



## Board of Trustees Policy

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**POLICY NUMBER: BOT 612**

**POLICY NAME: Buildings and Facilities-Naming**

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<b>Effective Date:</b>	<i>July 1, 2024</i>
<b>Last Review Date:</b>	<i>October 12, 2001</i>
<b>Next Scheduled Review Date:</b>	<i>January 2029</i>

### I. POLICY STATEMENT

Naming buildings and facilities at Michigan State University ("MSU") has become increasingly significant because of the growing importance of private giving and the value of naming gifts for institutional advancement. For this reason, and because of the longevity of named buildings and facilities and the need to maintain the integrity of MSU's values and public image, a predictable, published process for considering such gifts is advantageous. At the same time, each naming opportunity and gift has a different context, and MSU must remain flexible enough to seize special funding opportunities. Therefore, though it is expected that this policy will serve as a framework for naming buildings and facilities, it is not intended to negate an occasional, well-justified exception.

### II. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

University Advancement

### III. SCOPE

1. This policy applies to the naming of all buildings and facilities on land governed by the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University ("the Board").

2. This policy does not apply to the naming of administrative or academic programs, or forms of individual recognition, such as faculty chairs, professorships, scholarships, fellowships, awards, and other individual honors.

## IV. DEFINITIONS

*None.*

## V. POLICY

### A. Authority for Naming

1. Authority for naming buildings and facilities is vested in the Board as follows:
  - a. In recognition of gifts of \$2,500,000 or more.
  - b. An honorific naming that advances MSU's mission and values and may not be supported by a gift.
2. Authority for naming buildings and facilities in recognition of gifts less than \$2,500,000 is vested in the President or their designee. Any delegation of authority from the President must be made in writing and specify the monetary threshold below which the designee is authorized to exercise approval authority.

### B. Committee

1. There shall be a University Advisory Committee on the Naming of Buildings and Facilities ("Naming Committee").
2. The Naming Committee shall advise the President on the appropriateness of proposed names or changes in names for buildings and facilities at MSU. Facilities shall include designated areas of the campus, spaces within buildings, streets, and any other permanent physical structures.
3. The Naming Committee shall be composed of the following voting members:
  - a. Vice President for University Advancement (Chair)
  - b. One Dean (Vice Chair)
  - c. Chief of Staff to the President
  - d. Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Board of Trustees
  - e. Senior Vice President for Student Life and Engagement
  - f. Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer
  - g. Assistant Vice President for Engagement, University Advancement
  - h. Four Faculty Members
  - i. One Staff Member
  - j. One Alumnus
  - k. One Graduate Student
  - l. One Undergraduate Student
4. The terms for the Dean representative, faculty members, staff member, and alumnus shall be three years. The terms of the student members of the Naming Committee shall be two years. The Dean, faculty, staff, alumnus and student members shall have staggered terms so that no more than three terms end at the same time, unless a vacancy must be filled.
5. The following members of the Naming Committee shall be nominated and appointed by the President in accordance with the nomination process below.
  - a. For the vacant Dean position, the Provost will provide the President with at least two nominees.
  - b. For each vacant faculty position, the University Committee on Academic Governance will provide the President with at least two nominees.
  - c. For the vacant staff position, the President will request one nominee from each union representing staff.
  - d. For the vacant alumnus position, the Michigan State University Alumni Office will provide the President with at least two nominees.
  - e. For the vacant graduate student position, the President will request two nominees from the Council of Graduate Students.
  - f. For the vacant undergraduate student position, the President will request two nominees from the Associated Students of Michigan State University.

- g. At the discretion of the President, additional nominations may be requested from any or all nominating groups. The President will appoint the members of the Naming Committee from the persons nominated, with preference given to individuals who have a demonstrated interest or experience in institutional advancement and fundraising.
6. In the event that a member of the Naming Committee is unable to complete their term of office, the President shall request a list of nominees from the appropriate group or groups described in Section V.B.5. The President will appoint a person from among the nominees to fill the remainder of the term of office.
7. The members of the Naming Committee represent not only their constituent groups, but also exemplify the collective institutional values of MSU.

### **C. Naming Criteria**

1. Academic buildings and facilities may be named on the basis of primary academic use, location, or for a person or business entity.
2. Non-academic buildings and facilities may be named on the basis of primary use, location, for a person or business entity, or, in the case of athletic facilities, in recognition of the primary sports conducted therein.
3. Proposals for naming buildings and facilities solely on the basis of primary use or location, shall be submitted directly to the President by the leader of the unit with oversight of the facility, subject to prior approval of the Provost or appropriate Vice President, and are not considered by the Naming Committee or the Board.
4. Any other proposals for naming buildings or facilities not explicitly covered elsewhere in this policy are subject to the Board's or President's approval as described in Section VI, and must follow the naming procedures stated herein.
5. When a proposal is made to name a building or facility after an individual, that individual should be a person whose life, work or activities exemplify values for which MSU stands. The following criteria are suggested:

- a. Buildings and facilities may be named in honor of extraordinary faculty, staff, or alumni who:
  - i. Have been deceased for five years or longer;
  - ii. Over a long and illustrious career, exemplified values for which MSU stands; and
  - iii. Brought great honor to MSU through major scholarly, professional, or public service contributions that have stood the test of time.

It should be noted that faculty, staff, and alumni, living or deceased, who are worthy of recognition for exceptional service to MSU, but who are not qualified donors or their designees, are eligible for commemoration in a variety of significant ways other than having buildings or facilities named in their honor.

