# Competency Based Training Using Digital Credentialing

eCom Scotland

GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

## Setting the Scene

Georgia Southern University founded in 1906, is the largest higher education centre in the southern half of Georgia. With a clear focus on providing teaching to a consistently high level, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning journey and are supported beyond the classroom to achieve their academic aspirations.

## The Challenge

Georgia Southern University wanted to strengthen its post-baccalaureate teacher education programme to better equip school teachers with the practices needed for the modern classroom.

In particular, they identified a need for teacher training to be more closely aligned to specific competencies. This would address common "problems of practice" and place a clear emphasis on the individual's ability to demonstrate a set of teaching practices. Emphasis was to be placed on the collection of evidence to support their learning journey with the learner being "rewarded" for their progress.
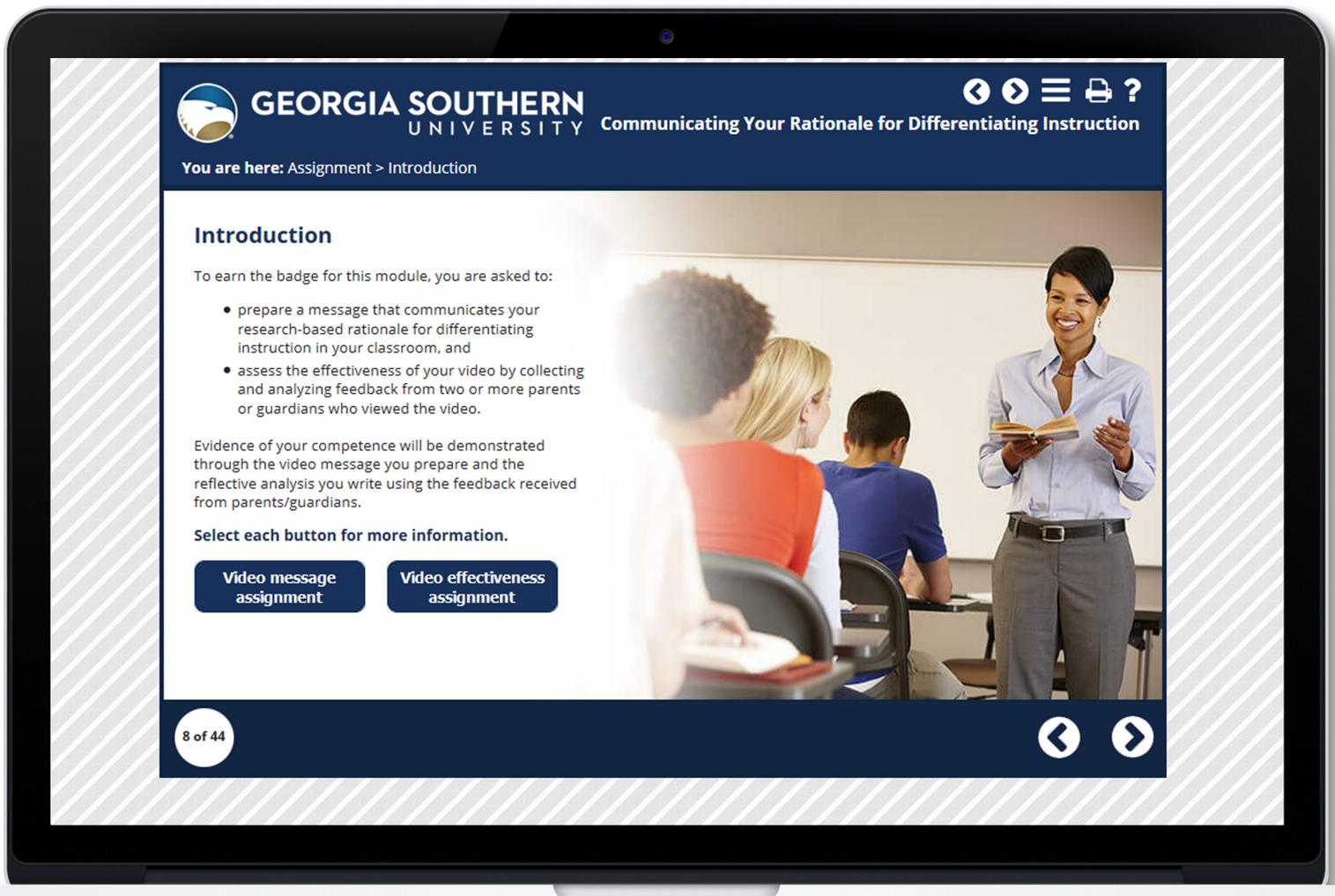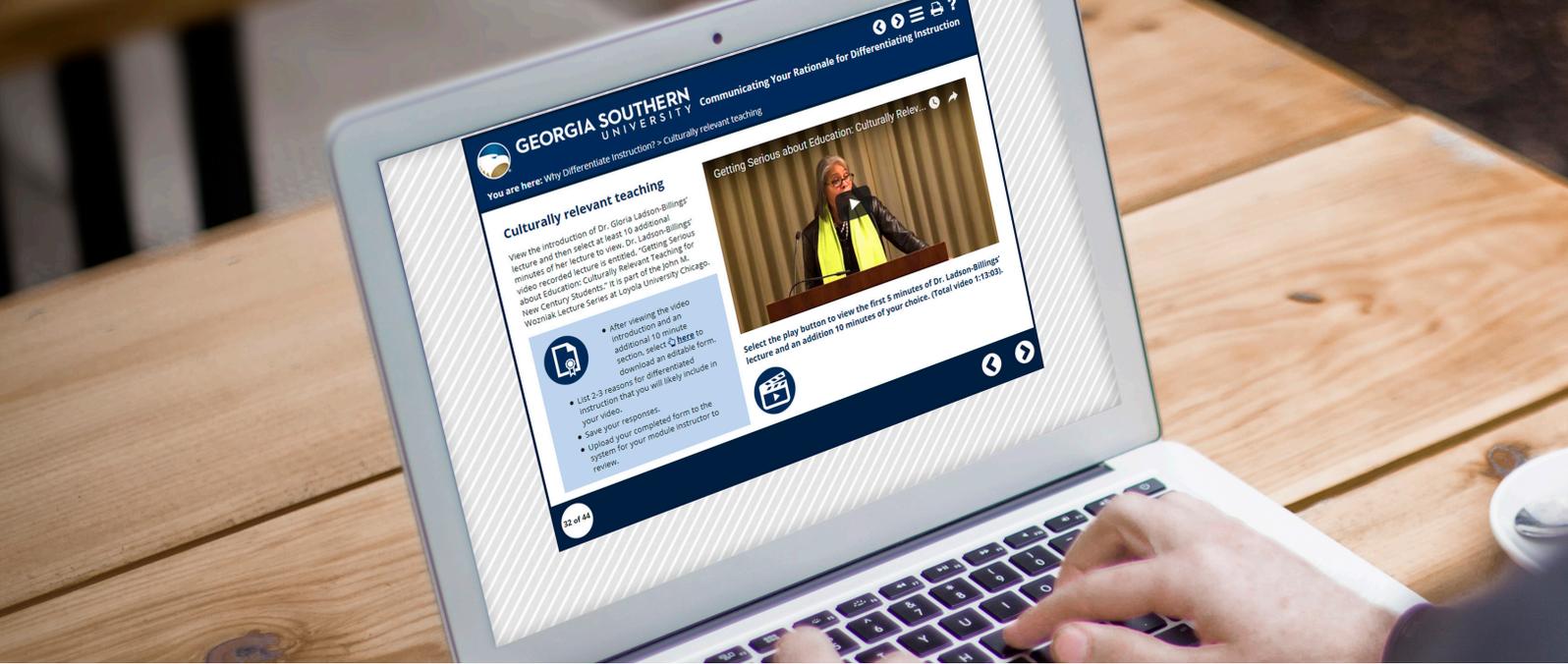
## The Solution

