

UNIVERSITY NAMING COMMITTEE (UNC)

1. STATUS: Committee of Council

2. DATE OF APPROVAL AND GENERAL RULES AND GUIDELINES:

Date of approval: Council, via PC 1A/2001 dated 7 February 2001; Council, via PC 01/2002 dated 30 January 2002; Council, via PC 10/2003 dated 29 October 2003; Council, November 2012; Council August 2015; Council June 2023

General Rules and Guidelines for Committees

These terms of reference must be read in conjunction with the general rules for committees, which can be found at:

<http://governance.uct.ac.za/committees/default.aspx>

3. INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

The University of Cape Town ("UCT") recognises the significance of naming and the importance of the naming process to the university and its stakeholders. Naming reflects the university's history, values, and aspirations, and contributes to the creation of a sense of place and identity. All official names at the university, virtual and physical, should be aligned to the University's vision, mission, and values UCT strives for academic excellence, respect for human dignity and sustainability.

University education has rapidly evolved since the last revision of this policy in 2015. The *Rhodes must fall* campaign highlighted the need for the university to engage and review the residual symbols and representations of colonisation and apartheid. It also pointed to the limited representation of African symbols and leaders in the brand and identity of the University. The UNC, as a redress measure, will ensure that names, symbols, and places associated with social justice and the African continent are drawn upon in our naming process. The UNC will ensure that these names are inspiring and that they positively contribute to a transformed identity associated with equity justice, and academic excellence. The UNC, noting our global context, will also draw on the names of individuals who have made positive outstanding contributions to the University, upheld human rights and dignity, and contributed towards scholarship and the advancement of society.

The UNC notes the constraints that the introduction of a range of virtual platforms for learning, teaching and research through and after the 2018 Covid Pandemic. This revised policy seeks to incorporate an appropriate standard for the naming of virtual spaces.

4. PURPOSE

This policy on naming provides the overarching objectives and principles that guide decision-making around naming decisions in the University of Cape Town. The Naming Committee is tasked with recognising contributions to the University and promoting the University's vision, mission and transformation through the naming of buildings, rooms, virtual spaces and other facilities. The committee shall operate transparently and in a manner that embraces diversity, considers historical context, and upholds African identity in the naming process.

5. OBJECTIVES

- a) Identify appropriate names for spaces and objects. Spaces include physical and virtual spaces.
 - **Physical spaces** refer to buildings, galleries, theatres, rooms, gardens, open spaces, walkways, roads, equipment, benches, sports facilities and other physical structures.
 - **Virtual spaces** refer to online learning and collaboration platforms utilised by the university. They include virtual academic and research endeavours.
- b) Determine the principles that guide the two distinctive naming procedures at the University of Cape Town, that is, Honorific naming and Donor-requested naming.
 - **Honorific naming** is naming in honour of an individual, event, space, object. It is not supported by a gift at the naming level.
 - **Donor-requested naming** is if a donor or group of donors provide a significant gift or donation to the university in exchange for the naming rights of a given space.
- c) Ensure alignment with related policies such as the Integrated Development Framework Policy, the Fundraising and Stewardship Policy.
- d) Establish and maintain a register of the names given to all spaces.
- e) Ensure that all the reasons behind the names recommended by the UNC are explicit and accessible to university stakeholders and the public at large.
- f) To ensure the development of appropriate procedures and guidelines that will assist in the implementation of this naming policy.

6. PRINCIPLES

The following principles shall guide the naming process at the University of Cape Town:

- a) *Diversity, equity and inclusivity*: Naming decisions should reflect the full spectrum of the university's community, including women, people living with disability, gender and sexually diverse individuals, and other underrepresented groups.
- b) *Decolonisation*: Embracing an African and indigenous identity and context - The use of African names and symbols that represent excellent scholarship; human rights and dignity will be prioritized.
- c) *Contributions to the university's values and mission and transformation*: The naming of spaces should recognise the contributions of individuals, groups and communities to the institution and society at large. Individuals

to be honoured should have contributed positively to the university's values and mission and transformation. Consideration should be given to their actions and impact on society.

