

Student Preferred or Chosen Name Policy

PURPOSE

To foster a campus environment that is inclusive and that encourages self-expression, Westfield State University has established a policy whereby any current or future student may use a preferred or chosen first name on campus. The University will use preferred or chosen name whenever a legal name is not necessary. This policy applies to current and future students of Westfield State University.

Westfield State University recognizes that members of our community may wish to use a chosen or preferred first name that is different from their legal first name. For some students, being addressed by a preferred or chosen name is an important part of their identity and expression. In an effort to respect and support individuals who wish to be referred to by a name other than their legal name, the University will endeavor to use a preferred or chosen first name when possible.

POLICY

It is the policy of the University to provide all current members of our community with the opportunity to use a preferred or chosen first name that is different from their legal name, where possible. In some instances, the University is obliged to use a person's legal name and cannot use a chosen or preferred name. Such instances include but are not limited to: employment and payroll records, health insurance records, billing records, financial aid documents, reimbursements, birth records, travel and purchasing authorizations, and records for judicial and governmental processes.

The University reserves the right in the sole discretion of the Registrar to decline to use or to remove a preferred or chosen name if its use is inappropriate, including but not limited to: for the purpose of misrepresentation, to be disruptive, or to attempt to avoid a legal obligation.

Please be advised that changing your first name is not the same as legally changing your name through the courts. If you have a legal name change, please complete the ["Address and Name Change Form"](#) and provide supporting legal documentation. The Registrar will develop a process by which students may seek the use of a preferred or chosen name, and will be the custodian of all records pertaining to the use of preferred or chosen name.

Westfield State University

Policy concerning:

Section: Student Affairs

Number: 4070

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APPROVED: December 13, 2023

REVIEWED:

Under Westfield State University's Preferred or Chosen Name Policy, a preferred name will be used in many university contexts including:

- University Directory,
- Degree Works, MyWestfield, Banner, Plato,
- Dean's List,
- Campus mail, class roster, grade roster, and degree audit.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years, and revised as needed, by the Registrar and the Vice President for Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.