



<b>Policy Name:</b>	Policy on Student and Alumni Name Changes		
<b>Associated Form(s):</b>	<a href="#">Online Form</a>	<b>Policy Number:</b>	2020-10
<b>Reviewed:</b>	Non-Academic Policy Committee	<b>Approved:</b>	November 10, 2020
<b>Approval Authority:</b>	President <i>Timothy L. Hall</i>	<b>Adopted:</b>	November 17, 2020
<b>Responsible Executive(s):</b>	Provost	<b>Revised:</b>	November 23, 2018
<b>Responsible Office(s):</b>	Office of the Registrar	<b>Contact(s):</b>	Registrar

## **I. Policy Statement**

Mercy University recognizes that certain circumstances may make it necessary for Mercy students and alumni to request a name change for diplomas, transcripts, and other student records. Official University documents (transcripts and diplomas) may be changed following a court-ordered name change or due to typographical errors made by the University.

## **II. Name Changes to Official University Documents**

### **A. Court Ordered and other Legal Name Changes**

Where names have been changed by court order, all transcripts of records and official statements by the University with respect to students or graduates shall incorporate only the official name as changed by said court order, unless otherwise specifically requested in writing.

Such a court order or legal name change may arise in a number of different contexts, including a legal marriage, official divorce decree, a name change proceeding, an adoption proceeding, becoming a U.S. citizen, a witness protection program, or gender reassignment. (Students should be free to change their gender on all prior, present, and future University records at their discretion.) In all such cases, a student is entitled to change their records to reflect the new or resumed name in accordance with the court order. Students attending Mercy University on a student visa requesting a legal name change must provide a current passport bearing the exact same legal name as the new legal name in order for the University to change their student record.

### **B. Name Changes Due to Typographical Errors**

When a student requests a name change due to a typographical or other error in University records, the student's request should be granted after verification that the name change is due to such error. Documents that can assist the University in making this determination must be issued by at least one of the following entities: federal, state or tribal government; insurance company; bank; credit card company; union; employer; landlord; education institution; or utility company. Examples of acceptable documents for rectifying typographical errors include, among other things, a voter registration card, professional or driver's license, state issued identification card or school identification card, employer identification card, paycheck, tax form, insurance card or policy, credit card, utility bill, or bank statement or check.

### **C. Process for Seeking Name Changes**

To obtain the change, a student must complete the Legal Name Change Request Form and, if relevant, show an original or certified copy of the court order and submit them to the Office of the Registrar. Note that all legal name changes must be made by the student or alumni requesting the

change. No second-party notification of a legal name change will be accepted. Thereafter, only their new name should be reflected on all transcripts, diplomas, and other records issued by the University unless the student requests in writing that their transcript and/or diploma include a reference to their former name (e.g., John Doe, formerly known as John Roe).

For recordkeeping purposes, the student's Legal Name Change Request Form and court order (where relevant) should be kept in the student's file, along with the date of the name change and the student's former name. For court-ordered changes, the University must strictly comply with the terms of the court order. For example, a court-ordered name change made as a result of an adoption proceeding, gender reassignment, or as part of a witness protection program may require that the previous name be sealed from the public. If there is any question about the validity or scope of a court order, please contact The Office of the General Counsel.

When a student has changed their name and requests a new diploma reflecting the new name, the University will issue a new diploma upon surrendering of the old diploma. In the event that the old diploma has been lost or destroyed, a new diploma identified as a "duplicate diploma" may be issued to the student without evidence of such loss or destruction.

### **III. Name Changes to Unofficial University Documents: Preferred Name**

Mercy University recognizes the importance that a change of first and/or middle name might have to students during their time with the University. A **Preferred Name** is not a legal name but is generally used to change how others refer to the student. For example, student Jonathan Doe may prefer the name John Doe or student Mary Jane Doe may want to be referred to as Jane Doe. Note that preferred names are not limited to variations of a student's legal name; for example, student Jennifer may request the preferred name David due to a change in gender identity and be unable to present the documents necessary to secure a court-ordered or common-law name change. Students may use a Preferred Name on all documents and records other than official documents. Documents and records that may display a preferred name may include, among other things, course rosters, student identification cards, student e-mail addresses, and honors, awards, and prizes issued by the university, and other forms/platforms as is can practicably be done by the University. A Preferred Name cannot be reflected on a student's diploma or transcript. A Preferred Name may not be used when applying for and receiving federal student aid (including, but not limited to federal grants and loans).

Students may complete the Preferred Name Request Form and return to the Office of the Registrar to effect this change.

## Legal Name Change Request Form

Please review the [Policy on Student and Alumni Name Changes](#)

**All requests must be accompanied by court ordered name change documentation.** This can consist of the following: a court order, a legal marriage certificate, official divorce decree, a name change proceeding, an adoption proceeding, becoming a U.S. citizen, a witness protection program, or legal gender reassignment.

Students attending Mercy University on a student visa requesting a legal name change must provide a current passport bearing the exact same legal name as the new legal name in order for the University to change their student record.

***Note that all legal name changes must be made by the student or alumni requesting the change. No second-party notification of a legal name change will be accepted***

First Name\*

Middle Name/Initial

Last Name\*

CWID\*

Email\*

Phone\*

Student Type\*

Prospective Student  Current Student  Alumni or Former Student

Document Upload\* No File Chosen

### Requested New Legal Name

First Name\*

Middle Name/Initial

Last Name\*

Signature\*

[\[clear\]](#)

Use your mouse or finger to draw your signature above