I. Policy Statement and Purpose

Licensing and Trademark Administration’s (Licensing) mission is to ensure that the image and reputation of Virginia Tech is upheld through effective management and protection of the university’s trademarks. The trademark licensing program ensures proper use of the University's name and symbols, as well as the quality and consistency of all merchandise bearing those marks. This policy applies only to merchandise, not other applications such as advertising, visual identity products, printed materials or other institutional uses of the marks.

All merchandise, for internal use or for resale, bearing one or more Virginia Tech (the University) marks must be produced by a licensed vendor.

A trademark (or mark) is any logo, symbol, nickname, letter(s), word, slogan, or derivative associated with an organization, company, manufacturer, or institution and can be distinguished from those of other entities or competitors. More than 20 years ago, Virginia Tech created its trademark licensing and administration program in order to establish a foundation for promoting and protecting the use of the university’s marks.

Licensing strives to communicate to all organizations, departments, and individuals affiliated or familiar with Virginia Tech the purpose and goals of the licensing program. Licensing works with other university departments to ensure all promotional activities involving the use of licensed products are administered in accordance with established licensing policies, procedures and guidelines stated here, and in the official University Brand Guide.

Licensing seeks to establish relationships with product manufacturers, retailers, and the general public to promote the benefits of producing, selling, and buying officially licensed products.
University Legal Counsel assists Licensing in administering various aspects of the licensing program, including policy development, contract administration, and license enforcement.

The Collegiate Licensing Company Inc. (CLC) represents Virginia Tech and assists in the management of the University’s licensing and trademark enforcement program. CLC is responsible for processing license applications, coordinating artwork approvals, collecting royalty payments, protecting trademarks and developing and promoting the University’s brand. Manufacturers who wish to produce Virginia Tech merchandise must be licensed through CLC. Once a license application is submitted to CLC, Licensing will review and consider for approval. Licensed manufacturers are required to pay a royalty fee. Virginia Tech will not license merchandise and services that are detrimental to the mission or reputation of Virginia Tech. Please see Section II.3.e for examples of inappropriate products and images.

Once licensed, vendors must submit proofs of all merchandise designs through the MyiCLC web portal system to ensure Virginia Tech’s brand standards are met. Vendors will generally be notified within on to three business days if their artwork is approved or requires revision.

Virginia Tech’s licensing program is in place for four principal reasons:

- **Protection of the Virginia Tech name** – Because licensed vendors have a written agreement with Virginia Tech through CLC, the university has appropriate control of the use and application of the marks that are associated with the University, as well as the quality of the merchandise bearing those marks.

- **Strengthening and growing the brand** – Licensing works to strengthen the University’s brand through relationships with retailers, licensees, academic and administrative units of the university, alumni, and fans. The sale of licensed products generates revenue that funds, among other things, academic and athletic scholarships.

- **Assuring Virginia Tech merchandise is produced under appropriate conditions** – Virginia Tech has adopted a code of conduct to ensure licensed products are manufactured in a responsible and sustainable fashion. Licensed vendors are required to abide by the code of conduct.

- **Product liability insurance** – Virginia Tech requires licensed vendors provide product liability insurance.

Virginia Tech has registered certain names, wordmarks and logos with the United States Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO). The most familiar symbols are the Virginia Tech seal, institutional logo and wordmark, the stylized VT logo, and the HokieBird. Through its licensing efforts, the University promotes the officially licensed merchandise of Virginia Tech and enhances relationships with manufacturers and retailers of licensed goods.

All University-approved groups, departments, colleges, and schools, as well as external individuals, groups and companies are required to obtain approval from CLC and Licensing before producing any merchandise bearing the institution’s registered and common law trademarks. Approval is required regardless of use or method of distribution. Merchandise produced without written authorization may be considered "counterfeit" and subject to all available legal remedies, including seizure of the
merchandise.

University trademarks are to be used with the appropriate trademark designation (® or ™), and may not be altered.

