

POLICY 1.44 – Namings

Policy Category:	General
Subject:	Naming Policy
Subsections:	Purpose, Definitions, Principles, Gift and Grant Namings, Honoric Namings, Administrative Namings, Due Diligence, Approval, Duration of Naming, Changes to Approved Namings, Revocation, Records, Public Announcements and Physical Signage
Approving Authority:	Board of Governors
Responsible Officer:	Vice-President (Western Advancement)
Responsible Office:	Western Advancement
Related Procedures:	Naming Approval Recognizing Gifts and Grants Approval of Honorific Naming Revocation of a Name
Related University Policies:	MAPP 1.12 – Advertising, Sponsorship and Promotional Activity MAPP 1.50 - Signage and Election Posters MAPP 2.1 - Gift Acceptance MAPP 2.2 - Fundraising MAPP2.10 - Student Scholarships, Awards and Prizes MAPP 2.15 - Approval of Capital Projects MAPP 2.22 - Funding of Academic Chairs, Professorships and Designated Faculty Fellowships MAPP 7.9 - Establishment, Governance and Review of Research Institutes, Centres and Groups
Effective Date:	June 26, 2025
Supersedes:	January 24, 2008

I. PURPOSE

This Policy sets out the considerations and processes for Naming University Assets.

This Policy applies to the Naming of University Assets for a commemorative or administrative purpose or as a result of a Gift or Grant. This Policy does not apply to the placing of plaques or other memorials where such recognition does not involve the Naming of a University Asset.

The authority to approve a Naming under this Policy and its Procedures is limited only to the Naming of the University Asset. Other University policies and procedures address the authority to approve the creation or acquisition of a University Asset, or the acceptance of a Gift or Grant.

II. DEFINITIONS

Agreement: A written agreement between a Donor and the University regarding a Gift or Grant which includes the terms of a proposed Name of a University Asset.

Board: The Board of Governors of the University.

Donor: An Entity making a Gift or Grant.

FDRC: Fundraising and Donor Relations Committee established by the Board.

Gift: As defined in [MAPP 2.1 Gift Acceptance](#).

Grant: As defined in [MAPP 2.1 Gift Acceptance](#).

Name: A word or set of words representing the official name of a University Asset.

Naming: The process of designating the official name of a University Asset, whether before, during, or after the establishment, creation or acquisition of the University Asset.

Entity: Means an individual, corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other legal entity.

Policy: This Naming Policy as may be amended from time to time.

Procedures: The procedures to this Policy as may be amended from time to time.

University: The University of Western Ontario operating as Western University.

University Asset(s): All tangible and intangible assets of the University, whether existing or proposed, including but not limited to:

- Tangible assets:
 - buildings and parts thereof (wings, lecture and seminar rooms, laboratories, reading rooms, atria, foyers, etc.);
 - equipment;
 - facilities or physical structures (including residences);
 - roadways and pathways; and
 - open spaces, green spaces or gardens, fields, and other natural features.

- Intangible assets:
 - academic units (faculties, departments, schools, institutes, centres, libraries, etc.);
 - research centres, research institutes, and research programs or initiatives;
 - academic programs within one or more academic units;
 - endowed or limited-term chairs;
 - awards, including scholarships and bursaries, to support or recognize students;
 - fellowships, professorships, awards for teaching excellence and other academic position support;
 - administrative posts (deanships, chairs, directorships, etc.);
 - events, both academic (lectures, symposia, conferences, etc.) and non-academic (athletic and other extracurricular events, etc.);
 - endowments; and
 - student services and other services.

III. POLICY

1. PRINCIPLES

1.1 The following general principles apply to all Namings and the Names that result from Namings:

- 1.1.1 University Assets available for Naming are limited and therefore Names must be used and approved wisely.
- 1.1.2 Names may be approved in the name of a Donor, or in the name of a third party at the request of the Donor.
- 1.1.3 Names proposed as part of an estate or trust bequest will be put forward for approval prior to acceptance of the bequest.
- 1.1.4 A Naming typically recognizes individual(s) but could recognize

corporations, partnerships, joint ventures, trusts, legal entities, or geographical areas (i.e., counties in Southwestern Ontario).

- 1.1.5 On rare occasions, an honorific Name may be approved to honour an Entity for distinguished service to the University or society in general.
 - 1.1.6 A Naming shall be independent of all appointment, admission, and curriculum decisions.
 - 1.1.7 This Policy permits Naming for an Entity that manufactures or distributes commercial goods or services. A Name that includes the name of an Entity that manufactures or distributes commercial goods or services is not an endorsement of that Entity or their goods or services.
 - 1.1.8 This Policy permits Naming for an individual who has at one time held public office, or the Naming of an individual who assumes a public office after a Name has been approved, unless the circumstances outlined in Section 8 or 9 arise. Names are not an endorsement of a partisan political or ideological position.
 - 1.1.9 The University values and will protect its integrity, autonomy, and academic freedom. It will not approve a Name that would compromise these fundamental values.
 - 1.1.10 The University will not approve a Name that will compromise its reputation, its commitment to its academic mission or its essential values, as articulated in its strategic documents. These include values respecting Indigeneity, equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and anti-racism.
 - 1.1.11 The Naming of an academic or research unit shall not impede the University from altering its academic and research priorities.
- 1.2 A Name may be reviewed, changed, or revoked by the University to ensure adherence to these principles.

2. GIFT AND GRANT NAMINGS

- 2.1 Namings related to Gifts or Grants shall comply with University funding minimums established by the University from time to time, which minimums shall not take into account external or internal matching funds.
- 2.2 Names are normally in recognition of Gifts or Grants that cover a significant portion of the cost to create, build, acquire, maintain, and/or renovate a tangible or intangible University Asset.
- 2.3 Namings of physical space within a building should be related to Gifts or Grants designated to the capital costs associated to that building.

