. *“Students, faculty, and employers really like the fact that students can see jobs that require the specific skills for which they've earned a digital credential—and other related skills that employers are looking for—from our badging program,”* says Voigt.

Once students have an interview lined up, digital credentials give them a story to tell. Because digital credentials are verified and issued by faculty from a trusted institution, students have the ability to showcase what they've accomplished and point to areas where they stand out. *“Digital badges give students a roadmap for what to talk about during an interview,”* says Voigt.

Continued Program Expansion in 2020

The college is rolling out a new type of digital badge in 2020: articulation badges for prior learning. These are geared at high school students and encourages them to complete coursework with community organizations to earn digital badges that will translate into college credit. If the student enrolls at Madison College, the articulation badges acknowledge the credit they've earned, and those credits will appear on the student's college transcript. The college is working with local organizations on the digital badges, which will be co-branded.