

Executive Summary

Austin is a hotbed for technology and innovation. Due to the number of tech companies in Austin, the city has been nicknamed “Silicon Hills.” Data from Burning Glass reports reveals, “more than 8 in 10 middle-skill jobs in the U.S. (82%) require digital skills” (Bradley, Restuccia, Rudnicki, & Bittle, 2017). There is an intersectional influence of factors that support the need for bolstering digital fluency skills - for those reskilling, upskilling, and for almost anyone else. Due to the rapid digitalization of the workforce, both opportunity and inequity have been paradoxically amplified, making it a critical priority for ACC to address the digital fluency skills gap to ensure collegiate success and economic mobility. Therefore, ACC’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), *Digital Fluency and Innovation* (commonly referenced as *Digital Fluency* for sake of brevity), aims to address digital inequity.

ACC defines *Digital Fluency* as the user’s ability to effectively transfer digital skills from one technology to another to problem solve and communicate (Goodfellow, 2011; Bergson-Shilcock, 2020). ACC will address digital inequity by committing resources for the creation of an Office of Digital Fluency and Innovation and by offering its diverse population four microcertificates – each with three to five microcredentials for a total of 16 microcredentials to improve digital fluency and critical professional skills. ACC’s no-cost, non-credit model utilizes best practices, such as Competency-Based Education, Open Educational Resources, and Digital Badges, while providing a flexible yet rigorous learning environment. The four microcertificates and 16 microcredentials are as follows:

- **Fundamentals of Computer Skills for Job Readiness:** *Intro to Computers and Internet Search (1), Word Processing (2), Presentation Software (3), Spreadsheets (4), Database Management (5)*
- **Web Presence Fundamentals:** *Web Builder (6), Photoshop (7), HTML/CSS (8), Web Analytics (9)*
- **Interactive Presentations for Effective Communication:** *Advanced PowerPoint (10), Interactive Media (11), Social Media (12), Data Analytics (13)*
- **Problem Solving with Systems Thinking and Technology:** *Systems Thinking (14), Problem Solving with AI (15), Project Management (16)*

A microcredential may be assigned by a faculty member as co-curricular with a contextualized assignment, or they may recommend that students enroll in a microcredential to help improve class performance. In addition, a student may voluntarily enroll in a microcredential without faculty intervention. Digital Navigators will act as facilitators to support and guide students, as well as provide early intervention to increase persistence rates. Once a student successfully completes a microcredential, they will be awarded with a portable digital badge as proof of skill that can be published socially. ACC’s QEP, *Digital Fluency and Innovation*, will ensure that students can not only participate fully in an increasingly digital economy, but also have the skills to advance in a collegiate setting and the flexibility to move from one job to the next, providing greater mobility in career paths.