

coursera

Micro-Credentials Impact Report 2024

Insights from Higher
Education Leaders



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Introduction

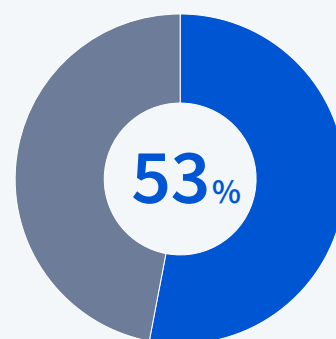
Micro-credentials are reshaping the future of higher education

Campuses are recognizing the crucial role of micro-credentials in equipping graduates for jobs and boosting institutional success. Our *Micro-Credentials Impact Report 2024*, based on a Coursera survey of over **1,000 higher education leaders across 850+ institutions in 89 countries**, reveals the transformative impact of micro-credentials and their growing role in enhancing curricula on campuses.

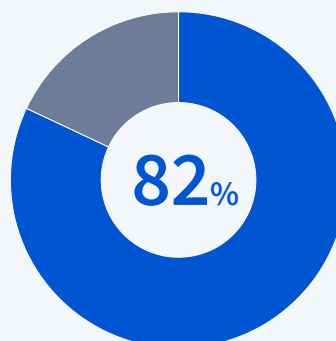
Notably, 97% of higher education leaders offering micro-credentials believe these credentials strengthen students' long-term career prospects. Fifty-three percent say their institutions offer credit-bearing options, and 82% indicate plans to do so within the next five years. Institutions see career credentials as a powerful tool to increase student satisfaction, grow their brand, and influence student enrollment and retention.

These certifications emerged with the rise of digital learning in the early 2000s.¹ In 2010, short-term, nondegree certificates, a kind of micro-credential, accounted for 41% of all credentials awarded by US community colleges.² By 2019, that number rose to 71%.³ The advent of massive open online courses (MOOCs) happened early in academia, but it's online platforms like Coursera that popularized the format. Tech giants eventually launched their own career credentials, often in partnership with online providers, to help students build job skills. Coursera, for example, began offering Professional Certificates, a type of micro-credential from industry leaders such as Google, IBM, and Meta.

Credit adoption for institutions that offer micro-credentials



of higher education leaders say their institution offers academic credit for micro-credentials



say their institution plans to integrate or expand for-credit micro-credentials in the next five years

What is a micro-credential?

A micro-credential, such as a [Professional Certificate](#) on Coursera, is a certification that focuses on a specific set of learning outcomes in a narrow field of learning, and is completed over a shorter time period.⁴ A Professional Certificate is an industry-recognized micro-credential designed to equip learners with the skills and knowledge necessary for specific jobs or industries. Offered by top companies, entry-level and advanced programs can be completed in three to 12 months. Learners build skills such as project management, data analysis, and programming. Additionally, they gain access to career support like job search guides, résumé assistance, interview practice, and a community of peers and alumni to ensure long-term career success.

We've come a long way since the inception of micro-credentials. Today, students and employers view job-ready skills as the bridge between education and employability. A [2023 Coursera study](#) found that 60% of students say using their skills is their top priority in a job, while 77% of employers back skills-based hiring practices. According to the World Economic Forum, 60% of workers will require training by 2027, yet only half have access to adequate training opportunities.⁵ Campuses must bridge the skills gap and prepare students for the workforce. They're rising to the challenge with micro-credentials.

Grounded in a robust survey with an **industry-standard range of error at a 95% confidence level**, this report presents new research in the understudied field of micro-credentials, and their impact on campus. As higher education evolves, we hope this report serves as a valuable resource for institutions exploring and integrating micro-credentials into their learning ecosystems.

“

Micro-credentials are valuable for learners at every stage of their journey, whether they're building foundational skills, exploring new career paths, or upskilling to keep pace with the changing job market. Our report reveals that 97% of higher education leaders offering micro-credentials believe they can strengthen students' long-term career outcomes. That's why we're dedicated to partnering with top institutions worldwide to design programs that blend academic rigor with real-world relevance, setting learners up for lifelong success.



Marni Baker Stein
Chief Content Officer
at Coursera

Adoption trends

Micro-credentials adoption

The majority of higher education leaders say their institutions are integrating and growing the use of micro-credentials

Today, over half (51%) of global leaders say their institutions are integrating micro-credentials, allowing students to develop applicable, job-ready skills while earning their degree.

Institutions currently offering micro-credentials view them as powerful engagement tools and are actively increasing their use. Almost three in four (73%) higher education leaders say that after implementing micro-credentials, their institution expanded its offerings to include more micro-credentials, or to provide more students with access to micro-credentials.

This demonstrates the positive impact and growing importance of micro-credentials in higher education.

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Our partnership with Coursera enables our students to supplement their degrees with credentials that arm them with the most current and in-demand skills and enhance their career readiness.



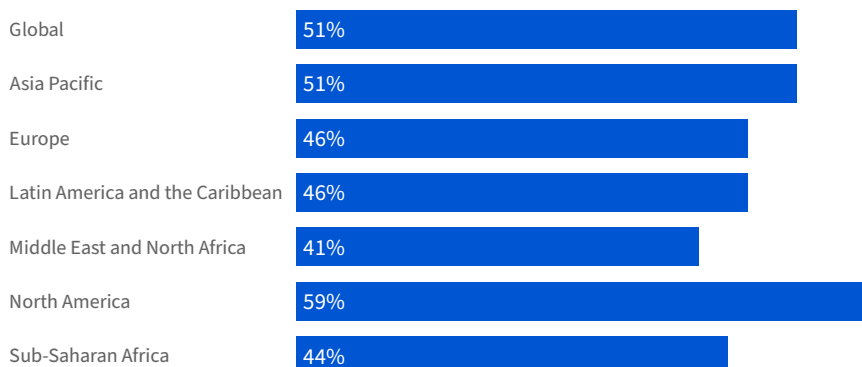
Allison Gough

Dean, College of Liberal Arts
Hawai'i Pacific University



Institutions that offer micro-credentials

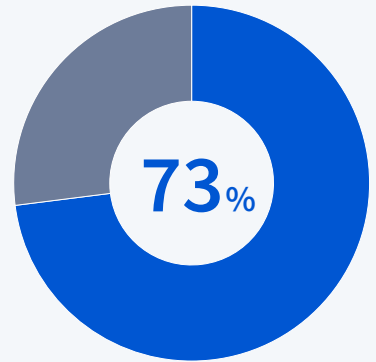
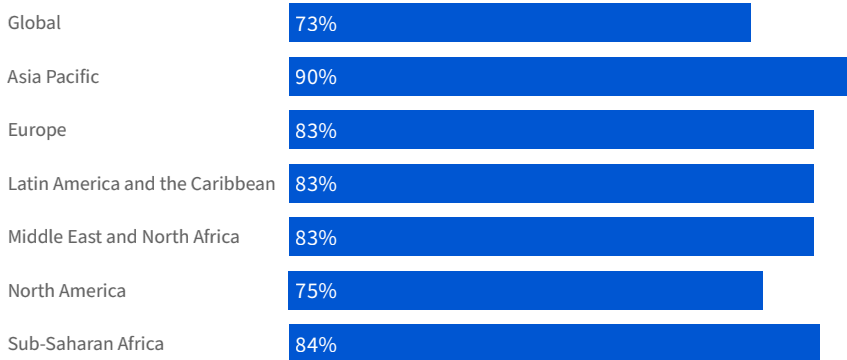
Question: Does your institution offer micro-credentials? (Yes responses)



