

## Degrees, Certificates and Diplomas (Minnesota State Procedure 3.36.1)

**Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree.** An associate of arts degree is awarded upon completion of a 60 credit academic program in the liberal arts and sciences. It is designed for transfer to a baccalaureate degree-granting college or university. An associate of arts degree requires completion of at least a 40 credit curriculum that fulfills the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum goal areas. The associate of arts degree program is named Liberal Arts and Sciences. An associate of arts degree may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits each in liberal arts and science fields, provided there is an articulation agreement with a related baccalaureate major offered by one or more system universities. At least 15 credits in the associate of arts degree or associate of arts transfer pathway degree must be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president or designee of the college or university. An associate of arts degree (AA) that is a transfer pathway is awarded upon completion of a 60 credit academic program in the liberal arts and sciences and is titled “[Discipline] Transfer Pathway.” Transfer pathway programs are designed to ensure completion of designated baccalaureate degree programs at Minnesota State universities within 120 credits.

**Associate of Science (A.S.) degree.** An associate of science degree is awarded upon completion of a 60 credit academic program in scientific, technological, or other professional fields. The associate of science degree is designed to transfer in its entirety to one or more related baccalaureate degree programs. A college shall pursue an articulation agreement with one or more system universities before establishing an articulation agreement with a non-system university. An associate of science transfer pathway degree (AS) is awarded upon completion of an academic program in scientific, technological, or other professional fields and is titled “Discipline Transfer Pathway”. Transfer pathway programs are designed to transfer all courses within the pathway into designated baccalaureate degree programs identified by system universities. An associate of science degree may address a single specialty or a set of allied specialties such as, but not limited to, (1) agriculture, (2) business, (3) computer and information sciences, (4) education, (5) engineering, (6) engineering technologies, (7) environmental sciences, (8) health sciences, and (9) natural sciences. The associate of science degree requires a minimum of 30 credits selected from at least six of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. An associate of science degree or associate of science transfer pathway degree must not have emphases. An associate of science degree may be individualized according to the standards outlined in system procedure, to provide a student an opportunity to design an academic program to meet specific occupational goals that cannot be met by current program offerings. Associate of science individualized studies programs do not require an articulation agreement. At least 15 credits in an associate of science degree or associate of science transfer pathway degree must be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the college. A waiver may be granted to exceed a length of 60 credits when (1) the waiver criteria in system procedure, are met and (2) an articulation agreement specifies the transfer of a greater number of credits.

**Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree.** An associate of applied science degree is awarded upon completion of a 60 credit academic program in a named field of study in scientific, technological or other professional fields. An associate of applied science degree prepares students for employment in an occupation or range of occupations. An associate of applied science degree may also be accepted in transfer to a related baccalaureate program. An associate of applied science degree requires a minimum of 15 credits selected from at least three of the ten goal areas of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum. At least 30 credits must be in the academic program’s occupational or technical field of preparation. An associate of applied science degree may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits each when there are at least 30 credits in the major that are common to the emphases. An associate of applied science degree program may be individualized according to the standards outlined in system procedure, to provide a student an opportunity to design an academic program to meet specific occupational goals that cannot be met by current program offerings. At least 15 credits in an associate of applied science must be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation of the faculty and approval by the president of the college. A waiver may be granted to exceed a length of 60 credits when (1) the waiver criteria in system procedure, are met and (2) an articulation agreement, where applicable, specifies the transfer of a greater number of credits.

**Diploma.** A diploma is awarded upon completion of a 31 to 72 credit undergraduate academic program that prepares students for employment. A minimum of 24 credits must be in occupational or technical courses. A diploma may have one or more emphases of at least 9 credits when there are at least 30 credits in the major that are common to the emphases. All vocational and technical credits earned for a diploma must be applicable toward any available degree in the same program. A diploma may be individualized according to the standards outlined in system procedure to provide a student an opportunity to design an academic program to meet specific occupational goals that cannot be met by current program offerings. At least one-third of the credits in the diploma must be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation by the faculty and approval by the president of the college. A diploma of more than 72 credits in length may be approved when the academic program prepares an individual for employment and the length is (1) required by an employer, a licensing body or other regulatory agency, accrediting association, or board, or (2) based on a formal task analysis conducted within the previous three years and the results endorsed by an advisory committee.

**Undergraduate certificate.** An undergraduate certificate is awarded upon completion of a 9 to 30 credit academic program. An undergraduate certificate may have an occupational outcome or address a focused area of study. An undergraduate certificate

must not have emphases. All vocational and technical credits earned for a certificate must be applicable toward any available degree in the same program. At least one-third of the credits in the undergraduate certificate must be taught by the faculty recommending the award. This requirement may be decreased upon recommendation by the faculty and approval by the president of the college or university. An undergraduate certificate less than 9 or more than 30 credits in length may be approved when the academic program prepares an individual for employment and the length or the designation as a certificate is (1) required by an employer, a licensing body or other regulatory agency, accrediting association, or board, or (2) based on a formal task analysis conducted within the previous three years and the results endorsed by an advisory committee.

**For specific program credit requirements go to [northlandcollege.edu/academics](http://northlandcollege.edu/academics).**