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Microcredentials ?

A microcredential is any one of a number of new certifications that covers more than a single course but is less than a full degree. They offer students and work professionals alike a way to build up their resumes field-specific skills.

	Platform	Microcredentials
2014	— Coursera	Specialization, MasterTrack Certificate, Professional Certificate
2013	— edX	XSeries, MicroMasters, Professional Certificate
2014	— Udacity	Nanodegree
	FutureLearn	Program, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma
	Kadenze	Program



Microcredentials on the Market Today



Introduction

Disadvantages

- The role of microcredentials will play in higher education and workforce development is not clear.
- Microcredentials haven't establish internal consistency within the various types of microcredentials yet, so it will be hard to help both learners and employers to find value in these new certifications.

Advantages

- The value in credentials that are smaller than degrees, especially as it begins to coalesce around models with recognizable features, structures, and meaning.

Microcredentials in Aggregate

Microcredential Type	Average Price	Average # Months to Complete (Minimum) ^[2]	Average Minimum Number Included Effort Per Week	in the Analysis ^[3]
Coursera Specialization	\$245.51	5	3 hours	243
edX XSeries	\$267.62	5	5 hours	30
FutureLearn Program	\$540.33	4	4 hours	28
edX Professional Certificate	\$542.51	5	3 hours	56
Kadenze Program	\$700.00	3	9 hours	17
Udacity Nanodegree	\$887.03	4	10 hours	27
edX MicroMasters	\$962.98	9	6 hours	46
Coursera MasterTrack	\$2,596.67	5	6 hours	3
Coursera Professional Certificate	\$3,121.99	6	9 hours	3
FutureLearn Graduate Certificate	\$8,626.98	7	Not given	7
FutureLearn Graduate Diploma	\$17,504.40	12	Not given	2

Common point

- be structured as a series of courses, requiring less than a year (usually around 6 months) to complete, with prices ranging from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars
- Learners can choose to pay for each course individually, or can pay upfront for the full series at a slight discount.
- Most (though not all) microcredentials cover work-relevant subjects such as business, computer science, and data analysis.

Microcredentials in Aggregate

Coursera Specialization	Some potential to receive university credit for programs associated with particular degree programs (e.g. the iMBA from the University of Illinois)
edX XSeries	No for-credit options
FutureLearn Program	Some include options to earn university credit
edX Professional Certificate	At least 2 offer some option for professionals of a certain background to earn credit
Kadenze Program	Some include options to earn university credit
Udacity Nanodegree	No for-credit options
edX MicroMasters	Almost all MicroMasters include options to earn credit (or become eligible for accelerated completion) towards particular master's degree programs
Coursera MasterTrack	All MasterTrack programs include an option to earn credit towards a particular degree program
Coursera Professional Certificate	Two of the three Professional Certificate programs currently available offer options to earn credit towards a degree
FutureLearn Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma	Both of these microcredentials are "for-credit" in the Australian system of postgraduate credentials

A summary of the microcredentials that offer some possibility of earning university credit.

Variability in Microcredentials

Microcredential Type	Price Range	Range of Minimum # Months to Complete	Lowest Minimum Effort Per Week	Highest Maximum Effort Per Week
Coursera Specialization	\$27 – \$636	1-15	1 hour	40 hours
edX XSeries	\$90 – \$594	2-10	1 hour	10 hours
FutureLearn Program	\$147 – \$1,685	2-12	2 hours	6 hours
edX Professional Certificate	\$68 – \$2,340	1-15	1 hour	13 hours
Kadenze Program	\$300 – \$900	2-7	6 hours	12 hours
Udacity Nanodegree	\$199 – \$2,400	1-8	5 hours	15 hours
edX MicroMasters	\$536 – \$1,500	3-15	2 hours	20 hours
Coursera MasterTrack	\$2,000 – \$3,474	4-6	4 hours	15 hours
Coursera Professional Certificate	\$406 – \$5,980	4-8	8 hours	10 hours
FutureLearn Graduate Certificate	\$6,406 – \$11,613	6-12	Not given	Not given
FutureLearn Graduate Diploma	\$15,320 – \$19689	12	Not given	Not given

These ranges demonstrate the vast differences between even microcredentials that carry the same brand name.

