Parents’ Guide to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: Rights Regarding Student’s Educational Records

South Carolina State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. South Carolina State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at South Carolina State University. Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, South Carolina State University, 300 College Street, Northeast, Orangeburg, South Carolina 29117-0001, Telephone: (803) 536-7000.

Whom should I contact with questions or concerns with FERPA?

Direct all general questions and concerns to the Registrar’s Office/Veterans Affairs or the Office of Student Affairs.

The Registrar’s Office/Veterans Affairs
Post Office Box 8104
300 College St, Northeast
Orangeburg, SC 29117

Phone: 803-536-8406
Fax: 803-536-8602
E-mail: registrar@scsu.edu

The Office of Student Affairs
Post Office Box 7574
300 College St, Northeast
Orangeburg, SC 29117

Phone: 803-536-8190
Fax: 803-516-4706

Note: Directory information is released at the discretion of the University.
What is FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act is a federal privacy law that gives students certain protections with regard to their education records, such as grades, transcripts, disciplinary records, contact and family information, and class schedules.

To protect the student’s privacy, the law requires schools to ask for a written consent before disclosing personally identifiable information to individuals other than the student.

Why is FERPA important?

If you’re a student, it’s important for you to understand your rights under FERPA. If you’re a parent, you’ll need to understand that the rights to educational records are transferred from the parent to the child once student enters a post-secondary institution.

What are the student’s rights under FERPA?

1. FERPA gives students four basic rights with respect to their education record:
   - The right to control disclosure of their education record
   - The right to review their education record
   - The right to request amendment of inaccurate or misleading portions of their education record

2. The right to file a complaint regarding non-compliance of FERPA with the Family Policy Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education

Does FERPA give me a right to see the education records of my son or daughter who is in college?

Under FERPA, once a student turns eighteen or attends any postsecondary educational institution (including enrolled students under the age of 18), access to academic or financial records are transferred from the parent/legal guardian to the student. Records may be released to parents only if one of the following conditions has been met:

1. Through the written consent of the student, a Release of Student Information form may be obtained from the Registrar’s Office/Veterans Affairs that requires the signature of the student and parent and must be filled out in the Registrar’s Office/Veterans Affairs. This form remains on file and in effect for one full year from the date of receipt. An update to this release form must be made in person by the student and parent. Written notification to rescind this release must be signed by the student and notarized.

2. In compliance with a subpoena

3. By submission of evidence that the parent(s) declared the student as a dependent on their most recent federal income tax form and at the discretion of the institution

Release of Student Forms can also be accessed via the web at: http://www.scsu.edu/admissions/registrar/forms.aspx or in Moss Hall 204

What is Non-Directory Information?

A. Non-Directory Information is considered confidential by FERPA and cannot be released without the student’s consent. Non-Directory Information includes:
   - Education records
   - Enrollment records
   - Student work (exams, papers, reports, projects, etc.)
   - Grades
   - Class schedules
   - Disciplinary files
   - Financial aid information
   - Student employment records
   - Academic Progress

What is "Directory Information"?

Under FERPA, a higher education institution may define some education record information as “directory information” and not confidential under FERPA. South Carolina State University has defined directory information as follows:
   - Student’s name
   - Participation in officially recognized activities and sports