

Policy #	Policy Name	BR #	Board Action Date
2.2	Use of Preferred First Name & Execution of Change to Legal Name by Students - CSCU	17-041	2017-04-06

**Use of a Preferred First Name and Execution of Changes to Legal Name by Students**

**Statement of Policy**

The Board of Regents for Higher Education is committed to providing an educational environment where all are welcome and free to express the manner in which they choose to identify themselves. In this vein the BOR is issuing this policy so that individuals may be identified by a preferred first name or used name as well as understand procedures to change their legal names for the purposes of their education records.

Connecticut State Colleges & Universities (CSCU) shall use a preferred or used name on all documents and records other than official documents, such as diplomas and transcripts. Documents and records that may display a preferred or used name include, among others, course rosters, identification cards, email addresses, and honors, awards and prizes issued by the institution.

The Board of Regents for Higher Education directs the system office working with representatives of the CSCU institutions to establish appropriate forms, procedures and timelines to facilitate students’ requests for usage of a preferred first name or used name. The institutions are to incorporate advisement regarding the ramifications of preferred first name or used name usage into their process.

CSCU institutions must use students’ legal names in all official documents, despite requests for the usage of preferred or used names. Legal names are to appear on all external use reports and documents including, but not limited to employment paper work, paychecks, tax forms, student billings, financial aid forms, scholarships, transcripts, diplomas, and other documents required by law.

The Board of Regents for Higher Education directs the system office working with representatives of the CSCU institutions to establish appropriate forms, procedures and timelines to facilitate students’ requests to change their legal name. Within such a request, the student must present an original or certified copy of the court order. After the request has been processed, only the new legal name should be reflected in the institution’s official documents, unless the individual requests in writing that such documents include reference to his or her former name (e.g. Heather Pauline Armstrong formerly known as John Joseph Doe).

In the event of a typographical or other error in institutional records or documents, the individual's request to correct the name will be granted after verification that the correction is due to an error. Documents that may provide sufficient verification for determination of the correction include birth certificates, social security cards, driver's licenses, and other documents issued by federal, state and local governmental agencies.

### Definitions

**Preferred First Name:** A preferred first name or used name is not a legal first name, but is generally used to change the manner in which others refer to the individual. For example, student Mathew Allan Smith may prefer the name Matt or Susan Elaine Taylor may choose to be referred to as Sue or Elly rather than Susan. Note that preferred first names or used names are not limited to variations or derivatives of a given or legal name; for example, student Margaret Ann Parker may request the preferred name Robert or Lawrence Peterson may choose to be called Sarah due to gender identity or transgender status, respectively, without court-ordered documentations.

**Legal Name:** A legal name is the person's official name in accordance with the law. Legal names can only be changed on official documents when a student acquires a court order. Such a court order may arise in a number of different contexts, including a name change proceeding, an adoption, a divorce decree, individual choice, witness protection program. Additionally, a marriage certificate should be treated like a court order.