The rapid advancement of technologies like generative AI (GenAI) further emphasizes the need for micro-credentials. Students are eager to develop new skills to secure sought-after jobs upon graduation. Two-thirds of business leaders agree, saying they wouldn't hire someone without AI skills.⁶ The surge in interest is clear in the growth of [GenAI course enrollments](#) on Coursera, which quadrupled from one enrollment per minute in 2023 to four per minute in 2024.⁷

Micro-credentials expansion

Question: After implementing micro-credentials, did your university expand its programs to offer them to more students, or to offer additional micro-credentials? (Yes responses)



of global leaders expanded university programs after implementing micro-credentials

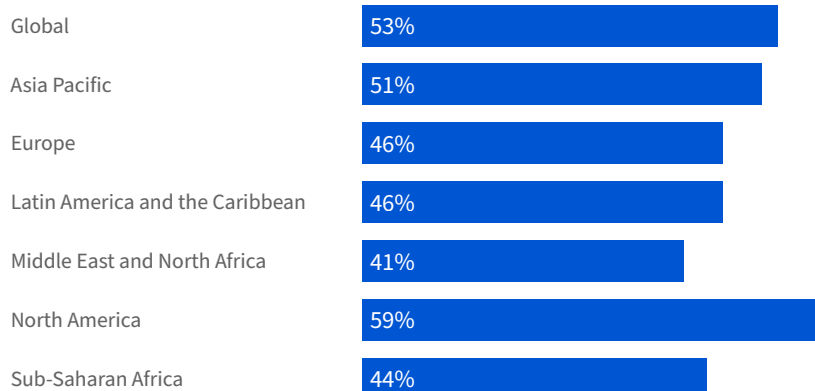
Credit-bearing micro-credentials

There's a shift toward offering academic credit for micro-credentials

Institutions have a unique opportunity to meet evolving student needs with flexible, job-relevant skills by offering academic credit for micro-credentials. This trend is already gaining momentum, with 53% of higher education leaders offering micro-credentials saying their campuses provide credit-bearing options.

Credit options at campuses offering micro-credentials

Question: Does your institution currently offer academic credit for micro-credentials?
(Yes responses)



The demand for career credentials is undeniable. Three in four (75%) higher education leaders say students are more likely to enroll in degree programs that recognize academic credit for micro-credentials. This sentiment is echoed by students themselves, with 76% stating they're more likely to enroll in a degree program that includes industry micro-credentials.⁸

Institutions are taking note of this demand, with 82% planning to expand their use of for-credit micro-credentials in the next five years. This shift toward offering academic credit for micro-credentials can not only attract students seeking career-focused learning, but also position institutions as leaders in bridging the gap between academia and industry.

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The for-credit adoption of micro-credentials signals a transformative shift in higher education. It allows institutions to integrate these valuable learning experiences into traditional degree programs, enriching curriculum, diversifying learning pathways, and fostering a more dynamic and responsive learning environment.

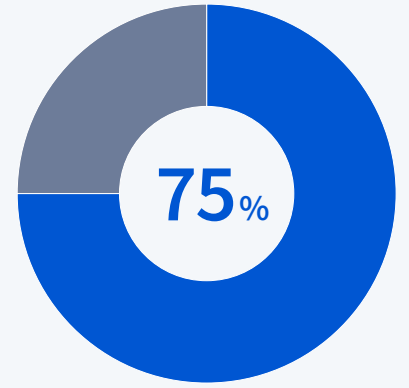
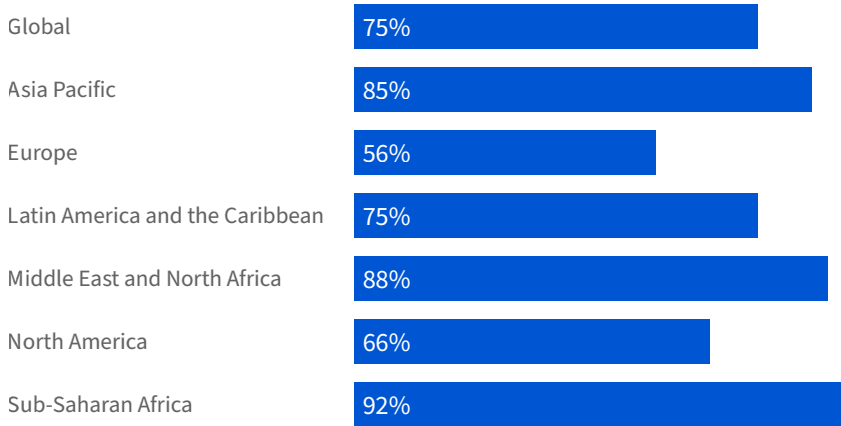


IBM

Rav Ahuja
CCO & Global Program
Director, IBM Skills Network

Enrollment at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: Students are more likely to enroll in learning programs that offer academic credit for micro-credentials. (Agree or strongly agree)



say students are more likely to enroll in degree programs that recognize academic credit for micro-credentials

Accreditation support

Accreditation bodies and frameworks pave the way for credit-bearing micro-credentials

Higher education leaders recognize the importance of credit recommendations. Fifty-seven percent believe external support, such as recommendations from organizations like the American Council on Education (ACE) and qualification frameworks like India's National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQF) or the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), can significantly promote internal buy-in and accelerate the adoption of credit-bearing micro-credentials.

On platforms like Coursera, leading accrediting organizations such as ACE and the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) already recommend select courses for credit. This is a [powerful testament](#) to the quality, rigor, and integrity of the online learning experience underpinning every assessment, course, and credential from the world's top universities and companies on Coursera.

Campuses can leverage credit-recommended content to easily select and integrate micro-credentials into curricula, positioning themselves as leaders in relevant, dynamic education. Explore our Professional Certificates, aligned with ACE, ECTS, and NSQF standards and recommended for academic credit, [here](#).



Insights in action

Regulatory support for recognizing innovative micro-credential programs is beginning to fuel a growing trend in Europe and Asia Pacific. Higher education leaders can drive enrollment and retention by developing strategies that turn industry-recognized certificate completion into academic credit.



ACE's partnership with Coursera will play an increasingly crucial role in assuring that non-traditional learning and industry training meets the rigorous standards deserving of academic credit. By providing a consistent and trusted framework for evaluation and value recognition, we can help industry and academia speak the same language, scale for-credit learning across entire systems of higher education, and equip large populations of students for jobs of the future.



