Preferred Name

UNIVERSITY POLICY #046

Authority:
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SECTION 1: Introduction and General Principles

1.1 West Liberty University recognizes that many members of the campus community use first names other than their legal names to identify themselves. For some students and employees, a chosen or preferred first name may be an integral component of their identity. This policy has been established to allow students and employees to use their preferred first name where possible, even if they have not legally changed their first name.

SECTION 2: Preferred Name

2.1 Students and employees of West Liberty University may opt to use a preferred first name when conducting general day-to-day business with the institution. The preferred first name will be used in every instance possible, including class rosters, communications, campus directories, and in reporting when possible.

2.2 Processes for requesting and implementing preferred first names shall be developed and administrated by the Office of the Registrar for students, and the Human Resources Office for employees.

SECTION 3: Limitations

3.1 Individuals who request and use a preferred first name must be aware that the preferred first name will constitute an alias for use within the university community, and which they may be required to disclose in some circumstances, including background checks and other legal processes.

3.2 Legal names will always appear on all external reports and documents and any instance requiring a legal name including, but not limited to:

3.2.1 Student Financial Aid Documentation

3.2.2 Federal or State Requests for Information

3.2.3 National Student Clearinghouse

3.2.4 Transcripts

3.2.5 Academic Certifications

3.2.6 License Requests and/or Certification Testing

3.2.7 Athletics Rosters 8. Department of Public Safety documents

3.2.8 Accounts payable documents

3.2.9 Paychecks

3.2.10 W-2 and/or Any Other IRS forms

3.2.11 Employment Forms

3.2.12 International Students Admissions Office/Immigration Documentation

3.2.13 Any other official university employment and/or student record documents such as enrollment verification, degree verification and timekeeping software where a legal name is required.

3.3 Use of the preferred first name on the diploma may be requested. However, if the diploma should need to be used as a legal document, the name appearing on the diploma may need to match the legal name in order to be considered valid.

3.4 If the preferred first name is used on the WLU ID card, that ID cannot serve as an alternate ID outside the campus community. Use of the WLU ID to misrepresent the individual's legal identity in any circumstance is misuse and may result in disciplinary or adverse employee action.

SECTION 4: Requirement for Use

4.1 Once the preferred first name is established, all University offices and personnel are expected to respect a person's request to be known by their preferred first name and to use that name when interacting with individuals who have established through the University a preferred first name. This expectation covers all areas of the University including academics, student life, athletics, and other University business. Refusal of individuals within the campus community to respect the use of an approved preferred first name may constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

SECTION 5: Denial of Request

5.1 In the following circumstances, a request for use of preferred first name may be denied:

5.1.1 the name is intended to misrepresent the person's identity and/or misappropriate the identity of another person or organization;

5.1.2 the use of the name is an attempt to avoid a legal obligation;

5.1.3 the appearance of the requested name on the University ID or other records would be harmful to the reputation or interests of the University, and/or;

5.1.4 the name is derogatory, obscene, conveys an offensive message, or is otherwise deemed inappropriate per established policy or code.