



# UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto  
Governing Council

## **Policy on Naming**

October 24, 1996

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## Policy on Naming

### Purpose of the Policy

The University of Toronto welcomes the opportunity to name buildings, rooms, endowed chairs, and other things to honour the distinguished contributions of its past members and others to humanity, to Canada, to Ontario, to Toronto and to the University. It also welcomes the opportunity to honour individuals whose generous benefactions make possible the erection of buildings, the establishment of endowed chairs, and other things.

This policy sets out the University's guidelines for granting the honour of naming.

### Applicability

This policy applies to the naming of:

- buildings or substantial parts of buildings (wings, rooms, laboratories, etc.) or other locations on campus (roadways, etc.)
- special research, teaching, recreational service or other facilities
- endowed programs of research, teaching, service or recreation
- chairs, professorships, visiting lectureships, special lecture series, awards for excellence in teaching, research, or performance of other academic responsibilities
- library collections of books or other materials
- series of publications by the University Press or a division or department, endowed publication grants for books not designated as put of a series, awards for outstanding publications
- collections of works of art
- trophies and other awards for extracurricular achievement
- such other things as the University may from time to time see fit to name in order to perpetuate the name of a distinguished person or a benefactor.<sup>1</sup>

This policy does not apply to the recognition of distinction or benefactions by the placing of plaques or other memorials where such recognition does not carry with it the naming of something such as the above. The President, or an officer or committee designated by the President, is delegated the responsibility for approving all matters in connection with the design and location of plaques.

### General Provisions

Notwithstanding any other provision of this policy, no naming will be approved or (once approved) continued that will call into serious question the public respect of the University.

No name will be approved that will imply the University's endorsement of a partisan political or ideological position or of a commercial product. This does not preclude a naming with the name of an individual who has at one time held public office or with the name of an individual or a company that manufactures or distributes commercial products.

Where a building or a part thereof or a facility has been named, the University will continue to use the name so long as the building, part or facility remains in use and serves its original function. When the use

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<sup>1</sup> Responsibility for establishing fellowships, scholarships bursaries, prizes and other student awards is assigned to the Director of Student Awards by the [Policy on Student Awards](#), which shall be understood to include the authority for naming such awards.

of a building, room or facility is changed such that it must be demolished, substantially renovated, or rebuilt, the University may retain the use of the name, name another comparable room or facility, or discontinue the use of the name. Where it is proposed that the use of the name not be maintained, the discontinuation will require the approval of the Governing Council or of any committee thereof charged in its terms of reference with responsibility for naming.

In identifying portions of buildings which may be named, Deans, fundraisers, and other representatives of the University should be conscious of the need to identify discrete and functional entities. [Alcoves, corners, cupboards, entries, and the like should not be represented as naming opportunities.]

The President, or other administrative officers designated by the President, may recognize gifts from benefactors of physical objects which reside in buildings under the authority of such persons, such as books, decorative windows or doors, paintings, furniture and the like. Such recognition is usually marked by the mounting of plaques or nameplates or inclusion in published lists.

Where an endowment has been established or donated to continue something that has been named, the University will, by means of its Policy on the Protection of the Capital of Endowment Funds or some other policy that succeeds it, make its best effort to maintain the capital value of the endowment in order to perpetuate the thing that has been named and the use of the name.

## Naming In Recognition of Distinction

From time to time, the University will wish to approve a naming to honour the extraordinary distinguished contributions of its past members and others to humanity, to Canada, to Ontario, to Toronto or to the University.

Only in exceptional circumstances will naming be approved for current members of the University community, Governing Council, or holders of political office in Canada. Such naming will require the approval of the Governing Council.

## Naming in Recognition of Benefactions

A decision to erect a building, establish a Chair or Professorship, begin a program, etc., is to be taken on the basis of the usual academic and other criteria, and approved in the usual manner, as prescribed by Governing Council.

For recognition by naming, it will be expected that the benefactor, and/or other contributors wishing to honour a benefactor, will provide all or a substantial part of the cost of the entity. "Substantial" is deemed to mean either a significant majority of the cost or a contribution which, while not being a significant majority, is regarded as central to the completion of the building, etc. Other specific criteria appear below.

In the establishment of objectives for a fundraising campaign, the Governing Council or the campaign committee to which Governing Council delegates authority, may establish in advance naming opportunities and the level of benefaction required for each, and may advise potential benefactors that the benefaction will be recognized by naming, subject to approvals and decisions being consistent with this policy.

In all such cases, individuals representing the University will make clear to potential benefactors that naming is subject to the following:

- (a) the proposal must be approved according to the University's academic and other criteria, and
- (b) where the benefaction does not meet the full cost of the building, the Chair, etc., the naming is subject to completion of satisfactory funding arrangements, and the naming will take place only after that is achieved. If the University is unable to proceed, the potential benefactors will be entitled to redirect or withdraw their contributions.

Benefactors establishing endowments are asked to include provision giving Governing Council the authority to amend the use of the benefaction if the original use becomes inappropriate or impossible, providing that the University undertakes to make its best efforts to ensure that the endowment is maintained as a separate entity and that the naming in recognition of the benefactor is maintained.

## Approvals

Where a naming is proposed within the context of a single academic division or department of the University, the proposal should have the approval of the appropriate authority within that division or department.

All proposals for naming should be forwarded to the President, who shall make a determination whether the proposed naming conforms to this policy, is otherwise appropriate, and is of sufficient merit.

Provisions in this policy that refer to naming to honour a benefactor also in general apply to honour some other person at the wish of a benefactor or group of benefactors. However, where the person to be honoured is a public figure (living or dead) rather than a benefactor, a member of the family of the benefactor, or an associate of the benefactor, the naming shall be subject to the approval of the Governing Council, which shall determine whether the naming in recognition of the third-party/ies is appropriate in reference to University purposes and policies

Governing Council approval will be required for the naming of buildings or substantial parts of buildings, endowed programs of research, teaching, service or recreation, endowed chairs and professorships. Such approval will ordinarily be given on behalf of Governing Council by a committee composed of the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council and the President. The President may approve the names of other things such as visiting lectureships, special lecture series, individual rooms and similar interior spaces, walkways, etc.

Prior to the consideration of naming proposals by the above committee, notice will be sent on a confidential basis to all Governing Council members, in order to enable any member to comment. Comments will be considered by the committee and the Chair of Governing Council will have the authority to require that any proposal whose propriety has been objected to by a member be referred to the Executive Committee of Governing Council for a final decision.

Names approved by the above committee or by the President will be reported to the Executive Committee for information.

The authority to name does not extend to the decision to erect a building, establish a chair, or otherwise proceed with the thing which is to be named, which shall be taken in the manner prescribed from time to time by Governing Council.

April 11, 1989

Last four paragraphs amended, Governing Council, October 24th, 1996.