

CONVERGENCE

Credential Innovation
in Higher Education

SEPT 29–
OCT 1, 2025
Washington, DC
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UPCEA[®]
AACRAO
A Joint Presentation

Co-Creating Success: Microcredentials that
Meet Community and Individual Need

 **MacEwan**
UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING
EDUCATION

 **JMU**
School of Professional
& Continuing Education

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Agenda

- Overview
- Case Study One: MacEwan University
- Case Study Two: James Madison University
- Wrap Up
- Questions



Case Study One

- Introduction: Who We Are and What We Do
- Microcredentials: Expanding Learning Opportunities
- Collaborating with Our Community
- Lessons Learned on Our Journey
- Entrepreneurship Fundamentals
- Looking Ahead: Where We're Going and Why

MacEwan University's School of Continuing Education

MacEwan University is a public undergraduate university in Western Canada with a focus on teaching excellence and student success.

- Serves approximately 19,000 students

[School of Continuing Education](#) develops and delivers innovative, relevant and impactful courses for individuals and organizations to support workforce and community goals.

Addresses workforce and community needs in alignment with the University's strategic vision.

Offers credit and non-credit programs, including corporate training

- Serves domestic and international learners

Our Microcredential Journey

- Kickoff of development in 2021 ([web post](#))
- Government of Alberta grants provided initial support
- University Credential Policy updated to include microcredentials in 2023
 - Definition:
 - *Micro-Credential: An accelerated, skills-focused and specialized credential that may be non-credit or credit. Micro-credentials are competency-based and include formal assessments.*
 - Practical application of learning included ((rubric developed by industry experts)
- Decision to remain in non-credit space initially
- Aligned with University strategic goals
 - *Target: 14 MC and 1000 enrolments by 2030*
- Input from faculty, employers, and community to identify areas of need
- Developed with industry and piloted within sectors
- Accessibility is a priority (transcripts, low barriers to entry, affordable)



What we Learned to Get Here

- Standalone learning opportunities
 - Lack of clear 'next steps'
 - No stackability
- Marketing
 - No clear target persona cross microcredentials
 - Definition and Application Variability
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 - Lack of consistency in Alberta (ranges from 5-100hrs; one learning opportunity versus multiple micro-courses)
 - Pan-Albertan group working on this
 - Challenging to collaborate across institutions
- Connectivity and Engagement Needs
 - Building community asynchronously
- Value Proposition
 - Employers are unaware of what microcredentials are
 - Learners do not understand the value proposition
 - Varies by institution



Pulling it all Together- Learnings, Research, Community

What we want in microcredentials

- Customizable
- Stackable
- Low Commitment
- Low Barrier to Entry
- High Flexibility
- Fosters Learning Communities
- Connected to Local Resources
- Provides Updates on Local Events

Entrepreneur Fundamentals

ENTREPRENEUR FUNDAMENTALS CERTIFICATE

Running a business is challenging, but you don't have to figure it out alone:

The Entrepreneur Fundamentals certificate at MacEwan University equips you with the essential skills to launch, manage and scale your business.



Online, self-paced learning.



Earn a recognized digital certificate from MacEwan (issued by MyCreds®.)



Four distinct learning paths.

REGISTER NOW

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN



Not sure which path is best for you? Take our 1-minute entrepreneur assessment quiz to find out!

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▼ Welcome!

Co



Entrepreneur Fundamentals

Service Business Path

General Announcements

Discussion Board

Welcome to Entrepreneur Fundamentals! The Service Business Path focuses on service-based business skills.

It includes the following courses:

1. Sustainable Business
2. Social Entrepreneurship
3. Small Business Analytics
4. Digital Marketing
5. Project Management Essentials

Note: Start with the Introduction Module, complete the 5 courses in any order that you prefer, and finish with the Outro Module. All course projects must be complete in order to earn your certificate.

There is a bonus course called *Intellectual Property for New Innovators* included before the Outro Module. If your business includes intellectual property be sure to review this helpful course material. This bonus course does not have a project component and is not required for the completion of your certificate.

Entrepreneur Fundamentals: Outro Module

25% COMPLETE

Client Journey: Where are you
now?

Local Entrepreneurs

Funding

Moving Forward

Lesson 2 of 4

Local Entrepreneurs

The Impact of Community

Being an entrepreneur can be
challenging, especially when you are
doing it alone. There is a thriving
community here in Edmonton of

Entrepreneur Fundamentals: Outro Module

25% COMPLETE

Client Journey: Where are you now?

Local Entrepreneurs

Funding

Moving Forward

Here are a list of some of the current groups located in Edmonton

Click on each tab to learn more about the local companies.

