



wcet

Webcast

Can Microcredentials Re-engage 40.4 Million Learners?

May 7, 2024



Hosted in partnership with:

straighterline



⋮ Today's Moderator

Megan Raymond

Senior Director, Membership and Programs

WCET

mraymond@wiche.edu



Speakers



Janelle Elias

VP, Strategy & Advancement
Interim VP, Academic Affairs
Rio Salado College



Noah Geisel

Micro-credentials
Program Manager
University of Colorado Boulder



Amy Smith

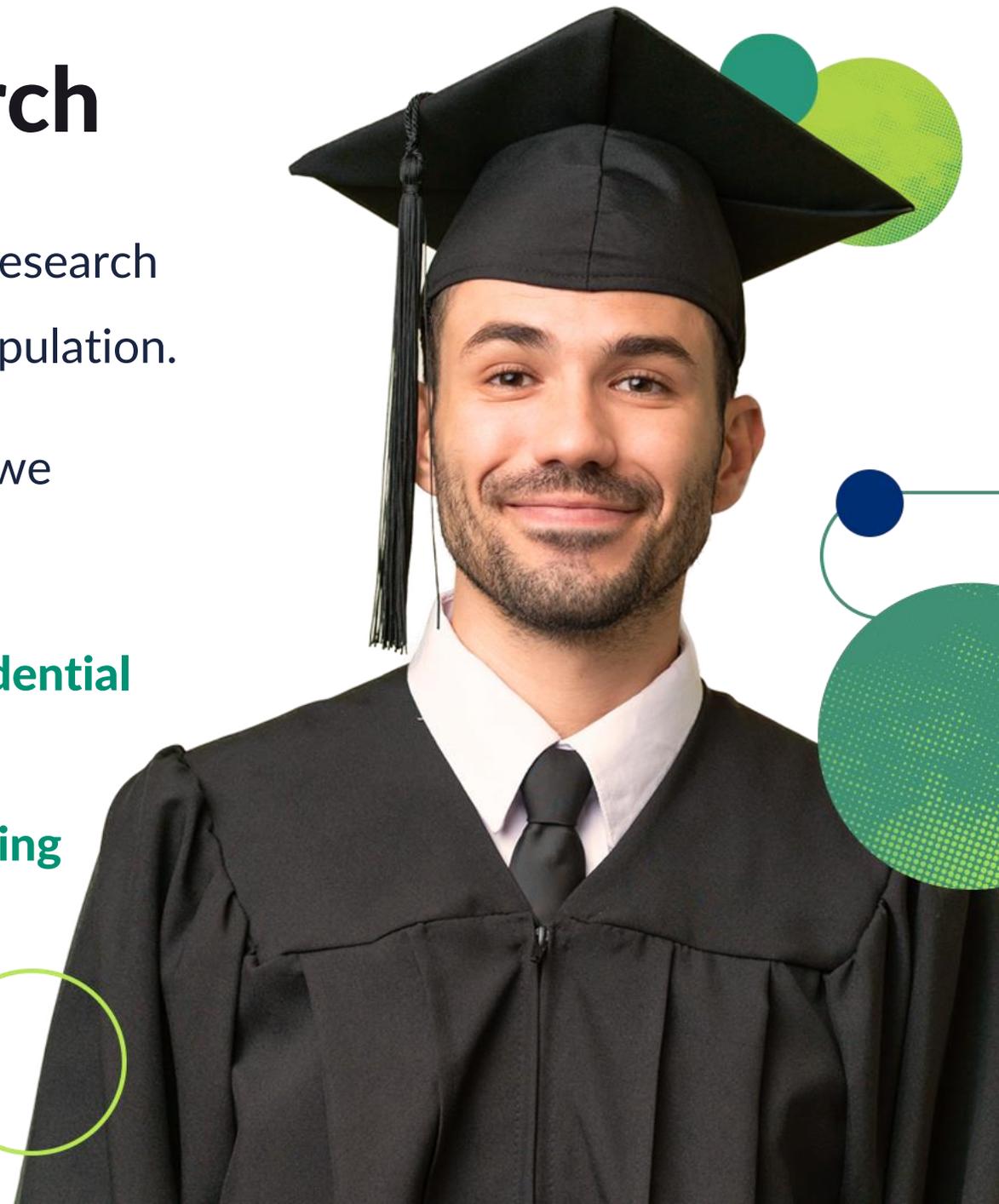
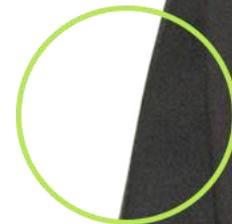
Chief Learning
Officer
StraighterLine

Disengaged Learner Research

In 2021, StraighterLine conducted its first empirical research into the 40.4 million Some College, No Credential population.

