



30.007: Commencement Participation Policy (Graduation Clearance)

Responsible Executive: Vice President for Academic Affairs
Responsible Office: Office of Academic Affairs
Related Policy:
Approved-On Date: AY 04-05
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Policy Statement

Each academic year in December and May, Norfolk State University hosts Commencement Exercises to publicly recognize the academic accomplishments of students who have completed degree requirements and are poised to take leadership roles in a global and rapidly changing society. In keeping with this commitment, candidates for graduation must complete all degree requirements or be currently enrolled in all remaining credits that will complete degree requirements and satisfy all financial obligations in order to participate in commencement ceremonies. Academic and financial clearances must be obtained before academic attire is issued to the student.

Purpose

The purpose of the Commencement Participation Policy is to establish procedures for use in qualifying students for participation in Commencement Exercises. This policy is intended to reflect the purpose of Commencement, the University's mission, vision, and core values, and the University's most important charge – to ensure student success.

Procedures

I. Academic Departments

The candidate for graduation (the student) submits a graduation application to the departmental academic advisor by the published deadline for the term in which the student expects to complete all academic requirements for his/her degree program. The academic advisor signs, if approved, and forwards the application to the department head for signature. The department forwards all graduation applications, in batch, to the Registrar's Office. The student is responsible for paying the graduation application fee and Commencement fee directly to Student Financial Services.

II. Registrar's Office

The Graduation Audit unit of the Registrar's Office conducts preliminary review of the graduation applications and compiles a list of "Candidates for Graduation." The list is then forwarded to the Director of Event Planning for use in the Commencement Program. Applications not passing the preliminary screening are sent back to the departments. The names of any applicants who apply after the Registrar's published deadline may not appear in the Commencement Program. The published deadline is listed in the University Schedule Book printed each semester.

III. Student Financial Services

The Office of Student Financial Services receives a list of the candidates for graduation from the Registrar's Office. The Office of Student Financial Services assesses the Graduation Application Fee and Commencement Fee respectively and indicates the financial status of each student. This list is forwarded to the Bookstore Manager for use in the distribution of academic attire.

V. Diploma Distribution

Participation in the commencement ceremonies does not mean the student has been awarded a diploma. An empty cover is issued to students during the commencement program. The Registrar's Office distributes diplomas to graduates via regular mail after the list of candidates has received the final certification by the graduation audit unit in the Registrar's Office. A graduating student's status is reflected on his or her respective transcript within two weeks of the Commencement Exercises. Diplomas are mailed six to eight weeks after Commencement Exercises.

VI. Exceptions

Undergraduate students with nine (9) credit hours or less remaining will be considered for participation in May commencement exercises provided that the following conditions are met. The student must:

- register and pay for the remaining credits for the upcoming summer term before seeking approval to participate in May commencement exercises.
- submit an "Application for Exception to Participate in Spring Commencement Exercises" to the academic department
- fulfill all other outstanding financial obligations to the University prior to May Commencement.