
Subject: Sales, Solicitation and Advertising on Campus

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1. Purpose

This policy outlines the guidelines relating to sales, solicitation and advertising on the Virginia Tech campus and in university facilities.

In accordance with University Policy 5000, [University Facilities Usage and Event Approval](#), university facilities are intended for the use of its students, faculty, staff and invited guests participating in university-approved programs or activities. In the interest of providing a productive living, learning, and working environment for students and employees and protecting the institution's authorized business activities and interests, the university has established policies and procedures for the approval of commercial, fund-raising, informational and advertising activities. Decisions regarding requests will take into account overall campus safety and security, any special circumstances relating to university activities, and the impact such activity may have on the university.

This policy applies to all university departments, university-affiliated organizations (student or non-student), commercial vendors, charitable organizations, faculty, staff, students, and third parties.

1.1 Policy Review

In Spring 2012, University Policies 5205, Sales and Solicitation on Campus and 5210, Advertising on Campus were reviewed. The policies were reformatted into one policy to more concisely state the guidelines relating to sales, solicitation and advertising on the Virginia Tech campus and in university facilities.

2. Policy

2.1 Sales and Solicitation

The sale or solicitation of any products, goods, food, beverages, or services on the campus requires prior written authorization and must be conducted in accordance with university policy and the regulations established by the authorizing office. See Policy 5000, [University Facilities Usage and Event Approval](#), for authorizing officials. Informational activities and solicitations of any type (e.g., donations, petition for signatures) also require prior written authorization. In most cases, per University Policy 5000, University Facilities Usage and Event Approval, confirmation to reserve the location will also serve as event approval; if further event approval is required, the reserving authority shall communicate further requirements to the event sponsor in writing.

All commercial, fund-raising, and informational activities require sponsorship by a university-affiliated organization. Activities should be occasional, non-continuous and specific in purpose and may be approved only for designated areas on campus. Regular, recurring activities are prohibited. All proceeds from fund-raising activities are to be returned to the organization's treasury for use for organization projects or activities or for the organization's charitable activities.

It is the responsibility of the sponsoring organization to obtain the appropriate approvals outlined in this policy. It is the responsibility of the designated authorizing offices to ensure that appropriate university policies are followed before approving requests.

Salespersons may not engage in misrepresentation or fraudulent trade practices nor other activities that are illegal or in violation of state or federal laws or university policies. Salespersons and any company involved will be held responsible if university policies are violated. Such violations may result in the sponsoring organization and/or the individual or company losing the privilege of conducting future sales on campus.

For purposes of regulation, distinctions are made among "commercial," "fund-raising," "individual" and "informational" sales and solicitation activities.

2.1.1 Commercial Activity

Commercial activity is defined as any sale, solicitation, or promotion/marketing that results in securing a **profit or benefit for a non-university group, organization, or business**. This includes activities of university-affiliated organizations that:

- use vendors for the actual selling;
- are paid or receive any kind of sales commission (including percentage of sales, flat fee, or per unit sold fee);
- sell for the benefit of an external group, organization, or business (unless it is solely for the benefit of a non-profit organization);
- provide product promotion or marketing for an external group, organization, or business even if no products are sold, **and/or**
- conduct employee recruitment activities for external employers, unless there is a university-approved collaboration agreement (except Career Services office).

Commercial activities will generally be prohibited unless:

- the university or a university-affiliated organization does not offer the service or goods, **and**
- it is determined that the activity is either necessary to the purpose of the university, **or**
- it provides a direct benefit to the university or the sponsoring university-affiliated organization.

The benefit to the sponsoring university-affiliated organization must be included in the request for approval. Provisions for proceeds from any sales must also be included in the request for approval. However, such activities may not be approved or may be approved with restrictions by the authorizing office if they are determined to compete with or have a significantly adverse effect on the ongoing operations of the business activities of the university or university-related corporations.

Uninvited commercial activities, which include commercial presentations, door-to-door, and other commercial solicitations, and the making of sales agreements, are prohibited on Virginia Tech property, including but not limited to students' private rooms and the common areas of all residence and dining halls.