After learning why SCNC disengage from higher ed, we wanted to ask two ultimate questions:

1. How can higher ed get the some college, no credential population to return?
2. What role do alternative credentials play in getting working adults to return to college?



Persona Insights: Disengaged Learners and Return Paths to Higher Education



Sean
(n=305)

Whitney
(n=372)

Sandra
(n=336)

Frank
(n=57)

Top Reason for Program Disengagement

Financial reasons
(37%)

Financial reasons
(58%)

Family reasons or
commitments
(41%)

Wasn't the right
fit (28%)

Reached a Point in Career Where They Feel Stuck (Strongly Agree/Agree)

50%

54%

38%

32%

Likelihood to Pursue an Undergraduate Degree Through Degree Completion Program (Extremely/Very Likely)

35%

50%

7%

0%

Top Motivating Factor to Enroll in a Degree Completion Program

Improve salary
(38%)

Improve salary
(73%)

Personal goal
(39%)

Love for learning
(23%)

Effect of Credits for Prior Learning on Interest in Pursuing Undergraduate Degree (Greatly Increase/Increase Interest)

76%

96%

71%

20%

Effect of Stackable Microcredentials on Interest in Pursuing Undergraduate Degree (Greatly Increase/Increase Interest)

78%

94%

66%

14%



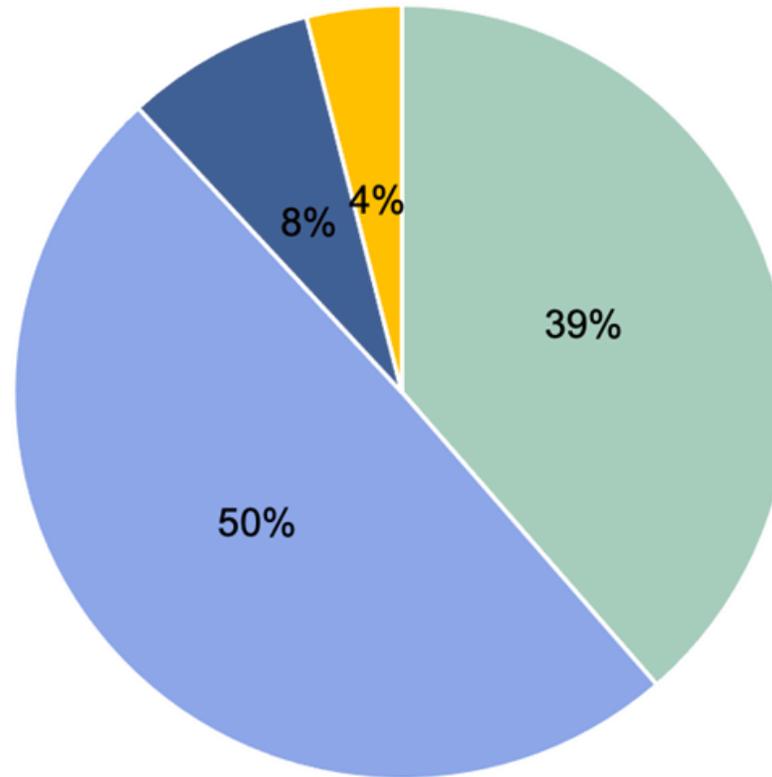
Current Careers

straighterline

proprietary and confidential

Career Level

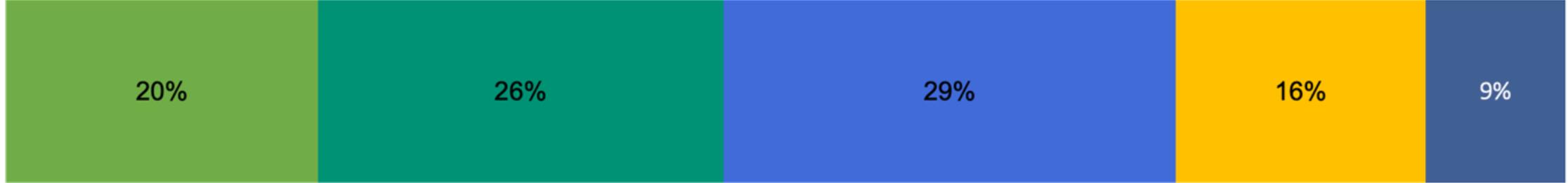
Which of the following best describes your career level? (n=1,100)



