



CONCEPT

Community of Practice: A thought leadership and a practitioner support group for professionals.

INSIGHT

Faculty and staff are highly invested in working together to build learners' marketable skills and award digital badges.

MICRO-CREDENTIAL INSIGHTS

**BADGE PRACTITIONER
COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**

THE ALAMO COLLEGES STORY

OPPORTUNITY FACULTY UNCERTAINTY TOWARDS DIGITAL BADGES

Alamo Colleges needed to train faculty and staff to become badge practitioners - those who would interact with students on digital badges - in order to scale digital badge offerings in a way that would be learner-centered. Faculty had concerns about the value of digital badges and how this effort would impact the learner experience and faculty workload.

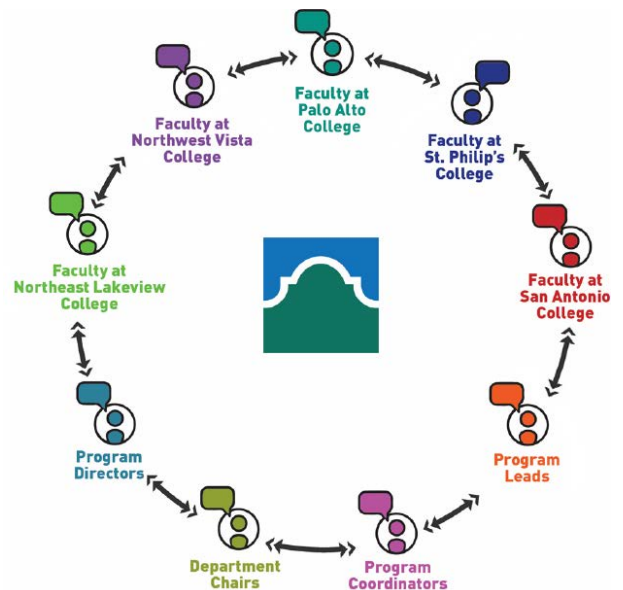
FACULTY AND STAFF TRAINING COURSE + BADGE INITIATIVE

To address concerns and engage faculty in the process, Alamo Colleges provided a 10-week online training, which guided faculty through course redesign and digital badge creation. While much of the training was asynchronous, there were two synchronous virtual sessions that brought faculty and instructional designers together with their peers to share ideas and learn from each other.

PIVOT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Quite unexpectedly, a community of practice formed around these badge practitioners. More than 25 faculty and staff across all five colleges indicated interest in continuing to work and learn together as they embarked in their new roles as badge specialists and coaches.

Alamo Colleges Online quickly asked a faculty member to lead and facilitate the group in order to support its formation and continuation.



LEARNING EXPERTISE AND ADVOCACY

The badge practitioner community of practice, which began in 2021, has become an important source of guidance and advocacy on digital badges. The community of practice simply aims to share their experience, identify best practices, and provide feedback to each other. However, the broader Alamo Colleges community has significantly benefited from the group's insights and suggestions. The community of practice is now a guiding force on the direction and priorities for Alamo Colleges' badging initiative. Community of practice members are serving as enthusiastic champions of this work across our institutions.

UP NEXT ONGOING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Alamo Colleges highly values the investments and impact of the badge practitioner community of practice. More than 1,200 badges have been awarded to Alamo Colleges' learners in 2021 and 2022. Faculty and staff who have gone through the badging training have also received digital badges to demonstrate their new skills.

As the community of practice continues to grow and work internally, we will turn to them for their thought leadership, to share their learnings with our broader internal community, and to shape our badge initiative based on their collective experience and guidance.

HOW TO BUILD A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

1. Actively involve faculty and staff in the development of training opportunities for new initiatives.
2. Encourage participants to come together to learn and share as they implement what they have learned.
3. Provide structure by empowering a faculty or staff to lead the community of practice.
4. Schedule opportunities to engage in conversations with practitioners. Value their time by asking for help with tough questions around the strategic or technical application.
5. Take action on the feedback received from practitioners.



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