

Policy on Naming of Programs, Positions, and Spaces

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Terminology

Programs include, without being limited to, schools, centers, departments, and other academic units; scholarships and fellowships; initiatives; funds; lectures; and other forms of activity or funding associated with academic or extra-curricular programming.

Positions include, without being limited to, professorships, preceptorships, administrative or coaching appointments, directorships, deanships, and any other status, job, or title.

Spaces include, without being limited to, buildings, rooms, gardens, quadrangles, walkways, equipment, benches, and other physical structures or locations.

A naming is *donor-requested* if a donor requests the name in connection with making a gift at the level specified by the University for naming the program, position, or space in question.

A naming is *honorific* if not supported by a gift at the naming level.

The *URC-T* is the University Resources Committee of the Princeton University Board of Trustees. The URC-T acts under this policy as the delegate of the Board of Trustees, and the Board may at any time require that the URC-T refer decisions to or consult with the full Board.

The *CPUC Committee on Naming (CPUC-CN)* is a committee of the CPUC to be created for the purpose of carrying out the responsibilities described below.

Policy

The Board of Trustees of Princeton University has sole authority over the naming of programs, positions, spaces, and other entities operated, maintained, or owned by Princeton University. The Board will in general exercise that authority pursuant to this policy. The Board reserves the authority to change the policy or to make exceptions to it when it deems it appropriate to do so.

Standards

1. *Donor-requested namings.* When a donor makes a gift at the naming level specified by the University for a particular program, position, or space, the donor may propose a name for that program, position, or space. The donor's preferred name should be approved, provided that it is *consistent with the overall best interests of the University*, where those interests include and take into account the University's interest in attracting gifts to support its mission. The following guidelines and presumptions apply to the determination of consistency with the overall best interests of the University:

- a. If the proposed name is either the donor’s own name, the name of a person closely related to the donor, or the name of a close friend of the donor (but not a public figure), then the naming should be presumed to be in the University’s overall best interests unless the name in question belongs to a person who has a record of malfeasance of a character that would make it inappropriate for the University to benefit from or establish a long-term association with the person. (This provision does not apply to gifts from corporations or other organizations; for such gifts, see (d) below).
 - b. If the donor proposes to name a program, position, or space in honor of a Princeton University graduating class (e.g., “The Class of 1976 Hall”), the name is presumed to be in the University’s overall best interests.
 - c. If a donor proposes to name a program, position, or space in honor of a public figure (other than the donor himself or herself), then consistency with the overall best interests of the University requires not only that the standards in paragraph (1)(a) be met, *but also either that* the public figure have a substantial connection to Princeton, *or that* the use of the public figure’s name would advance University values in the sense described by paragraph (2) (on “honorific namings”) below.
 - d. If the donor proposes to name a program, position, or space in honor of a country, corporation or other non-human entity, then the naming is consistent with the University’s overall best interests only if the entity *both* does not have a record of malfeasance of a character that would make it inappropriate for the University to benefit from or establish a long-term association with the entity, *and* the entity is *also* sufficiently stable that it is reasonable for the University to take whatever risks may be involved in establishing a long-term relationship with the entity. Because countries, governments, and political bodies may undergo dramatic change and commit dramatic injustices, there is a presumption against naming programs, positions, or spaces in honor of them.
 - e. Even when the above standards are met, the University reserves the authority to edit proposed names to conform to University practices with regard to the style, length, or presentation of names.
 - f. The University also reserves the authority to consider other unforeseen factors as they may arise.
2. *Honorific namings.* An honorific naming (that is, a naming not supported by a gift at the naming level) *must advance University values and policies.* Honorific namings are governed by standards comparable to or, indeed, higher than those that govern the award of honorary degrees (the University confers six honorary degrees per year on average; honorific namings are of necessity far fewer).