2.4 Members of faculty, staff, retirees, alumni or students making a Gift or Grant are eligible to be recognized through a Naming.

3. HONORIFIC NAMINGS

3.1 Provisions in this Policy that apply to Naming in recognition of a Gift or Grant also generally apply to an honorific Naming.

3.2 The University shall seek, where possible, written support for a Naming from the intended honouree or, if deceased, members of the intended honouree's family.

3.3 Only in exceptional circumstances will University Assets be named to honour outstanding service of members of faculty, staff, retirees, alumni or students, and this would typically occur after an individual is no longer in full-time employment at the University.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE NAMING

4.1 In the absence of a Naming based on Gift, Grant or honorific Naming, the Vice-President (Operations & Finance) may assign a Name to an unnamed University Asset for operational purposes, after appropriate consultation. The Vice-President (Operations & Finance) shall inform the Board of such Naming at the next meeting of the Board.

5. DUE DILIGENCE

5.1 The University shall conduct appropriate due diligence to reasonably assure the Board or its delegate(s) that any Entity to be recognized through a Naming is of sound reputation and that the proposed Name complies with this Policy.

6. APPROVAL

6.1 The authority to name, change, or revoke a Name rests with the Board or its delegate(s).

6.1.1 The Vice-President (Western Advancement) has delegated authority to approve a Naming, change a Name, or to revoke a Name in recognition of Gifts or Grants of less than \$1 million.

6.1.2 FDRC has delegated authority to approve a Naming, change a Name, or to revoke a Name in recognition of Gifts or Grants of \$1 million or more but less than \$10 million.

6.1.3 The Board has the authority to approve a Naming, change a Name, or revoke a Name in recognition of Gifts or Grants of \$10 million or more.

6.1.4 The Board has the authority to approve all honorific Namings, changes to

honorific Namings, or to revoke an honorific Naming.

- 6.1.5 The Vice-President (Operations & Finance) has delegated authority to approve an administrative Naming, change an administrative Naming or revoke an administrative Naming.

7. DURATION OF NAMING

7.1 Names may be approved for a limited term or in-perpetuity.

- 7.1.1 A Name of a tangible University Asset recognizing an Entity or administrative Namings shall remain in place for the useful life of the University Asset. If the tangible University Asset changes, the Name is subject to provisions of Section 8 of this Policy.
- 7.1.2 A Name in recognition of a legal entity that is not an individual – such as a corporation, partnership, trust or other entity – shall be for a limited period of time unless supported by an endowment.
- 7.1.3 Where Names are approved for a limited period of time, the University is obligated to honour the Naming for the period of time stipulated in the Agreement, subject to Section 8 or Section 9 of this Policy.
- 7.1.4 Where (i) a University Asset is named and (ii) the University Asset so named is directly supported by an endowment, the University will maintain the Name.

8. CHANGES TO APPROVED NAMINGS

- 8.1 Any proposal to change a Name on a University Asset shall adhere to the same principles and requirements outlined in this Policy. In this case, the University will endeavor to consult with all parties concerned (e.g. Donor, Donor representative) where reasonably possible.
- 8.2 The Board or its delegate(s) have the right (in consultation with the Donor(s) where possible) to change the Name of a University Asset due to a change of circumstances, such as change of name or marital status associated to the Name, significant renovations or modifications of a tangible University Asset, or a change of circumstances that affects an intangible University Asset.
- 8.3 When, for whatever reason, a named building or space is to be substantially renovated or replaced, or the purpose of the space is substantially altered, the University shall have discretion to retain, transfer, or discontinue the use of the Name.

9. REVOCATION

- 9.1 A Name may be revoked where continuation of the Name would, in the opinion

of the Board or its delegate(s), be contrary to the principles articulated in this Policy.

- 9.2 In addition to the right of revocation set forth in Section 8.1 above, the Board or its delegate(s) may revoke a Name in recognition of a Gift or Grant if there is a shortfall in the promised payment(s) outlined in the Agreement, following reasonable notice to the Donor and an opportunity to address the shortfall. If the Board or its delegate(s) revoke a name, they may offer alternate recognition commensurate with the actual giving level.
- 9.3 Consistent with the Income Tax Act, if a Name in recognition of a Gift is revoked, the University shall not return any portion of the Gift already received except where legally permitted.
- 9.4 Any proposed revocation of a Name shall require written confirmation of due diligence on the background and impact of the subject of the Naming to the Board or its delegate(s).
- 9.5 The revocation process shall generally parallel the approval process outlined in Section 6 of this Policy.
- 9.6 Any Name revoked by the Vice-President (Western Advancement), the FDRC, or the Vice-President (Operations & Finance) shall be reported to the Board at the next meeting of the Board.

10. RECORDS

- 10.1 The University Secretariat will maintain the records pertaining to the approval of all Namings and an inventory of all approved Names.
- 10.2 Western Advancement will maintain an inventory of University Assets available for Naming.
- 10.3 Western Advancement will maintain all records of Gifts and Grants associated with Namings.

11. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PHYSICAL SIGNAGE

- 11.1 A minimum of 20% of a Gift or Grant should typically be received before the approved Name is announced and/or signage is installed.
- 11.2 All physical signage or displays which recognize a Naming shall be consistent with MAPP 1.50 Signage and Election Posters and be reviewed by Western Communications before proceeding.
- 11.3 No corporate logos or wordmarks will be used to recognize Gifts or Grants, unless proposed by the Vice-President (Western Advancement) and subject to the approval process for Namings.