Ted Mitchell
President, American Council on Education (ACE)



Campus growth strategies

Micro-credentials are a growth accelerator for institutions that *don't* offer micro-credentials

Institutions that do not currently offer micro-credentials are prioritizing growth strategies that micro-credentials can significantly impact. Their top three growth considerations include improving career prospects for students, increasing student enrollment and retention, and enhancing their satisfaction.

Growth priorities for institutions without micro-credentials

Question: Select the top three considerations for your institution's growth strategy. (Select all that apply)

Global data

Improved career prospects for students

65%

Increase in student enrollment and retention

59%

Enhanced student satisfaction and involvement

51%

Increased innovation among students and faculty

47%

Amplification of the institution's brand image and reputation

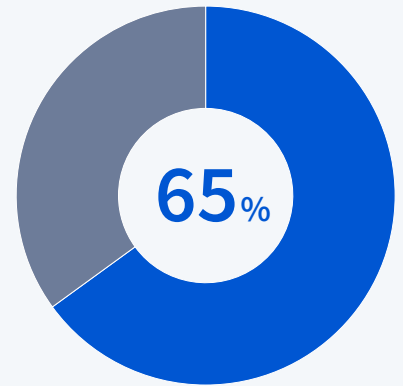
39%

New revenue streams

27%

Strengthened relationships with alumni

21%

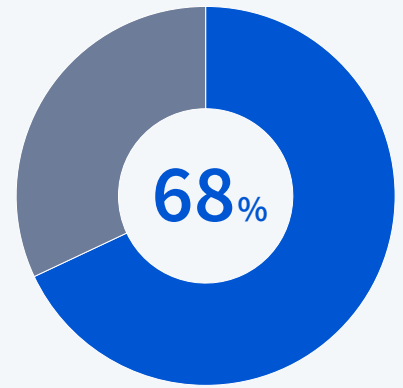
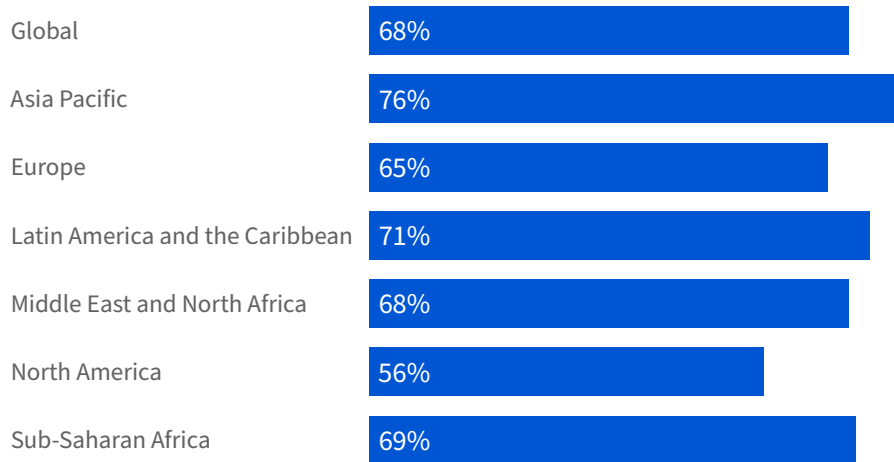


65% of leaders say improved career prospects for students are a top consideration for their institution's growth

Notably, 68% of leaders at these institutions say their campuses are likely to adopt micro-credentials in the next five years to better support these goals. As you'll see in the next section, micro-credentials are already delivering impressive results in these key areas. The vast majority of leaders at campuses that currently offer micro-credentials agree that they prepare students for the workforce, while boosting enrollment, retention, and satisfaction.

Adoption plans at institutions without micro-credentials

Question: How likely is it that your institution will adopt micro-credentials in the next five years? (Likely or very likely)



of global leaders say their campuses are likely to adopt micro-credentials in the next five years

Keep reading to discover global perspectives on how micro-credentials can drive positive outcomes in higher education, and help institutions achieve their growth goals.



Insights in action

Campus leaders from Asia Pacific lead the way in micro-credential adoption plans, with 76% saying their institution is likely to offer them within five years. To seize this opportunity and enhance student employability, education leaders should develop actionable strategies for integrating industry-aligned micro-credentials into existing curricula.

The University of Szeged



The [University of Szeged](#) blends for-credit Professional Certificates to support career exploration

At the University of Szeged in Hungary, students can access a wide range of Professional Certificates, with some available for academic credit. For example, by completing seven out of nine courses within a Professional Certificate, such as the IBM Data Science Certificate, students fulfill the Statistics 2 module and earn five European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) credits.

The university offers the entire portfolio of Professional Certificates as a voluntary noncredit option as well, allowing students to tailor their learning experience to their individual career and study goals. This flexibility is key to the program's success. Péter Szakál, Szeged's Director of Academic Affairs, emphasizes: "Professional Certificates are a differentiator and another way to add value to our students' education."

Students report enjoying the flexibility of online courses and value the opportunity to receive recognition from global companies alongside university credits. Faculty members note that the courses complement classroom teaching with varied methodology.



Professional Certificates are a differentiator and another way to add value to our students' education.

Péter Szakál
Director of Academic Affairs



Learn how higher education institutions worldwide are improving employment outcomes through micro-credentials.

[Download playbook](#)

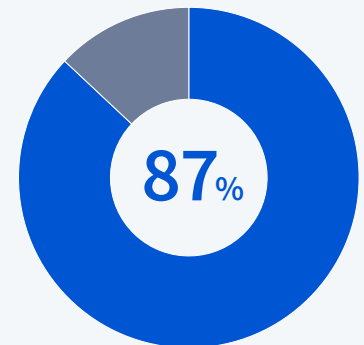
Global outcomes

Job readiness

Nearly all higher education leaders agree that micro-credentials prepare students for the workforce

Micro-credentials are a powerful tool for universities to equip students with the skills employers seek. Eighty-seven percent of higher education leaders offering micro-credentials agree that students with micro-credentials are more likely to be job-ready compared to those without.

