Convenings to Explore Opportunities for Integration of Four-Year Degrees and Certifications

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PROBLEM

Insufficient opportunities for students to earn certifications with labor market value and build those credentials toward a degree

OPPORTUNITY

To convene certification bodies and universities to explore how students can earn both degrees and certifications as part of their four-year degree program

CONVENING PARTNERS

workcred
Coalition of Urban Serving Universities
Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities
UPCEA

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About the Project

• Workcred, APLU/USU, and UPCEA are exploring how universities and certification bodies can collaborate to create pathways for students to earn a certification as part of four-year degree programs.

• Project is focused on identifying barriers, opportunities, examples of partnerships, and building relationships through focused convenings.

• Convenings bring together certification body leaders and a variety of university faculty and administrators.

• Mix of presentations, structured discussions, and interactive exercises.
Convenings

Health Care
- APLU (Washington, DC)
- April 23-24, 2019

Cybersecurity
- San Jose State University
- July 9-10, 2019

Liberal Arts
- Lumina Foundation (Indianapolis)
- October 10-11, 2019

Manufacturing
- Georgia Tech
- December 10-11, 2019

Hospitality
- Florida International University
- March 26-27, 2020
Expected Outcomes

Better understanding of current relationships between universities and certification bodies.

Stronger relationships and improved dialogue between these entities.

A framework on which to build pilot programs that can be tested and scaled.
Themes from the Convenings

Need common terminology to appropriately integrate credentials

• This could include a common framework for competencies and learning outcomes

Lack of awareness and understanding about processes and policies

Broaden dialogue to include accreditation bodies, employers, and community colleges
Themes from the Convenings Cont’d

Provide continuing education for faculty to gain knowledge to integrate certifications

Need to understand the value and quality of certifications

- There are many certifications that may be relevant to specific degrees, but it is unclear how to determine which yields the best ROI

An interest in continued networking, conversation, and sharing/collaborating on models

- Opportunities around regional needs exist as well
Themes from the Convenings Cont’d

Develop a map/matrix about certifications
• E.g., prerequisites, competencies, university partnerships, employers who recognize the certification

Obtain buy-in at all levels of the organizations
• Universities – faculty, department chair, provost, president/chancellor
• Certification bodies – director of certification, executive director
• Buy-in may be more difficult to obtain among liberal arts faculty as compared to other disciplines, such as healthcare, IT, and manufacturing
Draft Model for Pre-Health Care

**Undergraduate**
- Pre-Professional Health Care Science Core Curriculum
  - (A set of common undergraduate courses that can be taken with any academic major)

**Completion of BA/BS Degree**
- New Certification: Certified Health Sciences Professional

**Post-Graduate**
- Health Professional School

**Examples**
- Dentistry
- Medicine
- Nursing
- Occupational Therapy
- Optometry
- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy
- Veterinary Medicine

**Examples**
- Phlebotomist
- Laboratory Associate
- Medical Records Associate
- Medical Interpreter

**Professional License or Certification**
for more information

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