

PENSACOLA STATE COLLEGE
POLICIES OF THE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Policy Title:	Student Records and Reports	<u>Number</u> 6Hx20-3.002
Legal Authority:	s. 1001.64, Fla. Stat.	<u>Page</u>
Law Implemented:	s. 1006.52, Fla. Stat.	Page 1 of 8

I. Federal Student Records Law

Annually, Pensacola State College informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA" or the "Act") of 1974 (20 U.S.C. 1232g and 34 C.F.R., 99.1-99.67). This Act, with which the institution endeavors to fully comply, was designed to protect the privacy of educational records, and to establish the right of students to inspect and review their non-privileged educational records. The Act also provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Students have the right to file complaints with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, concerning alleged failures by the institution to comply with the Act. An informal complaint may be filed within the institution by contacting the Office of the Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs. This College policy statement explains in detail the procedures to be used by the institution for compliance with the provisions of the Act. Questions concerning the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may be referred to the Office of the Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs, or the Office of the Registrar

II. Definitions

- A. A student is any person who attends or has attended the College.
- B. Education records are any records (on paper, in handwriting, print, tapes, film, electronic data, computer, or other medium) maintained by the College or an agent of the College which are directly related to a student except:
 - 1. A personal record kept by a faculty or staff member, if it is kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record, is not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record and is not used for purposes other than a memory or reference tool.
 - 2. Records created and maintained by the College Department of Public Safety for law enforcement purposes.
 - 3. An employment record of an individual whose employment is not contingent on the fact that he or she is a student.
 - 4. Alumni records which contain information about a student after he or she is no longer in attendance at the College and which do not relate to the person as a student.

III. The student records maintained by the College are classified as follows:

- A. Official academic records are maintained in the Office of the Registrar. They include admission applications, official transcripts, graduation applications, residency statements, equivalency diplomas or score reports (GED), correspondence with students, credit by exam documentation, grade changes, official transcripts of national test scores, the records of grades and credits received in courses at the College or accepted by the College from another institution, and other documents directly relating to academic progress and status.
- B. Disciplinary records related to violations of the Student Code of Conduct are maintained under the authority of the Dean of Students and Equal Opportunity Compliance. They include information about the investigation, adjudication, and imposition of sanctions by the College against a student for breach of the College's Student Code of Conduct or other written policies.
- C. Financial records are maintained by the Office of Student Financial Services. Financial aid application records, including tax forms, are maintained by the Office of Financial Aid and Veteran and Military Service Center.
- D. Employment records of students receiving financial aid consist of work study authorizations and are maintained by the Financial Aid Office. Non-work-study employment records of students are maintained by the Office of Human Resources.
- E. Medical records are maintained by the Student Resource Center for ADA Services for students who have disclosed a disability and have provided the College with appropriate documentation. This documentation may include medical, learning, or psychiatric evaluations. All documentation provided to the Student Resource Center for ADA Services will remain strictly confidential. No information, except as provided by law, will be released to anyone, including parents, without the student's written consent.
- F. Employment records of students who are College employees but whose employment is not related to their academic status and not a part of student financial aid are maintained by the Office of Human Resources, but are not directly affected by the provision of these guidelines.
- G. Electronic student educational records maintained on the College's Learning course system are fully covered by this policy. Users of the system are considered custodians of those student records to which they have access. Records should not be accessed by the user unless a legitimate educational interest exists or some other provision of the policy authorizing release applies.

IV. Student Access to Records

- A. Access. Students who are attending or have attended the College are to be accorded the rights of access to their records as specified by the Act with the exception of:
 - 1. Financial records of the parents of the student.

2. Confidential letters of evaluation which have been placed in the records before January 1, 1975. Beginning January 1, 1975, the law allows the student to waive his or her rights of access if the letters have to do with admission, employment, or honors, if the letters are used only for those purposes, and the student is told, on his or her request, the names of all letter writers. When confidential recommendations are collected in cases where the student has waived his or her access, the confidential statements (only) of such recommendations should be destroyed as soon as they are used for the purpose for which they were specifically intended.
- B. Limitations on Access. The College shall provide a “Student Consent to Release Educational Records Form” for use when a student waives his or her right of access to confidential recommendations respecting admission to an institution, application for employment, or the receipt of an honor or honorary recognition. The student will be given the opportunity to sign the “Student Consent to Release Educational Records Form” only as the need for confidential recommendations arises.
- C. Procedures for Granting Access. The custodians of records are authorized to establish definite procedures for granting a student access to his or her record. Such procedures will be clearly described in appropriate College publications.
 1. Student inspection of records is granted only upon written request, presented in person with appropriate photo identification, and must be made in the presence of designated personnel of the office maintaining the records. All requests shall be granted as soon as practicable, but in no event later than 45 days after the date of request. No documents or files may be altered or removed once a request has been filed.
 2. A student may receive a copy of any and all records to which he or she has lawful access. .

