

**DRAFT REPORT OF THE
COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH PRINCIPLES ON NAMING**

(April 2021)

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PREAMBLE

The Johns Hopkins Committee to Establish Principles on Naming (CEPN) was created in June of 2020, a year of reckoning that generated national awareness of ongoing structural racism and the legacy of chattel slavery in the United States. At that time, CEPN received a charge from the administration to create “substantive criteria upon which the university ought to decide whether or not to rename or de-name a facility, professorship, fellowship, scholarship or other program.” Our committee is now issuing a draft report for community feedback.

Our draft report recommends the creation of a permanent Name Review Board (NRB). We acknowledge that the custom to assign human names to university features holds up persons for public honor, as well as expressing the gratitude of the University for their achievements and/or contributions. In that act we also affirm and convey our values. The proposed Johns Hopkins NRB will apply the values of the university and the criteria articulated in this document as it fields requests to rename or de-name existing university features. The NRB will also serve as an institutional repository for requests made to it. Given the unique history of our committee’s genesis, we expect the NRB to understand that any inquiry into naming or de-naming will also include questions of institutional belonging and matters of reparative justice.

With the relationship between history and values in mind, CEPN recognizes naming and de-naming as an opportunity to shape and define the character of Johns Hopkins University & Medicine today and into the future. Naming and de-naming allow the institution to express preference in its symbolic associations, to rectify or contextualize past wrongdoing, and to emphasize the best modern examples of fairness and justice. This work is done with the humility that comes from our awareness that all human lives are complex, and contain multiple legacies.

CEPN acknowledges, second, that the bestowed honor of naming occurs in a specific place and at a particular time, but endures. Considering criteria for potential renaming or de-naming therefore includes determining how and when a naming honor was granted and what that name means under changing historical circumstances. It also includes acknowledging that the university, somewhere along the journey of its history, made a commitment to an individual or organization – either as a result of philanthropy or as an honorific tribute – by placing a name on a building or program. The seriousness of that commitment should also be considered. The committee echoes the measured wisdom of the university’s first president, Daniel Coit Gilman. “As the world goes forward,” he assured, “our plans will be adjusted to its new requirements.”

CEPN recognizes, thirdly, the risk of adopting standards that – in their urgency and presentism – can be at variance with the goals and durability of our institution. Therefore, when evaluating whether to retain, remove, or contextualize a name, our task is to reconcile the requirements and views of the present with our own established values and ideals. The values we presently hold can be found among the founding documents that created Johns Hopkins institutions. Our university was founded with the motto, “Truth will set you free.” Our hospital was established to care for the indigent and sick “without regard to sex, age, or color.” We may not have always lived up to these values, and, at times, have even undermined them. But, through the evolutionary process of naming and renaming, we are afforded the opportunity to celebrate and affirm our best impulses.

Honoring and promoting the university’s legacy in accordance with its own internal values requires our keen responsibility and rigor when deciding the names of our buildings, professorships, scholarships, and other programs. We stand committed to honor people whose lives, works, and character reflect a spirit of generosity, human decency, excellence, and foresight that will inspire future generations to the highest levels of principled scholarship, unwavering commitment to equity, and selfless service to humankind.

CRITERIA

General Principles for Naming

Johns Hopkins University & Medicine (collectively “Johns Hopkins”) honors people and their contributions by assigning their names to our campus buildings, professorships, programs and miscellany. We do this for many reasons, including to recognize the integrity of their personal character; their leadership and service to the institutions; the high quality of their professional achievements; and their generous gifts to the university. This honor is reserved for a select few, and is a mark of highest distinction. In this regard, naming communicates our values.

Naming also communicates our values beyond our immediate community. While we recognize that our honorees often achieve their first notice on account of their connection to Johns Hopkins, we remain acutely mindful that Johns Hopkins was founded in Baltimore, Maryland, in the United States of America, and not long after the nation had experienced an epochal civil war. Today, we have campuses in the District of Columbia and in Europe and Asia. Thus, any honored individual’s conduct, work, and service should resound in these contexts and throughout the globe, and do so admirably.

