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Policy Name

15.1130 Student Records Access Policy

Purpose and Scope

This policy defines the student records and Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA guidelines for Alvernia University ("AU")). The policy is intended to ensure all AU students are aware of their rights under UFERPA. This policy:

- Defines roles and responsibilities with respect to graduation.
- Identifies the standards and best practices used by the Registrar's Office related to graduation.
- Lists the related AU policies which provide more detailed guidance on graduation.
- Specifies which departments maintain their own graduation procedures.

This policy applies to all AU students and its scope includes students enrolled in AU programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Responsibilities

Title or Role	Definition and What They are Responsible For
Advisor	Guide students along program completion.
Student Life	Manages the commencement process.
Registrar	Maintains and enforces this policy.
Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost	Serves as approval for policy and assists with reviewing exceptions to the policy.
Senior Leadership Team	Serves as final approval for policy and assists with reviewing exceptions to the policy.

Policy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. Students obtain these rights upon attendance at Alvernia University. Attendance at Alvernia University begins with either the first day of class or the date the student moves into student housing, whichever is earlier. Alvernia University has chosen to assume that all students have reached the age of legal majority (18) as stated in the document.

Policy Framework

FERPA Rights

Under FERPA, students have a right to see, inspect and request changes to their education records. To inspect education records, a student should submit a written request identifying the records to be inspected to the Registrar's Office. Written requests to access records will receive a response within a reasonable time, but not more than forty-five days after submission. A University official will arrange for access and will notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. Records that are not subject to review are outlined below. If the records contain information on more than one student, the requesting student may inspect, review,

or be informed on only the specific information about their own records. A student may obtain copies of their education records; however, will incur duplicating costs.

The contents of a student's education records may be challenged by the student on the grounds that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of the student by submitting a written statement to the custodian of records. The student should clearly identify the part of the record he or she wants changed and specify why it should be changed. If Alvernia University decides not to amend the record as requested, the University will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

Student's rights under FERPA include the following:

1. The right to inspect and review information contained in educational records.
2. The right to request amendment of educational records to ensure they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of privacy or other rights.
3. The right to consent to disclosure, with exceptions specified in the Act, of personally identifiable information from education records.
4. This copy of institutional policy.
5. The right to file complaints with the Department of Education concerning alleged failure of this institution to comply with the Act.

Students may waive any or all rights to review confidential letters and statements of recommendation.

The right of waiver is subject to the following conditions:

1. The institution may not require waivers.
2. No institutional service or benefit be denied students who fail to supply waivers.
3. Documents for which a student has waived the right to access are used only for the purposes for which the waiver was collected.
4. Waivers must be in writing and signed by the student.

Student Record Maintenance

Typically, student records are maintained in the following University offices:

Record Type	Office
Academic Information	Registrar's Office
Career, Placement Service Records	Career Development Office
Financial and Financial Aid Records	Student Financial Services
Residence Life and Disciplinary Records	Residence Life or the Student Life
Student Personnel/Disciplinary Records/Official Correspondence	Student Life
Medical Records	Medical and Counseling Center
Course Information	Faculty and Departments

Non-education Records

A student does not have a right under FERPA to inspect information that is not an education record, such as:

Medical Treatment records; Law enforcement records; Employment records (provided that employment is unrelated to student status); Records containing information about the individual that were created or received after he or she is no longer a student and that are not directly related to the student's attendance at the University; Records of instructional, supervisory, and administrative personnel and educational personnel that are kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record and are not accessible or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record; and Peer-graded papers before they are collected and recorded by an instructor.

In addition, a student does not have the right to access certain education records, such as:

Confidential letters of recommendation, if the student has waived their right of access in writing; Financial records of the student's parents; Records connected with denied applications to attend the Alvernia University; Admissions records for a student who does not officially attend the program of admission. If the student completed a course at the University but never officially attended as a degree candidate in the program of admission, then the student has FERPA rights with respect to that course but does not have rights with respect to the admissions records for that program; Records of a student that contain information on other students. The student may inspect, review, or be informed of only the specific information about student.

Directory Information

Under Alvernia's Student Record Access Policy, the Registrar's Office may release the following directory information: the student's name, degree of study, major, dates of enrollment, anticipated graduation date, graduation date, placement on the Dean's List, and awards. Student Athletes may select additional optional information to disclosed for press release.

This information may be released without a student's consent. A student may request such information not be released by the Registrar's Office. This request must be made in writing to the Registrar by the end of the first week of classes of the semester.

Directory Information is not published for distribution to vendors but is furnished to law enforcement agencies and within the University community.

Exceptions to Record Release

Information contained in a student's record may not be released without the student's written consent with the following exceptions:

Disclosure is authorized in writing by the student. When the University releases or discloses information to third parties pursuant to a student's written authorization, it is done on the condition that the third party to whom the information or record is released or disclosed will not, in turn, release or disclose it to anyone else without the express written consent of the student.

Disclosure is to University officials who need to know so as to accomplish legitimate purposes related to their functions. A University official is a person employed by the Alvernia in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position. A University official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibilities for the University.

Disclosure is to officials of other schools in which a student intends to enroll.

Disclosure is to parents of dependent students. Dependency status, for the purpose of this policy statement, is defined by Internal Revenue Service guidelines. Documentation must be provided prior to release of information.

Disclosure is to specified representatives of governmental agencies, educational organizations or other entities as described by federal regulations or otherwise required by state or federal law. Custodians of records should obtain interpretations whenever third parties request personally identifiable information.

Disclosure is in connection with a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid.

Disclosure to accrediting organizations. Disclosure to organizations conducting studies on behalf of educational institutions.

Disclosure is in compliance with a conduct order or subpoena. The staff member receiving such order, shall, if possible, immediately notify the student concerned in writing prior to compliance with such order or subpoena.

Disclosure is to parents of students under the age of 21 who are found to be in violation of alcohol and/or drug policies.

Disclosure of results of a disciplinary hearing to an alleged victim of a crime of violence. Under the Clery Act, disclosure to the accuser and accused of the outcome of a disciplinary proceeding related to an alleged sex offense.

Disclosure of information received under a community notification program concerning a student who is required to register as a sex offender in the State. Information from University records may be released 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.

Marketing Disclosures

During each academic year, the Marketing Communications Office will, for various reasons, send releases containing student information to the media. Information may include the Directory Information listed above in this policy. Student Athletes may select additional optional information to disclosed for press release.

Student Right to Formal Complaint

Students may file formal complaints regarding alleged failure of the University to comply with FERPA with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

Definitions

Education records - records that contain information directly related to a student and which are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution. Typical educational records include applications, transcripts, advising records, letters of evaluation, disciplinary records, and other records related to work-study and financial records.

Exceptions to Policy

Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing by filling out the Policy Exception form and submitting to the individual named in the Responsibilities section who assists with reviewing exceptions to this policy.

Policy Review

The Registrar Office policies should be reviewed on a 5-year cycle and updated when institutional needs or goals change.

Approved versions of this policy will be posted on the Alvernia University Portal.

References and Related Policies

References

N/A

Related Policies

N/A

Exhibits

[Student Authorization to Release Education Record Information](#)

[Policy and Procedure Exception Form](#)

Document Review Log

Date Reviewed	Description of Changes
8/15/2023	Initial Draft
3/11/2024	Sent to Provost Office for Review
5/09/2024	SLT Approved