

Commencement Speaker Application

**APPLICATION FORM – SPRING 2014 – STUDENT COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER**

**DUE BY 4:00 P.M. MONDAY, APRIL 7, 2014**

Each year a member of the graduating class is chosen to represent their class as student speaker at Commencement, during the final portion of the program, after the honorary degrees and bachelor and master’s degrees are conferred and diplomas are presented. At this time seniors who will participate in the May ceremonies are invited to apply.

Students will be invited to present their speeches to a committee who will select the speaker.

PLEASE PRINT/TYPE:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student ID #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Local Address:

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Street Apt. No. City Zip Code

Local Phone/Cell: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Major: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Please provide the following information:**

1. Attach a **one-page statement** explaining why you would like to be considered as the commencement speaker.

2. **Prepare and attach to this application a draft of your speech.** The speech as presented must not exceed five minutes in length. If you are selected to speak at the commencement ceremony, the speech you submit must be the one you deliver at the ceremony. The proposed speech has to be an original work. The committee will not return the draft. The selection process may include an interview with the selection committee, at which time the proposed speech will be presented and discussed.

3. Please provide two names of either a St. Norbert College faculty member or staff member as references:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Guidance as You Develop Your Speech

1. A commencement speech generally addresses the following three topics:
   1. It offers ***congratulations***. Parents, grandparents, friends, and relatives all need to be acknowledged. They are proud of you and your classmates and appreciate being associated with your success.
   2. It reviews ***accomplishments***. As members of the Class of 2014, what obstacles did you overcome? What special characteristics have you exhibited? What are your significant accomplishments? These should be in sweeping terms with specifics that could apply to members of the graduating class, not just to you.
   3. It issues a ***challenge***. The word commencement denotes a beginning. What does the future look like for the Class of 2014, what are the problems that you will be called upon to address as you take your place in society? What inspirational thoughts can you share which will assure your classmates that they are prepared and ready to take up the challenge?
2. The speech needs to reflect the St. Norbert College experience. It shouldn’t be a speech that could be given at any college or university.
3. Make sure your speech meets the expectations of the audience. Remind people of the event they are commemorating. Commencement is “...one of the punctuation marks” of your life. Remember that you are speaking to your classmates and to the faculty, staff, family members and friends who have assembled to share this special day.
4. Use personal anecdotes and appropriate humor, but be aware that you are speaking for others as well as yourself. Though the words you use are your own and the feelings you express are sincere, you are speaking as a representative of your class. You are speaking to reflect their sentiments. The spotlight may seem to be on you, but your job is to refocus its beam on your classmates and the commencement event.
5. Avoid the clichés and words that every other speaker at commencement has used. Make appropriate use of metaphor. Choose vivid, colorful language. “The words you select should arouse sensory images and reflect the correct level of seriousness and formality of the occasion.” Be original, but remember that everything about your speech should be consistent with the tone of the ceremony.
6. Be brief. “Every word and phrase should be the right one, carefully chosen to bring about the desired emotional response.”
7. For most, commencement is both an ending and a beginning, an opportunity for the graduates to reflect on what has been, while anticipating new, perhaps unknown, challenges. The best speeches are those that have meaning for the largest number of persons. Highly personal speeches may not meet that test. The time allotted for the student commencement speech will be 5 minutes, maximum.
8. Before your audition with the selection committee rehearse your speech very thoroughly, giving careful attention to the techniques you will use for effective delivery. Your delivery, as well as content, will be considered in the selection of a commencement speaker.
9. If you have questions, please contact Corday Goddard, Associate Dean for Student Development via e-mail ([corday.goddard@snc.edu](mailto:corday.goddard@snc.edu)) or call him at 403-1351.
10. **Please remember to submit your applications and additional materials to the Student Development Office in the Campus Center by 4:00 p.m. Monday, April 7, 2014.**