Principles for Renaming and De-Naming

Just as the decision to name should be deliberate and thorough, the NRB’s recommendation to rename or de-name a building or program, remove a monument or artwork, or contextualize an existing named structure or tradition, should be based on rigorous consideration. The NRB should examine the full evidentiary record, including the reports that describe the original naming decision. This examination should be undertaken with a strong awareness that historical records are often incomplete or inaccurate, and that the creation of the scholarly archive involves acts of silencing, bias, and prioritization. It should also take into account changing standards of conduct and norms of behavior and expression. This process should include deliberate and open conversations with engaged stakeholders, and the documentary record of these conversations and the committee’s deliberations are to be made permanently available to the general public.

In its stewardship of the values of the university, the NRB welcomes the scrutiny of all university names. The evaluation of names and the subsequent decisions are constant and evolutionary in manner, signaling the development of Johns Hopkins as a diverse community with a shared vision. The conduct of the examinations should inspire the Johns Hopkins community and the world beyond. Lastly, requests to change or remove a name should not be the sole burden of aggrieved communities. Any member of the Johns Hopkins community should be able to request a change or removal on behalf of aggrieved communities, and persons should feel free to make a request proactively, before any moral injury – the betrayal of justice, equal respect, or dignity – by an aggrieved community is expressed. At the same time, the University must be mindful of the resources needed to address these requests with the seriousness they deserve.

In weighing the evidentiary record of a particular name and determining whether that name should be changed or removed, the NRB should apply consistent criteria that can be used in other naming inquiries. In listening sessions with students, faculty, and staff, the CEPN received a resounding recommendation to consider how the person’s conduct aligns with – or goes against

– Johns Hopkins’ mission and values, including its commitments to academic freedom and integrity, and to the diversity, equity, and inclusion of all of its members. Beyond this, we should consider how the conduct of an honoree or prospective honoree aligns with ethically responsible legal conduct, as described below.

Of course, over a life, a person engages in conduct across multiple axes of human interaction (intimate partner and family life, professional life, public life, worship and spiritual life), and sometimes engages in contradictory conduct along the same axis. And so, another criterion is to identify the scholarly consensus around the person’s “prime legacies.” A standard of “prime legacies” recognizes the complexity and plurality of multiple narratives comprising an individual’s life and works, and considers those narrative threads as part of an enduring and memorable fabric.

Next, the NRB should consider the nature and scope of moral injury that flow from a name’s assignment to a space or program, and from a decision to remove or retain it. Does the presence of the name on campus perpetuate a sense of exclusion among students, staff, faculty, or neighbors? Does it signal the institution’s support for the problematic conduct or policies associated with that person? Alternatively, would removing the name bring about an outcome that would fail to address the concerns of the petitioner or improve campus climate?

Lastly, the NRB should review the commitment the university has made to a particular person or organization, whether through philanthropy or an honorific.

The application of these core criteria is enumerated in the following manner:

(1) What do scholars substantially agree to be the person’s prime legacies?

And are there points of view outside of academic knowledge sources – newspapers, journals, both university and trade press books, research reports, legal testimony, government reports, university and library archives – that have contributed to the understanding of the prime legacies and/or in some way counter the consensus of professional academics? Where consensus does not exist, the NRB will have to explore the full range of views of the individual and his or her legacies.

(2) Does the evidentiary record show that the person’s prime legacies included conduct that violates or contradicts the Johns Hopkins mission and values? Specifically:

- a. Its teaching mission: to advance and disseminate knowledge and truth (motto: “Truth will set you free”)
- b. Its research mission: to foster independent and original research
- c. Its service mission: to care for the sick and injured (JHM) and to bring the benefits of discovery to the world (JHU)¹
- d. Its occupational mission: to ensure paths for personal and collective economic advancement and preserve the dignity of work on campus

¹ Source from JHM: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/about/mission.html>. Sources from JHU: <http://web.jhu.edu/administration/gca/our-mission/our-priorities/>; <https://www.jhu.edu/about/history/>; <https://provost.jhu.edu/>; <https://www.jhu.edu/about/history/>.

- e. Its civic mission: to fairly steward its resources and seek fair treatment of communities beyond its boundaries
 - f. Its value of equity and inclusion²
 - g. Its values of academic freedom and academic integrity³
 - h. Its value of ethically responsible legal conduct⁴
- (3) If yes, what was the severity of that conduct and its consequences? And how is it balanced against other dimensions of the person’s life? Does the evidentiary record show that the person meaningfully acknowledged or repaired that conduct?**
- (4) What is the relationship of the person to the institution?** Were they a central figure who taught, attended, or led the institution? Was their connection more distant?
- (5) What was the process used to apply the original name? What was the honoree being recognized for?** Does the basis for the honor (such as a particular research contribution) continue to comply with the Johns Hopkins mission and values?
- (6) What is the nature and scope of moral injury sustained by keeping their name?⁵ Could substantive reparation for this moral injury occur by means other than removing the name?**
- (7) What are the impacts – positive or negative – of removing a name? And are there constraints that qualify our ability to remove it?** For example, a legal gift instrument, or a standing custom regulating the renaming of a scholarship program, professorship, or space?

