



Name: Student Preferred Name Policy  
Category: Student Policies  
Subject: Student Self-identification: Names and Pronouns  
Owner: Academic Affairs  
Related Procedures: N/A  
Related Forms: N/A

## **I. SCOPE**

Delaware Tech’s Preferred Name policy applies to all students and allows them to adopt a first name other than the name listed on their birth certificate and designate their personal pronouns. The College will use a student’s Preferred Name for the purposes identified herein.

## **II. POLICY STATEMENT**

The policy articulates the College’s intent to foster a culture in which all students, including students who are transgender and gender nonconforming, feel safe, supported, and fully involved by allowing the student to designate the name and pronouns that they prefer. In all cases, the goal is to ensure the safety, comfort, and healthy development of the transgender or gender-nonconforming student while maximizing the student's social integration and minimizing any stigmatization.

## **III. DEFINITIONS**

The definitions provided here are not intended to label students but rather assist in understanding this policy and the legal obligations of College staff. Students may or may not use these terms.

- “Transgender” describes a person whose gender identity differs from the gender assigned at birth.
- “Gender expression” refers to how a person expresses gender, such as through clothing, hairstyles, activities, or mannerisms.
- “Gender nonconforming” describes people whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations.
- “Legal Name” means the first, middle, and last name of an individual that is recorded on the individual’s birth certificate, driver’s license, passport, or other legal documents.

## **IV. POLICY**

A. General Privacy

Information about a student's transgender status, legal name, or gender assigned at birth may constitute confidential information. College personnel shall not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender status or gender nonconforming presentation to others, including students and other school personnel, unless legally required to do so, unless the party to whom disclosure is made has a legitimate educational or business interest in the information in connection with their employment, or unless the student has authorized such disclosure.

When contacting the parent or guardian of a transgender or gender nonconforming student, school personnel should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise.

#### B. Student Preferred First Name

The College recognizes the need or preference for students to refer to themselves by a first name other than their legal given or first name. The College seeks to allow the use of a preferred first name wherever possible, consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and policies and within the capabilities of College administrative systems. In public communications and displays where names are visible to other students, instructors, faculty, campus administrators, and the general public, the College will strive to employ the student's preferred name.

While the College recognizes and respects a student's choice to adopt a preferred first name and pronouns and will strive to address the student accordingly, a student shall not have a right of action against the College or any person acting on behalf of the College for damages or other losses arising from a violation of this policy. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a College employee who intentionally violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of their employment.

Examples of types of preferred first names include:

- A middle name;
- A nickname;
- A name to which the individual is in the process of legally changing;
- A name that better represents the individual's gender identity.

The College reserves the right to review and clarify a preferred first name request. The College may deny or revoke a preferred first name when a name is deemed inappropriate for reasons including but not limited to avoidance of legal obligation, fraud, use of obscene or offensive language, or misrepresentation. The Office of the Registrar will maintain and audit this data in the Student Information System.

Examples of places where the College may use the Preferred First Name include:

- Attendance and grading for faculty
- College Email
- Diploma or certificate
- Learning Management System
- Student ID Card
- Student Information System

The College will use a legal name for official College records, including, but not limited to, the following items:

- 1098-T
- Academic Transcript
- Admissions Application
- Degree Verifications
- Directory Information
- Employment Verifications
- Enrollment Verifications
- Financial Aid Documents
- Legal Documents and Reports
- Schedule/Bill
- Scholarship Documents
- Student Account Statements

A student's legal name may be displayed in an unexpected location. The College will do its best to address those situations as they arise. Students whose legal name is displayed in a location where their preferred first name should be displayed may contact the Office of the Registrar on their respective campus.

#### C. Student ID Badge

Students who adopt a preferred name are encouraged to request a new Del Tech Student Identification Card reflecting their preferred name. Students may replace their Student Identification Card one time, free of charge, if the old card is returned to the Public Safety office at the time of replacement.

#### D. Official Records

The College must maintain a mandatory permanent student record (“official record”) that includes a student's legal name and gender assigned at birth. The College will change a student's official record to reflect a legal name or gender change upon receipt of proper documentation, which may include a court order and/or amended birth certificate. In situations where school staff or administrators are required to use or to report a transgender student's legal name or gender assigned at birth, school staff and administrators shall take reasonable precautions to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information.

#### E. Legal Name Change

Students who have had their name changed legally by the appropriate government entities shall inform the College of the change by submitting the new name to the Office of the Registrar using the Student Data Change Form. Official documentation showing the name was changed legally is required.

Acceptable documentation includes:

- Court order
- Divorce decree
- State issued Driver’s license
- Marriage certificate
- Passport
- Social Security Card or Tax Identification Number Card

#### F. Pronouns

A student may designate the personal pronouns to which they prefer to be addressed, whether or not the pronouns conform to their gender identity. A court-ordered name or gender change is not required, and the student need not change their official records.

#### G. Discrimination/Harassment

The College will address complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on a person's actual or perceived transgender status or gender nonconformity in the same manner as other discrimination or harassment complaints.

### **V. EFFECTIVE DATE(S)**

This policy will be effective January 2, 2024.

### **VI. FREQUENCY OF REVIEW AND UPDATE**

This policy will be reviewed and updated bi-annually.

VII. SIGNATURE AND DATE OF APPROVAL

Mark T. Brainard

Mark T. Brainard, President

8/20/2024

Date