

FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

I. Policy Section

8.0 Students

II. Policy Subsection

8.6 Privacy and Access to Student Records

III. Date of most recent changes

April 19, 2006

IV. Policy Statement

1. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 provides that educational institutions must provide a student access to his/her official records when the student requests access and an opportunity to challenge such records on grounds that they are inaccurate, misleading or otherwise inappropriate; that institutions must obtain written consent from student before releasing personally identifiable data about that student from record to other than a specified list of exceptions; and provides that the U. S. Department of Education investigates complaints of alleged violations of the Act. Certain records are not available for inspection. These include financial records of parents; confidential records of educational personnel (i.e., instructor's grade book).
2. In the absence of an official request, information contained in a student's record remains confidential between the student and Grand Rapids Community College and will not be released to a third party without the consent of the student with the following exceptions: Information for school directory, information requested by administrative officials at the College, certain information requested by officials of other colleges to which the student is seeking admission, certain information requested by accrediting organizations, and certain information requested by parents of dependent students as approved by the Registrar.
3. Any information released to a third party shall contain a statement informing the party of the requirement that the information provided may not be released without the written consent of the student.

Directory Information

The College may release to other educational institutions directory information.

Directory Information as defined by this College includes:

- Name, address, telephone listing, email address
- Student status: part-time/full-time; freshman/sophomore
- Major field of study

- Weight and height of athletes
- Most recent previous school attended
- Photographs
- Date and place of birth
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Dates of attendance, degrees, date of graduation and awards

Directory Information does not include student identifiable numbers, Social Security numbers or other personally identifiable information.

Students who do not wish this information released must fill out the Directory Information Stop Form at the Student Records/Office of the Registrar.

V. Reason for Policy

To comply with Federal Law.

VI. Entities Affected by This Policy

All public education institutions

VII. Who Should Read This Policy

All College staff and students

VIII. Related Documents

College Catalog, Student Handbook, GRCC Website

<http://www.ed.gov>

<http://www.macrao.org/FERPA.htm>

<http://www.aacrao.org/compliance/solomon/index.cfm>

IX. Contacts

Registrar, Student Records/Office of the Registrar

X. Definitions

School Official: A person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, 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, service provider, or collection agency); 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.

Legitimate Educational Interest: A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. The Registrar will resolve any questions

regarding legitimate educational interest with the Provost/Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs.

XI. Procedures

All College employees are expected to review and understand the online FERPA training materials hosted at <http://www.grcc.edu/FERPA>. Student privacy shall be protected by validation of the individual prior to releasing educational records. This may be done in person with photo identification, by asking comprehensive questions over the phone, or by a signed release. When in doubt about a procedure, employees are expected to contact the Registrar for clarification or assistance. All subpoenas related to student records are to be hand delivered to the Office of the Registrar in a timely fashion.

All educational records are to be kept secure. Disposed records should be shredded and electronic records fully purged. Electronic records should be stored **behind a secure firewall** on a network drive.

Enforcement of Policy

See College Catalog for student procedures under Notification to Students of Rights under FERPA.

Any violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including, discharge from employment. Additionally, violators of this policy may also be subject to civil or criminal sanctions as provided for by law.

XI. Forms

Directory Information Stop Form