



Meaningful Credentials: What are Students Earning upon Graduation?

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This session

- Why credentials are important
- What know about credentials currently offered by TPSIDs
- How to develop a meaningful credential



The TPSID National Coordinating Center at Think College is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMass Boston.

The Center is funded by the Office of Postsecondary Education Grant #P407B100002.



What is a credential?

- A credential is a verification of qualification or competency issued to a student by an accredited institution of higher education (IHE) – typically a diploma, certificate, or degree.
- Students earn the credential by following and completing a prescribed course of study

Shanley, J., Weir, C., Grigal, M. (2014). Credential Action Planning Tool for Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities. Boston, MA, Think College, University of Massachusetts Boston



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What issues are you interested in related to student credentials?

- Getting a credential approved by my college/university
- Measuring progress toward the credential
- Passing the licensing exams related to a labor credential
- Making our credential meaningful to employers
- Transferability to further postsecondary study
- Other??



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Why are the credentials students with ID earn important?



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Higher Education Credentials Vocabulary

ARE THESE TERMS FAMILIAR?

Postsecondary award, diploma, or certificate

Degree

Micro-credential

IHE-approved

Industry-recognized



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Options for Credentials

- Program creates a new credential that only their students earn.
 - Aligned with an industry-recognized credential
 - Certificate of completion of a program of studies
- Program creates a new credential that all students can earn
- Offer access to an existing credential already approved by and awarded by the IHE



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Credentials offered by TPSIDs 2016-17

47 sites offered **60** total credentials
11 sites offered more than 1 credential

56 credentials were postsecondary awards/certificates

4 credentials were micro-credentials (badges)

8 programs had students who earned credentials that are available to all students



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Credentials offered by TPSIDs 2016-17

34 credentials (57%) were approved by IHE governance

6 (11%) were aligned with industry-recognized credential

Example: National Retail Foundation

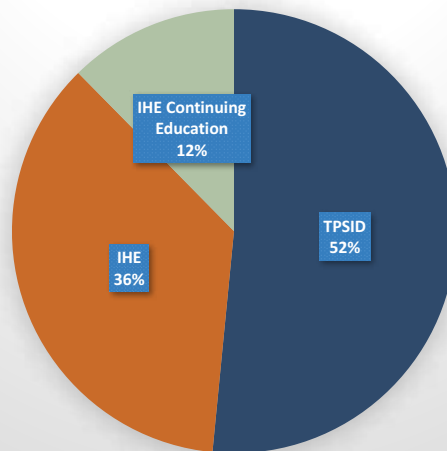
19 (32%) can be earned by non-TPSID students



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CREDENTIAL Awarded By:



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College to Career Experience Certificate of Accomplishment



1. 26 hours of coursework – either for credit or audit. Individually determined in relation to student goals
2. Minimum of 3 supervised internships related to career goal (paid or unpaid)
3. Student portfolio of accomplishment. Portfolio will include examples of assignments or projects for courses taken for credit; modified course assignments or projects for audited classes; examples of skills obtained through internships; and may also include examples of leadership or service learning activities on campus or in the community, extra-curricular involvement, etc.



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UP Program Certificate of Accomplishment



- Awarded after 2-years based on satisfactory completion of five program components. These components include the following:
 - Personal Development Skills
 - Community Participation Skills
 - Vocational Preparation Skills
 - Social Participation and Learning
 - Course Auditing - 3 to 4 courses per semester
- Individual objectives written each semester for each student in an Individual Plan for College Participation
- Students are eligible for a Certificate of Accomplishment based on the following criteria:
 - Completion of 1800 hours of learning activities over a four semester period
 - Achievement of at least 80% of the objectives per semester within each component of the plan; and
 - Recommendation for a UP Certificate of Accomplishment by the program coordinator and Steering Committee.



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**Credential Action Planning Tool for
Postsecondary Education Programs for
Students with Intellectual Disabilities**

think COLLEGE!


By Judy Shonley, Cate Weir and Meg Grisol




Planning



- Convene a team to develop the credential
- Formalize the course of study upon which the credential will be based
- Identify a credential title
- Learn what other postsecondary programs for students with ID are doing to create a credential
- Review guidance for credential development provided by the Higher Education Act


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Obtaining IHE approval



- Understand your institutional policies and procedures related to establishing a credential
- Identify the office at your institution that is responsible for student credentials
- Determine if the IHE has an existing credential that can be adopted or modified to serve as the credential for students in your program
- Speak with staff involved with institutional accreditation to determine how the credential you are developing may relate to program and/or institutional accreditation policies and procedures
- Gather information about how the credential may affect participation of your program in Title IV Federal Student Aid
 - Design the credential to meet CTP requirements



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Implementation and Evaluation



- Determine and create marketing and informational communications about the credential
- Establish and implement an evaluation plan



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Resources

- [Creative Approaches to Meaningful Credentials](#) – April 2017 webinar presented by Barbara Bookman, Martha Mock, and Carrie Shockley
- [Credential Action Planning Tool](#)
- [Insight Brief on Credential Development](#)
- [Article on the micro-credentials movement in higher education](#)



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