Consideration of Removing Names from University Property [DRAFT]

Effective: November 25, 2020
Contact: Office of the President

Please review this DRAFT POLICY and the supporting DRAFT PROCEDURES in the RESOURCES below and submit your comments to policy@iastate.edu by November 23, 2020.

Introduction

Iowa State University has named university property in honor of individuals, organizations, companies, and other entities (“honorees”). This property includes buildings, wings of buildings, colleges, programs, and large sections of campus (“major units”), as well as campus areas or sections of facilities such as rooms, labs, open spaces, streets, structures, and physical features (“minor units”). However, an honoree may have a history that members of the Iowa State University community find objectionable and wish for the honoree’s name to be removed from university property.

This policy sets forth the principles by which Iowa State University will address requests for removal of names from university property. The Procedures for Consideration of Removing Names from University Property document [see Resources below] sets forth the procedures for considering requests.

Policy Statement

Iowa State University will consider the removal of names from major units and minor units in accordance with Board of Regents’ policy using the principles set forth below. Board of Regents policy [see Resources below] states that the reconsideration of the naming of major units may occur in extraordinary circumstances if the prior approved naming may be damaging to the reputation of Iowa State University or contradictory to applicable law or to the policies, procedures, or strategic objectives of Iowa State University.

Principles

The university will consider the following principles when reviewing requests for the removal of names from university property. Individuals requesting the removal of names are encouraged to address these principles in their requests to the extent they are able to do so. Below each principle are factors that may assist both the individual requesting the name removal and those reviewing the request.

Clarifying University-Honoree Connections

What is the honoree’s relationship with the university?

Factors to address or consider may include:

- What is the honoree’s relationship, if any, with the university (e.g., administrator, faculty, staff, student, alumni, donor)?

Assessing Impact on the University

What harm to the university is caused by use of the honoree’s name?

Factors to address or consider may include:

- In considering evidence of offensive conduct or behavior, how does the continued use of the name impact the reputation of Iowa State University?
- How does the continued use of the name contradict applicable law, policies, procedures, or strategic objectives of Iowa State University, especially the university’s Mission and Principles of Community? [see Resources below]
- How does the continued use of the name impair the ability of students, faculty, or staff of a particular gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, national origin, disability, or other characteristic protected by federal or state law or university policy to participate fully and effectively in the mission of the university?
Evaluating Legacy

How central is the honoree’s offensive conduct or behavior to their legacy as a whole?

Factors to address or consider may include:

- Is the offensive conduct or behavior inextricably connected to the honoree’s legacy?
- Are other aspects of the legacy worth continued recognition?

Weighing Factual Evidence

What is the strength and clarity of the evidence?

Factors to address or consider may include:

- What is the evidence that the honoree engaged in the offensive conduct or behavior? What is the source of the evidence?
- Did the honoree address the offensive conduct or behavior (e.g. expressed remorse, took corrective action)? Is so, what is the evidence and what is its source?

Reviewing Past Considerations

How has the university previously considered the honoree’s offensive conduct or behavior?

Factors to address or consider may include:

- Was the offensive conduct or behavior the subject of prior deliberation and by whom?
- What facts were considered during the deliberation?
- Has new evidence come to light since the naming occurred or since the last deliberation?

Considering Alternatives

Is removing the honoree’s name the only remedy?

Factors to address or consider may include:

- Are there alternatives to removing the name? If so, what are they?
- Are there additional remedies that should be considered? If so, what are they?

Resources

Links

- Procedures for Consideration of Removing Names from University Property (DRAFT) [PDF]
- Board of Regents Policy Manual §2.3(17) (Naming)
- Iowa State University Mission and Vision Statements
- Iowa State University Principles of Community
- Naming University Property Policy
- President’s Advisory Committee on Naming University Property
- Faculty Handbook §6.2.5 (Rescission of Honorary Degrees)
- Special Collections and University Archives
- University Library