



Chosen Name and Pronouns

Policy EM006

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Responsible Administrator(s): Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Success and Vice President for Human Resource Management and Labor Relations

Responsible Office(s): Enrollment Management and Student Success and Human Resource Management and Labor Relations

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Policy Statement

FIT will use an individual's chosen first name and pronouns to the fullest extent possible, except as may otherwise be required by law. No individual will be required to give an explanation or state a reason for why that individual is requesting or has designated a chosen name.

Reason for the Policy

FIT recognizes and respects that members of our community may wish to identify themselves by a chosen name that is different than their legal name. An inclusive chosen name and pronoun policy not only helps members of our community feel safer but is also a matter of respect. This policy is part of FIT's mission to embrace inclusiveness and is aligned with the SUNY Board of Trustees' Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Policy (#7809). This policy is also consistent with the provisions against discrimination in the NYC Human Rights Law at NYC Admin. Code §d 8-107.

Who is Responsible for this Policy

- The Office of Enrollment Management and Student Success/Dean of Students' Office
- The Office of Human Resource Management and Labor Relations
- The Division of Information Technology
- The Department of Public Safety
- Title IX Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer

Who is Affected by this Policy

- All members of the FIT community

Definitions

- **Chosen Name:** A name by which a person wishes to be known in their day-to-day life that differs from their name given at birth or their legal name. SUNY and FIT recognize some members of the community use a different first name other than their legal first name.
- **Pronouns:** a third-person pronoun by which an individual wishes to be referred

- **Legal Name:** The name that identifies a person for legal purposes. A person's legal name is generally the name recorded on the birth certificate but may be a different name as declared by a court (ex. marriage certificate, legal name changes).
- **FIT Campus Card:** The holder's official campus multi-use card, issued by FIT, used for campus access and campus services including, but not limited to, access to campus facilities, events, administrative offices, residence halls, or purchases related to meal plans or printing services.
- **SUNY:** State University of New York.

Principles

Consistent with the SUNY Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Policy (#7809), FIT recognizes and respects that a person may prefer to use a first name other than their legal name to identify themselves, and to define their pronouns. The college will use a person's chosen name and pronouns to the fullest extent possible, including during classroom instruction, except as may otherwise be required by law.

In addition, consistent with Chapter 58 of the laws of 2022, FIT makes available the option to select "X" for sex or gender to the extent that federal law requires that sex or gender information be collected. Students and employees may identify their sex or gender as "X" at any time they are asked to select a sex or gender. For prospective students, SUNY applications will ask for legal sex (m/f) for federal reporting purposes but will also separately ask for gender where "X" is an option. FIT may still ask for legal sex identification where required for federal reporting purposes but will also include an additional field to allow the choice of "X" for state purposes.

New York State law prohibits an educational institution from misgendering a person, or deliberately refusing to use an individual's chosen name or pronouns. Intentional refusal to use someone's chosen name or correct pronouns may be considered equivalent to discrimination in the Title VII of the federal Civil Right Act, which bars discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

Use of a Chosen Name

- The following will default to display chosen name when a Chosen Name has been indicated:
 - Class rosters
 - Grade rosters
 - Certification rosters
 - Learning Management System
 - Enterprise Systems (Student Information System, Human Resources Information System)
 - Degree audits
 - Email address
 - Internal reports
 - Official College Mailings from FIT
 - FIT Campus Card (if requested)
- Examples where a legal name *must* be used include, but are not limited to:
 - Tax reporting and tax documentation
 - Documents produced by the offices of Financial Aid and the Bursar

- Enrollment, degree, and/or employment verifications
 - Diplomas¹ and transcripts
 - Health insurance documents
 - Immigration documents
 - Medical records
 - Payroll
 - FIT Residential Life housing contracts
 - Commencement booklet
 - Students may use their chosen name on their commencement ceremony name cards
- Members of the FIT community may designate a chosen name as permitted under this policy, such as for email addresses or FIT Campus Cards.
 - Members of the FIT community have the option to change their chosen name or remove their chosen name at any time.
 - Chosen name shall be considered Directory Information. (Legal Name is also Directory Information. For more information see FIT's FERPA policy in Related Policies below).
 - Members of the FIT community may only have one chosen name at any given time.