V. Release of Information

The College will disclose “Directory Information” from a student’s education records unless a confidential hold has been placed upon release of the information by the student. The College will disclose information from a student’s educational records only with the written consent of the student. Records may be disclosed without consent when the disclosure is:

- A. To school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the records.
 1. A school official is:
 - a. A person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position, including health or medical staff.
 - b. A person serving on the College’s Board of Trustees.

- c. A person or entity employed by or under contract to the College to perform a special task, such as an attorney, auditor, or direct support organization (e.g. the Pensacola State College Foundation).
 - d. A student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or who is assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.
 - 2. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:
 - a. Performing a task that is specified in his or her job description or contract agreement.
 - b. Performing a task related to a student's education.
 - c. Performing a task related to the discipline of a student.
 - d. Providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.
 - e. Maintaining the safety and security of the campus.
- B. To officials of another school, upon request, in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. The student shall receive notification of the disclosure unless the student initiated the disclosure.
- C. Subject to the conditions set forth in 34 CFR 99.35, authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, authorized representatives of the attorney general for law enforcement purposes (investigation or enforcement of federal legal requirements of federally supported education programs), or state and local educational authorities.
- D. School officials or lending institutions, in connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to:
 - 1. determine eligibility for the aid;
 - 2. determine the amount of the aid;
 - 3. determine the conditions for the aid; or
 - 4. enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- E. State and local officials or authorities to which such information is specifically required to be reported or disclosed pursuant to state statute.
- F. Organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions for the purpose 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 the purpose for which it is conducted.
- G. Accrediting organizations in order to carry out their accrediting functions.

- H. Parents of a dependent student, as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. The parent may be asked to provide a copy of the most recent federal income tax return establishing the student's dependency. Full rights under the Act shall be given to either parent, unless the institution has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, state statute, or legally binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation, or custody that specifically revokes those rights. The College does not have an obligation to disclose any financial information about one parent to another. If a parent claims a student as a dependent and does not want his or her financial information disclosed to his or her spouse or former spouse, the parent may make that request to the institution.
- I. In connection with an emergency, appropriate persons if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or others.
- J. To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided the College makes a reasonable effort to notify the student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance. Notification may be prohibited if the College receives a federal grand jury subpoena or any other subpoena that states that the student should not be notified. The General Counsel shall be consulted prior to the release of the record. See below for further details on the College's policy in dealing with subpoenas.
- K. To Veterans Administration Officials pursuant to 38 USC 3690(c).
- L. Information the College has designated as "directory information," unless a hold has been placed upon release of the information by the student.
 - 1. The following data is considered to be Directory Information and may be given to an inquirer, either in person, by mail, or by telephone, and may be otherwise made public:
 - a. name of student;
 - b. whether or not the student is currently enrolled;
 - c. dates of registered attendance;
 - d. major field of study;
 - e. degrees earned, including dates of award and fields of concentration;
 - f. honors received;
 - g. participation in officially recognized activities and sports; and
 - h. weight and height of members of the athletic team.If the inquiry is made in person, by email, or by mail, a student's date of birth and signature may be confirmed.
 - 2. This information may be made available and communicated to presently enrolled students through College publications. A current or former student may make a formal request that such Directory Information not be disclosed by submitting to the Office of the Registrar a completed Request for Confidential Status of Directory Information form available in any registration office.

- M. To the court, those records are necessary to defend the institution when a student initiates legal action against the institution.

Personal information shall be transferred to a third party only on the condition that such a party will not permit any other party to have access to such information without the written consent of the student. In all instances where written consent is required, written consent must specify the records that may be disclosed, state the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the parties or class of parties to whom disclosure may be made.

