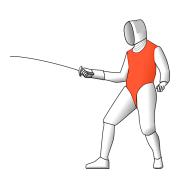
## Joining the Virginia Tech Fencing Club

Fencing, the sport of swordfighting, has been practiced for hundreds of years. Once studied as a martial art of dueling, today fencing is a regulated and competitive activity with participants around the world. A modern fencing bout is a match between two competitors, during which both use a specified type of weapon (foil, epee, or sabre), and attempt to score by striking a designated "target" zone of the opponents body. (See illustration on right; the target is marked in orange.) All fencing weapons are designed to prevent inflicted injury, and each fencer is required to wear



equipment to further protect themselves. The combination of structured rules, a scoring system, and protective gear allows fencers to compete with little risk of bodily harm.



Many colleges and universities have organized fencing clubs and teams, and Virginia Tech is no exception. The Virginia Tech Fencing Club is an official university club team. Membership is open to all students and the general public. The club has several programs in place to help those who are interested in the sport learn and enjoy it. Each semester, the club holds an information session and demonstration, during which the current club officers will speak to any interested students about the sport of fencing, details of the club's activities, and requirements for

membership. In addition, club members will fence a demonstration bout, providing students with a first-hand view of the sport's method of competition.

If students are interested in participating in the sport and have little or no prior experience, the club offers beginner's lessons for six weeks each semester, usually meeting on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 7:30-8:30pm in War Memorial Hall. All necessary equipment except a fencing glove will be provided to students, and the glove can be ordered through the club for around \$10.

Members of the club may attend practice from 8:00pm-10:00pm Monday through Friday in War Memorial Hall. In addition to practices, members have the option of trying out for the club's men's or women's team. The teams represent Virginia Tech at tournaments, and contain up to four fencers for each weapon. All club members can also compete individually in tournaments without being a member of the team. For tournaments regulated by the United States Fencing Association (USAF), the club member must also become a USAF member before competing. As a USAF member, the club member can, based on their performance and weapon, receive an official USAF skill "rating".

## Glossary

Fencing the sport of swordfighting

**Martial Art** a system of practices for use in combat

**Duel** an arranged engagement in combat between two individuals, with agreed

upon rules and weapons

**Bout** when referred to in the context of fencing, an engagement of two fencers in

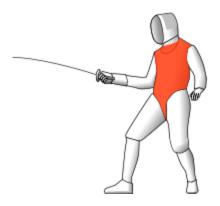
structured competition

**Club Sport** a university sporting organization run and managed by students

**Foil** a fencing weapon with a tapered quadrangular steel blade, designed to be

light and flexible, and to attack with thrusts (foil and orange marked target

area shown below)



**Epee** a fencing weapon with a tapered triangular steel blade and large hand guard

designed to protect the fencers hand and wrist, which are valid target area under epee rules (epee and orange marked target area shown below)

Sabre a fencing weapon with a triangular steel blade, designed to be light and

deliver quick slashing attacks (sabre and orange marked target area shown

below)



USFA United States Fencing Association, the national governing body for the sport of fencing in the United States

**Rating** when referred to in the context of fencing, a letter from E (lowest) to A (highest) awarded to members of the USFA who defeat higher rated fencers than they in competition

## Step-By-Step: Joining the Club



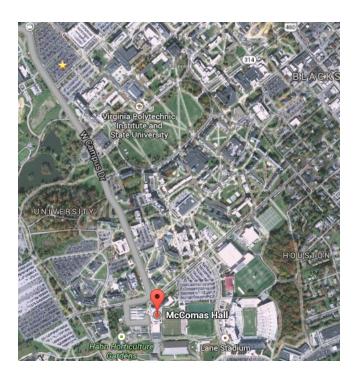
 If you wish to first attend a demonstration, determine the date, time, and location of the next session by viewing the club schedule at <a href="http://www.fencing.org.vt.edu/index.php?section=schedule">http://www.fencing.org.vt.edu/index.php?section=schedule</a> during the beginning of the semester.



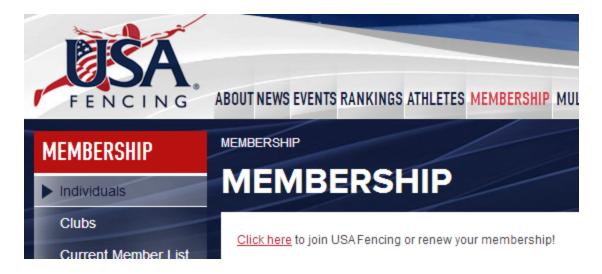
2. If you have no prior fencing experience, attend beginner lessons, the schedule for which can also be found at the above url. The lessons will continue for six weeks, and take place in War Memorial Hall from 7:30-8:30pm Mondays and Wednesdays. The location of War Memorial Hall in relation to the drillfield can be seen in the photo below, marked with a red pin.



3. Pay dues to the club. The monetary amount will be specified during lessons, and will only be paid if the student wishes to continue attending practices and club functions after the conclusion of beginner lessons. Dues will be paid to the Recreational Sports Office in McComas hall, the location of which can be seen below.



4. Optional Step: If you wish to attend USAF sanctioned tournaments, you must obtain a USAF membership. Visit <a href="http://www.usfencing.org/page/show/698114-membership">http://www.usfencing.org/page/show/698114-membership</a> to learn more about types of memberships and costs.



5. Attend practices and continue to hone your fencing skills as a member of the Virginia Tech Fencing Club.