Digital Badges in Academic Libraries: Perspectives and Opportunities

May 4, 2023
Emily Rimland, MLIS
Interim Department Head,
Library Learning Services
Penn State
emily@psu.edu
Wendy Pothier, MSLS, MS

Associate Professor
Business & Economics Librarian
University of New Hampshire

wendy.pothier@unh.edu
Michael Gutierrez
Director of Library Operations and Access Services
Minnesota State University- Mankato
Digital Badges in Academic Libraries

We will share:

- Insights from two institutions’ digital badge programs
- Opportunities offered by the Association of College and Research Libraries’ Digital Badge Interest Group
@ Penn State

- Large research university but no information literacy requirement
- Created badges to be used in courses
- Started in 2013, grew to 15 badges
- Initially used a “home grown” badge platform
- In transition to a new platform
@ Penn State, lessons learned

- Start small with a pilot program
- Have the badge be “meaningful”
  - See: “Employer Perceptions of Critical Information Literacy Skills and Digital Badges”
- Align them with standards or strategic goals
  - E.g. Bloom’s taxonomy
Badges @ University of New Hampshire

- R1 research university (15,000 FTE)
- Library badges began in 2017
  - Badgr platform
- Campus wide pilot 2019
  - Credly platform
- Two digital badges for first year business research program (500 students)
  - Library Research Basics
  - Market Research Badges
- Articulating workforce skill development
Lessons from UNH

- Shared vocabulary, taxonomy, branding, and platform across institution provides a foundation for growth and success
- Integration into business program has been a key to success for the library badges
- Provided a sustainable alternative to library instruction for solo subject librarian
ACRL’s Digital Badge Interest Group

Mission: Provide a forum for discussion and the exchange of ideas related to digital badges and micro-credentials, particularly as they relate to libraries (of all types) and information literacy.

- Over 500 current members
- Opportunities
  - Virtual programs (Spring and Fall)
  - Discussion board (ALA Connect)
  - https://acrl.libguides.com/digitalbadgeinterestgroup
THANK YOU