- d) *Historical context and values:* The policy should recognize the historical context of the university and South Africa as a whole; the Committee will annually review the list of official names to ensure that the register of names represent the values of the University of Cape Town and the South African Constitution.
- e) *Virtual Spaces:* The naming of spaces should take into consideration virtual spaces and their importance for collaboration and engagement beyond the physical walls of the University. Virtual spaces are a significant part of the University's digital world.
- f) *Renaming:* Names that are removed and replaced will be noted in a plaque on the history of the building and placed on record in the University archive.
- g) *Consultation with stakeholders:* The process of naming shall be transparent, consultative, and inclusive, with input from relevant stakeholders, including alumni, donors, staff, students, and the broader community.
- h) *Academic Excellence:* Naming of spaces after scholars or research groups should be guided by the principle of academic excellence.
- i) *Institutional Autonomy and Integrity:* Naming shall not compromise the integrity and independence of the university, nor undermine the values and mission of the University.

7. COMPOSITION:

- Two members of the Council appointed by the Council.
- The President of Convocation or nominee.
- The Vice-Chancellor or nominee.
- Five members of staff, nominated by the Senate's Nominations Committee, having regard to the need for diversity (race, gender, disability and representation across junior/senior Academic/PASS levels).
- Three Students nominated by the Students Representative Council (SRC).
- The Executive Director, Development & Alumni Affairs (Assessor member).
- A member of the Office for Inclusivity & Change. (Assessor member)
- A member of the Communications and Marketing Department. (Assessor member)

- A member nominated by the Works of Art Committee. (Assessor member)
- A member from Information and Communication Technology (Assessor member)

CHAIR/DEPUTY CHAIR:

- Chair: A member of Council appointed by Council, chosen from the members.
- Deputy: A member of the committee elected by the Committee, chosen from the members, who are not assessor members.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

An Executive Committee will be comprised of the Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretariat and the DVC Transformation. The Executive Committee will ensure that all work of the Committee is carried out effectively.

7. SPECIAL QUORUM RULES:

Seven members, excluding assessor members, shall constitute a quorum, at least one of these members shall be the Chair or Deputy Chair.

8. TERMS OF OFFICE:

The student members shall hold office for twelve months from 1 November. All other members shall hold office for four years from 1 July concurrent with the term of office of the Council.

9. TERMS OF REFERENCE

The University recognises, as the UNC must, the symbolic power of naming. The role of the UNC is to consider names for university spaces, as set out in these terms of reference.

9.1. Donor Requested Naming

- Philanthropic and donor support to the University plays an important role in the advancement of its mission and values. Donor-requested naming has mutual benefits to the University and the donor. It provides an opportunity for donors to make significant contributions to the University while leaving a legacy.
- The UNC must recognise that naming is a strong incentive to giving, and an appropriate way of recognising giving whether by institutions, corporations or individuals or by way of bequest.
- The UNC must balance donor recognition with institutional identity: Naming opportunities should strike a balance between recognising the donor's generosity and maintaining

the University's identity. The University should avoid naming opportunities that could be perceived as inappropriate or inconsistent with the institution's values.