- b. Buildings and facilities may be named in honor of living persons if such persons are:
  - i. Major donors who exemplify values for which MSU stands; or
  - ii. Persons who exemplify values for which MSU stands and are designated by a major donor with the designated person's prior written permission.

Buildings or facilities may not be named for public officials while they hold office.

6. Buildings or facilities may be named for corporations or other business entities if the business entity's overall history and activities are consistent with values for which MSU stands. When naming buildings and facilities for business entities, the appropriateness of the business' name in a public context, both historical and contemporary, should be taken into consideration. If the name of a business entity changes after a building or facility is named for the business entity, the name of the building or facility may not change unless a change is recommended by the President and approved by the Board, if needed, in accordance with this policy.
7. In the case of donations for buildings and facilities, the building or facility designated with the name of a donor or designee shall be consistent with the donor's wishes and commensurate with the magnitude of the gift. Except when the gift is for the naming of the entire building or facility and other unusual circumstances, it is expected that naming a building or facility for a donor or designee will not be considered unless the present value of the gift amount at the time of naming covers 50% of the project cost of new buildings or facilities, or existing buildings or facilities with a renovation or addition. The minimum gift amount required for

- consideration to name an entire building or facility will be determined based in part on the naming values assigned to other similar buildings or facilities. The proposed naming gift valuation for an overall naming must be set in context of other building and administrative unit naming values and will be proposed to the Naming Committee for review and approval. In the case of an existing building without a renovation or addition, a naming may be considered if the present value of the gift amount covers 50% of the facility's or building's replacement cost at the time of naming.
8. Whenever possible, donors will be encouraged to consider providing endowments for maintaining the building or facility to be named. More than one building or facility may be named by and/or for the same donor or designee, provided that such buildings or facilities' names include language to distinguish them.
  9. Unless otherwise specified, a building or facility named for a person or business entity will retain the name for the useful life of the building or facility.
  10. The criteria for naming in this policy constitute minimum standards. That is, the criteria are necessary, but not sufficient for approval. The Board and the President retain full discretion to decline a proposed naming that otherwise appears to meet the criteria.

## **VI. PROCEDURES**

### **A. General Provisions**

1. All proposals for the naming of new buildings and facilities must be submitted to the Naming Committee, except as otherwise provided for herein.
2. The manner and schedule for the Naming Committee's review and consideration of a naming proposal shall be determined by the Chair of the Naming Committee, subject to scheduled meetings of the Board.
3. The Naming Committee will be responsible for assuring that naming proposals include a thorough, factual investigation of the proposed honoree, and that the proposal meets the criteria for names stated herein. If the Naming Committee determines that the proposed name meets the relevant naming criteria, the Naming Committee will make an appropriate recommendation to the President.
4. After receiving the Naming Committee's recommendation, the President may ask the Infrastructure, Planning and Facilities Office and the Executive Committee for Buildings, Facilities, and Space to provide the Naming Committee with information relating to the building or facility proposed to be named. The President may seek other additional information as needed to make an informed decision, and then approve or disapprove of the recommendation.
5. If the naming proposal requires the Board's approval, the President will provide the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board ("Academic Affairs Committee") and the Secretary and Chief of Staff to the Board of Trustees with a recommendation for their consideration of the naming.
6. Following its review, the Academic Affairs Committee will advise the Board of the naming proposal for consideration and formal approval at the Board's next meeting.
7. The Board may approve the names of the buildings and facilities along with their construction budgets, thus eliminating assignment of working titles for buildings and facilities.
8. Except in unusual circumstances, and then subject to appropriate consultation, a proposed naming should not be announced publicly prior to consideration by the Board and the President. To the extent permitted by law, MSU will honor a donor's request for anonymity and keep confidential information related to the gift.

### **B. Changes to or Removal of Names**

1. Changing or removing the name of a building or facility in honor, or at the designation, of a donor may be considered in exceptionally rare circumstances. Any such request will require serious and careful evaluation on a case-by-case basis. This policy sets a high standard for removing a name designation before the end of an expected duration.
2. All proposals to change or remove the name of a building or facility must be submitted first to the Naming Committee. The process for reviewing proposals to change or remove a name shall be the same as that for proposals to name a building or facility as provided herein. The Naming Committee will retain authority for administration of this process.
3. MSU reserves the right to remove a name from a building or facility under extraordinary circumstances when the continued use of the honoree's name would compromise the public

trust and adversely reflect upon MSU and its reputation. The decision-making process will include at a minimum the following:

- a. An articulation of the specific concerning behavior or conduct by the honoree on which the request for the removal of the name is based.
- b. A fact-finding investigation by the Naming Committee of the alleged behavior or conduct by the honoree.
- c. An assessment of the impact on the campus community of retaining or removing the honoree's name from the building or facility.
- d. Whether retention of the honoree's name compromises MSU's mission or conflicts with its fundamental values.

The Naming Committee may also consult with immediate relatives and heirs of the honoree, as well as individuals involved in the initial naming decision, before making a recommendation.

4. After a thorough review of a request to change or remove a name from a building or facility, the Naming Committee will make a recommendation to the President to approve or deny the request. The President has exclusive authority to approve or deny requests for changing or removing names of building and facilities the President previously approved. The President will inform the Academic Affairs Committee about the request to change or remove a name that the Board had previously approved. The Academic Affairs Committee will advise the Board of the request. The Board has exclusive authority to approve or deny requests for changing or removing names of buildings and facilities it previously approved.

## **VII. RELATED POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

None.

## **VIII. HISTORY**

Enacted: April 25, 1980

Amended: February 3, 1984  
November 9, 1989  
October 12, 2001  
February 2, 2024

Retired Policy No. 02-06-03