



OP 41.02: NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to develop university-wide guidelines for gift naming opportunities and service recognition naming opportunities at Mississippi State University and affiliated entities.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

I. Gift Naming Opportunities

Significant gifts benefiting Mississippi State University will provide opportunities for donors to designate the name of a university program, facility, unit, scholarship, or other item in honor of the donor or another person. In order for Mississippi State University to properly administer funds, each gift must be accompanied by a gift agreement that has been approved by representatives of the donor, the MSU Foundation or MSU Bulldog Club if the gift is handled by one of those entities, and the college, school, department, or program that is to benefit from the gift.

The amounts listed are minimums. Gift amounts must be approved by the Vice President for Development and Alumni and the appropriate Vice President and/or dean/director prior to discussion with any donor. Any exceptions to these guidelines must be approved by the President of the university.

A. Buildings

- New building with 100% private funding: At least 50% of construction cost.
- New building with private funding component: At least 50% of the private fundraising goal.
- Existing building: Addressed on a case-by-case basis

Notes:

- Naming opportunities involving buildings must be approved by the President of the university and the board of trustees of the Institutions of Higher Learning based upon the recommendations of:
 - The Vice President for Development and Alumni,
 - The provost or other appropriate Vice President and/or dean/director.
- A proposal to name a building should be approved formally by the President before the proposal is delivered to a prospective donor.

- Generally speaking, the value of a gift that affords a donor the opportunity to name a new building should be at least 50% of the private fundraising goal. An appropriate value should be established at the time renovation plans are considered to add a donor's name to an existing named building. In all cases, a minimum contribution of \$1,000,000 is required to name a building.

B. Other Physical Facilities

- Minimum Amounts:
 - Laboratory: \$500,000
 - Electronic Classroom: \$200,000
 - Distance Learning Classroom: \$75,000
 - Other Classroom: \$50,000
 - Conference Room: \$50,000
 - Auditorium (with 150 or more seats): \$100,000
 - Auditorium (with less than 150 seats): \$50,000
 - Benches, fountains, outdoor plantings, other outdoor structures, or areas: Cost of project plus \$5,000 to the Campus Beautification Endowment.

Note: If structure is a student memorial or student project: strictly project cost.

Notes:

- Naming opportunities within a building should be defined by the unit head and approved by the Vice President for development and alumni.
- Naming opportunities such as benches, fountains, works of art, plantings, or other structures will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Approval must be granted by the university President or the Vice President for development and alumni, based on the recommendation of the appropriate committee. Funding amounts will be based on location, structure, and function. Gift funds must cover the entire cost of the structure or installation, and if significant ongoing costs will be incurred, an endowment sufficient to cover these costs may also be required.

C. Academic or other Major University Units – Minimum Endowment

- College or Division: \$10,000,000 (Some colleges/schools/division may require a higher amount; these will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.)
- School or Department: \$5,000,000 (Some schools and departments may require a higher

amount; these will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.)

- University-wide Center/Institute: \$2,500,000 (some may require a higher amount)
- College/Unit Center/Institute: \$1,000,000 (some may require a higher amount)

Notes:

- Any private gift associated with the naming of any of the above units should be of a level that will transform the very nature of the unit involved, enabling that unit to reach a level of excellence that would have been extremely difficult using state or university funds alone. The gift should be in the form of an endowment, and income from the endowment should be used to provide a margin of excellence for the unit involved and should not replace state funds previously made available to that unit.

D. Endowed Faculty Positions – Minimum Endowment

- Dean’s Chair: \$2,000,000
- Chair: \$1,500,000
- Professorship: \$500,000
- Endowed Faculty Fellowship: \$100,000

Notes:

- Some colleges or schools may require higher amounts to fund these endowed faculty positions; however, these will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- The endowed chair designation will be linked to a select faculty position filled by a truly outstanding scholar and teacher, as judged by rigorous, nationally accepted standards.
- A faculty position designated as a named professorship will be occupied by an exceptionally gifted and promising scholar. Named professorships typically are held by faculty members whose accomplishments indicate potential for national and international leadership and distinction in their field, and whose current efforts are focused on honing teaching skills and/or establishing a superior record of research or other scholarly activity.

