



# House Namesake Change Process

Note: This process will go into effect Fall 2021.

## Background

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President Gibson [announced in April 2020](#) that the College would create an official process by which students and alumni of a House may apply to retire a House namesake and adopt a new one. The goal of such a change would be to learn from other historical figures who constructively engaged with the Christian or classical traditions.

That process has been finalized and will be in effect beginning in the fall 2021 semester. The process was developed in consultation with the Student Body President, the King's Council, the Alumni Executive Committee, and the President's Cabinet.

- When submitting an application to change a House namesake, House members must demonstrate substantive engagement with the arguments for and against such a change. The application must include a three-to-five page document providing the rationale for change, as well as a three-to-five page defense for keeping the namesake.
- Two thirds of the current students of a House must be in favor of change for the vote to pass. NYC Semester visiting students, as well as students in their first semester of study at King's, are not eligible to vote.
- The process to change a House namesake requires alumni participation. To begin the namesake change process, 20 alumni must sign the petition to change the namesake. Once the matter is put to vote, 25% of contactable alumni must participate in the vote, and 51% of those participating alumni must vote in favor of the change.

## Guidelines

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1. A proposed change to a House namesake may only be initiated by a current member of that House who has been enrolled on-campus at The King's College for a minimum of two full semesters.
2. Only two Houses may initiate a namesake change at a time to allow the College to give adequate administrative oversight to the process. Applications will be considered in the order in which they are received by the Dean of Students.
3. Once a House namesake is changed, that House cannot change its namesake again for seven years.
4. An application for namesake change must be submitted between September 15 and February 1 to be considered for that academic year.

## Procedure

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1. Meet with House Advisors and House President to discuss the rationale for initiating a namesake change.
2. Submit the following application items to the Dean of Students:
  - a. Name/names of students submitting the application.
  - b. Petition signed by at least 50% of current House members who are eligible to sign and at least 20 House alumni.
    - i. First-year students are not eligible to sign a petition until they have completed one full semester of on-campus classes.
    - ii. NYC Semester students are not eligible to sign the petition.
  - c. Three to five page rationale for the requested change, including:
    - i. Historically documented rationale for why a namesake change may be warranted.
    - ii. Explanation of why the namesake does not align with the College and/or House mission and values.
  - d. Written recommendation from House Faculty and Staff Advisors that the three to five page rationale is thorough enough to move forward with the process. House Advisors, at their discretion, may contribute comments, references, etc. for Dean of Students consideration.
3. A review board consisting of Dean of Students, Director of Student Development and Chair of the Student Affairs Committee will consider the application. Review board will verify petition signatures and review rationale for change.
  - a. Review board may send application back to originators with recommended amendments.
  - b. If review board deems application complete and thorough, Dean of Students will submit to President's Cabinet for review.
4. President's Cabinet will review the application and consider the historicity and cogency of the arguments, congruence with the College's mission and values, and effects of the current namesake on the House/King's community. The President's Cabinet will take one of three actions:
  - a. Approve to move to next stages of process.
  - b. Request additional documentation or detail.
  - c. Deny. If denied, the President's Cabinet will provide reasons for denial.
5. The Dean of Students will notify the applicants of the President's Cabinet decision. If application is approved, Dean of Students will appoint a committee of neutral staff and faculty, along with a member of the Alumni Executive Committee (or designee), to facilitate the remainder of the process below.
6. The committee will request that the House Executive Team appoint at least one member and/or House alumna/alumnus to write a three to five page description of why the namesake should be retained. The committee must approve the House member/alumnus selected to write the defense for retaining the namesake, based on their confidence that the chosen member/alumnus will undertake the task seriously and avoid straw man arguments. The House

## Procedure Continued

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will have seven days to identify someone to write the defense. The individual selected to write the defense for retaining the namesake will have fourteen days from the time they are selected to write the defense.

7. Within five business days of receiving the written defense, the committee will email current House members, House alumni (based on current contact information from the Development Office), and House Advisors with notification of the proposal to change namesakes, along with the rationale for why the change is requested and the counter-argument for why the namesake should be retained.
8. The committee will host at least one open forum (in-person, virtual, or hybrid) for House members and alumni to discuss reasons for changing or retaining the namesake. The committee will give at least five days advance email notice for the forum. Current House members, alumni, and advisors may participate in the forum. The forum will begin with 10 minutes of opening arguments from each side. These opening statements may include statements from any outside contributors approved by the committee. After each side has made their opening statement, the committee will moderate a House discussion for current House members, alumni and advisors to discuss the merits of a namesake change.
9. The committee will conduct a vote between current House members, Advisors, and alumni on whether or not the Namesake should change.
  - a. The vote will take place no earlier than four weeks, and no later than eight weeks, after the current House members and alumni received the email about the proposal to change namesakes.
  - b. A vote to approve a namesake change must pass as follows:
    - i. At least 50% of current, eligible House members must participate in the vote.
      1. First-year students are not eligible to vote until they have completed one full semester of on-campus classes.
      2. NYC Semester students are not eligible to vote.
    - ii. Current House member and Advisor votes will be counted together. Two thirds of those voting must vote in favor of the proposal for it to pass.
    - iii. Of alumni who vote (a quorum of 25% of all alumni from that House must be met for the vote to be considered valid), 51% must vote in favor of the proposal for it to pass. Alumni are considered those who attended The King's College for at least three semesters.
  - c. If the proposal fails to pass, the namesake will be retained. A new proposal to change the namesake may not be submitted for a minimum of two years from the date the proposal fails.
10. If the proposal passes, the committee will notify all House members, advisors, and alumni and will request proposals (names and three to five page defense) for new namesakes. Proposed namesakes must meet all Criteria for Future Namesakes (found in the Student Handbook and on the student portal). The committee will establish a timeline for choosing a new namesake.
11. The committee will host at least one forum for current House members, alumni, and advisors to discuss proposed namesakes.
12. The House executive team and advisors, after consultation with the House, will narrow down

## Procedure Continued

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the proposed namesakes to the best options (no more than five) and submit these choices, along with the rationale for each, to the Dean of Students.

13. The Dean of Students and the President's Cabinet will approve or deny each proposed namesake based on the Criteria for Future Namesakes.
14. The committee will conduct a vote between all approved namesake proposals.
  - a. Current members, alumni, and Advisors may vote.
  - b. Voting will take place by rank-choice.
  - c. If no option wins a majority of first-preference votes, the option with the fewest first-preference votes will be eliminated and any first-preference votes cast for that option will also be eliminated, lifting the second-preference choices indicated on those ballots. A new tally will be conducted to determine whether any one option has garnered a majority of votes. The process will be repeated until one option garners an outright majority.
  - d. If after eliminating all other options, there is a tie between the top two options, the Committee will invite all past and current Presidents to meet virtually to discuss the two namesake options. A simple majority vote of all presidents in attendance will determine the new namesake.
15. The current House values and mission statement will stand (substituting the new namesake for the old in the mission statement).
16. The House Executive team may request revisions to their House crest. All new crest designs must be approved by Marketing and Communications.
17. The House and College will begin using the name of the new namesake as soon as the new namesake has been determined.