II. Guidelines

1. **U.S. Trademark Laws and Requirements Overview**

   The administrative requirements and procedures outlined in this policy should be followed in order to achieve effective use and legal protection of all Virginia Tech trademarks. Non-compliance with the requirements in this policy may result the university’s inability to claim or enforce trademarks.

   Licensing adheres to all requirements set forth in The Lanham Act of 1946. This legislation governs trademark use and enforcement at the federal level by reducing unfair competition amongst businesses and protecting consumers from imitation products and services.

2. **Trademark Creation and Design**

   Any trademark that will be registered and used by Virginia Tech must be reviewed by:
   - Licensing
   - Legal Counsel
   - The associate vice president for university relations

   At the direction of the associate vice president for university relations, Licensing will coordinate registration of a trademark, in consultation with Legal Counsel.

3. **Use of Virginia Tech’s Trademarks**

   a. **General** - University departments, colleges, organizations and outside companies must obtain written permission from Licensing to use Virginia Tech marks on any products. All products bearing university trademarks must be produced by licensed vendors. This includes, but is not limited to apparel, headwear, footwear, outerwear, housewares and promotional items. Licensing will notify the licensed vendor producing the item of the university’s approval to produce Virginia Tech marks and will inform the vendor of royalty requirements.

   b. **Registered and Protected Names** – The following names of Virginia Tech are either federally registered with the USPTO or claimed as trademarks by the university:
      i. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University®
      ii. Virginia Tech®
      iii. Hokies®
iv. Hokie™ (registration pending)
v. Invent the Future®
vi. HokieBird™

The following marks are not acceptable in referring to the university, either graphically or editorially:
• VPI
• Va (or VA) Tech
• Virginia Polytechnic Institute
• Virginia Tech University

c. Registered and Protected Official Artwork - The artwork featured on Virginia Tech’s official art sheet are the registered and protected trademarks of the University. Please reference “Artwork Specifications” section for brand guidelines for each mark.

Licensed vendors can access Virginia Tech’s official art sheet through the MyiCLC web portal. For internal use, please reference Virginia Tech’s Brand Guide or University Policy 12000.

The official Virginia Tech colors are maroon (PMS 208) and orange (PMS 158).

d. Co-branding University Marks - Virginia Tech marks may not be used in conjunction with other trademarks, service marks or registered marks without written permission from the owners of the mark. Licensing will provide assistance in determining proprietary rights (for example, using Virginia Tech with the Nike slogan “Just Do It,” or using VT with UVA.) for co-branding and will address questions about the status of a mark.

e. Use of Inappropriate Products and Images – The following list contains examples of products and images Virginia Tech considers inappropriate and for which Virginia Tech trademarks cannot be used. The list is not all inclusive.

i. Products that can be used to injure, kill or present a high risk of liability exposure.
ii. Tobacco, drug, and some alcohol related products.
iii. Sexually suggestive products.
iv. Products detrimental to the mission or image of the University.
v. Art and graphic designs depicting or endorsing alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, firearms or other weapons.
vi. Art representing racist, sexist, or hateful images.
vii. Art associated with profanity, demeaning or degrading language;
vi. Art depicting sexual acts.
ix. Art impugning other universities.

The University reserves the right to disapprove any artwork or product that does not align with the University’s mission or image.
Questions about the status of a mark for use with products meant for resale should be referred to Licensing at (540) 231-3748 or licensing@vt.edu. All other questions about use of university marks should be directed to branding@vt.edu or 540-231-3899.

4. Artwork Specifications

a. Institutional Logos

i. University Logo

![University logo](image_url)

The University Logo or approved brand extension logos are required to be used on merchandise meant for the promotion of an academic or administrative unit. Any modifications of a brand extension logo must have approval from the Brand Manager.

The University shield and shield logo both have a protected area. No lines, words, or artwork may overlap or intersect this mark, and no changes may be made to the design outside the parameters set forth in the University Brand Guide. The University’s preference to use the official tagline “Invent the Future” should be used with the University Logo. However, the tagline may be omitted within reason and with written permission from Licensing and/or the Brand Manager.