While the post-baccalaureate teacher education programme at Georgia Southern has been delivered online for some time, designing instruction to target practice-based competencies is new. Working in partnership, the University and eCom developed a blended, competency-based learning approach, incorporating digital badges to award the students on completion of a module. The badges mirrored competencies set out in the Georgia Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), ensuring the relevance of learning to application.

Using eNetAuthor the eLearning authoring tool, eCom developed 5 eLearning modules using content provided by the University's faculty. Each module consists of 10-12 hours of learning content including an offline assessment which is then reviewed by the course tutor. Students create and upload their evidence in the form of documents, images, audio and videos to demonstrate their understanding and competence in a specific area. This approach encourages self-directed learning with students being able to select the specific skills/competency they wish to work towards. Research shows that empowering learners in this way from the onset, encourages interest and engagement throughout.

On completion of a level and demonstration of a competency, the student is awarded the relevant badge - in a sense a micro-credential. Using this tool, course tutors are able to recognise incremental achievements. With integrated discussion forums within the programme encouraging peer-to-peer communication, the system also plays to the growing trend of social and collaborative learning.

To demonstrate the full potential of the system, eCom created a demo portal showcasing all functionality. This was particularly beneficial to the University who could then present this to key project stakeholders to gain support for the project.

Digital credentialing can be an effective workplace tool across all industries. It can be particularly useful in areas where knowledge, and indeed demonstration of knowledge of specific rules and regulations must be presented to comply with Health and Safety Regulations.

eCom are working closely with Georgia Southern University to deliver the next stage of the project and are looking forward to future developments.