Board of Regent Naming Policy 19-14:

“It is the preference of the Board to commemorate the contributions of individuals to academic excellence through the naming or dedication of scholarships, programs, professorships, and other similar actions. However, the Board recognizes that from time to time there may be a desire to name or dedicate some facilities or portions of the university’s buildings or grounds after a person.

The Board must approve each request to name an entire building after an individual or individuals. Such requests are to be presented to the Physical Planning and Funding Committee and the full Board of Regents for discussion in closed session prior to approval. Public announcement of the request by the university shall not be made until the request has been approved by the board.

If the request involves a living individual who has been formally associated with the University of Wisconsin System, or has held a paid public office, a waiting period is required unless a situation is presented where a gift stipulates the naming. Normally, at least five years must have elapsed from the time a person who has been formally associated with the University of Wisconsin System, or has held a paid public office, has terminated that association, or left the paid public office.

The Chancellor of each institution is authorized to name facilities when the naming involves less than an entire building, such as additions, wings, interior spaces or exterior amenities*. This authorization is subject to the same limitations regarding waiting periods as those pertaining to entire buildings.”

* Interior spaces includes rooms such as classrooms, instructional laboratories, seminar and auditorium spaces, common spaces and indoor playing surfaces, etc. Exterior amenities include walks, roads, gardens and outdoor playing surfaces, etc.

UW-Madison Process

When a university program intends to designate specific naming opportunities (buildings, additions, wings, interior spaces or exterior amenities) as part of a capital campaign for a new or renovated facility, the Dean/Director must review the campaign naming opportunities with the Chancellor and Provost prior to the start of the campaign. Past practice on the Madison campus has discouraged corporate naming for entire buildings or wings.

There are occasions when an honorary naming may be deemed appropriate to recognize the significant contributions an individual has made to the university. Donors may also make contributions to programs or projects and the naming opportunity may be a stipulation of the gift. The offices of the Chancellor and the Provost still must be informed of the names and spaces under consideration before a commitment is made and a formal request for approval is submitted to their offices. Auxiliary and support units must submit any naming requests under consideration to the Vice Chancellor for Administration for review and acceptance before submitting to the Provost and Chancellor’s offices. At all
times, an effort should be made to sufficiently consider the name of women and minorities in the naming process.

Under no circumstances can a commitment for a naming be made or the formal approval process started before this information is reviewed by those offices.

To start the formal approval process, the Dean/Director should submit a request to Teresa Adams in FPM’s Office of Capital Planning and Development (tadams@fpm.wisc.edu, phone 263-3003). The request should include:

- a brief biography of the person to be honored by the naming
- why the naming is being proposed
- how the naming meets Board of Regent/campus criteria

If the naming requires Board of Regent action, the Chancellor may choose to consult with the Campus Planning Committee before endorsing the naming and forwarding the request to the Regents. The chancellor may also choose to have the Campus Planning Committee review naming requests that are delegated to the campus. The time for approvals varies depending on the type of naming request under consideration and may take two to three months.

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