



Policy Title: GE2023 - Interim Naming and Recognition

Subject Area: General

Responsible Official(s): Vice President for Advancement

Responsible Office(s): Office of Development

Policy Statement

This policy applies to all University of Memphis facilities, buildings, outdoor and indoor areas and spaces, academic and administrative units, as well as to endowments and programs, regardless of location or administrative assignment. The Advancement Division is the central point of contact by virtue of its relationships with all constituent groups of the University, and its role in maintaining the image and communications functions of the University.

Definitions

Endowment – An endowment is a fund where the principal (corpus) is held for investment and the payout on the principal is available for spending as directed by the donor, or by the source of the original funds. Endowments may be general or restricted (used for a specific purpose). Examples of endowments include scholarships, fellowships, professorships, and student support accounts.

Facilities – Buildings, building additions, roads, and significant open spaces.

Gift Acceptance and Naming Committee – A committee selected by the President and charged with responsibility of review and recommendation of naming proposals to the President or Board of Trustees. The committee shall be led by the Vice President of Advancement and, at a minimum, shall include representatives from Academic Affairs, Business & Finance, and Legal.

Programs – Colleges, departments, centers, institutes, interdisciplinary centers, and other functional non-physical areas of the University.

Unit Head – The person responsible for decision making for an administrative or academic unit. Examples include dean, department chair, or director of a department, center or institute.

Policy

The naming or renaming of buildings, streets, landmarks, structures, and property, as well as academic units, centers, institutes, colleges, and programs that are owned or operated by the University of Memphis (the University) is a way to recognize donors who have made significant gifts supporting the mission of the University, or others with a close association to the University. The policy's overarching objectives are to establish and maintain a system to ensure that decisions on naming opportunities are made in a logical, consistent, and timely manner; that the requirements, expectations, and desires of all parties are respected; and that naming actions will not detract from the University's values, integrity, or reputation. To address considerations specific to physical and non-physical entities, this policy includes separate sections pertaining to naming opportunities for each.

Authority

- A name may not be bestowed on a University building or property without the written approval of the President or Board of Trustees, as appropriate.
- The Vice President of Advancement (VP) with the assistance of the Gift Acceptance and Naming Committee ("Committee") is charged with carrying out the goal of this policy. The VP of Advancement will determine the need for convening the Committee and will be responsible for developing any procedures and forms necessary to carry out the dictates of this policy.

General Provisions

- As a matter of general practice, naming of University facilities or programs will recognize significant philanthropic gifts or commitments.
- Under special circumstances, naming may honor or memorialize individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to the University, such as member(s) of its faculty, staff, administration, governing board or as alumni, and whose lives and personal qualities are deemed worthy of being remembered and followed. Such naming may consider the long-term financial needs of the facility or program and the importance of the facility or program to the University's strategic objectives. Subject to the sole discretion of the University of Memphis or its Board of Trustees, no facility or program may be named for a faculty, staff, or administration member currently employed by the University or for an elected or appointed official while they are in office, unless there is an associated philanthropic commitment to the University of Memphis. Philanthropic commitments must be in the form of monetary contributions.
- When the desire for a naming is apparent, the Advancement Division must be notified and provided with a profile of the donor or individual proposed for naming, the area of interest along with any proposed stipulations, and, if applicable, information about how the contribution (gift) will be paid. The VP of Advancement will be responsible for

performing all necessary prerequisites, including approving the gift level for non-athletic facilities, programs, and endowments prior to convening the Committee, for review of proposals. The VP of Advancement, in consultation with the Vice President and Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, will approve gift levels for athletics' facilities and endowments.

- When selecting a name, or considering a proposed name, sufficient research will be conducted to determine whether the proposed name will complement the University and its campuses, facilities, colleges, or departments and supports the University's mission and values, as well as the goals of this policy. The University shall also undertake a thorough degree of due diligence to avoid commercial influence or conflict of interest.
- Following all necessary review and approvals as required by this policy, a recommendation will be made to the President for final decision-making authority on naming, except in cases where the Board of Trustees approval is required. Board of Trustees approval is required to name buildings, most outdoor spaces including plazas and roads, and major academic and administrative units, including colleges, schools, major programs, and interdisciplinary centers.
- Gift-related Naming of Facilities
Gift levels required for facilities vary, based on several factors that include, but are not limited to:
 - Whether the purpose is for new construction or an existing facility;
 - The size, scope, and private-funding requirement of a construction project;
 - Comparisons of current funding requirements with previous gifts made and giving levels established for building projects or named structures across campus;
 - Any requirements of the University's master plan; and/or
 - The public visibility and perceived market value of the facility under consideration for naming.

All naming approvals will be subject to the provisions of a negotiated gift agreement that shall include the donor pledge amount and the pledge payment timeframe. In most cases the pledge payment timeframe will be between three (3) to five (5) years, in the discretion of the University.

In situations where the University raises funds in excess of the capital project minimum that is subject to a naming agreement or where the gift is related to an existing building or space, the University will determine allocation of the funds within its discretion.

