

CULINARY ARTS

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Philosophy

The NOCCA Culinary Arts Department offers a four-year course of study for talented and disciplined students who aspire to be chefs or food service professionals. Academic and performance standards are the same for all students, regardless of which career path is ultimately followed.

Admission, Placement, and Advancement

Admission into the Culinary Arts Department begins with submitting a complete application according to the posted deadlines. Applicants who express a desire to learn, a passion for cooking and demonstrative culinary expertise and training will be invited to audition. During the audition process applicants will participate in both group and individual assessments involving weights and measures, sauces and stocks, culinary math and product identification.

All culinary students are placed in Level I regardless of grade level. Advancement into higher levels is upon successful completion of the current level and consent of the Chef Instructors and the Director of Protocol.

Assessment

Assessment: Tests are administered in written and practical form.

Grading: Class grading is cumulative throughout the year. Daily performance grades are averaged into a bi-weekly grade which comprises 55% of the final grade. Tests, quizzes and homework are averaged to make up 20% and a written and practical final average weighs another 20%. A minimum of 40 hours of community service is required and accounts for the remaining 5%.

Requirements and Guidelines for Success in the Culinary Arts Department

Professional behavior, attendance, punctuality, and self-discipline are critical for continued enrollment at NOCCA. Daily study and practice is necessary to hone the skills required to move forward and stay current with the curriculum. Adherence to the culinary uniform is strictly enforced. Once issued, the uniform must be kept in clean and pressed condition. Knife kits will be treated with the respect they deserve as professional tools and safety hazards. Good personal hygiene is a must. Hair is to be above the collar and tightly restrained. Nails must be clipped and free of polish. Use of makeup is discouraged and must be kept to a bare minimum. Jewelry is limited to small stud earrings and one watch. Cologne and perfumes are never allowed.

Curriculum/Course Description

The Culinary Arts curriculum is delivered through a variety of methods including lecture, demonstration, and hands on experience. Each class is carefully selected to create a cohesive group in which students work together and independently and participate in all lessons.

Level I lays down the foundations of Food Service Professionalism, Food and Workplace Safety and Sanitation, Sustainability, Cost Control and Menu Development, Knife skills, Nutrition, Sensory Perception, Cooking Methods and Techniques, Seasoning and Flavoring Foods, Stocks-Sauces-Soups, Fundamentals of Baking and Pastry including Yeast Breads, Quick Breads, Cakes and Cookies.

Levels II and III deepen the Level I foundations by traveling the world through food. International and American Regional cuisines are studied with a focus on the people, the land, and local products.

Level IV is a group and individual project-based year with opportunity for the student to narrow their focus toward a culinary specialty.

Gardening and Sustainability

The Culinary Arts Department works hand-in-hand with our garden team in planting, weeding, fertilizing, and harvesting while learning the intricacies of growing food in an organic and sustainable environment.

Visiting Artists/Field Trips

The Culinary Arts Department seeks to give students an accurate understanding of the realities of the culinary industry by placing visiting artists in the classroom and exposing students to working kitchens and culinary facilities. The visiting chef program supports this aim by offering students the opportunity and benefit of working alongside self-trained and academic culinary experts who treat them as professionals, share their experience and lead workshops that give students critical feedback on their work.

Certificates

The Culinary Arts Department offers three levels of certification:

Certificate of Artistry represents the highest level of attainment for a NOCCA culinary student and is the culmination of four years of intensive hands-on culinary study, including a Level IV created and executed showcase.

Certificate of Achievement is conferred upon a student who has successfully completed at least two or three years of study at a high level, but not the full culinary curriculum.

Certificate of Recognition is granted to a student who has attended NOCCA for one or two years and has passed a comprehensive written exam and a practical exam at their current level.

In all cases the judgment of the core faculty regarding the awarding of certificates is final.