

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

Policy on Student Records in Accordance with FERPA

I. Student Rights

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to the student's educational records*. For purposes of this policy, whenever a student has attained 18 years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education, the permission or consent required of and the rights accorded to the parents of the student shall thereafter only be required of and accorded to the student. These rights include:

1. *The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access.*

Students should submit to the registrar, VP, head of the academic department or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the records(s) they wish to inspect. The College official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the College official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the parent/eligible student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. *The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading.*

Students may ask the College to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. The student should write the college official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record to be changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the College decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the college will notify the student of the decision and advice of the right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. *The right to consent to or withhold disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.*

Exceptions which permit disclosure without consent include disclosure to school officials or individuals with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the college has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

4. *The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Seward County Community College to comply with the requirements of FERPA.*

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

600 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202-4605

*Educational records include but are not limited to all official records, files, and data directly related to the student, including all material that is incorporated into each student's cumulative record folder, and intended for college use or to be available to parties outside the college or school system; identifying data, academic work completed, level of achievement (grades, standardized achievement test scores, etc.), attendance data, scores on intelligence tests, aptitude tests, psychological tests, interest inventory results, health data, disability and accommodation information, family background information, teacher or counselor ratings and observations, and verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns are all forms of student information that are recorded with, but not limited to, handwriting, print, computer media, video or audio tape, film microfilm, and microfiche.

II. Directory Information

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Seward County Community College considers the following as "Directory Information" and thereby subject to disclosure without consent, unless the eligible student notifies the Student Privacy Officer (VP of Student Services), in writing within 10 days of the beginning of each semester, of their wish to withhold release of said information:

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email address
- Date and place of birth

- Major Field of study
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight/height of members of athletic teams
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees and awards received
- Most recent previous educational institution attended

III. Guidelines for the Release of Student Information

Seward County Community College will adhere to the following guidelines in releasing records of students:

Official records are released only with the student's knowledge and written consent (exceptions are listed below) in compliance with FERPA regulations. The written consent must specify the records that may be disclosed; state the purpose of the disclosure; and identify the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure may be made. Students are entitled to an official transcript of academic records upon signed written request and payment of a transcript fee.

Records may be released without the student's knowledge and consent in the following situations:

- To school officials, including instructors, within the College who have been determined by the College to have legitimate educational interests;
- To officials of schools at which the student intends to enroll, upon condition that the parent/eligible student receive a copy of the record if desired, and have an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of the record;
- To authorized representatives of (i) the Comptroller General of the United States, (ii) the Secretary of the United States Department of Education, (iii) the State educational authority, which may be necessary in connection with the evaluation of Federally-supported education programs, or in connection with the enforcement of the Federal legal requirements which relate to such programs, or (iv) the Attorney General of the United States for law enforcement purposes;
- In connection with a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid;
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom such information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed pursuant to State statute;
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions for the purposes of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, and improving instruction, if such studies are conducted in such a manner as will not permit the personal identification of students and their parents by persons other than representatives of such organizations, and such information will be destroyed when no longer needed for purposes for which said records are obtained;
- To accrediting organizations in order to carry out their accrediting functions;
- To parents of a dependent student of such parents, as defined in the Internal Revenue Code;
- In connection with an emergency, to appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons;
- To comply with a judicial order or other lawfully issued subpoenas for law enforcement purposes; and
- Directory information unless the student notifies the Registrars Office in writing within ten (10) days of the beginning of each semester of his or her wish to withhold release of said information.

Release to non-educational agencies or individuals will be conducted only with written authorization from the parent/eligible student. Records requested in connection with employment situations should be specifically designated in writing in the Registrar's Office. Telephone inquiries for student information will not be accommodated; however, urgent requests based upon an apparent emergency will be handled by the Student Privacy Officer (VP of Student Services) or designee.

The College is not required to permit a student to inspect and review educational records that are financial records of his or her parents; certain confidential letters and confidential statements of recommendation are also not required to be available for review by parents/eligible students.

Inquiries concerning the Seward County Community College FERPA Policy should be made to the VP of Student Services or to the VP of Finance & Operations.