E. Lectureships and Lecture Series – Minimum Endowment

- Presidential Lecture Series: \$1,000,000
- Distinguished Lectureship: \$500,000
- Visiting Lecture Series: \$250,000

Notes:

- The designation of a distinguished lectureship is reserved for a select position to be filled by a top scholar who becomes a part of the Mississippi State University community for a specified period, but who typically does not accept a permanent position on the faculty. Special compensation packages usually are required to support distinguished lectureships, whose holders typically are in the forefront of their academic discipline.
- A presidential lecture series will bring to Mississippi State University a variety of outstanding individuals of broad experience and expertise whose presentations will have university-wide and interdisciplinary appeal. Earnings from the endowed fund will provide for honoraria, travel expenses, and other costs associated with presenting such speakers.
- Approval for a distinguished lectureship and presidential lecture series must be granted by the President of Mississippi State University based on recommendations of:
 - The Vice President for development and alumni,
 - The provost, and
 - The appropriate Vice President and/or dean.
- A visiting lecture series will bring to Mississippi State University, for short stays, a variety of individuals with experience and expertise relevant to the special interests of a particular college or school. Earnings from the endowed fund will provide for honoraria, travel expenses, and other costs associated with presenting such speakers.

F. Fellowships and Scholarships – Minimum Endowment

- Post-Doctoral Fellowships: \$300,000
- Graduate Fellowships: \$250,000
- Presidential Endowed Scholarships: \$300,000
- Endowed Scholarships: \$25,000 and above
- Annual Scholarships (non-endowed): \$1,000 and above

Notes:

- Fellowships are a form of educational assistance typically reserved for graduate students. The awards will provide full or partial support that will enable capable and deserving students to complete their educational experience at Mississippi State University. Specific criteria for eligibility may be established in consultation with the donor.

- Scholarships aid talented undergraduate students. Specific criteria for eligibility may be established in consultation with the donor.

G. Other Naming Opportunities – Minimum Endowments

- Endowed Fund for Excellence: \$25,000
- Teaching, Service, Research and Staff Awards: \$25,000
- Other Endowments: \$25,000

Notes:

- An endowed fund for excellence may be established in support of a college, school, department, academic discipline, or other university program of interest to the donor. Earnings from such funds may be used to enhance the selected program in a variety of ways, including support for research, faculty development, and travel, or for other educational enrichment activities.
- Earnings from such funds designated for teaching, service, research, and staff awards will be used to recognize outstanding performances in the areas of classrooms, service, and research by faculty, professional, or support staff members in the specified college, school, or division. Recipients typically will be chosen by the college, school, or unit.
- Other endowments supporting faculty development, classroom enhancements, etc. may be established in support of the needs of the selected college, school, or division.

II. Term Naming Opportunities

In appropriate circumstances, a facility, whether it be an interior or exterior space, can be designated with a specific name for a predetermined duration. Additionally, the following criteria must be met or understood:

1. The gift agreement must explicitly define the duration for which the space will bear the designated name.
 - For buildings or external spaces, the duration of the term naming designation shall be 5 to 10 years.
 - For interior spaces, the duration of the term naming shall be for periods of 3 to 5 years.
 - Upon conclusion of the naming term, naming rights for the space revert back to the university.
2. The University Naming Committee retains the authority to adjust naming terms if a significant renovation or addition becomes necessary for the advancement of the University's best interests.

3. The term naming agreement may be revoked by the university if any of the following conditions occur:
 - The donor's funding obligation is unfulfilled.
 - The university determines that the naming may materially damage the reputation of the university.
4. Term naming amounts shall be agreed upon by the Vice President for Development and the appropriate VP for the area impacted to align as close as reasonable with minimums outlined in Section I and associated costs of the project. External namings must be submitted to the President for final approval. The term naming opportunities must be approved by the University Naming Committee prior to being presented to a prospective donor. Exterior space term naming opportunities in the core of campus (generally defined as area between 182, Hwy 12, Blackjack Road and Wingo Way) will generally not be considered.

III. Service Recognition Naming Opportunities

The university has established procedures for naming certain items covered by this policy for reasons other than private giving. This occurs when some individual merits recognition due to his/her academic, research, or service contributions. The President's cabinet handles requests of this type and makes recommendations to the executive council.

GENERAL:

No building or facility may be named in honor of a current university employee or a former employee who has been separated from the university for less than two years, except in extenuating circumstances.

If at any time following the approval of a naming, circumstances change substantially so that the continued use of that name may compromise the public trust, the President will consult with the university's general counsel, and with the MSU Foundation Board of Directors as appropriate, regarding future action. Pursuant to IHL Policy 917, the university does not have the authority to re-name a building without IHL Board approval. In order for a request to be submitted to the IHL Board to rename a building, the MSU Foundation Board of Directors must make a recommendation to the President regarding the re-naming. If such a recommendation is received, the President will then submit that recommendation to the IHL Board for their consideration.

REVIEW:

This policy will be reviewed every four years or as needed by the Vice President for Development and Alumni.

REVIEWED BY:

/s/ John Rush
Vice President for Development and Alumni

06/07/2024
Date

/s/ Tracey N. Baham
Associate Vice President, Institutional Strategy & Effectiveness

06/10/2024
Date

/s/ Joan Lucas
General Counsel

06/18/2024
Date

APPROVED:

/s/ Mark E. Keenum
President

06/24/2024
Date