To: Tracy Roberts, Registrar
Linda Miller, Chief Information Officer

From: Bonnie Higginson, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Don Robertson, Vice President for Student Affairs

Subject: Preferred First Name Procedure

Date: December 14, 2012

Recognizing that many people use names other than their legal names to identify themselves, universities have began developing procedures to allow students, faculty, and staff to indicate a preferred first name. You may already be familiar with these types of procedures. They allow for a preferred first name to be used on a variety of internal documents and systems, such as: class rosters, identification cards, and contact directories. These procedures do not attempt to change an individual's legal name nor do they change the name that appears on documents where legal names are required by law (i.e. transcripts, financial aid records, enrollment verifications, etc.).

There are a number of successful models for implementing this type of procedure. Many of these models rely on the existing capabilities of technology platforms with preferred first name or nickname fields already built in, but not actively used or promoted as available. We are hopeful that this option is one that we can consider for Murray State. Another model is to follow a more traditional process where individuals submit written requests through a central point such as the Registrar's office for review and appropriate action. Obviously, a preferred first name procedure would work much better if it could be institutionalized within our technology platform with any appropriate modifications being made.

A few examples of how these procedures are implemented at other institutions include:

- Carnegie Mellon University - http://www.cmu.edu/hub/transcripts/preferred-name.html,
- Illinois State University - http://helpdesk.illinoisstate.edu/kb/1296/Overview_of_preferred_names_legal_names_and_how_your_name_is_displayed/,
- Northwestern University - http://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/academic_records/name_change.html,
- Stony Brook University - http://www.stonybrook.edu/registrar/prefname.shtml, and
- University of Michigan - http://www.itcs.umich.edu/itcsdocs/r1461/

Enacting a preferred first name procedure will benefit multiple populations at Murray State. We would like to move forward with implementing this type of procedure and request your feedback and guidance by mid-January.