

# Student Educational Records / FERPA

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The college maintains the position that students' records are their own property; therefore, this information, with certain exceptions defined below, is released only when a student signs a Student Information Release Authorization form in the Student Records Office. Students may have copies of their transcripts sent to any institutions or individuals they choose and may also order copies for their own use. A \$5 fee is required for each official transcript requested. Transcripts are not released if the student owes money to the college. Transcripts may be ordered online through a student's MyCollege account, in person at the Student Records Office on Central Campus or at the 'Welcome Desk' at the Levine or Merancas campuses.

## Policies and Procedures

The college policy on access to and release of student information is available to students, faculty, and staff. It is available in the online Student Handbook and in this catalog. For more information, go to 4.02 Student Records (Transcripts)

## Annual Notice to Students of Their Rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

Central Piedmont, in fulfilling its responsibilities to students, must maintain accurate and confidential student records. The college staff recognizes the rights of students to have access to their academic and personal records in accordance with existing College policy and FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Buckley Amendment).

## Definition of Term "Educational Records"

Educational records, as defined under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, include files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to students and which are maintained by an educational institution or by an authority on behalf of the institution. The term "educational record," under the provisions of the law, does not include the following:

- a. Records of institutional, supervisory, and administrative personnel which are the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute for the above-named personnel
  - b. Records and documents of Security Officers of the institution which are kept apart from such educational records
  - c. Records on students which are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in their official capacity and which are made, maintained, or used only in connection with a provision for treatment for the student and are not available to anyone other than the persons providing such treatment, except that such records can be personally reviewed by a physician or other appropriate professional of a given student's choice
  - d. Financial records of the parents of the students or other information therein contained
- e. Confidential recommendations if a given student has signed a waiver of the student's rights of access, provided such a waiver may not be required of the student
  - f. Confidential letters or statements of recommendation which were placed in educational records prior to January 1, 1975, if such records or statements are not used for purposes other than those for which they were specifically intended
  - g. Medical records, physical examination results, reasonable accommodation request forms, or other medical information are required to be kept apart from general educational records and treated as confidential in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act

## Control Provisions on Student Records and Student Information

- a. Transcripts and other educational records information are released only with the written permission of the student. When information other than the transcript is released from the student's official record (Student Records Office), the student will receive a copy of the release.
- b. Students have the right to inspect their own records whether recorded in hard copy form or recorded in the form of magnetic disks and microfilm. Upon inspection, students are entitled to an explanation of any information contained in their records.
- c. The official student file will not be sent outside the Counseling Office, Student Records Office, Admissions Office, Registration Office, Graduation Office, Financial Aid Office, Military Families & Veterans Services Office, or other custodial offices except in circumstances specifically authorized by the Senior Registrar. The authorization for such special circumstances must be in writing.
- d. All medical records, physical examination results, reasonable accommodation request forms, or other medical information must be collected on separate forms, maintained in separate medical files kept apart from a student's general educational records, and treated as confidential. Disclosure of such information may only be made at the express, written consent of the student to the following:
  - i. Administrators, deans, associate deans, and others involved in a request for a reasonable accommodation or evaluation of qualifications for or performance in a course, program, service, or activity
  - ii. Deans, associate deans, and instructors for purposes of implementing and enforcing necessary restrictions and accommodations
  - iii. First aid and safety personnel if a known disability may require emergency treatment

## Release of Student Educational Records

- a. Requests for protected information shall not be honored without proper written consent by the student via a Student Information Release Authorization Form for the release of such records except under conditions indicated in paragraphs 2 and 5 below.
  - i. The written consent must specify the records or the specific data to be released, to whom they are to be released, and the reasons for release.
  - ii. Each request for consent must be specific and each request must be handled separately.
- b. Request for confidential information will be honored without the prior consent of the student in connection with an emergency if the

knowledge of such information by appropriate persons is necessary (in view of a reasonable College Policies and Procedures person) to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons. However, such a release shall have the approval of a Cabinet Officer unless it can be shown that, under the circumstances, time would not permit or that no Cabinet Officer was available.

made correctly. If the student's request is denied, the student will be permitted to append a statement to the record in question, showing the basis for the disagreement with the denial. Such additions will become a permanent part of the record.

- c. The following "Directory Information" may be made available to the public by the college unless students notify the Senior Registrar in writing, by the third week of the semester, that such information concerning themselves is not to be made available:
  - i. Student's name and hometown
  - ii. Major field of study or program
  - iii. Dates of attendance, degrees, diplomas, or awards
- d. Information other than "Directory Information": Any release of student information for public use or use by the media, except that designated above (paragraph 3), must have prior written approval by the students involved.
- e. Disclosure to Government Agencies: Properly identified and authorized representatives of, or bona fide written requests from, the Comptroller General of the United States, the Department of Education, the Attorney General of the United States, as well as state and local educational authorities may have access to student or other records in connection with the audit and evaluation of federal or state-supported educational programs, in connection with the enforcement of federal or legal requirements related to such programs or for the purpose of military recruiting (Solomon Amendment). Routine requests for student data from such agencies as DEO, OEO, research agencies and state reporting agencies may be honored without prior approval of the student only in formats where students are not identified.
- f. Faculty and administrative officers of the college who demonstrate a legitimate educational need will be permitted to view student data for a particular student.
- g. Confidential information requested by other than federal or state agencies, as specified in paragraph 5 above, will be released only under the following conditions:
  - i. An official order of a court of competent jurisdiction
  - ii. Subpoena (Students will be notified immediately by registered mail that their records are being subpoenaed.)

## **Students' Rights to Question Content of Their Official Student Files**

- a. Students have the right to review their official records maintained by the college. Furthermore, students may question any inaccurate or misleading information and request correction or deletion of such data from their files.
- b. All such requests will be sent to the Senior Registrar and will become a part of that student's file.
- c. All requests for the correction of a student file will be acted upon within 45 workdays of receipt of the request. If the custodian can verify that such data are, in fact, in error, appropriate corrections will be made and the student will be notified in writing when the correction has been completed. If an error cannot be readily substantiated, the request will be referred to an Ad Hoc Hearing Committee appointed by the Vice President for Student Affairs. After a student has had the opportunity to present the case to the hearing committee, the committee will render a decision in writing stating the reasons for its decision. If the decision is in agreement with the student's request, the student will be permitted to review the file to verify that the change has been