



Policy on Preferred Name

Office of Student Affairs

Policy Document Number: SA-01.1-2024

Adopted by the President: xx/xx/xxxx

Policy Updates:

Policy Purpose: This policy creates a process for individuals to use a Preferred Name that better reflects their personal identity, which is different from their legal name, the name assigned at birth or included on legal or official governmental records and documentation.

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POLICY STATEMENT

New Mexico Tech (NMT) recognizes that individuals may use a Preferred Name that better reflects their personal identity which is different from their legal name, the name assigned at birth or included on legal or official governmental records and documentation. Except when the use of an individual's legal (or primary) name is required by law or policy, individuals will be identified in NMT student information systems (to the extent reasonably possible) and procedures by the preferred name that the student has designated in accordance with this policy.

This policy does not form a contract nor confer rights of any kind and NMT reserves the right to change or rescind any of the statements, procedures, regulations, or conditions contained herein without prior notice.

GENERAL POLICY

The intent of this policy is to allow individuals the option to select a "preferred first name" instead of their "legal first name" that better reflects their personal identity without petitioning for a legal name change. The policy does not include Surnames which can only be changed by a legal name change. If a student elects to use a Preferred Name, students, staff, and faculty are encouraged, as a matter of common courtesy and respect, to use the student's Preferred Name, preferred pronoun, and preferred prefix whenever possible in communications and reporting, except where the use of the legal name is necessitated by university business or legal requirements.

Preferred names are used only within the NMT community. Outside systems, like hometown newspapers, official transcripts, etc. will continue to use legal names.

Individuals who complete the process to establish a preferred name with the University will have their preferred name noted within University-maintained systems and documents. Examples of these systems and documents are listed below.

A preferred name may be used in the following:

- Student email address
- Student Identification Cards
- Class rosters
- Residential life rosters
- Canvas
- Campus Directory, unless a FERPA information block has been requested

New Mexico Tech reserves the right to ensure names, prefixes, and pronouns:

- Are in compliance with other university policies, such as the prohibition of providing false or misleading information;
- Are not being used to avoid legal obligation; and
- Do not include highly offensive or derogatory language.

Reports of such activity will be handled pursuant to university policies, procedures, and applicable law. New Mexico Tech also reserves the right to suspend the individual's privilege to update their preferred name given any conditions stated above.

Legal Name Requirements and Usage

Surnames can only be changed by a legal name change process. Students who wish to change their legal name or gender may do so by submitting a petition for legal name/gender change to the Registrar's Office as outlined in the Legal and Preferred Name Change Procedures.

An individual's legal name will be used pursuant to applicable laws, regulations, and or institutional policies. Examples of documents that use an individual's legal name include but are not limited to:

- Transcripts
- Diplomas
- Enrollment and Degree Verification
- Financial Aid and Scholarship documents
- Health Insurance and Legal Medical Records
- Student Accounts
- Human Resources
- Payroll
- Travel
- Accounts Payable
- SEVIS (International Students)
- Administrative Banner Forms
- F-1 Visa
- Legal documents and reports produced by New Mexico Tech

Inquiries about using a preferred name for an item not listed above may be brought to the University Registrar.

DEFINITIONS

- **Legal/Primary Name** is an individual's name required on legal or official governmental documents such as a Birth Certificate, Passport, Marriage License, Social Security or Tax Identification Number card or government-issued ID. For students, the Legal name is also used on University bills, financial aid documents, and most communications on campus.
- **Preferred Name** is a first name an individual uses other than their legal first name to identify themselves.
- **Preferred Prefix** is a prefix such as Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., or Mx., used by the individual to further identify themselves. This prefix may be associated with a legal or preferred name and is independent of the student's gender in Banner. The preferred prefix will appear in all places that refer to the student's Banner name prefix. The student's preferred prefix should

be used in written and oral communication where a prefix is appropriate and the information is provided and known.

- **Preferred Pronouns** are used in place of people's names. A preferred pronoun is the pronoun that an individual would like others to use when talking to or about that individual. Some people prefer others to use a gender-neutral or gender-inclusive pronoun when talking to or about them.

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