Sales to members of campus organizations are commercial activities, but may be permitted during meetings of the organization, without prior approval, provided the salesperson is invited to the meeting for that purpose, in advance, by a member of the organization. No announcement concerning the sale may be posted or advertised beyond the membership of the organization.

Applicable fees for facility use will be charged for commercial activities in accordance with Policy 5000, University Facilities Usage and Event Approval.

2.1.2 Fund-raising Activities

Fund-Raising is defined as any activity which involves the solicitation or collection of monies that is specific in purpose, not for individual gain, non-recurring, **and for the sole benefit of a specific, sponsored nonprofit group or cause or the self-generated fund-raising efforts of a recognized student organization**. Types of fund-raising activities may include: the selling of goods or services; the selling of tickets and/or charging of admission to public activities or events; and the solicitation of monetary contributions, goods, or services.

Fund-raising activities conducted by university affiliated organizations may be approved on a limited basis with regard to time, place, safety, and the scope of the activity. Fund-raising activities **may** be determined to be commercial activities if they are regular and recurring.

Private fund-raising made on behalf of the university and/or groups affiliated with Virginia Tech is coordinated through University Development (see Policy 12100), with the exception of normal student fund-raising activities. However, any fund-raising activities by students involving direct mail solicitation of alumni and friends of Virginia Tech and/or requests for gifts of \$1,000 or greater must be approved by the Office of University Development in accordance with Policy 12100, [Policy on Coordination of Private Fundraising](#).

Other permitted activities, which are not considered "fund-raising," include: (a) the collection of dues or membership fees from the members of a recognized student organization; and (b) collection of voluntary contributions from individuals for departmental social activities or gifts.

Recognized student organizations are encouraged to work with Virginia Tech Services, Inc. to procure goods for fundraisers. This university-related corporation has extensive on-campus and community-wide sales experience and can provide advice and guidance on how to achieve a successful event within the campus environment.

2.1.3 Informational Activity

Informational activity is defined as the distribution of literature and/or petitioning for signatures in support of a point of view, such as political, environmental, religious, etc., where no fee is involved nor donations or contributions sought.

Informational activities may be permitted if they are sponsored by a university-affiliated organization. Such activities require prior approval by the designated authorizing office and are subject to university policies and the reasonable guidelines of the authorizing official.

2.1.4 Individual Activity

Individuals, including employees, are prohibited from engaging in commercial activities on university property, including the following: (a) the solicitation or sale of products, services or personal property; (b) the solicitation of orders for such products or services; or (c) the distribution of catalogs and literature promoting products or services by individuals, including university employees.

University email, departmental mailboxes and bulletin boards are not to be used to distribute commercial sales information or catalogs.

2.2 Advertising

Students and student organizations; university-affiliated individuals, organizations, and departments; and university-related corporations may distribute literature, post signs, publicize, and advertise on campus. Advertising for commercial purposes by businesses, organizations, entities, or individuals not associated with the university is prohibited.

Failure to comply with these policies may subject the responsible organization and/or individuals to fines for property damage and/or clean-up costs.

2.2.1 Specific Provisions

- Advertisements, brochures, and portable signs for commercial activities may not be posted or displayed on university property.
- When the name of a product or non-university-affiliated entity appears on posted literature, the primary purpose of the poster must be a sponsorship to recognize support of the activity, event, or student organization, and not the commercial advancement of the non-university entity or the product.
- The promotion for sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages on campus or advertising of alcoholic beverages in university student publications may be prohibited or regulated by state or federal laws and/or the specific regulations developed by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board.
- The university mail service, including on-campus mail, is for official university correspondence only. It should not be used for personal correspondence, advertising, or mass mailing.
- The university's computers, internal networks, and national networks are not to be used to distribute personal advertisements or information that will result in personal gain. Such use violates university policy and the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Violations will be dealt with through Policy 7000, [Acceptable Use and Administration of Computer and Communication Systems](#), Acceptable Use Guidelines, state Standards of Conduct or University Policies for Student Life.