VI. Challenge Hearings

- A. If, upon inspection and review of his or her record, the student believes that the record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of his or her privacy rights, he or she may ask that the record be changed or may insert a statement in the file. Any disagreement should be resolved informally, if possible.
- B. The Registrar, upon consultation with the appropriate College officials, may authorize a correction in a record within the academic file of a student. Similar responsibility is exercised by the Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs, the Dean of Students and Equal Opportunity Compliance, the Director of Financial Aid/Veteran Services, the respective Academic Dean, and the Office of Human Resources.
- C. Should the request for a change be denied, the student will be notified of the College's decision and advised of the right to a hearing to challenge the information believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's privacy rights. The student has 30 days to appeal the decision to the Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs, and request a hearing. On behalf of the president of the College, the Vice President, Academic and Student Affairs shall refer the appeal to an appointed committee. The committee will include one officer of administration other than the one who has denied the request, two faculty members, and two students. The College will notify the student, reasonably in advance, of the date, place, and time of the hearing. The student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised in the original request to amend the student's education records. The student may be assisted by one or more individuals, including an attorney. The College will prepare a written decision based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing. The decision will include a summary of the evidence presented and the reasons for the decision. The decision of the hearing committee shall be final.
- D. If the College decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy, it will amend the record and notify the student, in writing, that the record has been amended. The challenge to be considered in such a hearing may extend only to the material in the respective College file; it may extend to the correct recording of a grade, but not to the appropriateness of the grade. If the College decides that the challenged information is not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's right of privacy, it will notify the student of the right to

place in the record a statement commenting on the challenged information and a statement setting forth reasons for disagreeing with the decision. Such a statement shall become a part of the educational record and will be disclosed with it.

VII. Addition to Records

- A. No entry may be made to a student's official records and no document or entry may be placed in such records without written notice to the student by the responsible administrative officials mentioned above.
- B. Notification of grades, written communication to a student of school or departmental evaluation, and announcement of honors, however, constitute adequate notice. A document or entry supplied by or at the request of the student may be placed in the student's record without additional notice to the student. In the case of student records maintained in departmental offices, additions other than those mentioned in the preceding paragraph require the permission of the College Registrar, who is responsible for notification of the student.

VIII. Record-keeping Requirements

The College will maintain a record of requests for and/or disclosures of information from a student's education records. The record will indicate the name of the party making the request and what records, if any, were released, the legitimate interest in the records, any additional party to whom it may be re-disclosed, and the legitimate interest the additional party had in requesting or obtaining the information. The record may be reviewed by the student. This recordkeeping is not required if the request was from, or the disclosure was to:

- A. the student;
- B. a school official determined to have a legitimate educational interest;
- C. a party with written consent from the student;
- D. a party seeking directory information; or
- E. a federal grand jury or law enforcement agency pursuant to a subpoena that by its terms requires nondisclosure.

IX. Destruction of Academic Records

The College has established, in accordance with the guidelines of the Florida Public Records Act (Chapter 119, Florida Statutes), standard "life spans" for the different types of student records maintained. Additionally, paper copies of documents may be converted to digital records at any time, whereupon the paper original shall be destroyed and the digital image shall thereafter be deemed the official record for all purposes by the College.

- A. The following documents pertaining to student information will be maintained permanently by the Office of the Registrar:
1. Most recent application;
 2. The College academic record (standardized transcript);
 3. Transcripts (includes transient form(s), academic credits earned by non-traditional means, high school transcripts and transcript evaluations, dual enrollment and early admission forms);
 4. Residency statements;
 5. Attendance records, which are maintained electronically;
 6. Instructors' final grade reports, which are maintained electronically; and
 7. Withdrawal form(s) and supporting documents.
- B. The following documents pertaining to student information are maintained for a "life span" of three years and then destroyed:
1. Grade change forms;
 2. Graduation applications and supporting documents; and
 3. Transcript requests.
- C. Once a student reaches the age of eighteen (18) or is enrolled in a postsecondary program, parents no longer have any rights under the FERPA unless (1) the student gives written consent to release the information to the student's parents, or (2) the parents provide evidence that the student is a dependent of the parents as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

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President's Signature:

Date: 11/18/2025