The University may enter into agreements with individuals or business entities to temporarily name facilities, places, or spaces with the approval of the Gift Acceptance and Naming Committee or the VP of Advancement, as appropriate.

- Endowments
When a donor commits to fund an endowment for any purpose, the donor is granted

the privilege of naming it. Minimum funding levels for endowments may be established by the University and may take into consideration factors such as the purpose of the endowment, the initial amount of the endowment, and the restrictions proposed.

In addition to naming rights, endowment commitments may have the right to include restrictions, such as limiting the endowment to college, academic/program unit, support of faculty (e.g., professorships and fellowships), or athletics. All restrictions must abide by applicable policy as well as state and federal law.

The University assumes certain fiduciary responsibilities upon the acceptance of endowment funds from an outside donor, including ensuring the funds are held and expended in compliance with the donor's wishes. For this reason, no new endowment accounts will be established without obtaining a signed endowment agreement from the donor. This signed agreement ensures the donor clearly understands the policies by which their gift will be managed, and the University clearly understands how the payout is to be used and any other unique terms and conditions of the gift.

Duration of Names

Naming is generally considered permanent until or unless a facility is demolished, substantially renovated, or expanded, or an academic unit or other program is discontinued. Should a building be demolished or replaced, or an academic program or unit be discontinued, and the former name is no longer warranted, alternative recognition will be considered, especially where the naming is supported by an endowment

Corporate Naming Opportunities

While the University prefers recognizing individuals through naming opportunities, corporate naming may also be made but will be reviewed with additional care. The University will assess the corporate history, business practices, reputation, long-term trajectory, and any other factor appropriate to considering a corporate naming request. The size, design, and wording of plaques or other signs acknowledging corporate generosity should avoid creating any appearance of advertising and be appropriately tailored to the nature of the facilities or properties being considered.

Matching Gifts

Donors are permitted to make a personal commitment toward a capital project, program, or endowment with the knowledge that they are intending to use any matching gift support that might be forthcoming from an affiliated corporate entity. However, as a donor's commitment does not bind the corporate entity, matching gifts may not generally be used in pledge agreements to reach a naming level for a capital project or endowment. Regarding capital projects, matching gifts may be considered as a supplement to a donor's personal commitment

and calculated as part of the overall pledge amount if at least one of the following circumstances are met:

- The donor agrees to fulfill the gift at the full naming level in the event matching gifts are not received and/or not received towards the gift's specific purpose;
- The use of matching gifts is consistent with existing University and University-affiliated foundations policies and guidelines; or
- The corporate entity signs a separate agreement with the University agreeing to match a specified amount for the donor to the specific naming opportunity without corporate naming conditions for those matching gifts.

Group Endeavors

Organized groups who are interested in naming programs or creating named endowments at the University may be allowed in certain circumstances. It is required that all organized groups affiliate and work with the University department, unit, college, or school that will benefit from the gift. The fundraising should be a collaborative effort that considers the best interests of the University and meets the following requirements:

- A marketing and solicitation plan approved by the unit head;
- The pledge minimum, as approved by the VP of Advancement, is reached within five fiscal years of the date the pledge agreement is signed; and
- The endeavor donors agree to forego individual naming recognitions associated with the gift and to the terms of the endeavor, in the event it does not reach full funding.

Deferred Gift Commitments

A benefactor may choose to create a present-day naming opportunity with some type of deferred gift (i.e., gift annuity, charitable remainder trust, bequest). A present-day naming opportunity, determined to be in the best interests of the University, may be reserved and named based on a gift commitment that defers payment to a date more than five years from the agreement date when the following conditions apply:

- The donor appropriately documents that his or her commitment is irrevocable or makes a revocable gift in tandem with an outright gift, aligned with current naming levels.
- The gift is not required for immediate use by the University (e.g., to complete a construction project, or for the immediate expansion of the programs of the benefiting unit).
- Actuarial and financial calculations indicate the net present value of the donor's commitment (i.e., its value in today's dollars) will be no less than if an outright gift in the full amount of the naming value if received presently.

Naming thresholds will increase over time. Future namings will be conferred only if the gift meets the criteria in place for the specified purpose when the gift is eventually received unless otherwise approved by the VP of Advancement.

Renaming and Removal of Names

From time to time, situations may occur which would warrant the renaming of an entity or removal of a name. Name changes, renamings or removals may occur if the University determines that circumstances, including but not limited to the following, dictate such action:

- The use or purpose of the building or property has changed;
- Significant private gifts to support the University offer an opportunity for appropriate recognition of donors;
- Confusion exists between names of buildings, streets, structures, building areas, landmarks, or other property within the University;
- Continued use of the name compromises the public's trust or image of the University or is inconsistent with the mission and values of the University; or
- The donor does not perform obligations specified in the gift agreement.

Related Documents, Policies and Forms

[GE2003 - Identification of Buildings and Facilities](#)

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GE2023 – revised June 16, 2022

GE2023 – supersedes UM1708

UM1708 – issued: May 11, 2009