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Micro-credentials in health and business earn provincial funding support

Advanced Education awards \$838,750 to support new programs in trauma-informed care and personal financial planning

The University of Lethbridge has once again been successful in securing funding for the creation of new micro-credentials, earning \$838,750 from Advanced Education, part of an \$8-million investment in micro-credential programming across the province.

The ULethbridge funding will support the creation of a Trauma-Informed Care Micro-Credential in the Faculty of Health Sciences and a Personal Financial Planner Micro-Credential in the Dhillon School of Business. In all, the Government of Alberta announced recently it would support the development of 69 micro-credential programs at 21 post-secondary institutions across the province. The ULethbridge award is the second highest in the province.



“Continuing education and non-traditional programming have long been a way for the University to connect further with our communities and encourage lifelong learning,” says Dr. Erasmus Okine, ULethbridge provost and vice-president (academic). “Through micro-credentials, we can reach even more Albertans who are looking to upgrade their skills to enhance their careers or change course and meet the new demands of an ever-shifting job market.”

The Personal Financial Planning micro-credential, comprising nine short online courses, will allow individuals aspiring to a career in personal financial planning to pursue the prestigious Qualified Associate Financial Planner™ and the Certified Financial Planner® designations offered by FP Canada (pending curriculum approval by FP Canada).

“This is a tremendous opportunity for career switchers, existing students, and individuals with degrees in any discipline to open doors to a rewarding high-demand career helping individuals and families have a more secure financial future,” says Dr. Kerry Godfrey, dean of the Dhillon School of Business.

The Trauma-Informed Care Micro-Credential will feature an approach that emphasizes a different vision for how to care for people not only as health professionals but as human beings. The program consists of seven different learning series where students will acquire a better understanding of the sources from which troubling behaviours occur and diseases spring in the wounded human soul. The learnings will help guide people toward a path of individual and collective healing.

“Our schools are full of children with learning disabilities and mental health issues that are trauma-based but the average teacher never gets a single lecture on trauma. Our health-care system is full of clients with debilitating mental health issues and substance abuse issues that are largely the result of trauma, but the average health provider never gets a single course on trauma,” says Dr. Claudia Steinke (MSc '01), associate professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences Nursing Program. “Most health-care providers are untrained to offer the support that is necessary for the well-being of the traumatized individual. I believe if we had a more trauma-informed society, we would have a society that is much more compassionate. This micro-credential program will help to fill a current gap that exists in our training of health professionals.”

Micro-credential programs support the Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs strategy by providing students with flexible and innovative learning opportunities to help them develop skills for jobs. The programs will align with priority industry sectors outlined in Alberta’s Recovery Plan, including health, technology, agri-business, aviation, veterinary medicine and software engineering, among others.

“Micro-credentials empower Albertans to develop the job-ready skills they need to be successful and build new careers, while ensuring employers have access to the talent they need to grow their business,” says Minister of Advanced Education, Demetrios Nicolaides. “I’m thrilled we’re able to expand this program in a meaningful way that supports our students, post-secondary institutions, employers and industry to secure Alberta’s future.”

In 2021, the Government of Alberta had its first call for proposals for micro-credentials and ULEthbridge received \$550,000 to develop micro-credentials for the film and creative industry. The Visual Design Micro-Credential has since been created and includes classes such as digital culture and communication; digital video storytelling; foundations of new media; introduction to web development; mobile media; and visual communications basic. The program is set to launch in January 2023.

To view online: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/unews/article/micro-credentials-health-and-business-earn-provincial-funding-support>

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