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Updated: Feb. 14, 2006, 6:31 AM ET

Duke to monitor apparel factory conditions

Associated Press

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DURHAM, N.C. -- Duke University will cut the number of factories that manufacture the school's licensed apparel to better monitor working conditions in the plants.

The decision, announced by university officials Monday, came after a request last fall by sweatshop opponents, Duke executive vice president Tallman Trask III said.

The school will "require that 25 percent of Duke production be moved to a smaller number of designated factories that meet all of our requirements, and which can be more closely monitored," Trask said in a news release.

Factories making licensed Duke logo gear are already required to pay a living wage, allow workers to form a group representing their interests to managers, and sell the majority of their products to university licensees or other buyers willing to meet the same standards.

Licensees are required to pay the factories prices high enough to make it possible to meet the standards and allow the Worker Rights Consortium to verify conditions inside the plants.

Duke's licensing director Jim Wilkerson is chairman of the board of the WRC, a nonprofit organization that keeps affiliated colleges informed about conditions in the factories that produce products bearing their names and logos. Duke has required factory disclosure since 1999.

<http://sports.espn.go.com/ncaa/news/story?id=2330077>