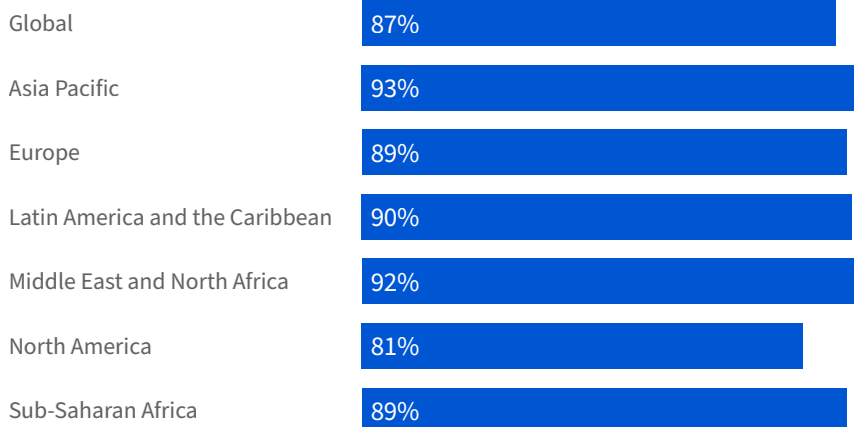
Students worldwide echo this sentiment, with 90% saying that earning a [Professional Certificate](#) will help them stand out to employers and land a job upon graduation.⁹ The most popular Professional Certificates on Coursera align closely with the top target roles learners are pursuing,¹⁰ which also correspond to the highest number of job openings in the US.¹¹



of leaders offering micro-credentials agree that students with micro-credentials are more likely to be job-ready compared to those without

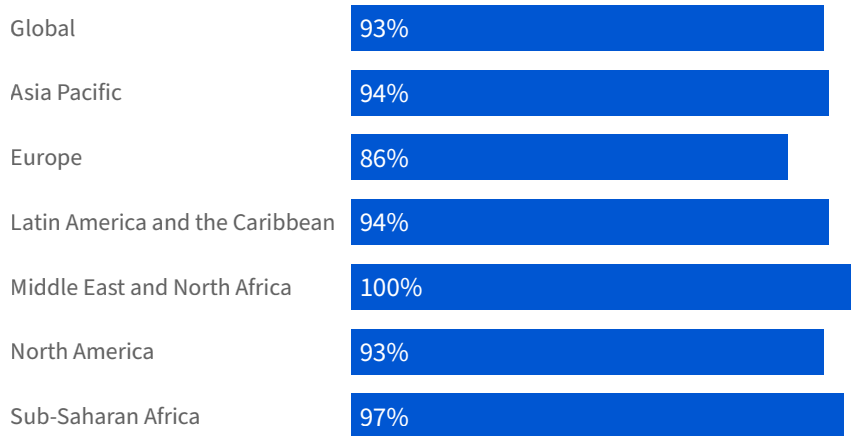
Job outcomes at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: Students with micro-credentials are more likely to be job-ready upon graduation than those without micro-credentials. (Agree or strongly agree)



Meeting employer demands at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: *Micro-credentials equip my institution to help students develop job-related skills to meet employer demands. (Agree or strongly agree)*



Upskilling is imperative for learners to thrive in a rapidly changing workforce.

Explore skill insights, like the increasing demand for GenAI, at the global, regional, and country levels.

[Get report](#)

Employers are also taking notice of the value of micro-credentials as they increasingly focus on skills-based hiring. Our last report revealed that employers are 72% more likely to hire a candidate with a Professional Certificate, as this helps hiring teams solve two top challenges: identifying and validating applicants' skills.¹²

Ninety-three percent of higher education leaders agree that micro-credentials equip their institutions to meet employer demands for job-specific skills, like GenAI expertise, project management, and data analysis. By offering micro-credentials, these institutions provide their students with the competencies today's employers seek, making graduates more job-ready.

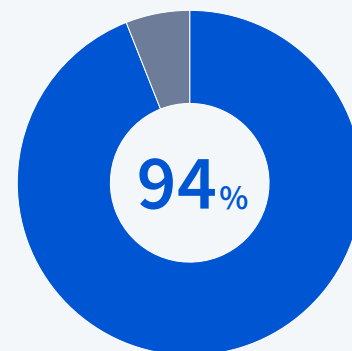
Lifelong learning

Almost all higher education leaders say micro-credentials encourage lifelong learning

In addition to strengthening students' long-term career outcomes, like job stability and higher earning potential, micro-credentials also help alumni, faculty, and others further their careers.

Ninety-four percent of higher education leaders recognize that micro-credentials can strengthen students' long-term career prospects. At institutions offering micro-credentials, nearly all (97%) agree.

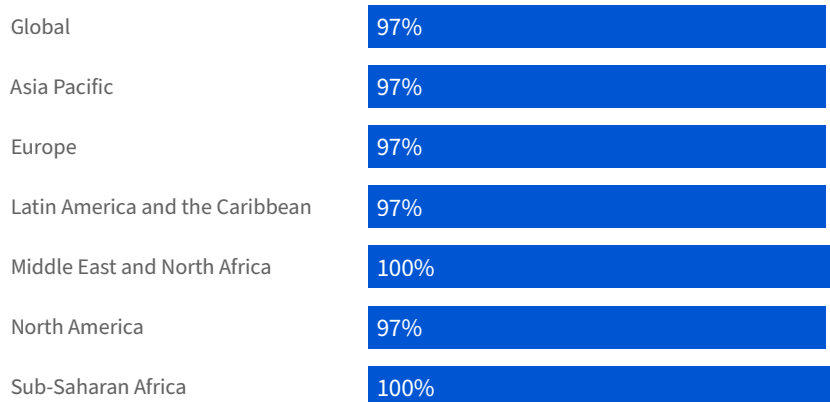
In fact, micro-credentials provide valuable upskilling opportunities for everyone on campus. Ninety-four percent of higher education leaders agree that micro-credentials can help alumni, faculty, and other professionals further their own careers, as they upskill to meet the evolving demands of academia. At institutions offering micro-credentials, nearly all (96%) agree.



94% of higher education leaders recognize that micro-credentials can strengthen students' long-term career prospects

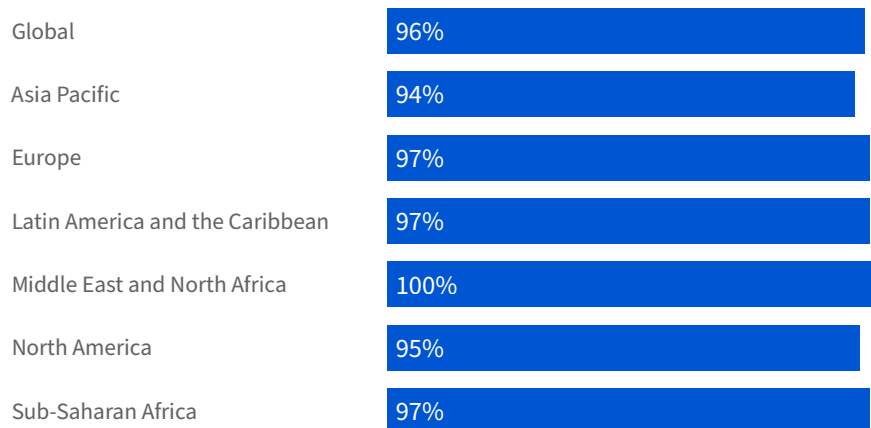
Student career outcomes at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: *Micro-credentials can strengthen long-term career outcomes for students.*
(Agree or strongly agree)



Community outcomes at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: Micro-credentials can help alumni, faculty, and other professionals further their careers. (Agree or strongly agree)




For example, with three out of four faculty reporting their institutions are unprepared for AI-related changes,¹³ micro-credentials may offer a solution by supporting upskilling in emerging fields like GenAI. By acquiring new skills through micro-credentials, faculty can teach new subjects, update course content, and prepare students for an AI-driven future.