3. Procedures

The total number of people or organizations conducting sales, solicitation and/or advertising activities in one place on campus will be limited. Preference for assignment of space will take into account the number of previous approvals for the group or activity, status as a major campus-wide activity, and time constraints of events that may be advertised. Priority will be given to activities conducted by students over those conducted by students with vendors.

These activities will also be limited in regards to time, place and manner of the proposed activity. Violation of any of these pre-approved agreements may result in permission for the activity being revoked.

3.1 Sales and Solicitation

The location and time of any commercial, fund-raising, and informational activity occurring on university facilities must receive prior approval. The request must be submitted to the office charged with approving and scheduling events in that facility or area.

- See Policy 5000, University Facilities Usage and Event Approval, for authorizing officials. All authorizing officials should collaborate with Virginia Tech Services, Inc. to provide students, student organizations, and university affiliated individuals, organizations and departments with advice and guidance on sales and solicitation activities on campus.
- Requests forms must be submitted no later than 10 calendar days prior to the planned date of the solicitation. Note that some university offices may require an earlier request date to schedule the use of certain locations.
- Full details must be submitted, including the times, dates and locations requested; an explanation of the products or services that will be made available; benefit to the sponsoring university-affiliated organization; provisions for proceeds from sales or fund-raising activities; whether or not on-campus delivery is anticipated; and any other information that may be needed by the authorizing official.

Commercial suppliers who have an established relationship with the university for the sale of products and services will coordinate campus visits, communications and activities with either the Purchasing Department or the Information Technologies Acquisition (ITA) office, as appropriate. Commercial suppliers who do not have established relationships with the university must either be invited to campus by a sponsoring university-affiliated organization, a university-related corporation, or by the Purchasing or ITA offices.

It is university policy that the university electronic mail systems and mail services are for official university business only. They should not be used for commercial correspondence, advertising, soliciting, or mass mailing. University departments and campus organizations may submit event postings or other information to Virginia Tech News (www.vtnews.vt.edu). Departmental mailboxes and bulletin boards are not to be used to distribute commercial sales information or catalogs.

3.1.1 Deliveries and Invited Guests on Campus

Food may be delivered to residence halls, academic/administrative offices, and outdoor locations by vendors. Such deliveries are permitted only in response to prepaid orders, or to specific orders by resident students and employees. Residence Life designates for residence halls the hours during which deliveries may occur, the doors to be used, and the areas within residence halls where deliveries must take place.

Personal deliveries to employees such as dry cleaning, personal airline tickets, and parcel deliveries are discouraged. Such activity could be disruptive to the workplace, and there is no liability coverage for stolen or damaged merchandise. The decision on whether to allow occasional, non-disruptive deliveries will be left to the discretion of the manager of the respective units. In making those determinations, managers should consider where items will be received and the space required for holding, the safety of those parcels, and confusion about a delivered item that may be opened by mistake.

3.2 Advertising

- The appropriate administrative official must approve the event, sale, or product prior to advertisement. Distribution of materials may only occur in the approved location(s).
 - Permission must be obtained in writing from the Athletics Department when advertising is to occur in recreational facilities.
 - Permission must be obtained in writing from Student Centers and Activities when advertising is to occur in or around University Unions facilities and public space locations on campus.
 - Permission must be obtained in writing from Residence Life when advertising is to occur inside the residence or dining halls.

- Permission must be obtained in writing from Virginia Tech Services, Inc. when advertising is to occur in or around campus bookstores or convenience stores.
- The collection and distribution of literature, when necessary, will be limited to designated central locations.
- Slipping literature under doors and/or on door knobs inside residence halls is not permitted.
- The advertisement, publicity, sign, banner, flier, or literature must be appropriate for its intended purpose and comply with the law.
- The name of the sponsoring organization, meeting or event date, time, and location must be printed in English on the poster or notice. Any other writing on the poster that is not in English must be translated into English on the front of the poster, or a translation must be on file.

3.2.1 Distribution of Flyers

- Flyers may not be placed on windshields of vehicles parked on university-owned or leased property or parked in any university parking lot.
- Distribution of advertisements or literature must be accomplished in such a manner as to avoid litter or disruption.

