



UNIVERSITY PROCEDURE

## PROCEDURE TO REVIEW AND PROPOSE THE REMOVAL OF A NAMESAKE FROM A UNIVERSITY FACILITY OR PROGRAM

### Procedure Purpose

This Procedure/Standard ("procedure") codifies the obligations and responsibilities of University (or WCU) officials and establishes the guidelines and procedures to determine the process the University should undertake before bringing to the Council of Trustees any consideration to terminate a naming right because the naming or continued association with the namesake of the facility or program adversely impacts the reputation, image, mission, or integrity of the University.<sup>1</sup>

### Procedure Statement

The procedure for deciding whether to remove a naming designation should reflect a consistent set of standards; a deliberate balancing process of consideration of all viewpoints; an acknowledgement of the complex intersection between the lessons of our past and present; the lived and learned experiences from time of the namesake's life or questionable behavior to present day; and the mission of the University.

### Procedure Framework

The University President may initiate this process on the President's own initiative or in response to a written request submitted to the President.

- I. A written request to the President requesting the removal of the name shall include<sup>2</sup>:

---

<sup>1</sup> West Chester University's Naming University Facilities and Programs Policy sets forth that "the Council of Trustees may terminate naming rights (1) in the event of any default in payment of the gift, or (2) if, in the Council's sole discretion, the naming, or a continuing association with the donor or other namesake of the facility or program, will adversely impact the reputation, image, mission, or integrity of the University." (Section D, p. 4)

<sup>2</sup> The President may waive any deficiency in the written request or return it to the requestor(s) for clarification or additional information.



UNIVERSITY PROCEDURE

- i. The specific conduct by the namesake of the facility or program that jeopardizes the University's reputation, image, missions, or integrity.
  - ii. The character of the namesake and the extent of the harm to the University caused by continuing to honor the namesake.
  - iii. The sources and strength of the evidence that support the allegations of the harm.
- II. Should any such a request be brought to the University President's attention, the President shall:
  - Make an initial determination of whether the concern rises to a level warranting further consideration of name removal.
  - i. If the President determines to not consider any further action, the President shall inform the Council of Trustees about the concern brought to the President's attention. The Chairperson of the Council of Trustees may direct the President to proceed to study the concern as outlined below. If the Council of Trustees does not instruct the President to further consider the naming rights in question, the President will advise the individual(s) requesting the name removal of the reasons that no further action is being taken.
  - ii. If the President determines that the concern merits further investigation (or if the Council so directs the President), the President shall appoint a committee to investigate the claims and provide a written report to the President.
  - iii. The President shall appoint the committee (and designate a chairperson). The composition of the committee shall be at the president's discretion; however, at minimum, the president should appoint individuals from the following stakeholder groups:
    1. Students;
    2. Faculty;



— UNIVERSITY PROCEDURE —

3. Staff (represented and non-represented); and
4. Alumni

Additionally, the President may appoint to the committee ex-officio, non-voting members, as determined by the President on a case-by-case basis.

- iv. The committee shall, within the timeframe set by the President<sup>3</sup>, study and provide a report that, at minimum, considers:
  - a. the centrality of the namesake's offensive behavior to their life as a whole;
  - b. the namesake's connection to the University;
  - c. the harmful impact of the namesake's behavior;
  - d. the community's identification with the facility or program;
  - e. strength and clarity of the relevant historical evidence;
  - f. any prior consideration of the issue;
  - g. the varying viewpoints of the committee's members;
  - h. comments and input from the namesake or namesake's family/heirs;
  - i. comments from interested members of the University community;
  - j. possibilities or mitigation or alternatives short of changing/removing the name of the facility or program; and
  - k. any other factors, relevant to the specific inquiry, to be studied by the committee at the request of the President.
- The committee's report shall be submitted to the President for the President and the University Cabinet's consideration. The meetings and discussions of the committee shall be confidential; however, the final report of the committee shall be made public on the University's website.

---

<sup>3</sup> It is within the president's discretion to extend applicable deadlines.



UNIVERSITY PROCEDURE

- v. The President shall, after consultation with the University's Cabinet, make a recommendation to the Council of Trustees. The Council of Trustees shall receive a copy of the committee's report with the President's written recommendation. Additionally, the President may recommend that the Council of Trustees hold a conference as is permitted under the Sunshine Act.
- vi. Should the Council of Trustees wish to consider changing the name of a facility or program, the Council shall place the matter on the agenda of an upcoming public meeting for deliberation of further action consistent with West Chester University's Naming University Facilities and Programs Policy.

### References

[WCU Naming University Facilities and Programs Policy](#)

**Reviewed by:** Provost, Vice President for University Affairs & Chief of Staff, Vice President for University Advancement & External Affairs, President

**Approved by:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zebulun Davenport".

Dr. Zebulun Davenport

Vice President for University Advancement & External Affairs

11/22/2022

**Effective Date:** 11/22/2022