- The UNC must ensure effective liaison with the University Development Committee (UDC), the Vice-Chancellor and the Development and Alumni Department (DAD) in regard to all proposals for names that give recognition, to, or secure, donations or bequests, in order to ensure that the University is not compromised by undertakings given to or understandings on the part of (prospective) donors, and to ensure that fundraisers (including the Vice-Chancellor) must seek guidance (and even mandates) prior to fundraising that keep intact the roles of this Committee and Council.
- The UNC must work with the UDC to ensure effective co-ordination, notwithstanding that decisions of this nature are the purview of the UNC.
- The UDC will from time to time, consider opportunities to secure a donation or bequest and/or recognise a donor by naming a space in their honour. Some opportunities will be identified in advance, while others will arise unexpectedly from approaches to, or by, donors. When appropriate and as early as possible, the ED: DAD must approach the Chair to discuss the opportunity, which might later take the form of a formal proposal to the Executive Committee of the UNC. The Executive Committee after such consultation with the UNC will give their view as to the support the name is likely to have in the UNC and therefore the Council.
- In approaches to donors - the Vice-Chancellor, Deans or DAD will be informed by the UNC's guidance. Use of the term, "naming recognition," must be avoided unless there has been prior agreement to name a space for a specific corporate donor for a fixed period. The provisions of **Section 10 (Delegated Authority)** must however, be adhered to.
- The UNC should, in cases where naming by donors is not possible, recommend that a virtual notification and/or plaque be used for acknowledging a bequest or benefaction. Such notifications and/or plaques (as is the case for names, other than for corporate sponsorship) should remain in place in perpetuity.
- The UNC should with the advice of the Development Committee and DAD advise Council on the size of donations or bequests that are worthy of donor recognition, where it takes the form of naming a space after a donor (individual or corporate) or testator. (The allocation of donor names to a space is thus not automatic).
- Corporate donor recognition where it takes the form of naming a space after a corporate donor/sponsor will, where approved, only be for a fixed period (usually up-to-five years) which period may be extended or renewed where corporate funding/sponsorship is renewed;
- All proposed names will be taken to Council for ratification.

9.2. *Honorific Naming*

The UNC shall always:

- Approach naming with care, recognising that in general names will be permanent (except, where sponsored for a pre-determined period or if the name of a space is of a person whose actions have been inconsistent with the university values).
- Seek and consider the views of the people who live or work in the building/room to be named. Where a name is linked to a specific faculty or residence that the appropriate governance structures be consulted in respect of the proposal.
- Consider whether names given by past generations are aligned to the values of the University, and where they are not, embark on a renaming process.
- Look for names that inspire all university constituencies and reflect the values of the University.
- Consider names that represent the diversity of people that make up the University, with particular emphasis on the need for transformation along the grounds of race, class, sex, gender, sexual orientation, and disability.
- Look for names that give substance to the commitment in our Mission Statement and recognises our historical context and location in Africa.
- The University Council will also from time to time give names to chairs and programmes. The naming of chairs, scholarships and programmes does not fall into the remit of the UNC. The UNC may, however, be requested to identify suitable names for these and where it does so it shall forward such names to the Vice-Chancellor for consideration.

9.3. *Honorific Procedures*

The UNC shall:

- issue a call for proposals, via university communications, to staff and students in June of each year.
- Inhabitants of new spaces will receive a direct call for proposals.
- A short-list of entities/individuals who have submitted proposals will be asked to present their submissions to the UNC by 01 August.
- The UNC will finalise a list of names and disseminate it for comment in the first week of October.
- Comments must be submitted to the UNC by 30 October.
- The UNC will submit the proposed names to Council for ratification at the December council meeting each year.

9.4. Communication

- All communication is the responsibility of the UNC and its chair in conjunction with the Communications and Marketing Department.
- Once names have been ratified by Council, the UNC must publicise the reasons for naming each named space. All spaces with names will include an official explanation for the choice of name.
- Where renaming of spaces has occurred, a clear explanation of the need for the change should be described in a plaque which should include a narrative relating to the previous name of the space.
- The Communications and Marketing Department will take responsibility for updating the Website and will liaise with Property and Services on updating the Register of Names.

10. Meeting Times

The UNC will meet four times a year:

Meetings	Tasks	Dates
Meeting 1	Preparatory meeting	March
Meeting 2	Finalising the call for Proposals and guidelines for submission of proposals	May
Meeting 3	Presentations to UNC	August
Meeting 4	Finalising the UNC Report to Council	November

10 DELEGATED AUTHORITY

- 4.1. The UNC has been delegated by Council to advise on the naming and renaming of university spaces. It will report all new names to Council and ensure that the university's register of names is at all times updated.

11. The UNC Secretariat

The Registrar's Secretariat services the UNC.