View Coursera's GenAI-enhanced Professional Certificates in the [appendix](#).

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At Meta, we believe micro-credentials are the future of lifelong learning. They provide accessibility and focus on in-demand skills that empower individuals to adapt and thrive in a rapidly evolving job market.



Vikas Wadhvani
Director of Learning and Certifications, Meta


The University of Texas Permian Basin



The University of Texas Permian Basin leverages for-credit micro-credentials to prepare students for jobs

The University of Texas Permian Basin (UTPB) is revolutionizing business education by integrating Professional Certificates on Coursera into its curriculum. The certificates contribute up to 15–20% of academic credit awarded for various courses. Management Information Systems (MNGT3333) includes select courses from the Google IT Support Certificate, while Digital Marketing Analytics (MRKT 4304) leverages the Google Data Analytics Certificate, equipping students with in-demand skills. Additionally, the Google Project Management Certificate has been integrated into Project Management Elements (MNGT 4307), a core requirement for all Management majors.

These initiatives have boosted enrollment, increased students' engagement, and enhanced students' job market competitiveness—reflecting the value students place on acquiring industry-aligned skills throughout their academic journey. “Students are so excited to share their accomplishments on LinkedIn,” says Dr. Lili Gai, Chair of Management, Marketing, and Industrial Technology Department. UTPB's commitment to data-driven improvement and industry partnerships ensures the ongoing relevance of for-credit micro-credential offerings, aligning with the UT System's goal of equipping 60% of working-age Texans with post-secondary credentials by 2030.



To address the skills gap in Texas' workforce, UTPB partners with Coursera to offer credit-bearing micro-credentials.

[Keep reading](#)



Completing the Google Data Analytics Certificate under Dr. Gai was a pivotal part of my coursework, and significantly enhanced my career prospects post-graduation by distinguishing me from other candidates.

The program equipped me with essential skills in data analysis, visualization, and interpretation, enabling effective data-driven decisions. As a Business Relationship Manager, I now use these skills to better understand client behavior and tailor strategies for stronger relationships and success.



Natalie Pickrom
Class of Spring 2024

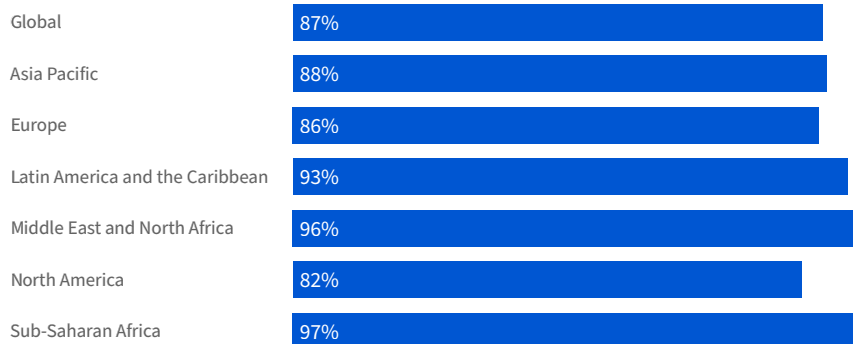
Engagement and satisfaction

Micro-credentials increase student satisfaction, according to nearly 9 in 10 higher education leaders

Leaders offering micro-credentials see them as a path to happier students, with 87% agreeing they boost satisfaction and engagement. Learners themselves share this positive view, with 95% reporting they feel better about themselves and more optimistic about their future after completing courses on Coursera.¹⁴ Micro-credentials' positive impact on student satisfaction is clear: Learners not only gain valuable skills, but also a sense of accomplishment that extends beyond the classroom.

Student engagement and satisfaction at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: Micro-credentials can increase student engagement and satisfaction. (Agree or strongly agree)



Top Professional Certificates by enrollment

1. [Google Data Analytics](#)
2. [Google Project Management](#)
3. [Google IT Support](#)
4. [Google UX Design](#)
5. [Google Digital Marketing & E-commerce](#)
6. [Google IT Automation with Python](#)
7. [Google Cybersecurity](#)
8. [IBM Data Science](#)
9. [Meta Social Media Marketing](#)
10. [Meta Front-End Developer](#)

Professional Certificate enrollment growth year-over-year

26%

Asia Pacific

34%

Europe

61%

North America

17%

Latin America and the Caribbean

41%

Middle East and North Africa

12%

Sub-Saharan Africa

Wawasan Open University



Wawasan Open University complements its curricula with for-credit micro-credentials

Malaysia's Wawasan Open University (WOU) recently reimagined its curriculum by strategically integrating credit-eligible content from Coursera into nearly 50% of its industry-aligned courses. Faculty carefully curate offerings that complement WOU's existing materials and support desired learning outcomes.

The impact is evident in WOU's data science and engineering programs, which incorporate Professional Certificates from Google and IBM to address growing employer demand for data and AI professionals. "These career credentials equip our graduates with job skills to excel in emerging roles," says Dr. Sean Tan, Dean of the School of Technology and Engineering Science.

Students benefit from the immersive learning experience on Coursera, deepening their understanding with high-quality video lectures, interactive tools, and expert insights from academia and industry. The integration has also freed up faculty time to create engaging learning experiences and develop cutting-edge programs. "Coursera exposes our faculty to the latest advancements in education, ensuring our teaching stays current," says Professor Dr. Lily Chan, Chief Executive and Vice Chancellor.¹⁵



Coursera exposes our faculty to the latest advancements in education, ensuring our teaching stays current.

Dr. Lily Chan
Chief Executive and
Vice Chancellor



WOU and other higher education institutions are integrating Coursera content into industry-aligned courses across programs.

