



## From the Office of the President

Edward J. Ray

Members of the Oregon State University community,

I am writing to provide an update on an important university-wide process that we will conduct in fall term to evaluate the names and namesakes of four buildings on the Corvallis campus.

Buildings and places play a very important role in our university. When OSU names a building, that name and building speak to the university's values and its mission, as well as our collective work to create inclusivity and recognize the positive contributions of all those associated with the university.

Over the past two years, a number of OSU community members have raised concerns regarding several buildings whose namesakes may have held or espoused views that were exclusionary or inconsistent with the university's values. These buildings are Avery Lodge, Arnold Dining Center, Benton Hall and Gill Coliseum.

I have asked the Office of Institutional Diversity, the OSU Architectural Naming Committee and a special Building and Place Name Evaluation workgroup made up of faculty, staff and students to undertake a full and transparent historical review of these buildings and their namesakes. This review builds on a process first announced last school year and will engage the entire university community and OSU stakeholders to learn about and discuss these buildings and their names.

Once this review and gathering of community input is completed, I will meet with and review recommendations from the Architectural Naming Committee and the Building and Place Name Evaluation workgroup as to whether these buildings will retain their current names or have their names changed. I will announce my decision the week of Nov. 27.

Whether a building's name is changed or not, it is important to learn from our history and permanent educational plaques and displays will be created to contextualize the history of each building and its name. Such transparent efforts are essential to our growth as an inclusive university community that is committed to success for all.

I encourage your involvement in this important process by first exploring a [website](#) created to inform and engage members of the OSU community and stakeholders. This website includes information on the scheduled evaluation process; information on each building; a set of FAQs; a comment tool for you to provide input to the evaluation process over the next few months; and contact information if you would like to e-mail or speak personally with someone.

We will update this website frequently, including with a building history and namesake review currently being conducted by several noted scholars. Meanwhile, please plan to attend community dialogue sessions on Sept. 28 and Oct. 2 to learn about and offer your input on the building name evaluation process, and additional sessions that later will focus on the names of each of the four buildings. The schedule for these meetings is available on the website.

It is important that we not only examine the past but also that we openly consider how the names of buildings presently portray our values as a community and reflect on OSU's mission. It is essential that we are cognizant of our history and learn from it. By doing so, we also join in the efforts of colleges and universities throughout the country that have taken up this important endeavor.

Please join me in this important process to examine our institution's history as well as those associated with OSU so we can best serve our values and achieve our university's mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Sincerely,

Ed Ray  
President