3.2.2 Posted Materials

- Posted advertisements may be placed on general-purpose bulletin boards, or A-frame boards designated for that purpose. Student Centers and Activities Event Planning must approve A-frame board placement.
- Advertisements are not to be placed on interior and exterior doors, interior and exterior walls, windows, fences, directional and informational signs, lamp posts, light poles, barricades, trees, and any other location that is not appropriate.
- Markings on walkways, roadways, or other permanent structures on campus with chalk, paint, or any other material is prohibited.
- Posted advertisements must be removed no later than 24 hours after the event.
- No posting of any type is permitted in classrooms.

3.2.3 Banners

- Permission to Hang Banners
 - Permission to hang banners on certain academic buildings must be granted by Student Centers and Activities Event Planning Office; these buildings include:
 - Squires
 - War Memorial Gym
 - Litton Reaves
 - Derring
 - Pamplin
 - Banners and signs are not permitted in any athletics facility, including Lane Stadium and Cassell Coliseum.
 - The Assistant Vice President for University Planning must approve all other banners.
- Banners must be removed from buildings within 24 hours following the event they advertised.

3.2.4 Bulletin Boards

- Student organizations may post advertising on bulletin boards marked "General Purpose Bulletin Boards," which are identified throughout the campus and labeled as such for use by students and student organizations to advertise such activities and events.
- Responsibility for the content of these boards is placed in the Division of Student Affairs.
- Each department and college will continue to maintain its own bulletin boards for academic and professional purposes.

- Advertisements may not be placed on academic, resident advisors', or Residence Hall Federation bulletin boards unless prior permission is granted by the appropriate source of approval.
- All general-purpose bulletin boards will be cleared at the end of every semester.
- No more than one poster or notice for the same advertised event may be placed on a bulletin board.
- When posting announcements on bulletin boards, use the following guidelines:
 - Avoid placing posters on top of other posters.
 - Avoid posters larger than 11 inches by 17 inches.
 - Avoid having posters extend beyond the border of the bulletin board.
 - When posting personal notices, such as items for sale or ride needed, include the date the notice was posted. Personal notices must be removed within two weeks of their having been posted.

3.2.5 Web Pages

- University web sites should remain an information source free of commercial intervention; therefore, advertising on university web pages (those maintained on any university file server or use any domain or subdomain on vt.edu) is prohibited. The Associate Vice President for University Relations may grant exceptions to this policy to auxiliary organizations provided that the following procedures are followed:
 - Advertisements must adhere to other aspects of this policy.
 - Alcohol, beer, and cigarette advertisements are prohibited.
 - Advertisements should not comprise more than 130 x 130 pixels of a screen area on a standard desktop monitor. On mobile devices, logos cannot exceed 320 x 50 pixels.
 - The name, logo, or logotype of a company or organization may be posted to indicate sponsorship/partnership with that company or organization.
 - If a logo from a sponsor/partner of the university is intended to be clickable, it can link only to a page that lists other sponsors and must remain on the vt.edu domain. A text link to a sponsor's website is acceptable and not prohibited from any web page. Links to a sponsor's external website should open in a new window
 - An advertisement on a university web site should consist of text or graphics that have been paid for by a non-university organization or are in exchange for goods and services.
- The following examples do not constitute a web advertisement:
 - General interest links to commercial web sites that may be of interest to web viewers and that are available free of charge (e.g., Yahoo! search service, Town of Blacksburg home page, area weather links, etc.);
 - Subscription services or site licenses that the university pays for to gain access to a commercial service (e.g., CollegeNET, Everbridge, etc.);
 - Icons that link to social media networks (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.);
 - Information that relates to or supports the teaching, research, or service mission of the university, such as academic departmental conferences; or,
 - Listings of sponsors for a special event.
- The Virginia Tech news website (<http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/>), and its corresponding products (a daily employee e-mail, a daily subscription e-mail, and a weekly student e-mail) can be used by campus departments and organizations to share information or promote non-commercial events. Information submitted must be relevant to the university community and/or occurring on university property.
- The university's online event calendar (<http://www.calendar.vt.edu/>) lists campus activities and events that are sponsored by Virginia Tech students, faculty, or staff organizations or held on the Virginia Tech campus and are open to the university or to the public. Virginia Tech News reserves the right to edit content.