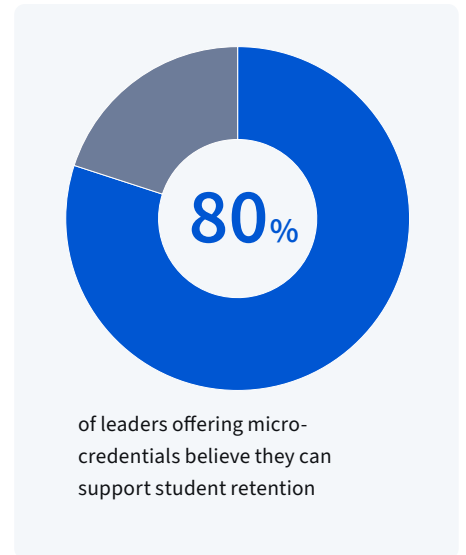
[Learn more](#)

Retention

Micro-credentials can boost retention, according to more than 4 in 5 higher education leaders

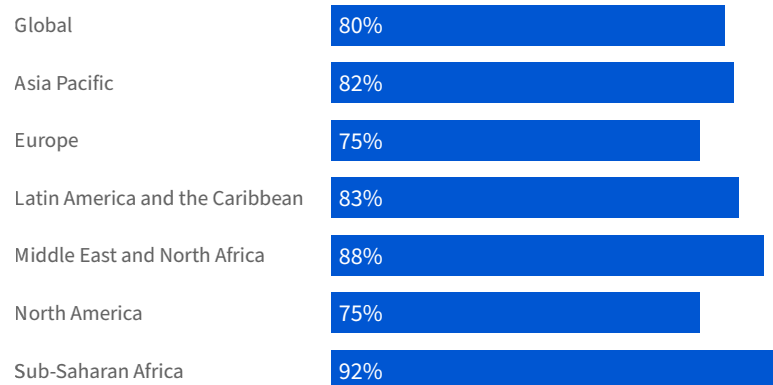
Eighty percent of leaders offering micro-credentials believe that they can support student retention.

By providing students with targeted, career-focused learning opportunities, micro-credentials can help keep them engaged and motivated throughout their academic journey. “Micro-credentials offer a compelling value proposition for students seeking flexible, personalized, and career-focused education. By providing modular learning pathways, institutions can attract a wider pool of learners and improve student retention by meeting their diverse needs and career aspirations,” says Rav Ahuja, CCO & Global Program Director, IBM Skills Network.



Student retention at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: Micro-credentials can support student retention. (Agree or strongly agree)



For students who have paused their academic journeys, micro-credentials and credit for prior learning offer a compelling path back to their degrees. A recent survey found that 78% of stop-out students would be more likely to return if they could receive credit for their prior learning.¹⁶ Similarly, 75% expressed increased interest if stackable micro-credentials were available.¹⁷

These findings highlight the potential of micro-credentials to not only retain current students but also re-engage those who have taken a break from their studies. By embracing micro-credentials and ensuring their value within degree programs, institutions can attract a broader pool of learners and improve their overall retention rates.

Ajman University



Ajman University integrates diverse Professional Certificates for enhanced career outcomes

Ajman University (AU) in the United Arab Emirates has enhanced students' career readiness and overall satisfaction by integrating more than 35 Professional Certificates from Coursera into its curriculum. AU instructors carefully select certificates that align with their academic focus, with some certificates serving as prerequisites or corequisites for other class activities.

“Our partnership with Coursera aims to enhance students' career outcomes, job readiness, ROI, and overall satisfaction with their university experience,” said Dr. Karim Seghir, AU Chancellor. The successful rollout of this initiative is attributed to the early engagement of key stakeholders, including faculty members, instructional designers, administrators, and learners. AU provides training to faculty members and offers incentives for integrating Professional Certificates into their classes.

Over 1,400 students within AU's colleges actively enrolled in Professional Certificates during the first semester, completing 2,570 certificates through more than 9,000 total learning hours. According to Dr. Seghir, “Offering Professional Certificates helps in strengthening AU's rankings and reputation, positioning us as an institution that values and promotes excellence in skill development and professional recognition.”

Enhancing students' career readiness

1,400+

students within AU's colleges actively enrolled in Professional Certificates during the first semester

2,570

certificates were completed by those students

9,000+

total learning hours



How are institutions like Ajman University integrating for-credit micro-credentials?

[Learn more](#)

Brand and reputation

Nearly 9 in 10 higher education leaders agree that micro-credentials can elevate their institution's brand and reputation

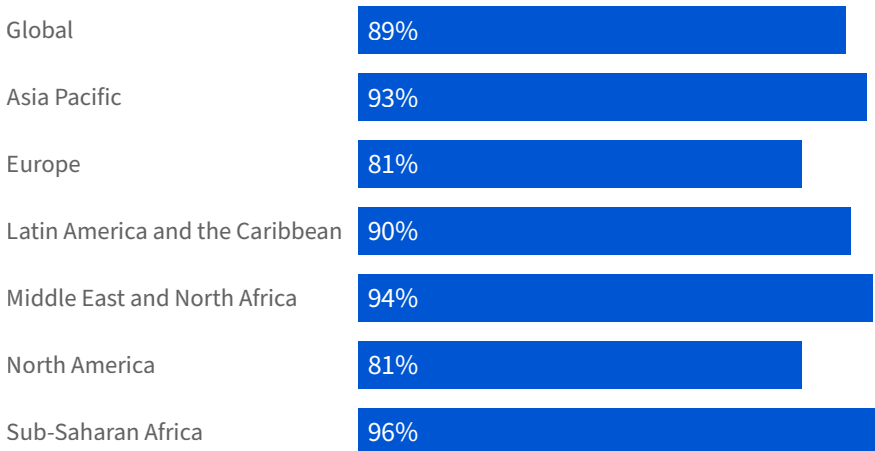
The majority of higher education leaders concur that micro-credentials can enhance their institution's brand and reputation.

Eighty-nine percent of campus leaders at institutions without micro-credentials believe offering them can position their institution as an innovator in higher education. Additionally, 86% say micro-credentials provide a competitive advantage for institutions and differentiate the colleges and universities that offer them.



Positioning at institutions not offering micro-credentials

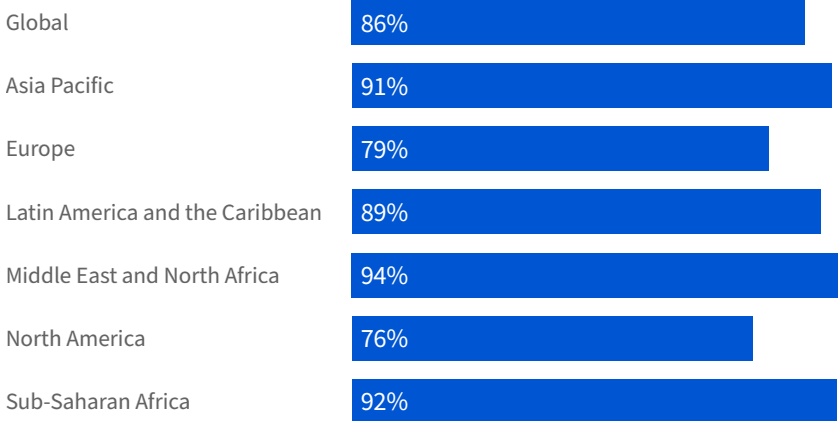
Question: Offering micro-credentials can help universities position themselves as innovators in advancing higher education. (Agree or strongly agree)



Embracing micro-credentials is a strategic move for universities seeking to transform their curricula and establish themselves as leaders in innovation. This forward-thinking approach attracts talented students and faculty, differentiates offerings, and expands reach, ensuring institutions remain adaptable in a rapidly evolving world.

Competitive differentiation at institutions not offering micro-credentials

Question: *Micro-credentials can be a competitive differentiator for institutions not offering them. (Agree or strongly agree)*



What do students and employers think about the future of micro-credentials in higher education?

