On September 30, 1791, an act confirmed an agreement that united the University of the State of Pennsylvania with the College, Academy, and Charitable School and provided that the name of the institution would be “The Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania.” To facilitate communication both internally and externally, the institution’s name is commonly simplified as the “University of Pennsylvania.”

The University regulates use of its name, including University of Pennsylvania, Penn, the names of its schools and programs, its shield and related insignia, trademarks and logos (“insignia”) to ensure that such use is related to the University’s educational, service and research missions and promotes its objectives. Responsibility for overseeing use of the University’s names and insignia lies with the Secretary of the University.

Official Use

When representing the University in an official capacity, all units of the University and members of the faculty and administration must use “University of Pennsylvania” in their publications and documents. Approved University stationery must be used for official correspondence.

University names and insignia may be used in connection with any academic University program provided that the program has been approved in advance by the responsible department chair and dean or director, and Provost, as appropriate. University units, faculty, staff and student organizations that wish to use University names or insignia in connection with any non-academic University program, activity, service or product must obtain the approval of the Secretary of the University before proceeding. Requests to use University names or insignia must first be presented to the appropriate department chair and dean, director, or, in the case of student organizations, to the Vice Provost for University Life, for review. If approved by the dean, director, or Vice Provost, a request with supporting information must be submitted to the Secretary for review. The Secretary shall review the proposed use and determine whether it is properly related to the University’s missions and, in consultation with the Provost, Executive Vice President and others as appropriate, whether the benefits of the proposed use outweigh any risks associated with the use. The Secretary may approve the proposed use, with or without conditions, or disapprove the proposed use.

Licensed Uses by Outside Entities

University names or insignia may be used on products or in connection with services offered by outside entities only under license from the University. Requests for such licenses are processed jointly through the Office of the Vice President for Business Services (“Business Services”) and the Center for Technology Transfer (“the Center”). If Business Services and the Center determine that a proposed licensed use may be beneficial to the University, they may
submit a proposal to the Secretary for review. The Secretary shall review the proposal and make a determination under the criteria stated above and may take particular note of the nature of the product, the proposed marketing plan, and the capabilities and reputation of the proposed licensee. If the Secretary approves the proposal, the Center is authorized to negotiate a license that is consistent with the terms of approval.

Outside sponsors of University programs or activities often seek to use University names or insignia in promotional or advertising materials. While the University is pleased to recognize the contributions of sponsors, such recognition must not suggest University endorsement of the sponsor’s activities. Therefore, University names or insignia may not be used in connection with any outside entity’s name or logo without prior approval of the Secretary of the University. In general, the Secretary shall approve uses that recognize or acknowledge the sponsor’s contribution to the University program or activity. Uses that, in the Secretary’s judgment, may suggest University endorsement or approval of the sponsor’s goods or services shall not be permitted.

Private Use

University faculty, staff and students may refer to their affiliation or status with the University in connection with personal activities, including consulting, provided that the affiliation or status is accurately represented and any title or position is accurately identified, and provided that such use does not imply University endorsement of the activity. In some cases, a disclaimer of University endorsement may be required. (See, for example, section II.E.10 of this Handbook, which deals with the Conflict of Interest Policy for Faculty Members.) Use of University insignia in connection with personal activities is prohibited. The University’s name must not be used in any announcement, advertising matter, publication, correspondence, or report in connection with personal or non-University activities if such use in any way could be construed as implying University endorsement or responsibility for any project, product, or service.

Related Policies

All faculty, staff and students are reminded that University equipment, stationery, campus mail service, and electronic media are to be used solely for University business by authorized University personnel and by officially recognized campus organizations. (See Human Resources Policy No. 3.) Additional information on faculty and staff involvement in extramural activities and organizations can be found in section II.E.10 of this Handbook, which deals with the Conflict of Interest Policy for Faculty Members, and Policies 5 and 6 in the Human Resources Policy Manual.