

The Lutheran University Association, Inc.
d/b/a Valparaiso University

PREFERRED FIRST NAME POLICY AND ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINE

Introduction:

Valparaiso University recognizes that many members of its community may use names other than their legal or official name initially provided to the University to identify themselves. For some students, faculty and staff, a chosen or preferred first name may be an important component of their identity. Therefore, the University has established guidelines that allow students and employees to choose a preferred first name to identify themselves within the University community. We feel it is important to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Policy: Effective June 1, 2016

Students, faculty, and staff may designate a preferred first name, which most university systems will then use. These systems include class rosters, email address, and One Card. The university will also retain the legal (or "primary") name, which will be used in documents such as tax documents, housing contracts, police reports, diplomas, transcripts, and certain health records. Preferred first name can be chosen to be read at commencement, however, the commencement program will contain the legal name.

You may not use your preferred name to misrepresent who you are, nor may you use any profane or offensive language in your preferred name. Your preferred name is subject to approval by university administration, and those who intentionally and egregiously misuse the preferred name option may be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy refers to first name use only. Last names or legal first names can only be changed if a request is accompanied by legal documentation of the change. This documentation includes completed court papers indicating a legal name change, marriage certificate, divorce or decrees.

Preferred name can be designated using the link found under Demographics in DataVU for students. A preferred name can only have a maximum of 15 characters. Faculty and staff will need to contact Human Resources. There will be a charge for new One Cards being issued due to preferred name changes.

Preferred First Name University Administrative Guideline: Effective June 1, 2016

Preferred First Names will be used in the following systems and records:

Valpo OneCard – subject to a replacement fee
Valpo Email
Class Rosters
Housing Rosters

Legal Names will continue to be used for official University records, including but not limited to the following:

Legal Documents and Reports Produced by the University
Student Account Statements (Bills)
Financial Aid and Scholarship Documents
Transcripts
Enrollment Verifications
Employment Verifications
Student Employment Documents, Paychecks, W2s, and other Payroll documents
Benefits Enrollment

I. Selecting a Preferred First Name

All requests for preferred first names will be reviewed by University administration. Preferred first names containing offensive, foul, or obscene language, in addition to names used for the purpose of academic misconduct or fraud will be removed at the discretion of the office maintaining the record and revert back to the legal name. Misuse of a preferred first name may be subject to administrative and/or judicial action.

Preferred First Names are limited to 15 characters, should not contain punctuation and will not reflect a change in your legal last name.

II. Requesting a Preferred First Name:

Students with a current DataVU login may request a Preferred First Name by selecting the Preferred First Name Request option under Personal Information Updates on the Student Menu. All students are required to read the introduction, which includes the Preferred First Name Policy and Guidelines before proceeding with the request. Processing time is 24 hours to update.

Faculty and Staff should contact Human Resource Services.

III. Important Information:

a. **Valpo OneCard**

After changing a preferred first name, students can obtain a new OneCard, subject to a replacement fee, by contacting the OneCard Office and turning in the old card.

b. **Diplomas, Commencement Program, Commencement Ceremony**

Diplomas and Commencement Programs are issued in the student's legal name. Students may choose to have their preferred first name read at Commencement.

c. **Valpo User Name**

A student's Valpo User Name will not change unless a legal name change has been submitted accompanied by supporting court recorded documentation. Students should contact registrar@valpo.edu for information pertaining to legal name changes.

For more information please contact:

Students

**Office of the Registrar
Kretzmann Hall, Room 101
Phone: 219-464-5212
Email: registrar@valpo.edu**

Faculty and Staff

**Human Resource Services
Kretzmann Hall
Phone: 219-464-5214**

Additional Support

**Stacey Miller, Assistant Provost for Inclusion
Stacey.Miller@valpo.edu**

**Office of Multicultural Programs
Harre Union, Suite 203
Gandhi-King Center for Diversity and Global Engagement
1509 Chapel Drive
Phone: 219-464-6760
Email: omp@valpo.edu**