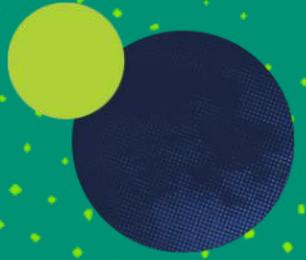
■ Early or entry-level ■ Mid-level ■ Director or senior level ■ C-level

Career Stagnation

Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statement: I've reached a point in my career where I feel as though I'm stuck or don't have the opportunity to advance. (n=1,100)



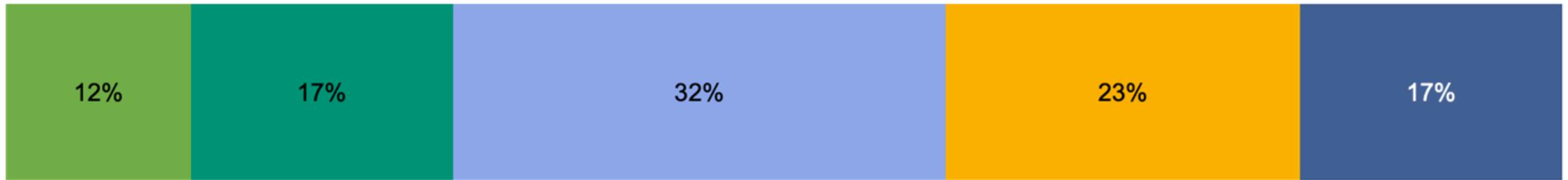
■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree



Interest in Degree Completion Programs

Likelihood of Pursuing a Degree Completion Program

How likely would you be to pursue an undergraduate degree through a degree completion program? (n=1,097)



■ Extremely likely ■ Very likely ■ Somewhat likely ■ Not very likely ■ Not at all likely

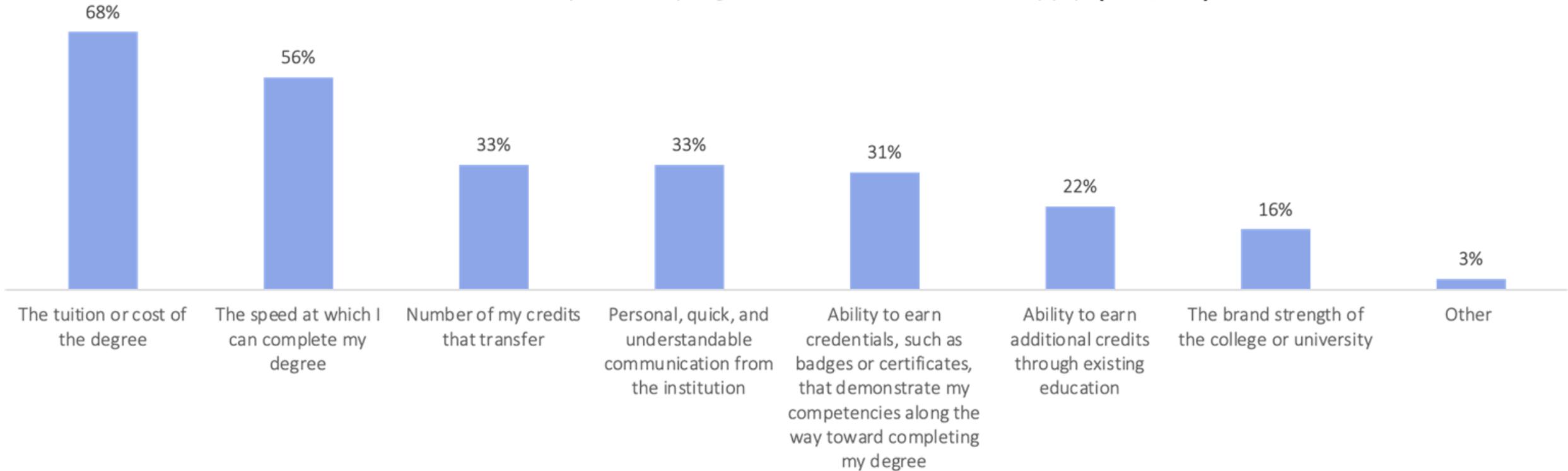
Reasons for Considering a Degree Completion Program