The preferred version of the University logo includes the maroon shield (PMS 208) with solid black logo type. Reversed white, solid black or solid maroon logos are acceptable. Solid orange logo is not permitted.

Please reference the University Brand Guide for complete guidelines on the use of this mark.

ii. University Seal

![University seal](image_url)

Merchandise designs using the University seal may not incorporate any of the Athletic logos or spirit marks (please reference section ll.4.d or the Terms
Glossary for list of spirit marks). Only institutional logos may be used within the same design as the seal.

b. Vintage Marks

Wordmarks: “VPI,” “Fighting Gobblers,” “Hoki”

The University’s vintage logos and wordmarks are not permitted for internal use, except for special circumstances with permission from Licensing. The University licenses these marks through a restricted College Vault program for retail.

c. Athletic Logo

The following logo is limited to athletic and informal use and should not be used for academic or administrative applications, academic merchandise, or University websites. Student groups are allowed to use this logo in an informal manner and as outlined in section III. Procedures.

i. Stylized VT

1. Protected Area – A protected area the width of the stem of the “T” of the logo should be maintained around the entire stylized VT. The protected area also precludes the addition of any additional type, graphics, or images in such a way that the effect is to create a distinct combined logo. Additional type, graphics, or images may not be overlapped on top of or behind the stylized VT.
2. *Patterns* – The stylized VT may be used on top of a background pattern. However, it may not be altered with patterns *inside* the mark. Exceptions may be made for special observations or occasions, such as the American flag pattern for Veteran’s Appreciation, or other “patterns” that are in line with the University’s core values, after prior consultation and approval from Licensing.

d. **Spirit Marks**
   The following logos are limited to athletic and informal usage and should not be used for academic or administrative applications, academic merchandise, or university websites.

   i. **HokieBird**

   1. The HokieBird should not overlap another Virginia Tech trademark.
   2. The original HokieBird, HokieBird head and Youth Mark (“HokieBirds”) artwork shown on the University’s Official Art Sheet are the only HokieBirds allowed on merchandise. No modifications or alternate versions will be allowed (except where noted below for Varsity Athletics).
   3. Modifications to the color, outside of the options available on the Official Art Sheet, stance or direction of the HokieBird will not be allowed.

   4. **Varsity Athletics** - Athletics may modify the HokieBird artwork to reflect specific sports for internal purposes. All modifications must be approved by Licensing and the Executive Associate Athletics Director. Designs
should never compromise Athletics’ Code of Conduct.

5. **Student Groups** - University Relations recognizes the brand affinity students have with the spirit marks, especially the HokieBird. Student Groups (RSOs, club sports, USCOs USLPs, and other student groups/teams) may use the HokieBird. Modifications to the HokieBird will not be allowed. Please see the examples below.
   a. Example of creative use of the HokieBird unmodified for Rec Sports:

   ![Example of creative use of the HokieBird unmodified for Rec Sports](image1)

   b. Example of creative use of the HokieBird unmodified for RSO:

   ![Example of creative use of the HokieBird unmodified for RSO](image2)

6. **Academic and Administrative Departments** - All colleges, academic, and administrative departments should use the formal university marks for brand identification. Please reference the University Brand Guide.

   Exceptions may be made for programs or initiatives established to promote student awareness (for example: Office of Emergency Management’s “Be Hokie Ready” campaign or the Alumni Association’s Graduation Picnic). All exceptions must be reviewed and approved from Licensing.
ii. Hokie Tracks

![Hokie Tracks Image]

The trademark Hokie Tracks are for athletic and informal use only. No lines, words or artwork may overlap or intersect the mark, and no alterations may be made to the mark. Hokie Tracks may be used as a pair or individually.

e. Wordmarks

The university has trademarks on several wordmarks:

1. Virginia Tech®
2. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University®
3. Invent the Future®
4. HokieBird™
5. Hokies®
6. Hokie™

These wordmarks may be used on licensed products and stylized or designed with creativity that reflects the core values and mission of the University, and subject to approval from Licensing.