² Sources: JHI diversity and inclusion statement: <http://web.jhu.edu/administration/provost/images/Campus%20Diversity%20Statement.pdf>; JHU Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures: <https://diversity.jhu.edu/> ; Roadmap on Diversity and Inclusion: <https://diversity.jhu.edu/roadmap-on-diversity-and-inclusion/iv-restatement-of-principles/>.

³ Sources: Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom: https://policies.jhu.edu/?event=render&categoryId=804&policyId=32102&fileId=JHU_Statement_of_Principles_on_Academic_Freedom.pdf&=0.845220894322; Academic Integrity Policies: <https://provost.jhu.edu/education/graduate-and-professional-education-resources/academic-integrity-policies/>.

⁴ This “ethically responsible” language expresses the distinction Martin Luther King Jr. made between just and unjust laws and the necessity of acting in accord with ethical responsibility, which might at times violate such laws, such as the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 or the segregationist legal framework in the United States instantiated after the 1896 Supreme Court *Plessy* decision.

⁵ Examples could include: perpetuating student/faculty/staff sense of exclusion, signaling the institution’s tacit support for the bad conduct in question; or symbolism effecting the perpetuation of aggravation.

CONTEXTUALIZATION

Contextualization -- Purposes

A person's or organization's name on an institution's building or program does not, on its own, tell us what the institution values about the person or organization or why it values it. Nor does it tell us why or how the institution came to decide that permanently assigning the name in question to an object or program was an appropriate way to display its appreciation.

The absence of interpretive information – of context – at the site of a name is a missed opportunity to teach all those who pass by it (as with a building or room) or associate themselves with it (as with a professorship or scholarship) the person or organization honored. The same missed opportunity may occur when the institution decides to change or remove a name. Without providing an enduring rationale associated with that decision, the institution fails to educate its members and stakeholders about the ends it is seeking to achieve through that change or removal. It is this second missed opportunity related to a change, removal, or challenged retention of a name that the CEPN addresses in this draft report.

Contextualization is an obligation of an institution of higher learning; it furthers the institution's research, teaching and service missions by ensuring its community engages with, intrepidly examines, and learns from facts about the people who have contributed to the university. Contextualization is also an opportunity to teach all of us about the complexity of human behavior and character. Further, the process of providing context is ongoing and not limited to the moment of retaining or removing a name. Accordingly, contextualization, in some form, should continue to accompany any Johns Hopkins action to retain or remove a name following an NRB recommendation.

Contextualization is not a panacea. The Committee admonishes the future NRB not to resort to it merely as a means to placate or to avoid difficult naming decisions when appropriate application of the renaming criteria warrants removing a particular name.

Done well, contextualizing achieves multiple goals beyond dissemination of knowledge, including: reinforcing the institution's values and purpose; enhancing the physical and emotional experience for students, staff and faculty; and mitigating moral injury, particularly when use of a name adversely and disproportionately impacts members of the institution's community and members of the community at large. Moreover, with fidelity to the Johns Hopkins motto, successful contextualization achieves truth telling. Simply put: When deployed effectively, contextualization can be a powerful and positive tool to improve a community.

Process of Providing Contextualization through NRB Consideration

As a practical matter, successful contextualization requires sufficient facts and perspective. Each set of written recommendations ("reports") from the NRB regarding a formal proposal for reconsideration of a name must be prepared rigorously and with sufficient detail to articulate clearly the rationale(s) for the NRB's recommendation(s). Properly prepared NRB reports will assist in contextualizing the names considered, regardless of whether the report recommends de-naming or retaining a name.

Preparation of the NRB report is an essential first step in the contextualization process as that process relates to existing named features. In this regard, contextualization addresses only approaches to existing named features given that neither the CEPN nor the NRB has a mandate that extends to assigning new names.

However, the NRB's report cannot always be the only source of contextualization. Whatever the NRB's recommendation, frequently the named feature should receive additional contextualization that is readily accessible to all those who encounter it and that communicates, clearly and enduringly, the connection between the named individual or organization and Johns Hopkins.

