

Policy 5103
Naming of University Facilities and Entities

Date of Current Revision: May 2023
Responsible Officer: Vice President, University Advancement

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for naming university facilities and entities, as defined below. The policy's overarching objectives are to establish and maintain a system to ensure that decisions to name facilities and entities 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 institution's values, integrity, or reputation.

2. AUTHORITY

The Board of Visitors has been authorized by the Commonwealth of Virginia to govern James Madison University. See Code of Virginia § 23.1-1600; § 23.1-1301. The Board has delegated the authority to manage the university to the president.

3. DEFINITIONS

Donor

An individual, corporation, or foundation who have made significant charitable contributions to the university.

Entity

An administrative or academic unit and the colleges, departments, schools, programs, institutes and centers within those units.

Facility

Any university building, structure, room, plaza, open space, landscaped area, or other physical improvement or natural feature of the university campus or other property under the administrative control of the university.

Gift

A voluntary transfer of money or property of value made by a donor without expectation or receipt of an economic benefit commensurate with the money or property transferred, and to which no commitment of resources or services has been made. A donor may specify the general use of the fund or it may be an unrestricted gift to be used to meet needs identified by the university, college, or related support organization.

Naming Opportunity

For purposes of this policy, a naming opportunity is defined as any occasion when a specific name, beyond a merely functional description or designation, may be bestowed upon a university facility or entity.

4. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all JMU facilities and entities as defined by this policy regardless of location or administrative assignment.

5. POLICY

The president has delegated responsibility for the management of all facility and entity namings to the vice president for University Advancement.

Employees are considered eligible for naming opportunity consideration after a period of three (3) years from the end of employment at the university. Exceptions may be granted by the president or board of visitors in special circumstances.

When a naming opportunity arises, strong preference shall be given to persons who have distinguished, close, and valued association with James Madison University. Any individual(s) or corporate entities for whom a facility or entity may be named should be representative of the university's core values.

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) requires that all organizational changes to academic programs, units or colleges, including changes of name, be submitted and approved before changes may take effect. This review may affect the timing of the name change. The Office of the Provost and vice president for Academic Affairs will coordinate the SCHEV review process.

5.1 Types of Namings

a. Functional

Established to provide place or function-based namings that are institutionally relevant. These namings may be temporary.

b. Honorary

Bestowed to honor extraordinary service to, or valued association with, the university.

c. Commemorative

Bestowed upon individuals outside the university community – often of local, state or national prominence.

d. Philanthropic

Secured through significant philanthropic investment in support of JMU.

Proposals offering naming opportunities to prospective donors will refer to the record of open-naming opportunities and gift levels that have been approved by the vice president for University Advancement. In instances where the approved record of naming opportunities allows for consideration of a range of giving levels (e.g., for major capital gifts, or for academic and administrative units), a naming proposal will be submitted to a donor only after the giving level has been approved by the vice president for University Advancement in consultation with the president.

Donors who wish to pursue a gift-based naming for any eligible University facility or entity must meet the *University Advancement Guidelines for Naming Opportunities and Endowments* and any other applicable policies and have a fully executed donor gift agreement on file with the James Madison University Foundation. These guidelines are on file with the associate vice president for Development and available upon request.

Gift reinvestment will be assessed on all donations directed to name facilities but not to gifts made to endow deferred maintenance.

One gift will be recognized with only one naming opportunity per commitment, typically after not less than 20% of the amount has been paid.

1. Appropriation of private, charitable funds raised in excess of capital project minimum

In the event that the university raises and receives cash in excess of the capital project's fundraising minimum total need, the vice president for University Advancement will consult with the president and division heads to determine the most beneficial allocation of these funds for the university.

2. Appropriation of private, charitable donations raised for existing facilities and spaces

In instances when a gift recognized with the naming of a building or space does not directly offset renovation or construction expenses, such as naming an already-existing building, the vice president for University Advancement will consult with the president and division heads to determine the most beneficial allocation of these funds for the university.

3. Naming for a Corporation or Organization

The university will consider naming a facility or entity for a corporation or organization whose gifts represent a substantial contribution toward the cost of a particular project, or when the corporation or organization has significantly advanced the university in other ways deemed to merit such recognition. Corporate naming sponsorships (vs. philanthropic gifts) must first be approved by the vice president for University Advancement and comply with the JMU Foundation Sponsorship Policy.

4. Temporary Naming Rights

The university may enter into agreements with individuals or business entities to temporarily name facilities when a contribution to the university meets or exceeds naming levels. The university officer seeking a temporary naming right for a physical entity at JMU on behalf of a corporation or organization must receive approval from the vice president for University Advancement or the athletics director for athletic facilities, before making any agreements (written or verbal) with the organization. The vice president for Administration and Finance will also review and must approve the terms of the naming rights before those rights can be granted. Contract signing should be pursuant to university policy [4100](#).

5. Gift Levels

The vice president for University Advancement must approve and disseminate all gift levels for any non-athletic capital project or facility before it can be named and/or before any person or organization can be recognized with this honor. The athletic

director must approve and disseminate all gift levels for athletic facilities. Because the capital projects and gift levels are subject to change, employees wishing to access the most current listing of gift-level pricings for capital projects or facilities should contact the vice president for University Advancement or, for athletic gift levels, the associate athletic director for Athletics Fundraising.

