



Office of University Development  
Naming Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines  
**Policy and Procedure: Endowment Top-off**

## INTRODUCTION

Generally, the university prefers to have endowments funded entirely from donor-directed gifts. When fundraising efforts are insufficient to bring the value of a new endowment up to university established minimums, the unit head of the school, college, or unit (“SCU”) holding the fund may consider topping-off the fund to bring it to the required minimum value in order to be able to begin realization of the endowment income for the intended program or position.

## POLICY

The following conditions must be met in order to proceed with topping-off the fund:

- Gifts must be solicited for a minimum of one year in an effort to meet the required funding level for the endowment prior to proceeding with a topping-off strategy.
- At least 75% of the overall endowment must be from donor gifts directed to the fund. An SCU’s direction of unrestricted gifts to the fund will not be counted toward the 75% minimum. An SCU may only top-off up to 25% of the minimum required amount then needed to establish the endowment.
- Top-offs will be based on the total gift given value (“book value”) and the required minimum amount then needed for the type of endowment.
- Unrestricted Gifts, Designated and/or Auxiliary Funds may be used toward the 25% cap for top-off funds from the SCU. They will not be considered part of the 75% minimum of donor-directed funds.
- Top-offs will be considered permanent additions to the endowment, are subject to the same restrictions as the original gift, and may not be withdrawn at a later date. (i.e., if later gifts are added, the top-off may not be backed out).
- Written pledges may be used to meet the 75% of donor-directed gifts. Should a donor not fulfill the pledge and the department has already topped-off the fund, the SCU will be required to continue fundraising or reinvesting the fund until the 75% minimum has been reached, or the top-off will be converted to another purpose based on the solicitation, gift agreement contingency, or negotiation.
- SCUs will be required to have signed approval from the Office of the Provost before topping-off an endowment. This is due to the permanent nature of top-offs.

If a request is made to split a professorship endowment that has a top-off, the top-off cannot be included in the calculation for a split or the split itself (see [Policy for Splitting Professorship Endowment](#)) and accounting rules must be followed.

Legacy Professorships do not qualify for top-offs. ([Non-Facilities Naming Policy Section 1.e.](#))

## PROCEDURE

Provost approval is required to top-off an endowment. The following steps will ensure relevant parties are contacted in a timely manner.

- SCU development staff seeks approval from their unit head by submitting a request memorandum ([download memo template](#)) for the unit head to sign, if supported.
- SCU development staff then sends the request memo to the associate vice president for development (“AVP Dev”) to present to the provost.
- The provost will seek additional information through the AVP Dev, or approve or deny the top-off by indicating so and signing the request memo.
- AVP Dev will notify SCU development staff who will then follow the SCU’s usual process for additional review and processing of the top-off with the Office of Finance.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs.** Review and final approval of requests.

**Associate Vice President for Development.** Consults with the provost on requests.

**Office of Finance.** Establishes appropriate accounts to hold original and topped-off funds.