Additional contextualization could be as simple as a plaque or informational kiosk. However, in many circumstances a more active approach to deliver sophisticated and nuanced context for a given name will be needed to achieve one of the aforementioned goals meaningfully.

Accordingly, whenever the NRB determines that a feature bears a name whose retention or removal would benefit from contextualization in addition to the NRB's report, we recommend that the NRB refer the matter to the Sheridan Libraries, the Chesney Medical Archives, and/or the Peabody Institute Archives (depending upon where the name appears) with a request for an approach for more active contextualization. We anticipate that the NRB would make such a referral for active contextualization whenever a name is significantly at odds with at least one of the core criteria identified for consideration (and identified in the Principles section of this draft report).

In approaching more active contextualization, the Sheridan Libraries, the Chesney Medical Archives, and/or the Peabody Institute Archives should review the scholarly and other materials considered by the NRB, as well as any relevant materials that those entities may acquire independently. The dean of the Sheridan Libraries, the Chesney Medical Archivist and/or the Peabody Institute Archivist shall have the ability and resources to draw on a range of additional resources when appropriate, including, and not limited to, the project director for the Hopkins Retrospective, faculty from the Museums and Society Program, the Department of History and the Center for Africana Studies in the Krieger School of Arts & Sciences and the Department of the History of Medicine in the School of Medicine.

In considering more elaborate approaches to contextualization, the dean of the Sheridan Libraries, the Chesney Medical Archivist and/or the Peabody Institute Archivist, in coordination with the divisional dean(s) where the name arises, shall look for opportunities for creative educational opportunities, interpretation, reinterpretation, or mitigation (if the name is assigned to a fund or program) that advance the Johns Hopkins' mission and values; enhance the physical and emotional experience for students, staff and faculty; and/or offer truth-telling and mitigation of moral injury, for example when the continued use a name adversely and disproportionately impacts certain members of the Johns Hopkins community and the community at large. The approach to contextualization shall consider the enduring nature of the means of contextualization while balancing changes that are inherent in a living university.

Examples of creative reinterpretation could include permanent exhibits, artistic installations, or new lecture series. An example of creative mitigation could include expanding a named lecture fund to invite critical thought and engagement with the name's legacy. Where feasible, educating the community should be a central purpose of these contextualization efforts.

Where contextualization is recommended, the relevant dean(s) may proceed with contextualization projects that do not involve financial resources beyond their divisions. For extensive contextualization projects, the dean of the Sheridan Libraries, the Chesney Medical Archivist and/or the Peabody Institute Archivist and the relevant divisional dean(s) shall recommend to the President options and necessary resources for designs to acknowledge and reconcile any discord between the continued use of the name and its clash with the identified principles, showing particular sensitivity to the scale of moral injury and the severity of the conduct involved.

Recommended contextualization options should allow for a public and highly visible consideration of the legacy of the name in question, acknowledge any burden that the institution is asking any specific population(s) to bear by retaining the name, and address the basic question: *What does the institution intend to teach by assigning or removing the name?*

While the recommendations for more active contextualization may be available in sufficient time to inform action on a recommendation from the NRB with respect to a challenged name, the final decision-making body may act on the recommendation of the NRB notwithstanding any pending contextualization recommendations.

Additional Recommendations Related to Contextualization

The themes of access to information, transparency, and enhanced experience were raised repeatedly in CEPN discussions and during listening sessions. The following were suggested as additional means of providing context:

- Considering naming opportunities that reflect the diversity of the Johns Hopkins enterprise as naming opportunities arise
- Creating an enduring catalogue of named features, with links to relevant contextualization
- Developing technologies to readily identify individuals for whom features are named (e.g., QR codes at the site of the name)
- Designing interactive tours of accessible parts of the institution
- Offering a critical focus on the history of the university during freshmen orientation
- Initiating classes for students and trainings for staff that focus on the history of the university

PROCESS

We are recommending the formation of an institution-level standing committee, with members from Johns Hopkins University & Medicine, called the Name Review Board (NRB). Elements of the NRB and its process are described below and in the accompanying flowchart. We are further recommending that the NRB be properly resourced and staffed, given the significant time and coordination – of processes, materials, and consultations – needed for the NRB to carry out its work responsively.