Example of an approved “creative use:”

![Example T-Shirt Image]
Example of a disapproved use:

(Cannot overlap words over university logos and cannot use the institutional logo’s font without using the entire mark.)

The letters “VT” are not an approved wordmark for use and are considered a distortion of the stylized VT logo.

Letters in a trademark may not be replaced with an object that does not appropriately reflect the letter being replaced. For example, it would not be approved to replace the “o” in “Hokies” with a tennis racket or the “e” in “Tech” with a heart. Below is an example of an approved use of replacing a letter with an object that appropriately reflects the letter being replaced:

f. Trademark Designations (® and ™ marks)

1. The ® mark – The logos or wordmarks Virginia Tech designates with the ® mark are federally registered trademarks through the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). This registration gives Virginia Tech legal validity and exclusive ownership of our marks and ensures there is no infringement on or from other registered marks.

2. The TM (™) mark – The logos or wordmarks Virginia Tech designates with a TM are claimed by the University and owned through Common Law.
III. Procedures

1. Procedures for University Academic and Administrative Units and Student Organizations

   University units and registered student organizations requesting authorization for University trademark use on merchandise should direct their requests to Licensing. Merchandise bearing Virginia Tech trademarks must be produced by a licensed Virginia Tech vendor. “Merchandise” includes items that may be sold, promotional items for giveaways, gifts, etc., as well as items for fundraisers.

   a. University Departments, Colleges, Schools and Organizations (University Units)

      i. Licensed Products: University units are required to use University marks or their official brand extension logo on licensed products. When approved by Licensing, exceptions may be made based on space or product design restraints. Orders must be placed through officially licensed vendors.

   b. Registered Student Organizations (RSO) & Extended Campus Student Organizations (ECSO)

      i. Naming an RSO or ECSO on Licensed Merchandise - When referring to Virginia Tech in the organization’s name, please reference “Establishing and Maintaining
a Registered Student Organization (RSO)” policy 8013. “Virginia Tech” may not be placed in front of the organization’s name; “at Virginia Tech” is the only permitted use of a university trademark in an RSO’s or ESCOs name (for example: Chess Club at Virginia Tech or Student Ministries at Virginia Tech). RSOs and ECSOs may not use “at VT.” RSOs and ECSOs are not permitted to use the trademark words “Hokie” or “Hokies” in their organization name.

ii. Use of university trademark logos – RSOs and ECSOs are not required to use a Virginia Tech logo as part of their organization logo. However, RSOs and ECSOs are required to use the words “at Virginia Tech” as part of their name, within university brand standards, which is subject to final approval from Licensing. Use of the letters “VT,” except when using the stylized VT, is not permitted. Examples of the use of “at Virginia Tech” in an organization’s logo:

If an RSO or ECSO chooses to use a Virginia Tech logo, it must be either an Athletic mark or institutional mark. Use of both together is not permitted. Academic-related RSOs and ECSOs are strongly encouraged to use the institutional mark, not athletic marks. The University seal and vintage marks are not permitted for use.

RSOs and ECSOs are never allowed to modify any Virginia Tech trademark including, but not limited to: changing colors, adding clothes to the HokieBird, or elongating the “t” on the stylized VT logo. RSOs and ECSOs may also not incorporate a trademark with the addition of type, graphics, or images in such a way that the effect is to create a distinct combined logo.
c. University Student Life Programs (USLP)

i. Naming a USLP on Licensed Merchandise – USLPs are permitted to use “Virginia Tech” in their organization name (for example Virginia Tech Baseball Club). USLPs are not permitted to use “Hokie” or “Hokies” in their organization name.