Which of the following would be motivating factors or goals if you were to enroll in a degree completion program? Please select all that apply. (n=1,086)



Factors for Selecting a Degree Completion Program

When thinking about degree completion programs, what factors would be important when making your decision about a potential program? Please select all that apply. (n=1,086)

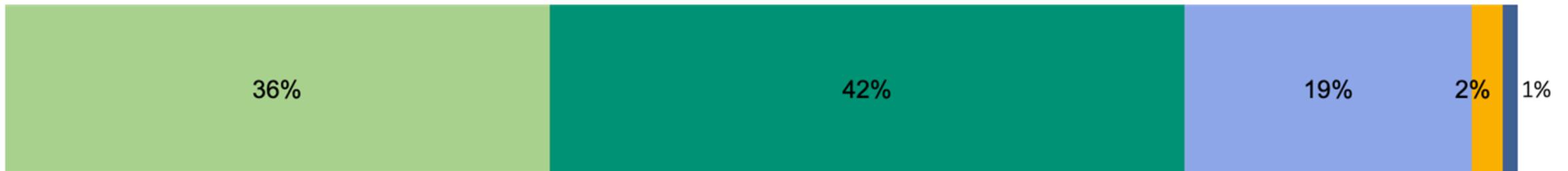




Strategies for Enrollment

Credit for Prior Learning Interest

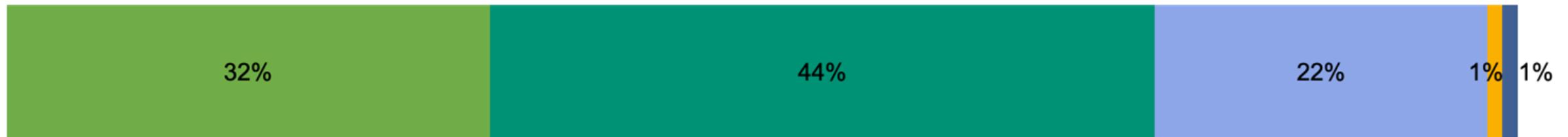
If an institution offered credit for prior learning, where you could earn credit toward your degree or credential based upon knowledge and skills you've earned outside the classroom, what effect would that have on your interest in pursuing an undergraduate degree? (n=1,074)



■ Greatly increase interest ■ Increase interest ■ No effect on interest ■ Decrease interest ■ Greatly decrease interest

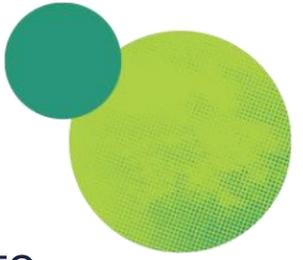
Stackable Microcredentials Interest

For the purpose of this research, alternative or microcredentials are defined as any credential, outside of a degree, that signals an individual's knowledge or skills within a particular subject area. If an institution offered alternative or microcredentials that were stackable, that is to say that courses and certificates could build upon each other and count as credit toward each subsequent credential, ultimately building to a full degree, what effect would that have on your interest in pursuing an undergraduate degree? (n=1,074)



■ Greatly increase interest ■ Increase interest ■ No effect on interest ■ Decrease interest ■ Greatly decrease interest

The Take Aways



- **46%** of respondents feel they are **stuck in their careers** without opportunities to advance.
- **29%** were **very/extremely likely** to pursue a **degree completion program**.
- **Traditional degree completion programs** alone are **not enough** to entice learners to return to higher education.
- **76%** of respondents said **stackable microcredentials** would **increase/greatly increase** their interest in a degree program.

Questions from the Audience



Contact Information



Janelle Elias

[LinkedIn](#)



Noah Geisel

[LinkedIn](#)



Amy Smith

[LinkedIn](#)

Additional Information and Resources

The webcast recording and additional resources will be available in the next week: wcet.wiche.edu/events/webcasts.

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WCET is the leader in the practice, policy & advocacy of digital learning in higher education.

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Help students fill prereq and gen ed gaps with online, self-paced, affordable courses for transferable credit.

[straighterline.com](https://www.straighterline.com)

Join us for a WCET and SAN special event:

Distance Ed at a Crossroads: The Changing Landscape of New Regulations

July 30-31, 2024 | St. Louis, Missouri



Save the Date for the WCET Annual Meeting

Join us October 8-10 in Long Beach, CA!

Registration opens May 9

Thank you

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Thank you for attending!

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