The UW-Madison Naming Guidelines specify that:

“You may NOT use any form of UW-Madison as the BEGINNING WORD(S) of the name of your student organization, e.g., UW-Madison, University, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Wisconsin. Instead, list the UW-Madison affiliation at the end of the name of your organization, followed by a comma or parentheses, i.e., Checkers Club, UW or Checkers Club (UW-Madison).”

In the past we have not enforced this for an organization’s acronym, website, email address or WIN URL, just for their official name. **Starting with registration in Fall 2012, we will enforce the requirement that NO reference to the group’s name can begin with “UW” (or the other versions, listed above in the policy).**

When you register your organization this year, please make sure **all references** to your organization follow the Naming Guidelines.

If you want to update your name, acronym, URL or constitution now, follow this link to the [Change Request Form](#).

**Naming Guidelines FAQs**

How long do I have until I need to make changes?
*Acronyms, WIN URLs, references to the group’s name in the constitution or any other text must be in compliance at the time of registration or the group will be denied until they fix these.*

We understand it may take some time to transition external websites, email addresses, Facebook and Twitter. Therefore we will allow you to continue using these until January 1, 2013. After that date, we will perform an audit and we will deactivate any organization not in compliance.

What’s the difference between putting the UW in the beginning versus the end?
*When “UW” appears at the beginning of an organization’s name, one can assume that they are an entity of the University – an official University-sponsored department or program. This is not true for the relationship between Student Organizations and the University.*

What will happen if I don't make the changes?
*Your application to register or re-register will be denied and you will not be a Registered Student Organization until you are in compliance. You will not have access to the RSO benefits. If your group is not able to make changes to your external website or email address right away, just resubmit your application with the old information and we will place you on a list of organizations that will be audited after January 1, 2013.*

Most people know our organization a certain way; can you make an exception for larger orgs?
*Unfortunately, we are not able to make exceptions for any size or type of organization. This would be unfair to the organizations not included in the exception.*

Does wisc, wisconsin, wisco, or madison count?
*We are only concerned with the trademarked name University of Wisconsin-Madison and its variants.*

We are using a university department to host our website, is that okay?
*If your website is hosted by a University Department and the department is using “UW” in it’s name, then it should be fine. You still cannot include the UW before your name. For example; The Wisconsin Alumni Student Board*
(WASB) is a Student Organization that is affiliated with the Wisconsin Alumni Association. Their website is: www.uwalumni.com/home/wasb, which is fine.

They could not have: www.uwalumni.com/home/uw-wasb

Our website is really extensive and hosts other RSO's too, can you make an exception? Unfortunately, we are not able to make exceptions for any size or type of organization. This would be unfair to the organizations not included in the exception. You can, however, contact the CfLI front desk to set up a meeting with one of the advisors to discuss the timing of the transition (see above - you have until January 1, 2013 to change your website).

Why are you enforcing this rule now instead of before? The UW-Madison Office of Administrative Legal Services has asked CfLI to be more consistent in the way we enforce this policy as part of the University’s ongoing efforts to maintain and protect its brand and trademarks. Also, we have noticed an increasing number of issues in the past couple of years caused by not clearly communicating this policy. Many organizations were under the impression that the Naming Guidelines only applied to their official name and have been using a version of their name that begins with UW for all of their day-to-day operations which has resulted in some issues. We believe that consistent enforcement of this policy from this point on will help organizations in the long term, while meeting the University’s goals.

What if we say the UW stands for something else? Can we keep it then? No. It would still be a violation as the acronym will be construed as referring to the University of Wisconsin due to your relationship with the University as a Registered Student Organization.

My website is really hard to change; can I just add a disclaimer saying we’re not affiliated? No. Just because you say you are not affiliated it doesn’t excuse infringement on the University’s marks. The name is trademarked and cannot be used without written permission of the Vice Chancellor for University Relations as set forth in the university’s Policies Governing the Use of University Names, Logos, Symbols and Marks (http://universityrelations.wisc.edu/policies/marks.php). Student Organizations do not have permission to start their name (or any iteration of their name) with “University of Wisconsin-Madison” in any form.

If we need to transition to a new domain, can we get some help with that? Yes! We reached out to the Division of Informational Technology (DoIT) on campus to see how they can help you.

Here is what they said:

Greetings from Software Training for Students (STS)! STS spends a lot of time helping student groups build and update websites. We can help in these ways, all of which are free to students:

- Free Technology Classes - We teach Dreamweaver, HTML/CSS, Javascript, and PHP/SQL series that students can enroll in via our website;
- Custom Technology Workshops - As long as there are eight or more students who will attend the workshop(s), we can build custom classes to fit the unique needs of specific student orgs;
- "Ask a Trainer" Project Support - We can help students troubleshoot their specific projects via one-hour, in-person appointments;
- Online Training - STS helps fund a campus-wide Lynda.com subscription.

What we can’t do is help groups get official UW URLs, UW email addresses, or campus-supported hosting space.