

## **Penn Sues company over use of the Wharton name**

*Francesca Di Meglio*



Photograph by Kendall Whitehouse/The Wharton School  
Huntsman Hall at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School

What's in a name? When you're the oldest business school in America, your name is your brand, and you guard it fiercely. That's why the trustees of the University of Pennsylvania on March 27 filed a lawsuit alleging trademark infringement against a company that provides business consulting and business education services under the Wharton name.

Penn's lawsuit against Wharton Business Foundation (WBF), an Internet marketing company based in Beverly Hills, Calif., claims that WBF's unauthorized use of the Wharton trademark creates confusion in the marketplace.

"WBF's unauthorized use [of the Wharton name] in connection with business education and business consultation is likely to cause confusion, or mistake, or to deceive as to the source or origin of the WBF's services and constitutes infringement of the university's rights," according to the document.

WBF has not filed a response with the court, and no one at WBF has returned a call seeking comment. Peter Winicov, a spokesman for the Wharton School, declined to comment, citing the university's policy to refrain from discussing pending litigation.

WBF uses the Wharton name to carry out functions similar to those offered by the Wharton School, including business education, the lawsuit alleges. The university cites descriptions of online course work offered on the the WBF website, including lessons "leveraging a multimedia mix of teleconferences, online video, and audio instructions. Wharton University's proven instructional method maximizes your results." The WBF phone number is (888) 4-WHARTON.

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Philadelphia, says the Wharton School has been using the Wharton registered mark for business education since 1881 and for business consultation since 1953, while WBF has neither applied for, nor received, a U.S. trademark registration for Wharton University or Wharton Business Foundation University.

The suit seeks a jury trial and a court order prohibiting WBF from using the Wharton name.

**Fonte: Bloomberg Businessweek. Disponível em:**  
**<<http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2013-04-02/penn-sues-company-over-use-of-the-wharton-name#r=nav-r-blog>>. Acesso em: 2 Abr. 2013.**