Prohibited Uses of a Chosen Name

- FIT reserves the right to reject or remove a chosen name designation if it is determined to be in contravention of federal, state, or local laws, or regulations, or FIT policies.
- A chosen name may not include symbols or numbers.
- Uses of chosen name may be reviewed to determine whether reasonably appropriate (for example avoidance of legal obligations, fraud, or use of obscene or offensive language).

FIT Campus Card Displaying Chosen Name

- Members of the FIT community may acquire a new FIT Campus Card displaying a chosen name designation or change.
- Members of the FIT community should be aware that the FIT Campus Card is not a valid, government-issued identification and is not accepted for purposes such as air travel or proof of identity to governmental authorities.
- Members of the FIT community are not required to obtain a new FIT Campus Card with their chosen name, but may do so if they wish.

Use of Pronouns

Respecting a person's self-identification means using the pronouns with which they identify and use in their day-to-day life, as well as the name they provide. Pronouns are reflected in all operational systems consistent with federal, state, or local law in instances when the individual has shared them.

Pronouns are not considered Directory Information under FIT's FERPA policy and FIT will refrain from sharing this information with outside parties. FIT encourages students and employees to share their pronouns where comfortable.

¹ Per SUNY, the display of chosen name on a diploma is left to the discretion of the institution; as such, FIT continues to require legal name be used on this document.

Responsibilities

- **The Office of Enrollment Management and Student Success/Dean of Students' Office:** Assists students with chosen name designations and changes.
- **The Office of Human Resource Management and Labor Relations:** Assists employees with chosen name designations and changes.
- **The Division of Information Technology:** Assists with chosen name designations and changes in all applicable college electronic systems.
- **The Department of Public Safety:** Issues student FIT Campus Cards with chosen name designations and changes upon request.
- **Title IX Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer:** Investigates and responds to complaints regarding failure to use a chosen name as required by policy, or any other allegation related to a chosen name or pronouns that falls within the purview of the Title IX Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer.

Procedures

- **Student Use of a Chosen Name**
A student requesting a chosen name designation or change must submit a completed FIT chosen name form to the Dean of Students Office. Students may also indicate their pronouns on this form.
- **Employee Use of a Chosen Name**
An employee requesting a chosen name designation or change must submit a completed FIT chosen name form to Human Resources Management and Labor Relations. Employees may also indicate their pronouns on this form.
- **Use of Chosen Name on FIT Email**
A student or employee is responsible for notifying all contacts of their email address change once their chosen name request has been approved, and transition to use of the account. The former email address will be available to the user for one month, during which time, they will still be able to receive email to that address.²
- **Reporting Misuse or Other Discrimination of Chosen Name or Pronouns:**
Members of the FIT community with complaints regarding failure to use a chosen name, or who have concerns about violations of this policy, should contact the Title IX Coordinator/Affirmative Action Officer.

² This one-month period is contingent upon the need to reclaim your previous email address to accommodate a new user using the same name as your previous name. In these circumstances, FIT reserves the right to reclaim your previous email address sooner than one month, and access would no longer be granted. Users will be contacted in the event this situation presents itself.

Violations

Violations of this policy will be subject to discipline as set forth in established policies and/or the Collective Bargaining Agreement as applicable, including but not limited to

- Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment
- Code of Student Conduct
- Employee Code of Ethical Conduct
- Collective Bargaining Agreement

Related Policies

- [Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Employee Code of Ethical Conduct](#)
- [FERPA](#)
- [FIT Campus Card and Access](#)
- [Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#)
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

Related Documents

- [Chosen Name Form \(Student\)](#)
- Chosen Name Form (Employees, see HR)
- [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#)

Contacts

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