Preferred Name Guideline

Document Status

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December 4, 2015 – This draft data management guideline was endorsed by the Data Management Committee (DMC). It will be posted under the DMC policies and guidelines.

Purpose

This guideline defines data management practices for the administration and appropriate use of preferred names.

Overview

Many members of the University community use a name other than their legal name to identify themselves. It is the name they go by and the one by which they prefer to be recognized and addressed. In order to serve a diverse community and foster a welcoming and supportive environment, the University should acknowledge the importance of choice of a preferred name. To do so requires data management practices that collect an individual’s preferred name separate from the individual’s legal name, so that each can be used where it is most appropriate. In general, legal names should be used in contexts where the UW has a legal obligation or other requirements to identify a person by means of a legal name. In contrast, preferred names should be used where there is no obligation to use a legal name. By differentiating between preferred and legal names, the University can enable use of names based on business need, individual preference, and align the governance of name data with the values, principles, and goals of the UW.

Definition

A preferred name is a name some people use to identify themselves in the University community instead of using their legal name.

A preferred name tells others how a person prefers to be recognized and addressed.

A preferred name is collected, managed, shared, and used for purposes where the University has no compliance or other regulatory requirements to use a legal name.

Guidelines

The University allows all registered members of its community to manage a preferred name. For individuals whose privacy preferences require greater confidentiality, the management of preferred names should be aligned with the management of privacy preferences to improve usability and transparency on how preferred names and other personal information will be combined, shared, and used.

The University may constrain the collection of preferred names to a set of distinct name data components including, but not limited to, first name, middle name, and last name. The University will periodically
evaluate additional and/or alternate name data components in order to enable more choices of preferred names.

The University may constrain preferred names to a subset of possible characters in order to control costs and complexity and to enable the use of preferred names in as many contexts as possible. The University will periodically evaluate the pros and cons of modifying the allowed character set to enable more choices of preferred names.

The University shall endeavor to use a preferred name for purposes where there is no obligation to use a legal name. The University may continue to use a legal name in some contexts where use of a preferred name is not feasible due to cost or other reasonable justification.

The University shall endeavor to use and display preferred names in the format provided, preserving individual preferences for uppercase, lowercase, and other formatting.

The University administers preferred names in ways that support individual preference while maintaining standards of conduct that safeguard business functions and protect the rights and freedoms of all members of its community. System operators and others using preferred names should report cases of possible misuse (e.g. offensive language, misrepresentation, passing off, avoidance of legal obligation) to help@uw.edu.

**Concurrence / Responsibility**

The undersigned concur with the observations and recommendations herein, and are in agreement with this guideline.

**Signature**
Assistant Director
Identity and Access Management
UW Information Technology – Nathan Dors

**Date**
1/22/2016

**Signature**
Associate Vice President
Planning and Management – Gary Quarforth

**Date**
11/12/16