Gift levels for physical entities vary, based on the following factors:

- Whether 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
- The public visibility and perceived market value of the physical entity under consideration for naming

6. Pledge Duration

Donors who pledge to donate funds and receive recognition benefits to name a facility or entity must commit to complete the payment no more than five (5) years from the date of gift agreement. In some circumstances, and only with the authorization of the university's vice president for University Advancement, a pledge payment schedule may exceed five (5) years. When the physical entity to be named is part of a new capital project, the vice president for Administration and Finance must also approve exceptions to the pledge duration standard.

7. Deferred Gift Commitments

Conditions for conferring a naming on the basis of a deferred-gift commitment vary, depending on whether a physical or non-physical entity is being named, and when the naming is to be conferred.

Naming thresholds will increase over time. Future namings made on the basis of deferred gifts (e.g., bequests) 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 vice president for University Advancement.

A present-day naming opportunity may be reserved and named based on a gift commitment that defers payment (i.e., with a will commitment or deferred-gift vehicle) to a date more than five years from the agreement date only when all of 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 were received today.

- The vice president for University Advancement determines the conditions of the gift are beneficial to the university.

5.2 University Naming Committee

When considering functional, honorary and commemorative namings, the University Naming Committee advises the President and when needed the President makes recommendations to the Board of Visitors. The committee is comprised of the following:

- vice president for University Advancement or their designee (chair)
- all division heads
- university counsel, ex officio
- director of athletics or their designee
- chief of staff to the President

5.3 Renaming, Removal, or Relocation of Facility or Entity Names

Once a facility or entity has been named the name shall not be changed for the life of the facility or entity, unless there are unusual or compelling reasons for changing the name, including, but not limited to, the right to re-name if a designated name should bring discredit upon JMU.

The renaming, removal or relocation of a facility or entity shall follow the same university policy and procedures for naming a facility or entity. See sections 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4.

5.4 Ineligible Facilities or Entities

The president will determine facilities or entities that will not be eligible for naming for an individual e.g., the Quad and the President's Office.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Confidentiality

Considering the sensitivity of the matters under consideration and their potential for creating misunderstanding, all stages of the proposal, review and recommendation process are required to be conducted in confidence.

6.2 Functional Namings

Functional namings will be proposed by the vice president who oversees the facility or entity or the athletic director for athletic facilities or entities to the University Naming Committee.

The University Naming Committee will make recommendations for functional namings to the President for consideration and approval.

6.3 Honorary or Commemorative Namings

A proposal to name a facility or entity in honor/memory of a specific individual may be initiated by any JMU faculty or staff member through a written proposal submitted to the vice president for University Advancement and the athletic director when it is an athletic facility or entity.

Each proposal, as feasible, shall be accompanied by:

1. a description of the facility or entity and the name proposed to be honored
2. a biographical summary of the person proposed, and
3. a statement of rationale articulating the distinctiveness of the individual's contributions to the university.

The University Naming Committee will review proposals and determine whether the proposed naming is responsible, appropriate, and consistent with the university's core values. After considering all relevant information, the committee will make its recommendation for approval or rejection to the president.

For buildings named in honor or to commemorate specific individuals, the university administration, through the BOV Advancement Committee, will make recommendations for consideration and approval by the Board of Visitors.

The president will have final approval in the case of honorary or commemorative non-building facility and entity namings.

6.4 Philanthropic Namings

Gift-based naming proposals for eligible university facilities and entities will refer to the record of open-naming opportunities and gift levels that have been approved by the vice president for University Advancement in consultation with the vice president responsible for the facility or entity or the athletic director when it is an athletic facility or entity.

Philanthropic naming actions for entities (e.g., Jones College of Business) will be approved by the president on the recommendation of the vice president for University Advancement, prior to the proposal being presented to the donor. Proposals to name academic entities must be reviewed and approved by the provost, before review by the vice president for University Advancement.

Proposals inviting gifts at the highest endowment naming levels (e.g., to name an academic unit) must be approved individually by the president prior to presentation (verbal or written) to the donor.

The president will have final approval in the case of all philanthropic building namings.

6.5 Implementation

Upon final approval of a name for a facility or entity, the Office of the President will notify the campus community of the new or changed name.

Standard facility signage will appear in university-approved lettering and wording and on university maps and other documents as appropriate. Corporate logos will be permitted pursuant to Section 5.1.d.4. All donor signage should be coordinated with the office of Donor Relations.

Upon final approval of facility or entity namings to *honor/commemorate* specific individuals, the implementation, notification, ceremonies and signage will be carried out under the direction of University Events.

Upon final approval of facility or entity namings due to a *philanthropic gift*, the implementation, notification, ceremonies and signage will be carried out under the direction of University Advancement, in partnership with University Events.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

The president gives the vice president for University Advancement the responsibility and authority to ensure that the guidelines of this policy are respected university-wide. The vice president for University Advancement may delegate responsibility within the division to ensure the policy and procedures are carried out in an efficient and effective manner.

The vice president for University Advancement will maintain the university's official records of all open-naming opportunities, as well as all names already in use by the university. All departments, offices and employees that generate, receive, or maintain public records under the terms of this policy are also responsible for compliance with Policy [1109](#) – Records Management.

The division of Academic Affairs is responsible for review of academic entity namings. The Office of the Provost and vice president for Academic Affairs is responsible for coordinating the SCHEV submission and review process.

8. SANCTIONS

Any violation of this policy may subject the individual to discipline, commensurate with the severity and/or frequency of the offense, and may include termination of employment.

9. EXCLUSIONS

None.

10. INTERPRETATION

Authority to interpret and apply this policy rests with the president and is generally delegated to the vice president for University Advancement.

Previous version: March 2018

Approved by the president: February 2006