

MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY

Policy #:	03-0016 / 02-0012				
Name of Policy:	Chosen Name				
Date of Last Revision:	April 2024	Initial Date of Approval:	Sept 2020	Initial Effective Date:	Sept 2020
Policy Owner	Office of the Registrar (Current Students) / Human Resources (Employees)				
Policy/Chapter Sections	Chosen Name Legal Name Student Process				
Date of Next Review:	April 2027				

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to provide guidance on how Missouri Southern State University organizational member (student, staff, or faculty member) may identify themselves within the University community with a chosen first, middle, and/or last name that differs from their legal name.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all University administration, faculty, staff, and students, and all such parties are expected to abide by the procedural guidelines outlined herein.

3.0 POLICY

It is the policy of Missouri Southern State University that any organizational member (student, staff, or faculty member) may identify themselves within the University community with a chosen first, middle, and/or last name that differs from their legal name.

Subject to the parameters set below, the use of the chosen first, middle, and/or last name will appear instead of the person's legal name in university-related systems and documents.

- 1. Chosen Name.** Chosen first, middle, and/or last name will be used in lieu of an organizational member's legal name when possible, consistent with applicable laws, regulations, policies and guides within the capabilities of the University administrative systems.

The University reserves the right to deny or remove any chosen name for misuse, including but not limited to misidentification, misrepresentation, fraud, attempting to avoid legal obligation; the use of derogatory names; the use of symbols, numbers, or any database character not supported by University systems; or, in any other manner in violation of University, local, state or federal policy, law, rules or regulations, with or without notice, in the University's sole judgment.

Examples in which chosen name could be used for organizational members include:

1. Class rosters;
2. Commencement Program;
3. Dean's List;

4. Discussion Boards;
5. Email Accounts;
6. Employee Directory; and
7. Residence hall rosters.

Organizational members are expected to facilitate the use of chosen name by contacting the Human Resources department (employees), the Registrar department (current students), or the Admissions department (prospective students) and the Enterprise Resource Planning System (ERP) will be updated, in most instances, in a timely manner. An individual may not have more than one chosen name for each of the first, middle and last name, at any one time.

2. **Legal Name.** Organizational members are required to provide their legal name. In the event of a legal name change, organization members may process official legal name changes or corrections. A change of legal name requires an official document or court order verifying the correct information at the time the request is made.

Examples in which legal name will be used for organizational members, even when a chosen name has been identified, include but are not limited to:

1. Reporting to state or federal agencies;
2. Transcripts and other student record documents;
3. Diplomas;
4. Payroll, benefits, and other employment documents;
5. Legal documents;
6. Housing contracts;
7. Financial aid documents and processes; and
8. Enrollment and degree verification processes.

3. **Students:**

- a) It is the responsibility of each student who designates a chosen name to ensure that their professors or instructors are able to identify their work for grading purposes.
- b) A chosen name is for use within the University community; however, any use of such chosen name does not apply in situations where one's legal name is required. For example, with F-1 or J-1 student visa status, the legal name is required on I-20s and DS-2019s.
- c) **FERPA.** Under the Family Rights and Privacy Act, a student's name, including chosen and legal name, may be disclosed to the public as "directory information" unless the student opts not to permit such disclosure. To revoke the disclosure of directory information, a student has the option of making the request through the Registrar's website.

Process:

Students may apply for a chosen name by submitting a [Name Change](#) form.

4.0 HISTORY

This policy may be revised, edited, changed or removed at any time with or without notice to applicable individuals.

April 2024 – Updated to new format.

5.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Name Change](#) form

Questions? Contact the Office of the Registrar at registrar@mssu.edu or 417-625-9389.