- a. Honorific namings should recognize rare or exceptional levels of achievement, and those so honored should have to their credit achievements or virtues that the University hopes its students would seek to emulate.
 - b. As the University expands the portfolio of honorific namings on campus, it should take into account the University's aspiration to be diverse and inclusive. While not every honorific naming need increase the diversity of campus names, the overall trajectory of such namings should do so.
3. Before using any donor-requested or honorific name, the University must obtain all legally required or ethically appropriate permissions related to the use of the name (for example, before naming anything in honor of a living person, the University must obtain that person's consent).

Procedures

4. *Donor-requested namings.*
 - a. The Board of Trustees has sole and complete authority to decide whether names meet the standards for naming articulated in paragraph 1 above. If the standards of paragraphs 1(a) or 1(b) are applicable, the URC-T will in general implement the standards on behalf of the Board and in consultation with the president and the University administration.
 - b. If the standards of paragraphs 1(c) or 1(d) are applicable, the president or the president's designee will refer the proposed name to the CPUC-CN for a confidential advisory opinion about whether the proposed naming is consistent with the standards described in those paragraphs. The proposed naming, along with the CPUC-CN's opinion, will then be submitted to the URC-T. The URC-T will give serious consideration to the CPUC-CN's opinion when deciding on behalf of the Board whether to accept or to reject the proposed naming.
5. *Honorific namings.*
 - a. The URC-T may, on its own initiative or after a proposal from the president or the provost of the University, refer programs, positions, or spaces to the CPUC-CN for advice about honorific naming. When doing so, the URC-T may either suggest a specific name for the program, position, or space, or it may ask the CPUC-CN to propose a name.
 - i. When the URC-T proposes a name for the program, position, or space, the CPUC-CN will consider whether the proposed naming is consistent with the standard set forth in paragraph 2(a) above and provide the URC-T with its advice about that question. Unless the URC-T specifies otherwise, both its inquiry to the CPUC-CN and that committee's reply should remain fully confidential. The Board of

Trustees has sole and complete authority to decide whether to proceed with the proposed naming, but the URC-T will ordinarily exercise that authority on behalf of the Board with a presumption in favor of following the CPUC-CN's advice.

- ii. When the URC-T asks the CPUC-CN to propose a name for a program, position, or space, the CPUC-CN should recommend to the URC-T a name that, in the judgment of CPUC-CN, is consistent with the standards set forth in paragraph 2 above. Unless the URC-T specifies otherwise, the CPUC-CN may and in general should solicit public input about potential names for the programs, positions, or spaces under consideration, but both the CPUC-CN's deliberations about the naming and its eventual recommendations to the URC-T should remain confidential. The Board of Trustees has sole and complete authority to decide whether to accept the CPUC-CN's recommendation, but the URC-T will ordinarily exercise that authority on behalf of the Board with a presumption in favor of following the CPUC-CN's recommendation.
- b. Heads of academic and administrative units may propose names for University programs or spaces that are currently unnamed by submitting a proposal to the University provost, but in so doing they should be aware that such honorific namings are rare and the standards for them are demanding. The provost will determine whether the proposed naming should be referred to the URC-T for further consideration pursuant to the standards specified in paragraph 2(a) above. In making this determination, the provost may choose to consult with the Academic Planning Group, the vice president for Development, and any other relevant cabinet officers. The provost will take into account, among other factors, the following policies and presumptions when deciding whether to refer a submission to the URC-T for further action:
- i. In general, the University does not name programs, positions, or spaces for a person unless a donor has made a gift at the naming level specified by the University. This policy is necessary to protect the University's ability to continue to attract gifts to support its programs.
 - ii. In general, academic and administrative units should not propose honorific namings as a way to recognize the contributions of past or present employees, volunteers, or alumni. The University is blessed with too many such contributors to honor them with namings.

Reporting

6. *Periodic consultation and reporting.* In addition to delivering to the URC-T any recommendations called for under paragraphs 4 and 5 above, the chair of the CPUC-CN will at least once during each academic year meet with the URC-T to report on the CPUC-CN's proceedings and discuss with the URC-T any issues or concerns that may have arisen over the course of the preceding year.