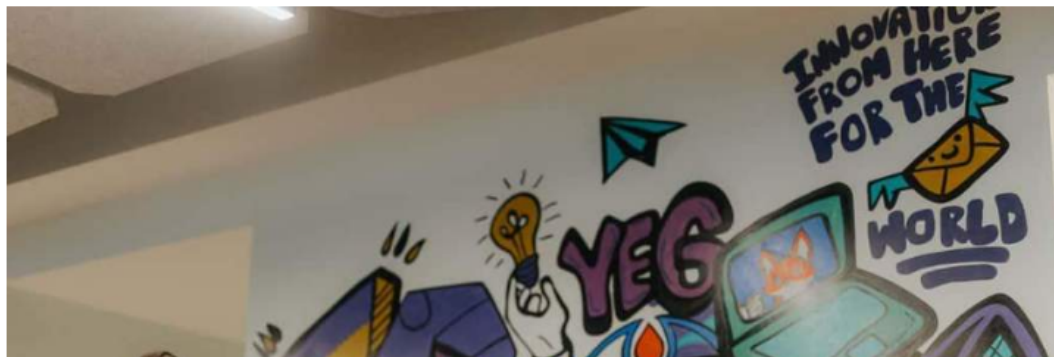
EDMONTON UNLIMITED

STARTUP TNT

TECH WEDNESDAYS

This is an organization built to support Edmonton's founders. There's hotdesking space, community coffee, programs and networking opportunities!

Link: www.Edmontonunlimited.com



Entrepreneur Fundamentals: Introduction Module

0% COMPLETE

≡ Welcome

≡ Definitions

≡ Your Journey

≡ Customer Discovery

≡ The Leaner Canvas

≡ Case Study

MacEwan Ventures

Did you know that MacEwan University offers a free 8-week entrepreneurship course called **MacEwan Ventures**? This workshop series is a fantastic way to test the desirability, feasibility and viability of any business idea. This is available to you before, during and after your studies!



Courses under MacEwan Ventures are **FREE** for Entrepreneurs!



The reality is that *most* startups fail. Typically this is because founders haven't done enough to find out *who* their customer is and if they are solving the right problems, as all businesses are solving some type of problem. Our job as founders is to find the **right solution** to

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EF - Service Business Path / [Welcome!](#) / Discussion Board



Discussion Board

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This space is used for connecting with other learners in the course. Share resources, business ideas, and build community.



Next Areas for Exploration

- **Greater Customization**
 - Enabled by changes to the student enrollment system
- **Transferability Across Institutions**
 - Within the non-credit space
- **Pathways from Non-Credit to Credit**
 - Clear progression opportunities for learners

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Dr. Lisa Rochman

Dean, School of Continuing Education

MacEwan University, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

macewan.ca

macewan.ca/SCE



MacEwan
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF CONTINUING
EDUCATION



James Madison University

- Public Research 2 institution
- Harrisonburg, VA
- 23,000 students
- School of Professional & Continuing Education (2021)
- Significant alumni base in Northern Virginia



Microcredentials

- Taskforce (2023-24)
- Non-credit only
- Unique to JMU



SPCE Strategy

- Alternative revenue
- Faculty first
- Responsiveness
- Geographic expansion

SPCE Current Programming Partnerships Across Academic

| Affairs | Youth Programs | Non-Credit Professional Development | Adult Degree Program | Credit Programs <i>(in Partnership with JMU Colleges)</i> | Lifelong Learning Institute |
|---|----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| College of Visual & Performing Arts | | | X (1 course) | | |
| College of Education | | X (Grow Your Own Modules) | X (several) | X | |
| College of Business | | X (Supply-Chain) | X (2 courses) | | |
| College of Health & Behavioral Studies | | | X (1 course) | X | X (Dietetics) |
| College of Integrated Science & Engineering | X (2 camps) | | X (Several Geog courses) | X | |
| College of Arts & Letters | | | X (Several GEN Ed & SCOM) | | X (ICAD) |
| College of Science & Math | X (1 camp) | X (Medical Grad Exams Test Prep) | X (Math Gen Ed) | X | |
| Honors College | X | | | | |
| Libraries | | | X (Several teach courses) | | |
| University Studies | | X (CARS) | X (OVN) | | |
| The Graduate School | | | | X | |

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New programs

- Artificial Intelligence for Executives
- Government Contracting
- Dukes Uncorked
- Illicit Trade Executive Institute: 12/01-12/05
- Blockchain Networking Lecture Series



JMU School of Professional & Continuing Education

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