[Get report](#)



Embracing Coursera—the gold standard in online learning—has brought international recognition to LPU and strengthened our position as a forward-thinking education leader across Asia-Pacific. This attracts high-caliber students and gives our campuses a distinct competitive advantage.



Dr. Lerma Calingasan
 Chancellor and Vice President
 for Academic Affairs at
 Lyceum of the Philippines
 University (LPU) Laguna



Challenges and solutions

Barriers for non-adopters

Barriers to integration for institutions that *don't* offer micro-credentials

Integrating industry micro-credentials into existing curricula can be a significant challenge, especially for institutions that haven't yet embraced this approach to learning. Among education leaders from institutions that don't currently offer micro-credentials, 45% say that difficulties in aligning them with their curriculum have posed a primary barrier to implementation.

Integration barriers at institutions not offering micro-credentials

Question: What are the main barriers to integrating industry micro-credentials into your curriculum? (Select all that apply)

Global data

A lack of awareness about micro-credentials

50%

Difficulties integrating micro-credentials with existing curriculum

45%

Uncertainty about the quality of micro-credentials

35%

Insufficient data to indicate relevance and benefit

34%

Resistance from faculty due to shift from traditional methods

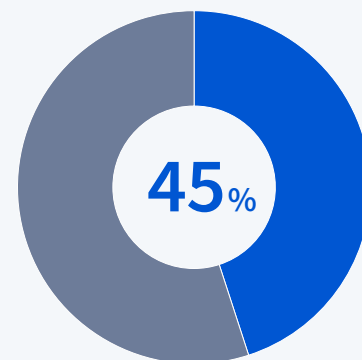
27%

Technological limitations for online offerings

22%

Institutional policies

22%



45% of campus leaders at institutions without micro-credentials say that difficulties with curriculum alignment have posed a primary barrier to implementation

To overcome these challenges, institutions can collaborate with trusted online learning platforms to offer micro-credentials and ensure a high standard of learning. On Coursera, select Professional Certificates are recommended for academic credit by leading accrediting bodies and [skills and qualifications frameworks](#).

In addition, a well-defined policy is crucial for institutions to fully harness the potential of micro-credentials. Without a clear framework, campuses may lack the infrastructure and processes to effectively offer these valuable learning opportunities, hindering adoption and limiting student access. By developing a strong policy, institutions can pave the way for smooth integration and maximize the benefits of micro-credentials for both students and themselves.

Barriers for adopters

Barriers to integration for institutions that *do* offer micro-credentials

Even institutions that have already embraced micro-credentials may face challenges with seamless integration.

To address some of these concerns, institutions must create a clear framework for aligning micro-credentials with existing curricula. Engaging faculty in the process of identifying, pursuing, and integrating micro-credentials—as well as providing them with the resources and support to do so—can help secure their buy-in and ensure successful program implementation.

Integration challenges at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: What are the most pressing challenges your university faces when integrating micro-credentials into its curriculum? (Select all that apply)

Global data

Aligning micro-credentials with existing programs

65%

Getting faculty buy-in

49%

Ensuring industry relevance

42%

Offering micro-credentials for-credit

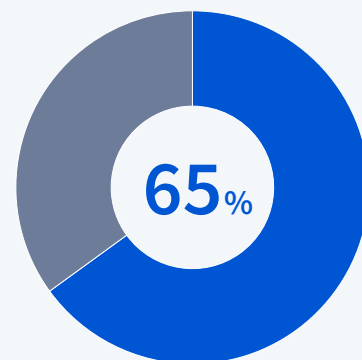
40%

Ensuring academic integrity

39%

Achieving administrative support

22%



65% of campus leaders at institutions offering micro-credentials say that difficulties with program alignment have posed a primary barrier to implementation



How are campuses aligning micro-credentials with existing curricula, getting faculty buy-in, and ensuring industry relevance?

[Learn more](#)

Scaling for success

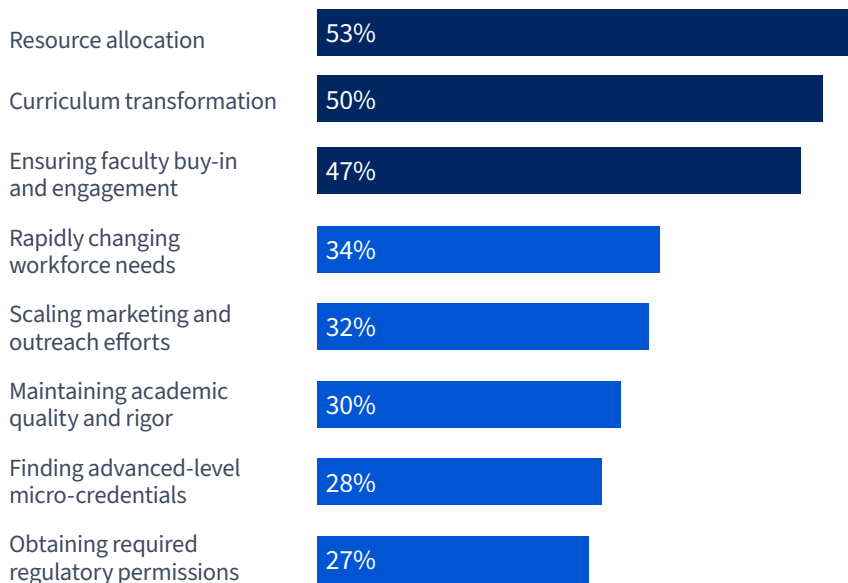
Overcoming barriers to expanding micro-credential programs

As institutions offering micro-credentials seek to expand their offerings and student reach, they may encounter a range of challenges that can hinder their growth and impact.

Expansion challenges at institutions offering micro-credentials

Question: What are the most pressing challenges your university faces or could face when expanding micro-credential programs? (Select all that apply)

Global data



To successfully launch and scale a micro-credentials program, it's critical to first establish the business case. This may involve reallocating resources to support program development and implementation, investing in professional development opportunities for faculty, and forming partnerships with industry leaders to ensure the relevance and quality of the micro-credentials.

Appendix

Coursera for Campus

Career Academy connects curricula to careers by providing students with the skills, knowledge, and industry-recognized Professional Certificates needed to thrive in today's dynamic job market.

Through partnerships with leading companies and experts, Coursera's platform enables institutions to keep pace with student expectations and advance the value of their educational offering.

Career Academy features content from leading industry partners like:



Career Academy empowers universities to deliver high-quality learning experiences at scale, connect their curricula to careers, and enrich student experiences. This innovative approach to skills-based learning can position institutions as leaders in preparing students for the jobs of the future while supporting the ambitions of individuals and industries in a rapidly changing world.