4. Definitions

Advertising/Advertisement - includes posting of signs or banners, the distribution of literature, electronic media, or any other form of public notice designed to sell goods or services, or publicize an event.

Auxiliary organization/unit – self-supporting enterprises that provide goods and services to the university (or faculty, staff, and/or students) and that do not rely on state appropriations for operating support.

Commercial activity - any sale, solicitation, or promotion/marketing for the purpose of securing a profit or benefit for a non-university group, organization, or business.

Fund-Raising activity - any activity which involves the solicitation or collection of monies that is specific in purpose, not for individual gain, non-recurring, and for the sole benefit of a specific nonprofit group or cause or the self-generated fund-raising efforts of a recognized student organization.

Individual activity – (a) the solicitation or sale of products, services or personal property; (b) the solicitation of orders for such products or services; or (c) the distribution of catalogs and literature promoting products or services by individuals, including university employees.

Informational activity - the distribution of literature and/or petitioning for signatures in support of a point of view, such as political, environmental, religious, etc., where no fee is involved nor donations or contributions sought.

Nonprofit organization - public, governmental, and charitable organizations that can provide proof of their nonprofit status.

Public Space Location or Public Area - all lobbies and atriums in student centers and academic facilities; campus sidewalks, plazas, and parking lots; the Drill Field; and all outdoor campus space, except those managed by University Athletics or Recreational Sports.

Recognized student organizations include: University Student Life Programs (USLP), University Chartered Student Organizations (UCSO), Registered Student Organizations (RSO), and Extended Campus Student Organizations (ECSO).

Sale - the activity of offering or exchanging products or services in return for monies, goods, or other services. This includes raffles or auctions.

Solicitation - the act of requesting money or funds for any reason, seeking agreement to pay, taking subscriptions, selling merchandise or services, seeking contributions of goods or services, offering materials or privileges to others via promotion or advertisement, or soliciting signatures for petitions.

Student – any individual currently enrolled and registered to attend Virginia Tech.

University facilities - any location, either permanent or temporary, owned or leased by Virginia Tech, and includes satellite campuses and offices. This includes, but is not limited to, the buildings, grounds, and the surrounding perimeters, including the parking lots, field locations, classrooms, alternate work or class locations, and university owned or leased vehicles.

University-affiliated individual – any individual who is a faculty or staff member, currently on the Virginia Tech payroll.

University-affiliated organization - (a) recognized student organizations; (b) university-related Corporations; (c) university departments; and (d) those organizations comprised of faculty and staff and are administered through a college, administrative division, or department to complement the departmental mission.

University-related Corporations - Corporations authorized by the Board of Visitors to provide support for the university; i.e. the Virginia Tech Foundation, Inc., Virginia Tech Services, Inc., etc.

5. References

University Policy 3005, University-Related Business and Commercial Activities
(<http://www.policies.vt.edu/3005.pdf>)

University Policy 3006, Catering Policy
(<http://www.policies.vt.edu/3006.pdf>)

University Policy 3600, Funds Handling and Deposit of State and Local Funds
(<http://www.policies.vt.edu/3600.pdf>)

University Policy 3610, Accepting and Handling Payment Card Transactions
(<http://www.policies.vt.edu/3610.pdf>)

University Policy 5000, University Facilities Usage and Event Approval
(<http://www.policies.vt.edu/5000.pdf>)

University Policy 7000, Acceptable Use and Administration of Computer and Communication Systems
(<http://www.policies.vt.edu/7000.pdf>)

University Policy 12100, Policy on Coordination of Private Fund-Raising
(<http://www.policies.vt.edu/12100.pdf>)

6. Approval and Revisions

Approved July 3, 2012 by Vice President for Administrative Services, Sherwood G. Wilson.