I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document establishes guidelines for the use of preferred names on the University of Houston’s official identification card, the Cougar Card. This policy applies to university students, faculty, and staff.

II. POLICY

The Cougar Card Office recognizes that faculty, staff, and students may use names other than their legal names to identify themselves. The use of preferred names is supported by the University’s systems, including the campus card management system.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Preferred Name: A preferred name is defined as an alternative to the individual’s legal name as designated by the individuals in university systems.

B. Legal Name: A person’s legal name is the name they use for official governmental documents, such as licenses, passports, and tax forms.

C. Primary Name: A person’s legal name.

IV. ALLOWABLE NAME FORMATS

A. Many members of the University of Houston community use a first and last name that differs from their legal first and last name. Allowable name formats include (but are not limited to):

1. A shortened derivative of a name (e.g. “Sue” for “Susan”);
2. A middle name instead of a first name;
3. First and middle initials (e.g. “A.J.” for “Andrew John”);
4. An anglicized name (e.g. “Peter” instead of “Xingyu”);
5. A name that better represents the individual’s gender identity; and/or
6. A name to which the individual is in the process of legally changing.

B. The Cougar Card office will not accept a preferred name that is vulgar, offensive, obscene or fanciful, or creates confusion of the individual with another person. The use of a preferred name cannot be used for the purpose of misrepresentation.
V. **PROCEDURE**

A. Faculty, staff, and students who wish to use preferred names are required to update their profile within the PASS or MyUH systems. Faculty and staff are required to update their preferred names through the [AccessUH](https://www.uh.edu), via the PASS system. The preferred name option is listed under the Employee Self Service/My Personal Info. Students are required to update their preferred name through [AccessUH](https://www.uh.edu), via MyUH. The preferred name option is listed under Personal Information.

B. Please note that only the First and Last name fields noted with an asterisk will be printed on the Cougar Card. If a preferred name is not entered, the primary names will be printed on the Cougar Card.

C. A person’s preferred name will be printed on his or her UH identification card. Persons who are issued cards with a preferred name that is different from their legal names should be cautioned that such cards are issued for the purpose of university business only, and that identification cards issued by the University of Houston are not considered government issued identification.

D. Faculty, staff, and students should carry a driver’s license or other legal identification at all times.

E. The primary name will remain in effect on all legal documentation including, but not limited to, financial aid forms, tax forms, university transcripts, and health records.

VI. **REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Responsible Party: Associate Vice President for Administration  

Review: Every five years on or before March 1

VII. **APPROVAL**

Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance  

President  

Date of President’s Approval: 

VIII. **REFERENCES**

- [MAPP 04.05.02 – Cougar Cards](https://www.uh.edu)  
- [AccessUH Web Site](https://www.uh.edu)
## REVISION LOG

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