



Diplomas Procedure

Procedure Number: 216P

Responsible Office: Vice President, Student Affairs

Forms: [Student Data Change eForm](#)

Effective Date: 07/01/2021

Date Last Reviewed: 2/12/2024

1. Purpose

Northern Virginia Community College diplomas are issued in commemoration of successful completion of studies at the institution, in accordance with Virginia Community College System guidelines.

2. Definitions

Career Studies Certificate Program: A career studies certificate program is defined as a program of study that must be at least 9 and no more than 29 semester credit hours. Career studies certificate programs are not required to include general education.

Certificate: A certificate is awarded for the completion of an approved non-degree curriculum consisting of 30-59 semester credit hours, usually in a career area; a minimum of 15 percent of a certificate's credit hour requirement will be in general education including one three-credit-hour English course.

Degree Program: A degree program is a broadly structured curriculum leading to the award of an associate degree and is listed on a student's diploma. NOVA awards the Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Fine Arts (AFA), Associate of Applied Arts (AAA), and Associated of Applied Science (AAS) degrees.

Programs of Study: A specific area of study in which a student chooses to specialize. College students often declare a major after completing prerequisite courses.

Specialization: A specialization is an area of concentration within an approved major that varies from the parent major by 9-15 credits.

3. Procedure

- i. Diplomas and certificates are ordered after all degree awarding has been completed for the semester. Diplomas should arrive within three months after degree awarding is completed.
- ii. Diplomas will be mailed to the address in the student information system. Students should ensure that their address information is current and correct when they apply for graduation. To update information, complete the [Student Data Change eForm](#).



- iii. International students' diplomas will be mailed to their international addresses if one is provided or to a designated embassy.
- iv. Returned/undeliverable diplomas are returned to the College Records Office (CRO) via mail.
- v. Requests for replacement of lost/destroyed diploma should be sent to AsktheCRO@nvcc.edu. If the diploma is damaged, the damaged diploma must be returned to the College Records Office before a re-order is submitted to the vendor.
- vi. Students who have had a legal name change due to gender reassignment must submit a name change request to a campus Enrollment Services unit or to registrars@nvcc.edu. Upon completing a name change request, the student must wait at least 48 hours before requesting a diploma to be reissued.
- vii. For students who complete additional coursework after the awarding of a degree, the cumulative and plan grade point averages (GPAs) will be affected, but not the GPAs entered when the degree was awarded. The updated grades and GPAs will be reflected on the student's transcript but will not have any bearing on the diploma.