

Resource Guide: Diploma Name

Background

The College of St. Benedict and St. John's University recognize that many members of our community use names other than one's legal name first provided to identify themselves. For some students and employees, a chosen or preferred name may be an important component of their identity. Therefore, we have established guidelines that allow students to indicate their chosen or preferred first names to the CSB and SJU community even if they have not changed their legal name.

Preferred Name Guidelines

CSB/SJU students may choose to identify themselves within the community using a preferred first name that differs from their legal name. A student's preferred name will appear instead of the one's legal name in select CSB and SJU documents. Legal name will continue to be used in all College systems and documents that require a verified legal name. See the [Preferred Name Process Policy](#) for more detailed information.

Diplomas

It is recommended that the diploma name match your legal name, however a preferred name may be considered when you apply for graduation.

The student name listed on a diploma or certificate must match the official name on file at the Colleges (first name, last name) with the following exceptions:

- Option of a first name which conforms with the graduate's genuine expression of gender identity
- Option of first name or initial
- Options of shortened or alternate form for the first name
- Omission of the first name when the middle name is used as a salutary name
- Option of middle name or initial
- Inclusion of former or maiden name
- Inclusion of proper capitalization and accentuation of name
- Inclusion of maternal surnames as culturally appropriate

Neither titles nor degrees previously earned will be included as part of a graduate's name on a diploma.

All requests are reviewed on a case by case basis. The preferred name requested on the diploma must match the preferred name listed in the Banner student information system. This is necessary for future degree verifications that may take place.

If you decide to change your diploma name back to your legal name after graduation, please note that you will be required to request and pay for a replacement diploma. Legal name changes are only permitted through the Courts.

Apostille

Diploma apostille can ONLY be provided when using your full legal name.

Note for Degree Verification

Third parties using the preferred name appearing on your diploma will not be able to verify your degree through the National Student Clearinghouse because of name mismatch. Enrollment/degree verification is provided using your full legal name.

Note for Graduates planning to live or work abroad

CSB and SJU consider the diploma to be a ceremonial document. Some countries may require your diploma (in conjunction with your official transcript) for various legal, immigration, and employment purposes. Choosing to print your preferred name on your diploma may result in unforeseen complications due to discrepancy between your diploma and other documents (e.g. transcripts, passport, birth certificates, etc.) that contain your legal name. To avoid such complications, we recommend printing your legal name on your diploma if you plan to live, study, work outside of the United States.

Note for student/graduates of professional schools [Law, Medicine, Nursing, etc.]

Before opting to print your preferred name on your diploma, please take into consideration that professional licensing requirements require you to use your legal name. For example, State Bar application and licensure and federal employment/guidelines require the use of the legal name. Using your preferred name on your diploma may result in rejection, delay, scrutiny, and/or requirements for additional proof of identification associated with any application for employment, licensure, credentialing, visa application, and/or other processes that require verification of your education records.