

PROCEDURE

Number: 8.6.9.1
Related Policy: 8.6.9
Title: Confidentiality of Student Records
Responsibility: Registrar

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President

Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) personnel will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), to protect the privacy of student education records.

I. General

All records pertaining to students that are maintained by departments are official Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) records, and as such, remain the property of the College. Students have the right to review this record of requests and disclosures of student record information. FERPA applies to: Employees, students, contractual agents of the institution, parents of dependent students, and individuals requesting access to student information.

For the purpose of this procedure, student is defined as a person who can be categorized as one of the following:

- Admitted to the college.
- Registered for a current or future term.
- Registered for any prior term.

II. Annual Notice

The Registrar provides students with the annual notice of rights with respect to their education records within the Academic Catalog, and College website within the Current Students and Workforce Development pages.

III. Right to Inspect and Review

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's records. These rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of eighteen or attends a school beyond the high school level to include both credit and workforce development courses.

Students are granted the right to inspect and review their education records, except the following:
1. Financial records of parents. 2. Confidential letters and statements of recommendations for admission, employment, or honorary recognition placed in education records.

IV. Right to Challenge Information in the Education Records

Students have a right to challenge the content of their education records if they consider the information contained therein to be inaccurate, misleading, or inappropriate. This process includes an opportunity for amendment of the education records or insertion of written explanations by the student into such records. The right to challenge grades does not apply under FERPA unless the grade assigned was inaccurately recorded, under which condition the record will be corrected. The request to challenge must be filed as a complaint in the Office of Student Affairs.

V. Release Without Consent

The College may release the following information without obtaining consent:

- A. Requests from faculty and staff of HGTC who have a legitimate educational interest on a "need to know" basis, including student employees or contractual agents of the institution, if necessary to conduct official business, as authorized by the Registrar. Legitimate educational interest includes performing a task related to the regular duties of the employee or contractual agent, the student's education, the discipline of a student, a service or benefit for the student, or maintaining safety and security of the campus.
- B. Requests from other schools to which a student is transferring.
- C. Requests in compliance with a lawful subpoena or judicial order.
- D. Requests in connection with a student's application for or receipt of financial aid.
- E. Requests by parents or legal guardians of a dependent student.
- F. In the case of emergencies, the university may release information from education records to appropriate persons in connection with an emergency, if the knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other persons.
- G. The results of any disciplinary proceeding conducted by the college against an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence to the alleged victim of that crime.
- H. Requests by state authorities and agencies specifically exempted from the prior consent requirements by FERPA.
- I. To authorized federal officials who have need to audit and evaluate federally-supported programs.

- J. Information submitted to accrediting organizations
- K. Organizations conducting studies on behalf on the college, if such studies do not permit the personal identification of students to any persons other than to representatives of such organizations and if the personal identification data is destroyed when no longer needed.
- L. Requests for directory information (see Directory Information)

VI. Directory Information

- A. FERPA requires the College to designate which information about students will be considered directory information. Directory information may be published and/or released without consent.
- B. Horry-Georgetown Technical College has designated the following information about students as public (directory) information:
 - 1. Name
 - 2. Permanent address
 - 3. Official college email address
 - 4. Home telephone
 - 5. Program of study
 - 6. Enrollment status (e.g., full-time, part-time, withdrawn)
 - 7. Dates of attendance
 - 8. Graduation status
 - 9. Names of honors awarded (e.g., Latin honors, dean's list, president's list)
 - 10. Previous educational agencies or institutions attended
 - 11. Participation in officially recognized activities

VII. Accountability

- A. Students have the right to have their directory information withheld from the public if they so desire. Each student who wants all directory information to be withheld must notify the Registrar in writing or submit changes in the College portal within the Confidentiality Preferences section.
- B. It is the responsibility of all faculty, staff, student employees, students, and contractual agents of the College to be informed of and follow the requirements under FERPA to protect student information.

- C. Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including and not limited to termination of employment and/or potential criminal prosecution under applicable federal, state, and local laws.
- D. Students who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action under the Code of Student Conduct and/or potential criminal prosecution under applicable federal, state, and local laws.
- E. Other individuals and entities to whom this policy applies who violate this policy are subject to appropriate sanctions, including and not limited to termination of the relationship and/or potential criminal prosecution under applicable federal, state, and local laws.

VIII. Student Inspection and Review of Education Records

- A. Students requests to review education records must be made separately, in writing, to each unit maintaining records. Each unit must respond to requests to review and inspect as soon as possible and no later than 45 days.
- B. Information contained in education records will be fully explained and interpret to students by college personnel assigned.
- C. Students have the right to review only their own education records. When a record contains information about more than one student, disclosure cannot include information regarding the other student(s).

IX. Challenge, Complaints, Concerns, or Suggestions

Any student, who has reason to believe that the College is not complying with FERPA or this policy, should go through the formal complaint process with the Office of Student Affairs.

X. Training

All employees, upon hire will be provided with FERPA training based on their role. Additional information and training may be requested by contacting the Registrar.

XI. Custodian of Student Education Records

Horry-Georgetown Technical College does not maintain education records in one central office. All college personnel who handle records are obligated to safeguard these records. Please refer to the HGTC [Policy 8.6.10](#) and [Procedure 8.6.10.1](#) concerning Academic Records Management and Security.