



Preferred First Name (PFN) FAQs

What is a PFN vs. a legal name?

A Preferred Name is the *first name* a student wishes to be known by in the University community that is different from a student's Legal Name. A Legal Name is the name that appears on a passport, driver's license, birth certificate, or U.S. Social Security Card. A Legal Name change can take place with documentation of such through the name change process. <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/admission/registrar/registrarPdfs/NameChange.pdf>

A Preferred Name is not a nickname such as Ed for Edward.

Can I select a preferred last name?

No, preferred name only applies to your first name. You must use your legal last name.

Where will my PFN appear?

Currently, your PFN will appear on:

- Faculty/advisor Class List, Wait List, Final/Mid Term Grades, Grade Changes and Advisee List/Registration Status
- You may select to receive a new student ID that will have your PFN on the front and legal name on the back.
- Your PFN does not currently appear in Blackboard and some other systems used within the University.

As Ferris State University phases in the use PFN additional areas will be added to this list.

Do I need to select a PFN?

No, you do not need to select a PFN. If you do not have a preferred name your legal name will appear.

When will be my legal name appear instead of my PFN?

There are instances where by policy or legal need the University may need to use your legal name. For example, the use of legal name is required in instances regarding your financial aid or student employment.

How do I designate a PFN?

You can designate a PFN by completing the Preferred First Name request form and returning it in person with a photo ID to the University Registrar's Office on Ferris' main campus, Kendall College of Art and Design's Registrar's Office (for Kendall students) or through other accommodations made with the University Registrar. If extenuating circumstances prevent you from coming in person to submit the form, please contact the Registrar's Office directly for instructions on how to complete the process.

How do I change/remove a PFN?

You will need to contact the Registrar's Office to have your PFNs removed.

How long does it take for my PFN to be reflected?

Your PFN should be reflected within a few business days or less. However, if after reasonable review your request is deemed inappropriate, offensive or for the purpose of misrepresentation it can be denied.

How often can I change my PFN?

You may choose to change your PFN as needed. However, the University reserves the right to limit the number of changes to a number it deems reasonable. Please be aware if you designate a PFN after the semester starts your instructor(s) may have an outdated class list with your legal name on it.

Who will see my PFN vs. my legal name?

Staff or Faculty with a legitimate need (e.g., police, health, financial services, deans' office, Human Resources or similar) may see your legal and PFN. As with other sensitive information, these staff/faculty members shall be trained on the implications of this access.

What format can my PFN take?

PFNs can have a single space, single hyphen, apostrophe or single period. Other special characters not allowed

What happens if I select a name that is considered offensive or misleading?

If after reasonable review your PFN is deemed inappropriate, offensive or for the purpose of misrepresentation it can be denied. You will receive a written letter if your request is denied and depending on the severity you may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

Can I get a new Student ID card?

Yes, you may request a new student ID card after you have designated a PFN. Your new ID will have your PFN on the front and legal name on the back. Please bring your current student ID to Student Financial Services in the Timme Center for a free replacement, otherwise a \$25 card

replacement charge may be applicable. Please remember that you should be mindful using the student ID with your PFN for identification for outside entities, such as the police. It can be considered a civil or criminal infraction if you misrepresent yourself to a police officer, knowingly or by accident. When asked for your legal name you must provide your legal first and last names to a police officer. You may consider asking the officer to speak in private so others cannot hear your legal first name.

Can I get a new email address?

Currently, Ferris State University does not change an email address after the declaration of a PFN. However, the University will change how your name appears when an email is sent to match that of your PFN. For example, your email may remain samplej123@Ferris.edu but your name will appear on an incoming email as *Jane Sample* (Jane being your PFN).

Can I get a new user ID?

Currently, Ferris State University does not change a user ID after the declaration of a PFN

What name will appear in the student directory?

No, currently your PFN will not appear in Ferris State University's student directory.

What name should I use when applying for my parking permit?

Please use your legal name for applying for your parking permit.

How does the PFN policy apply to non-student Ferris community members, such as staff and faculty.

The PFN policy applies to all Ferris community members. If you are not a student you will need to contact HR for further information regarding the use of a PFN.