

What Faculty Need to Know About the *Preferred Names Policy*

What Is the *Preferred Name Policy*?

- The University Board of Trustees recently adopted a *Policy on Preferred Names*. You can find the policy here: <http://www.csuohio.edu/sites/default/files/3344-86-02-preferred-name-policy.pdf>
- The *Preferred Name Policy* states that the University recognizes that some members of the campus community prefer to use a name – a preferred name – that is not their legal name, and the University will use preferred names wherever possible.

Who uses a Preferred Name?

Anyone who wants to be referred to by a name that is not their legal name, including individuals who prefer to go by a nickname or middle name, transgender individuals or persons with gender nonconforming expression, and International students.

Why Are Preferred Names Important?

- Calling a person by his or her preferred name shows respect.
- Using students' preferred names contributes to the University's goal of providing an empowering, safe and nondiscriminatory educational and work environment. Names are extremely important parts of a person's identity. Using the wrong name can cause a person to recall a time and experience when they couldn't express who they really are.
- Most names and pronouns are gendered. Using a preferred name that may match a person's gender expression prevents that person from being the subject of questions about why he or she has a name that is inconsistent with his or her gender expression.

How does the Preferred Name Policy achieve these goals?

The University now allows the use of a student's or employee's preferred first and middle names wherever possible. At this time, preferred names are used, when requested, in the following circumstances:

- In Blackboard
- On a Student ID Card
- On Residence Life documents
- At Counseling Services, except for billing records
- At the Cashier's Office window
- In Office of Disability Services records

How will the use of Preferred Names affect faculty?

- Starting with the Spring Semester 2018, Blackboard will show students' preferred names.
- Faculty should use the class lists on Blackboard to learn student names, check attendance and when calling on or addressing students.
- Faculty should understand that implementing the use of preferred names at the University is ongoing and there may be situations where questions arise about a student's name.

- Faculty can anticipate that, as the *Preferred Name Policy* is implemented, some students' preferred names may not match a name on a class roster or students' appearance. Anticipate solutions, such as questions like, "Do you have I.D. that matches the name in my records?" INSTEAD OF "You don't look like 'Jack'."

Should I ask students for their Preferred Name or Pronouns?

Sure! You can start off by introducing yourself and identifying your preferred pronouns. "Hello, I'm Jennifer Smith. My pronouns are her, she and hers." This creates a safe and inviting space for students to similarly introduce themselves. If students provide preferred names and pronouns, write them down and use them during the next class.

What If I Use the Wrong Name/Pronoun?

- It isn't a big deal. Apologize for the mistake and move forward. Harping on the mistake can focus unwanted attention on the person who was just called by the wrong name.
- Don't say, "I'll never get that name/pronoun right." This suggests that correctly using the person's preferred name or pronouns is burdensome and you won't commit to honoring their identity.

What if a student wants to use a preferred name, but their name hasn't changed in Blackboard or on their Viking Card?

- Tell the student about the *Preferred Name Policy*.
- Encourage the student to contact Office for Institutional Equity (OIE) to implement the use of their preferred name as much as possible on campus.
- Record the student's preferred name and use it in your class.

What if students have questions about preferred names?

- Direct preferred name questions to the Office for Institutional Equity at ois@csuohio.edu.
- Tell students to contact OIE to implement the wider use of their preferred name on campus.
- Refer students to the Preferred Name Guidelines <http://www.csuohio.edu/sites/default/files/Guidelines-Use-of-Preferred-Names.pdf> or FAQ's <http://www.csuohio.edu/compliance/preferred-names-frequently-asked-questions>.

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