

Chosen Name Policy – Paul Smith’s College

Paul Smith’s College supports current students, former students, faculty, and staff in using a chosen name to identify themselves regardless of whether they have legally changed their name.

This policy is consistent with Title IX federal law protecting students against discrimination based on gender identity and expression. This service is available to individuals who use a chosen name daily other than their legal/primary first name. The purpose of the chosen name policy is to foster a campus environment that both encourages self-expression and affirms identity.

Incoming/New Students:

Students who indicated their chosen name on their Paul Smith’s College application will see their chosen name used in all compatible systems (listed below)

Current Students:

Students who would like to indicate a chosen name should complete a **Chosen Name Form**. Please visit the Registrar’s Office (Administration Building, Room 113) to complete this form or submit it via email to registrar@paulsmiths.edu

Legal Name Changes:

Students who have legally changed their name should submit legal documentation to the Registrar’s Office (Administration Building, Room 113) Examples of legal documentation include:

- Name change judgement from State Court
- Certified marriage certificate
- Final decree of divorce

Questions? Contact:

Registrar’s Office- Phelps Smith Administration Building, Room 113

518-327-6231 | registrar@paulsmiths.edu

Where will my chosen name be used?

- College mailings to your permanent address
- Starfish (Tutoring/Academic Support System)
- Canvas (Learning Management System)
- Email
- Erezlife (Residence Life & Housing)
- ID Badge
- Pyramid (Health Services/Counseling Center)
- Office 365
- Sirsidynix (Library)

There are some spaces where a student's legal name is required by law to be used:

- Background checks
- Employment information and timecards
- Responses to enrollment inquiries such as verification requests
- Official Transcripts
- Licensure Paperwork
- Student Billing/Accounts
- Financial Aid & Scholarship Records
- Medical Records
- Immigration Documents
- Admissions Records
- Email Account & Active Directory Authentication (Email display name will be chosen name)

Because of some technological barriers, there are some technology systems where a student's legal name will still appear:

- Self service
- Raisers Edge
- PowerFAIDS

**Note: The institution is in the process of updating technology systems, which will allow for a chosen name to be used in some of the above systems in the future*

What qualifies a student to use a chosen name?

There are no specific criteria that qualify a student to use a chosen name. Any student who prefers to use a name other than their legal name may choose to do so. Examples of reasons to use a chosen name can include:

- Student's legal name is inconsistent with their gender identity
- Student primarily uses their middle name instead of their first name
- Student goes by a nickname significantly different from their first name
- International students or other students who wish to adopt an English language nickname during their course of study

**Note: Nicknames that are common abbreviations of first names (such as "Joe" for "Joseph" or "Kate" for "Kaitlyn") are not covered under this procedure.*

Chosen name changes are not to be used for purposes of misidentification, fraud or misrepresentation. A student's chosen name must meet community standards (i.e. not profane, obscene, or derived from hate-speech).

What is a chosen name?

For the purposes of this policy, a chosen name is a first name used daily that is significantly different from the student's legal first name.

Class Rosters

Chosen names will appear on class lists on Canvas, however class rosters on Self Service will reflect a student's legal name. Paul Smith's College is currently unable to add the chosen name to the self service class rosters due to technology limitations. This is a project under review. In the meantime, students can utilize the letter below to assist in having this conversation with their class faculty.

Dear [Name],

I am a student in your [insert class name]. The purpose of this email is to inform you that I would appreciate it if you referred to me as: CHOSEN NAME: _____ PRONOUN: _____

On your class roster, you'll see _____, which is my legal name. Please refer to me by my chosen name instead of by my legal name.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact the Title IX Coordinator. Thank you for your understanding, and I look forward to seeing you in class.

Sincerely, [chosen name]

Pronouns

Paul Smith's College seeks to cultivate a community in which the asking, sharing, and respecting of a person's pronouns is a common practice. Referring to people by the pronouns they identify with is a easy and fundamental way to give meaning to a core Paul Smith's College value. In contrast, referring to people by the wrong pronouns, especially intentionally, can have a negative, devaluing impact. The English language has a number of pronouns that are used to describe an individual, which include and are not limited to she/her/hers, he/him/his, and they/them/theirs. As we seek to sustain the practice of sharing, asking for, and respecting pronouns, Paul Smith's College provides pronoun pins and stickers. They can be found in the Counseling Center.