Valedictory Speaker Application Form
Commencement Ceremony 2024

Name: _____   Student ID#: _____

Address: _____
                    Street   City   State   Zip

Cell: _____   E-mail: _____

Major: _____   Cumulative GPA: _____

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1. 3.5 cumulative GPA or higher at the time of application.
2. Strong extracurricular involvement/volunteerism/work experience/other.
3. Strong leadership skills/abilities.
4. Ability to effectively convey educational and other relevant experiences both in writing and verbally.
5. The majority of the units must have been completed at Napa Valley College.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. **Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper (2 pages maximum):**

   a) Why would you like to be the student speaker at this year's Commencement ceremony?
   b) What experiences have you had at Napa Valley College and/or in the community that would make you a good representative of the college?
   c) What qualities do you possess that would make you a strong candidate to be the student speaker?

2. **Submit a FINAL DRAFT of your prepared speech (approximately 700-1000 words) that you would present if you are chosen. See next page for guidance on how to write a winning commencement speech.**

Please submit this form, along with a separate sheet of paper answering the questions above, and your finalized speech, via email to the Office of Student Affairs **by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 12**. Email your documents to: NVCCommencement@napavalley.edu. If you have any questions or need additional information, feel free to contact the Office of Student Affairs in Room 1330, at (707) 256-7362.

OTHER KEY DATES TO NOTE ON YOUR CALENDAR

Friday, April 12 by 5 p.m.	Application form is due
Friday, April 19 by 5 p.m. noon	Students will be notified if they have been invited to present their speech to the selection committee. Selected finalists will be called to schedule a 10-minute interview appointment.
Thursday, April 25 @ 2 p.m. or Friday, April 26 @ 9 a.m.	Interviews: Those selected will interview and make their speech presentation to the Valedictory Selection Committee on this date during a 10-minute appointment.
Monday, April 29	One student speaker will be selected by this date.

HOW TO WRITE A WINNING COMMENCEMENT SPEECH!

Being chosen as a college valedictory speaker is a high honor and a capstone of a successful college career. Many spend a lot of time preparing a speech, only to learn that someone else was awarded that honor. ***How can you improve your chances to present your speech to the Valedictory Selection Committee?***

Here are some guidelines:

- **Tell a story:** Talk about personal success at NVC or in general, such as struggles ending in triumph, or momentous decisions and life-changing experiences that led you to where you are today. Reflect on your experience as a student at NVC and how it has affected your life.

- **Make it personal:** Add touches that show who you are. Humor, modesty, or even a little boastfulness is ok!

- **Make it universal:** Commencement celebrates those graduating. Don't forget them. Acknowledge those who have travelled this road with you, as well as the people who have supported you along the way.

- **Be yourself:** Be sincere! Nothing kills a speech–or an audition–like the appearance of phoniness or "phoning it in."

- **Be original: DO NOT** write a speech filled with quotations from famous people or clichés about success and hard work. Those speeches don't get chosen.

- **Be clear:** Sloppy, poorly organized, or incoherent speeches aren't chosen, either.

If your speech is chosen:
- **Be flexible, open-minded, and available:** The selected speech will likely go through revision for final polish, and we will take the time to coach the selected speaker on effective public speaking. Be ready, willing and available to work with the NVC speech professor on the selection committee.

- **Relax!** Don't worry about being nervous! Some of Napa Valley College's best and most memorable commencement speeches were made by graduates afraid of public speaking.