Because USLPs are directly governed by academic or administrative departments, for which the University is ultimately responsible, it is very important that USLP club sport teams are identified properly. To avoid confusion between club sports and varsity athletic sports, club sport teams must identify themselves as such on merchandise (including uniforms) using one of two options:
   1. Use the word “club” in their organization’s name on the merchandise. “Club” can be at the beginning or end of the name (for example: Club Baseball or Baseball Club, Snowboarding Club or Club Snowboarding).
   2. Use the approved Rec Sports Patch (seen below) on the merchandise. The patch can be anywhere on the merchandise as long as it is visible and legible. If the patch is used, the club’s name is not required to be on the merchandise.

![Rec Sports Patch](image)

ii. Use of University trademark logos – USLPs are not required to use a Virginia Tech logo as part of their organization logo. Use of the letters “VT,” except when using the stylized VT, is not permitted.

If a USLP chooses to use a Virginia Tech logo, it must be an Athletic mark or institutional mark. Use of both together is not permitted. Use of the university seal and vintage university marks is not permitted.

USLPs are never allowed to modify any Virginia Tech trademark including, but not limited to: changing colors, adding clothes to the HokieBird, or elongating the “t” on the stylized VT. USLPs may also not incorporate a trademark with the addition of type, graphics, or images in such a way that the effect is to create a distinct combined logo.
d. University Chartered Student Organizations (UCSO)

i. *Naming a UCSO* – UCSOs are permitted to use “Virginia Tech” in their organization name (for example Virginia Tech Class of 2015). UCSOs are not permitted to use “Hokie” or “Hokies” in their organization name.

ii. *Use of university trademark logos* – UCSOs are not required to use a Virginia Tech logo as part of their organization logo. Use of the letters “VT,” except when using the stylized VT, is not permitted.

If a UCSO chooses to use a Virginia Tech logo, it must be either an Athletic or institutional mark. Use of both together is not permitted. Use of the University seal and vintage marks is not permitted.

UCSOs are never allowed to modify any Virginia Tech trademark including, but not limited to: changing colors, adding clothes to the HokieBird, or elongating the “t” on the stylized VT. UCSOs may also not incorporate a trademark with the addition of type, graphics, or images in such a way that the effect is to create a distinct combined logo.

e. Student Research Groups/Teams (Student Teams)

i. *Naming a Student Team* – Student teams are not required to use “Virginia Tech” or “at Virginia Tech” in their team name. Student teams are not permitted to use “Hokie” or “Hokies” in their name.

ii. *Use of University trademark logos* – Student teams are not required to use a Virginia Tech logo as part of their logo. Use of the letters “VT,” except when using the stylized VT athletic logo, is not permitted. If a student team chooses to use a Virginia Tech logo, it must be an Athletic or institutional mark. The University seal and vintage marks are not permitted for use.

Student teams are never allowed to modify any Virginia Tech trademark including, but not limited to: changing colors, adding clothes to the HokieBird, or elongating the “t” on the stylized VT. Student teams may also not incorporate a trademark with the addition of type, graphics, or images in such a way that the effect is to create a distinct combined logo.

On licensed merchandise, student teams must use the sponsoring academic unit’s approved brand extension logo.
Example of approved Student Team merchandise:

![Example of approved Student Team merchandise](image)

2. Procedures for Active Alumni Chapters

Use of a University mark with an organization name implies association with the university. Therefore, only alumni chapters recognized by the Alumni Association are allowed to use university marks in conjunction with their organization’s name.

a. Chapter Logos – All chapter logos using the university’s marks must be approved by Licensing. The following guidelines apply:
   i. Chapter logos must identify the chapter, and must include the word(s) “chapter,” “alumni,” or “alumni chapter.”
   ii. Chapter logos may incorporate any of the following university marks within compliance of the artwork specifications listed in this policy:
      1. HokieBird
      2. Stylized VT
      3. “Virginia Tech”
      4. Primary university logo
      5. HokieBird head
      6. “Hokie”
      7. “Hokies”
   iii. University marks may not be altered. Marks may not be stretched, squeezed, altered, have added patterns or effects, or otherwise edited. This includes not changing the HokieBird’s stance and not altering the proportion or spacing around the stylized VT.

b. Ordering Merchandise – To ensure consistency in the use and protection of the University’s name and marks, all product designs and chapter logos using the University’s marks must be approved by Licensing and follow these guidelines:
   i. Alumni chapters may use university marks, except the seal and vintage marks, on merchandise as long as that merchandise also identifies the chapter.
ii. All merchandise bearing university trademarks, whether standalone or incorporated as part of a chapter logo, must be ordered through an officially licensed vendor.

iii. Royalties will apply for alumni chapters as outlined below in Section III.3.