NRB Structure and Membership

- This standing committee will be composed of an Executive Committee and a larger General Committee. It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee's ex officio members to ensure diversity and inclusion in the make-up of the NRB.
- Executive Committee: Composed of 7 members: (1) a student, (2) a faculty member, (3) a local community leader, (4) a JHU trustee, (5) an archivist from the Sheridan Libraries or the Chesney Medical Archives, (6) the JHU Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion or the SOM Vice Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, and (7) the Vice President of DAR.
 - The student and faculty member on the Executive Committee will be selected by the Diversity and Inclusion member of the Executive Committee (either the JHU Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion or the SOM Vice Dean for Diversity and Inclusion) from among the students and faculty members in the General Committee divisional clusters.
 - The local community leader, JHU trustee, and archivist will be appointed by the JHU President, after consultation with relevant stakeholder communities.
 - The archivist, JHU Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion or SOM Vice Dean for Diversity and Inclusion, and Vice President of DAR will be members ex officio.
 - A designee from the Office of General Counsel will be appointed to the Executive Committee in an advisory role.
 - Terms: The student member will serve for 2 years, to allow for juniors to serve (in addition to first-years, sophomores, and graduate students). The faculty member, local community leader, and trustee will serve for 3 years, with staggered terms.
- General Committee: Composed of 4-person groups of representatives from each unit of JHU and JHM, referred to as divisional clusters. Those units are:
 - BIB, BSPH, CBS, CTY, KSAS, PI, SAIS, SOE, SOM, SON, and WSE.
 - JHHS will also have a divisional cluster, composed of: the JHHS President, relevant hospital president, Vice President of Human Resources, and VP and Chief Diversity Officer for JHM.
- Divisional cluster: Composed of 4 members: (1) a student, (2) a faculty member, (3) a staff member, and (4) the Dean or division leader or his/her designee.
 - The student, faculty, and staff members of each divisional cluster will be appointed by the Dean or his/her designee from among existing elected bodies or, where those bodies do not exist, from a division-level selection process.
 - The dean or designee will be an ex officio member.
 - Terms: The student, faculty, and staff member will each serve 2 years, with staggered terms.

NRB Review Process

[See flowchart on p. 11]

- All JHU/JHM names and features will be eligible for review by the NRB.
- Any member of the Hopkins community (faculty, students, alumni, staff) and/or any resident of the local community may make a proposal to reconsider the naming of a building or other act of memorialization of an individual on any Hopkins campus.
- If requested, the name(s) of the submitter(s) will be kept confidential and not disclosed outside the NRB.
- To initiate the process, a formal proposal will be submitted directly to the NRB using an online submission form. This proposal will require detailed written information from the submitter(s) that includes:
 - A robust description of the specific behavior or conduct perceived to be in violation of the core mission and values of Johns Hopkins University & Medicine as articulated in the Preamble and Criteria sections of this document;
 - Print, digital and/or multi-media evidence to support the claim;
 - Relationship of the submitter(s) to the Johns Hopkins community or local community; and
 - Responses to questions in the online form developed by the NRB based on the criteria in this document.
- At any stage of the review process, the NRB may request additional information from the submitter(s), the relevant university archives, or others who may have relevant shareable information about the named feature in question.
- Requests will first be reviewed by the Executive Committee.
- The Executive Committee will initiate a formal review whenever it determines that the evidence in the proposal has raised a substantial concern regarding an existing name such that there is a material likelihood that the name may be removed or contextualized.
- If the Executive Committee does so determine, the NRB will then assemble a Formal Review Committee (FRC), including the Executive Committee and relevant divisional clusters from the General Committee (i.e., from units that have the name in question as a feature). This combined FRC will examine the request and make a written recommendation to the JHU President and Board of Trustees and the relevant JHHS Board of Trustees after reaching a substantial consensus.
- The recommendation of the NRB may include the following:
 - Remove the name, allowing an opportunity to replace with another name that reflects the Johns Hopkins mission and values in this scenario.
 - Relocate the named feature or add contextualization to the feature in its existing location.
 - Keep the name as is.
- The recommendation will be put in writing by the Review Committee, and will include, where warranted, a referral to the dean of the Sheridan Libraries, the Chesney Medical Archivist and/or the Peabody Institute Archivist and the relevant divisional dean(s).

Transparency

There will be a website that publishes validated proposals that have come into the NRB, invites the public to provide input and/or materials, tracks where each proposal is in the review process, and publishes the decisions/recommendations of the NRB.

Name Review Board (NRB) Process