With Career Academy, students will:

- ✓ Learn cutting-edge skills to prepare for in-demand jobs—no experience required.
- ✓ Earn Professional Certificates from the world's leading companies, adding industry knowledge to their academic learnings.
- ✓ Access hands-on Guided Projects to practice new skills using real-world tools, maximizing their educational impact.
- ✓ Explore career paths while learning at their own pace across web and mobile, empowering them to achieve their career aspirations.

Learn how Career Academy prepares students for in-demand jobs

- ✓ Build essential applied skills
- ✓ Provide insights into in-demand roles across a range of industries
- ✓ Guide understanding of entry-level roles



Equip your students with the skills employers demand.

[Explore Career Academy](#)

Credit-recommended courses on Coursera

ACE-recommended courses

IBM. IBM

**Full Stack Cloud
Developer Professional
Certificate**

IBM. IBM

**Applied Data Science
Specialization**

G Google

**IT Support Professional
Certificate**

Salesforce Salesforce

**Sales Development
Representative
Professional Certificate**

Salesforce Salesforce

**Sales Operations
Professional Certificate**

[See more →](#)

ECTS-recommended courses

G Google

**Business Intelligence
Professional Certificate**

G Google

**Digital Marketing
& E-commerce
Professional Certificate**

IBM. IBM

**Cybersecurity Analyst
Professional Certificate**

IBM. IBM

**Data Analyst
Professional Certificate**

IBM. IBM

**Data Analyst with Excel
and R Professional
Certificate**

[See more →](#)

NSQF-aligned courses

G Google

**Data Analytics
Professional Certificate**

G Google

**Project Management
Professional Certificate**

IBM. IBM

**Data Engineering
Professional Certificate**

IBM. IBM

**Data Science
Professional Certificate**

IBM. IBM

**Cybersecurity Analyst
Professional Certificate**

[See more →](#)

GenAI-enhanced Professional Certificates

As GenAI skills become increasingly crucial for the future workforce, curriculum design must equip students to use AI responsibly and confidently.

Faculty using AI recognize this need, with 75% agreeing that graduates must master GenAI tools for workplace success.¹⁸ Sixty-six percent of business leaders mirror this sentiment, saying they wouldn't hire individuals lacking GenAI skills.¹⁹

To equip students for the future of work, we're integrating cutting-edge GenAI content into select Professional Certificates. We're also launching new Professional Certificates powered by GenAI in partnership with Meta and IBM, offering learners a comprehensive educational experience. Browse our course recommendations below.

Professional Certificate

New courses added

IBM Data Science	→	IBM Generative AI: Elevate Your Data Science Career
IBM Full Stack Software Developer	→	IBM Generative AI: Elevate Your Software Development Career
IBM Data Analyst	→	IBM Generative AI: Enhance Your Data Analytics Career
IBM Data Engineering	→	IBM Generative AI: Elevate Your Data Engineering Career

New Professional Certificate



GenAI presents challenges and opportunities for academic integrity online. Empower institutional excellence with AI-enhanced tools.

[Get report](#)

Methodology

In the spring and early summer of 2024, Coursera surveyed higher education leaders at institutions around the globe to gain valuable insights into their perspectives on micro-credentials.

The survey explored various aspects of micro-credentials in higher education, including implementation trends, attitudes toward for-credit adoption, broader impact on campus, and institutional challenges to integration. We collected responses from 1,058 higher education leaders in our database, representing a diverse range of institutions and roles from 852 institutions across 89 countries.

The online survey was conducted between April 11 and May 9, 2024, with the majority of responses collected between April 26 and May 2. Respondents included department heads, professors, deans, vice presidents, presidents, and other key decision-makers in higher education institutions.

Our sample covered six major regions: North America, Asia Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The survey garnered widespread participation, with the United States and India providing the largest number of responses, followed by countries such as Mexico, Colombia, and the Philippines. Given the distribution of responses, we've created dedicated reports for higher education leaders in both the [United States](#) and [India](#).

Our sample size of 1,058 leaders enabled us to obtain results with an industry-standard range of error at a 95% confidence level. Where useful, we compared findings from higher education leaders surveyed with the perspectives of [employers and students](#).

While this survey provides critical insights into global higher education perspectives on micro-credentials, it does not include a comprehensive review of policy landscapes in individual countries. The results should be interpreted as indicative of the viewpoints and experiences of participating respondents and institutions, and not a complete portrayal of the higher education landscape worldwide.

1,058

leaders surveyed

95%

confidence level

Countries with the most responses

United States

India

Mexico

Philippines

Colombia

Nigeria

Malaysia

Pakistan

United Kingdom

Indonesia

Kenya

United Arab Emirates

Chile

Egypt

Saudi Arabia

Job titles represented

Dean

President/Provost

Vice President/Vice Provost

Department Head

Professor

Other roles (Chancellor/ Rector, COO/CIO, Registrar, Vice Chancellor/Vice Rector)

Other higher education stakeholders, including advisors, chairpersons, faculty, and staff

About Coursera

Coursera was launched in 2012 by two Stanford Computer Science professors, Andrew Ng and Daphne Koller, with a mission to provide universal access to world-class learning. It is now one of the largest online learning platforms in the world, with over 155 million registered learners.²⁰

Coursera partners with over 325 leading university and industry partners to offer a broad catalog of content and credentials, including courses, Specializations, Professional Certificates, Guided Projects, and bachelor’s and master’s degrees.²¹ Institutions around the world use Coursera to upskill and reskill their employees, citizens, and students in fields such as data science, technology, and business. Coursera became a Delaware public benefit corporation and a B Corp in February 2021.

325+ university and industry partners collaborate on Coursera



Integrate credit-eligible micro-credentials into your curriculum.

Get your students job-ready

Endnotes

1. [Digital Badges and Micro-credentials: Historical Overview, Motivational Aspects, Issues, and Challenges](#) (Ellis, Nunn, and Avella, 2016)
2. [Postsecondary Certificates and Degrees Conferred](#) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2024)
3. [Degrees and Other Formal Awards Conferred](#) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019)
4. [Towards a common definition of micro-credentials](#) (UNESDOC, 2022)
5. [Future of Jobs Report 2023](#) (World Economic Forum, 2023)
6. [2024 Work Trend Index Annual Report](#) (Microsoft and LinkedIn, 2024)
7. [Global Skills Report 2024](#) (Coursera, 2024)
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13. [Examining Higher Ed's Digital Future](#) (Cengage, 2023)
14. [Learner Outcomes Report](#) (Coursera, 2023)
15. [Transforming Higher Education through For-Credit Online Learning](#) (Coursera, 2023)
16. [Disengaged Learners & Return Paths to Higher Education](#) (UPCEA and StraighterLine, 2023)
17. [Disengaged Learners & Return Paths to Higher Education](#) (UPCEA and StraighterLine, 2023)
18. [GenAI in Higher Education](#) (Tyton Partners, 2023)
19. [2024 Work Trend Index Annual Report](#) (Microsoft & LinkedIn, May 2024)
20. As of May 31, 2024.
21. Ibid.

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