3. Royalties

The University receives royalty payments for use of any of Virginia Tech’s trademarks through licensing agreements required of any company producing products bearing Virginia Tech trademarks. All royalty payments received are allocated by the University’s Office of Budget and Planning.

a. Merchandise bearing University trademarks produced exclusively for a University affiliated club, organization or department listed herein for giveaway promotions or sold to internal members at cost are not currently subject to royalties. Royalties are not charged when merchandise is used to promote instructional programs or events, or other activities that further the academic and educational mission of the university.

b. Merchandise bearing university trademarks generally is subject to royalties if:

i. The merchandise is for resale, including fundraisers; or
ii. The merchandise promotes a specific event for which a fee is charged; or
iii. The name, mark, or logo of a third party is used with the university’s mark.

4. One Time Agreements - If there is a specialized product not currently offered by a Virginia Tech licensed vendor, organizations should work with Licensing to obtain a one-time licensing agreement for that vendor. However, if a vendor that is already licensed provides that product, that licensed vendor must be used. One time agreements are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and are only issued in exceptional circumstances.

V. Contact Information

Virginia Tech Licensing and Trademark Administration
University Relations
Media Building
101 Draper Road NW
Blacksburg, VA 24061
(540) 231-3748
licensing@vt.edu
http://www.unirel.vt.edu/licensing/index.html
VI. Term Glossary

Common Law Trademark
A common law trademark indicates trademark rights are developed through use and not through state or federal trademark registration. Instead, common law trademark rights have been developed under a judicially created scheme of rights governed by state law.

Informal Trademark Use
When an academic or administrative unit or student group uses a University trademark for a program, initiative, or promotion that is student and/or spirit focused. For example, Student Affairs using the HokieBird for New Student Orientation merchandise for incoming freshman.

Manufacturers
Any person, group or business that has the means to physically produce a Virginia Tech trademark(s) on merchandise. Examples include a t-shirt screen printer, embroidery service, etc.

Merchandise
Any product, including but not limited to apparel, headwear, footwear, house wares, office supplies, etc., that bear the trademarks of Virginia Tech, whether or not it is available for resale.

Official Artwork Sheet
For internal use, please reference the University Brand Guide. The Official Art Sheet is used by licensed vendors to obtain Virginia Tech’s trademarks through the MyiCLC web portal.

Spirit Marks
Virginia Tech’s spirit marks include the HokieBird logo and the Hokie Tracks logo. Please reference section II.4.d.

Trademark
A word, logo, or a combination, used by organization, business, group, etc. to identify its goods and/or services and distinguish them from others.

Trademark Designation
There are two types of trademark designs that Virginia Tech uses – the ® mark and the TM (™) mark. Both designations offer Virginia Tech exclusive rights to the logos or wordmarks they accompany, with these differences:

The TM (™) mark – The logos or wordmarks that Virginia Tech designates with a TM are owned by the university through common law.

The ® mark – The logos or wordmarks that Virginia Tech designates with the ® mark are federally registered trademarks in specific service or product categories through the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

In almost all merchandise applications, the inclusion of the appropriate trademark symbol is required.
**Wordmark**

Any word that is trademark owned by the university, but which may or may not have a design or logo-type specified for use. Examples include the wordmark “Virginia Tech,” “Hokies,” or “Hokie.”

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*This document establishes official policy and standards for the use of the university’s trademarks on licensed merchandise and is incorporated into University Policy 12000, Usage of the University Name.*