Taxonomy of Terms*

The following list provides the UWM community with a common taxonomy around microcredentials, building on the quality work of the Lumina Foundation and others.

[1] Badge: use of digital technologies to represent competencies and various learning achievements; electronic badges should include meta-data on the evidence of learning and link back to sponsoring institution and evaluation criteria.

Competency: Learnable, measurable and/or observable knowledge and skill-sets gained.
Degree: title given by an institution (usually a college or university) that has been granted the authority by a state, a recognized Native American tribe, or the federal government to confer such credentials. A degree represents satisfactory accomplishments within an accepted body of knowledge.

Microcredential: Credentials that are generally smaller than a minor, certificate or degree and narrower in focus. For example, a microcredential could be three courses in length (9 credits). Microcredentials are designed to help students meet academic and career goals and to help them stand-out in a competitive job market. They are intentionally explicit about skills and competencies mastered.

Stackable Credential: part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual's qualifications and help that individual move along a career pathway and further education. For example, a 30-credit master's degree could be comprised of three 9-credit microcredentials plus a capstone course.

All definitions are based on Lumina/Connecting Credentials, save certificate (New York State Education Department); and MOOC (Educause)

*Modified from SUNY (https://system.suny.edu/academic-affairs/microcredentials/definitions/ and https://az659834.vo.msecnd.net/eventsairsthcusprod/production-sunycpdpublic/194d076e93b04c7ab929b8cd00ac4d6f)