Commemorative Tributes Policy

100.00 Introduction and Purpose:
This policy guides commemorative naming only; other naming approvals ultimately fall under the Office of the President. Specifically, this policy governs:
1. The commemorative naming of buildings, portions of buildings, streets or other physical facilities, including significant exterior spaces, owned by the State of Montana under the control of the Montana University System or the university, or the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station.
2. The display of items of recognition, including the erection of walls, plaques, portraits, benches, sculptures, gardens or other memorials honoring individuals, organizations or other entities on university property.
3. The naming of specific academic units or academic positions in honor of individuals, organizations or other entities.

200.00 Definitions:
For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

201.00 “Academic components” means units, departments, schools, colleges, centers or any part of an academic program.

202.00 “Academic positions” means professorships, chairs or other positions related to the academic programs of the university.

203.00 “Buildings” means physical structures and includes all buildings, athletic facilities and significant interior spaces, such as theaters and auditoriums that seat more than 500 people, owned by the State of Montana and under the control of the Montana University System.

204.00 “Items of recognition” means displays, including recognition walls, plaques, portraits, benches, sculptures, gardens or other memorials placed on any portion of university property that commemorate or honor individuals or organizations.

205.00 “Significant Exterior Spaces” means spaces that are not part of a building, but are part of the campus infrastructure including parking lots, assembly areas, malls, and streets owned by the State of Montana and under the control of the Montana University System.

300.00 University Approval Required
Any commemorative naming of buildings, physical facilities, specific academic components or positions, and displays or erection of walls, plaques, portraits, benches, sculptures, gardens or other memorials placed on any portion of university property as a commemorative tribute to a person, organization or other entity must be approved in advance by the Commemorative Tributes Committee.

310.00 Regents Approval
Buildings and significant exterior spaces named after or dedicated in honor of a person, organization or other entity must be approved by the Board of Regents (Policy 1004.1) unless named for an academic field or designated by a functional description.

320.00 Approval Process
Any proposal for commemorative naming must be submitted to the dean of the college that has responsibility for the proposed naming, or the vice president for administration and finance if the property is a facility that is operated by Auxiliary Services (e.g., residence halls, athletic venues, student union building). The proposer must obtain university approval for the naming proposal before notifying the honoree. The proposal shall identify the property, describe the proposed commemorative tribute and provide information about the person to be honored and their contributions to the University. The University Commemorative Tributes Committee shall review proposals under this policy and will make recommendations to the president. All naming shall be evaluated in terms of its consistency with the university’s strategic planning, facilities planning and fundraising priorities. For those proposals requiring Board of Regents approval, the Commemorative Tributes Committee will hold an in-person meeting and vote. Such in-person meetings will be held during the academic year so as to allow the ASMSU President to solicit student feedback on the proposal.

After review, the president will approve or disapprove the commemorative tribute and submit approved proposals to the Board of Regents, if required under Regents policy 1004.1. The Commemorative Tributes Committee, in conjunction with the University Facilities Planning Board, will make recommendations to the President for the approval of the erection of recognition walls, plaques, portraits, benches, sculptures, gardens or other memorials honoring individuals, organizations or other entities.
400.00 Commemorative Tributes Committee

The Commemorative Tributes Committee will consist of the following:

President of the MSU Alumni Foundation, Co-Chair
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Vice President for Student Success
Vice President for Administration and Finance, Co-Chair
Vice President for Research and Economic Development
Chair of the University Facilities Planning Board
Executive Director, University Communications
Director, Campus Planning, Design and Construction
President, Associated Students of Montana State University.

500.00 Criteria for Commemorative Naming

Commemorative naming shall honor persons or entities which have made significant contributions to the social, academic, scholarly, research, or student life of the campus and/or in recognition of substantial charitable gifts to the campus. The contribution for which property is named shall be commensurate with the honor and compatible with the mission of the campus. Buildings and other property of the Montana University System may not be named or dedicated in honor of a person currently employed by the Montana University System or the State of Montana, including but not limited to statewide or federal elected or appointed officials and candidates for elected statewide or federal office who have announced or filed for office. Such naming opportunities will not be considered until at least one year from the end of the individual’s MUS employment, or one year after the individual has announced or filed or leaves public office. The MUS and its institutions will not advertise, publicize or promote a proposed gift, including donations in the form of a grant, of anyone who has announced or filed for statewide or federal elected office until after the election is concluded. The institution considering the naming opportunity and the Board of Regents may consider exceptions to the one-year waiting period under the following circumstances: 1) the individual is no longer living; 2) the philanthropic giving warrants some form of recognition; 3) another unrelated person or entity proposes a gift and requests the naming in honor of the individual or entity; or 4) other extenuating circumstances.

510.00 Building Names

The following guidelines should be observed in naming buildings or portions of buildings:

1. Entire buildings, building additions, or portions of buildings may be named.
2. The naming of a building, part of a building, or other facility or property of the university is a high honor and should not be proposed casually. The honor is reserved for those who have made extraordinary contributions to the University through their achievements in service and/or in financial support to the university.
3. To merit recognition in the naming of a building or portion of a building, an individual's relationship to the university should be truly exceptional in both quality and impact.
4. When financial contributions are a factor, the level of contribution needed to name a building, an addition to a building, or a portion of a building (as may be the case in a major renovation project) will vary depending on the financing considerations, purpose, size, prominence on campus, and the level of private support needed for construction. Such gift commitments must be payable over a defined pledge term and the donor must provide a legally binding commitment enforceable against his/her assets/estate until the pledge is retired. Guidelines for gift amounts required for naming buildings are set forth in the MSU Alumni Foundation’s “Philanthropic Naming Guidelines.”
5. Names assigned to buildings are intended to be enduring. Changes should be made only when significant changes occur to the property (such as major renovation or demolition), upon agreement of the honoree, or as a result of other, extenuating circumstances. In these cases, building name changes must be approved by the Commemorative Tributes Committee and the Board of Regents.

600.00 Plaques and Portraits, and Miscellaneous Items of Recognition

Recognition walls, plaques, portraits, benches, sculptures, gardens and other memorials may be approved to commemorate truly outstanding contributions, either in service or financial support, of persons or organizations. Such tributes should be located inside or outside buildings or facilities that have strong identification with the persons or organizations being honored. The cost of such plaques, portraits, and miscellaneous recognition items generally should be borne by donors interested in the tributes or by the benefitting campus entity. All designs must be reviewed and approved by the Director of Campus Planning, Design & Construction to assure compliance with the university’s master plan.

700.00 Departments, Schools, Colleges, Institutes, Centers, or Other Academic Commemorations

A major academic component may be named in honor of an individual in recognition of service to the university and/or in recognition of financial contributions sufficient to provide physical facilities and equipment for its academic and/or research programs, or which would provide sufficient income to cover an appropriate portion of the annual operating costs of the unit, or both.

The name applied to an academic unit should be appropriate to its purpose, and should reflect honor on the university as well as upon the person for which it is named.

Because named recognition may continue indefinitely, gift funding for an institute or a center is best accomplished by endowment, however current gifts are acceptable. If accomplished by a current gift, the name shall be limited to the term during which the expendable gift provides funding. The policies and procedures for naming the center or institute shall be the same as for naming other major academic units of the university. Guidelines for gift amounts required for naming departments, schools, colleges, institutes, centers or other academic components are set forth in the MSU Alumni Foundation’s “Philanthropic Naming Guidelines.”
800.00 Internal Control/Enforcement

The President is ultimately responsible for the approval of commemorative tributes on the MSU campus and the implementation of the policies related thereto.