

02.09 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) – Buckley Amendment

Original Approval: **DATE**

Last Updated: **DATE**

Last Reviewed: **DATE**

Policy/Purpose:

Wallace Community College – Selma (WCCS) upholds the Federal law, The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA), giving students the right to inspect, review, and amend their educational records. WCCS students are permitted to inspect their own educational records. In addition, the College will not release or disclose information or allow inspection of records without prior written permission from the student, unless, by law, prior consent is not required under certain circumstances. Students also have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA applies to all educational records directly related to a student and maintained by the College or by a party (faculty, staff, administrator, etc.) acting on behalf of the College. At WCCS, the official transcript is used as the typical educational record.

Scope:

This policy applies to all WCCS students and employees during any activity involving the College, including the workday. In addition, visitors, vendors, contractors, and all other non-employees are expected to recognize and comply with College policies.

FERPA applies to faculty and staff in a variety of situations, such as posting of grades, inquiries from parents or spouses, internal requests for information (from one faculty/staff member to another), subpoenas and summons, emergency situations, recommendations and/or letters of reference, and release of transcripts.

Definitions:

College Official: A person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, support staff, or an outside contractor (e.g., health or medical professional, attorney, auditor) acting as an agent for the College or the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) or a student employed in the College work study/student worker program.

Educational Data or Education Records: Any data in any form directly relating to an individual student maintained by the College or by a person acting for the institution.

Eligible Parent: A parent or guardian providing documentation that supports the student is a legal dependent for tax purposes, or provides a signed release as designated by official documentation.

Student: An individual currently or formerly enrolled or registered or individuals who receive shared time educational services from a public agency or institution. All students at the College have the same rights regarding their educational data regardless of age.

Student Records: Student records include any and all records, in any medium, formally maintained by the College that is directly related to a student.

Details:

1. **Requests for Student Record Information:** Any request for student record information or questions related to FERPA guidelines must be directed to the Admissions Office. Information requests regarding student employees must be directed to the Human Resources Office (human.resources@wccs.edu). Only the following information may be made public and released from the Admissions Office (334) 876-9295. (admissions.records@wccs.edu):
 - Student's full name;
 - Affirmation of the student's enrollment (full-time or part-time) and class level. The student's class schedule may not be released;
 - Dates of attendance, graduation, degree(s) or certificate(s) earned, and honors received;
 - Pertinent information relating to participation in officially recognized activities and sports (e.g., debate tournaments, basketball games, etc.).
2. **Annual Notification of FERPA Rights:** Annually, WCCS informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. This Act, with which the institution fully complies, was designed to protect the privacy of education records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Also, students have the right to file complaints with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office (FERPA) concerning alleged failures by the institution to comply with the Act. Questions concerning the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act may be referred to the office of the Registrar.
3. **Violation of Drug and Alcohol Policies:** In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, students under the age of 21 who commit a violation of drug and alcohol policies and laws may have such violation(s) reported to their parents/guardians.
4. **References or Recommendations:** Because of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html> and the potential effects of any future amendments on traditionally confidential documents, employees will use prudence in writing references, recommendations, evaluations, and other documents which contain subjective judgments about individual students. Such documents in the future may not be considered confidential parts of a student's record.
5. **Local Policy:** Local policy explains in detail the procedures to be used by the institution for compliance with the provisions of FERPA. Copies of the policy are available to students in the Admissions Office. Also refer to the Student Records Policy. Questions concerning the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act may be referred to the Admissions Office.

Procedure(s):

1. If an employee receives any request for student information and has questions or concerns, they should contact the Admissions Office at (334) 876-9295 or admissions.records@wccs.edu.

Additional Provisions/Information

There are no additional provisions / information applicable to this policy.