Variability in Microcredentials

Udacity Nanodegree	Business Analysis	Artificial Intelligence
	3 months	3 months
	\$599	\$799
Coursera Specialization	10 hours/week	12-15 hours/week
	5 4-week courses (est. 5 months)	5 4-week courses (est. 4 months)
	\$79	\$49/month, est. \$196
edX Professional Certificate	1-6 hours/week	3-6 hours/week
	1 course, 4 weeks	9 6-week courses + final project (est. 1 year)
	\$60	\$990
	1-2 hours/week	8-16 hours/week



Looking at a single subject, there is little **consistency** across the different types of microcredentials when it comes to length, price, and level of effort required.

Problems

- With so much variability, how would a prospective learner choose among the various options?
- Without a detailed understanding of these options, how would an employer interpret or compare these microcredentials when they come up on a resume?

Summary

- In summary, this analysis points to a lack of consistency among microcredentials, making it difficult to compare them or interpret their significance, for prospective learners and employers alike.

Case Study

■ An Ivy League MOOC-based Computer Science Degree for Non-CS Majors

— 11th MOOC-based online degree:

Master of Computer and Information Technology (MCIT):

MCIT is a graduate degree for students without a computer science background, though you still need to have a bachelor's degree of some sort to be accepted into the program.

- CIT 591 Introduction to Software Development
- CIT 592 Mathematical Foundations of Computer Science
- CIT 593 Introduction to Computer Systems
- CIT 594 Data Structures & Software Design
- CIT 595 Computer Systems Programming
- CIT 596 Algorithms & Computation

▶ The MCIT degree program costs a total of **\$26,300** (\$25,000 (tuition) + \$1,300 (fees) and take anywhere between 20 to 40 months. The offline counterpart of the same degree costs around **\$75,000**.



Case Study

■ Y Combinator's Startup School MOOC To Give Out \$10,000 to 100 Companies

Y Combinator (YC): the leading startup incubator has announced its second edition of Startup School MOOC. The MOOC is YC's attempt to scale their investment + mentorship program.

- Last year, over 13,000 companies applied to participate in Startup School and, 95 YC alumni volunteered their time to advise over 2,800 of those companies participating across 141 countries. 1,587 (56%) of the companies completed the course.
- This time around 100 of the most promising companies that complete the course will receive \$10,000 in equity-free funding.

Case Study

■ Israeli Government To Launch MOOC Platform for Speakers of Hebrew and Arabic

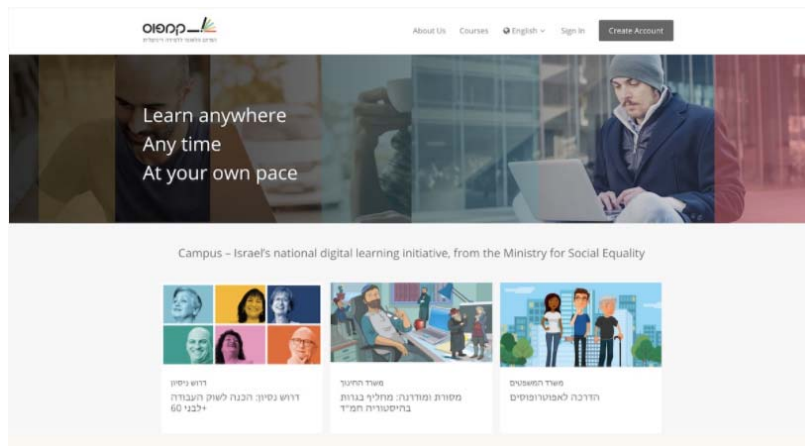
Campus-il: an online learning platform run by Digital Israel, an initiative of the Israeli Ministry of Social Equality.

- **Goal:** to “reduce social gaps, increase the equality of opportunities for different segments of the population, and to provide flexible training solutions for an ever-evolving labor market.”

platform	Coursera, edX	Campus-il
range	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Big• a few of courses• international audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• smaller• with fewer courses• more narrowly defined audiences (Israeli audience)
Course name	IsraelX	courses
Language	English	Hebrew or Arabic.

Case Study

■ Israeli Government To Launch MOOC Platform for Speakers of Hebrew and Arabic



- The platform also includes courses designed to serve underprivileged communities, on topics such as digital literacy and financial literacy.
- The Israeli government can save money by using the Campus-il platform.
- Campus-il is currently in a pilot phase, with an official launch planned for the end of 2018 or early 2019. However, the site is already live, and new courses are being added as they become available, with approximately 50 courses currently available.



Ten Most Popular MOOCs Starting in August 2018

MOOC Tracker

MOOC Tracker was created to solve these two problems – **rapid growth of courses** and **unpredictable schedules**. It is a notification/reminder service for MOOCs.

Ten Most Popular MOOCs Starting in August 2018

