Glossary

Backpack: Where earners store, organize, and share badges earned in their Badgr account.

Badge Awarder: Awards badges to those who meet requirements after the badge has been approved and entered in the Badgr platform.

Badging Contact: Provides information about the CSU badge approval process and answers questions for those in the CSU interested in developing badges.

Badge Recipient: Individual who is awarded a badge after meeting specified badge criteria.

Badge Requestor: One who proposes a new badge.

Badging Admin: Enters approved badges and pathways into the Badgr platform.

Badging Review Board (BRB): The BRB is led by a BRB Chair and consists of experts from the fields participating in the UT Austin Digital Badging initiative, based on recommendations from dean's offices. BRB members evaluate badge proposals.

BRB Administrator: A staff member from Extended Education Ventures (EEV) who provides administrative support for the BRB, maintains general documentation related to badging, and answers questions for CSU designates.

Certificate: Broad term describing a credit or noncredit credential that is less than a degree. Using "certificate" as a stand-alone term is problematic because it may be conflated with a credit-bearing credential. As a result, most noncredit certificates are framed with qualifiers such as "professional certificate" or "continuing education certificate." If use of the term cannot be avoided, badge issuers are urged to provide qualifying language that clarifies the noncredit nature of the credential.

Competence Badges: Verifiable digital records of assessed mastery of knowledge, skills, and/or abilities for a given context.

Completion Badges: Verifiable digital records that acknowledge the completion of an assignment, training, or other activity.

Concentration: An approved and defined group of courses within a major published in the university catalog that allows a student to focus in a particular area of that major. As an understood component of UT academic offerings, badge issuers are urged to avoid use of the term or use it only in ways that won't be mistaken for concentrations that are officially recognized by the University.

Core: Use of the word "core" in university catalogs is reserved for reference to institutional core curriculum, which is regulated by and reported to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. As such, it should be avoided by badge issuers or used only in ways that won't be mistaken for the core curriculum.

Course or Coursework: Generally understood to denote a specific portion of a credit-bearing degree program. Similar to "certificates," badge issuers should consider using qualifying language to clarify that courses associated with badges are not for credit.

Credit: Credits at UT Austin represent an hour of instruction over a 15-week period in a semester system. Credit hours are applied toward the total number of hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award. The term credit should not be associated with badging as it may be misleading or result in inaccurate expectations.

CSU Approver: Reviews and approves badges within the CSU.

CSUs: Colleges, schools and units are the entities responsible for issuing badges, awarding badges, and maintaining documentation for awarded badges

Digital Badge: Type of digital credential in the form of an image that represents and communicates the earner's achievement. Badges have underlying verifiable metadata containing detailed information about the badge.

Evidence: Evidence is proof that the recipient satisfied the earning criteria for a badge.

Foundation Badge: A badge with no prerequisite that serves as the prerequisite for another badge. A foundation badge is always part of a pathway.

Issuer: Within a CSU, there can be one or more collections of badges. Each collection of badges is considered in Badgr to be an "issuer."

Metadata: A set of data that describes and gives information about other data. Within the context of digital badging, metadata is the data that combines with the badge image to produce a digital credential.

Milestone Badge: A badge that has a prerequisite and also serves as the prerequisite for another badge. A milestone badge is always part of a pathway.

Pathway: A hierarchical arrangement of two or more badges based on prerequisites. Pathways at UT Austin may include up to three levels: foundation, milestone, and terminal badges.

Program: Catch-all word used to generically describe a category defined by a common grouping such as academic or educational program, funding source, non-academic program, or characteristic that is institutionally approved and managed with oversight. Despite the term's generic usage, it is specifically defined in law and regulation and should be avoided by badge issuers unless qualified as a noncredit-bearing program.

Specialization: Refers to a course or sequence of courses that is defined and offered by an academic unit (department, program, school, or college) but does not appear on the transcript as a separate credential. Badge issuers are asked to avoid use of the term or use it only in ways that won't be mistaken for a University-recognized specialization.

Student: Badges may be offered to members of the public who are not currently enrolled students, and participation in badging does not constitute student status at UT Austin. To avoid confusion with those individuals who have been admitted into the institution and are seeking a degree, use an alternative term, for example, "learner," to describe those individuals who are seeking badges. This is especially important in marketing and advertising materials.

Terminal Badge: A badge that is either a stand-alone badge or the culmination of a pathway with prerequisite(s). The terminal badge, which is usually the one shared on social media, contains the name of the achievement as well as the name of the CSU or badge issuer.