

Student Records Policy and Procedures for Privacy of Student Educational Records

For Wallace Community College Selma to comply with requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), the following policies and procedures have been established. Wallace Community College Selma accords all rights under the law to students who are declared independent. In accordance with this policy, after a student attains the age of 18, the College will not release any information pertaining to the student's academic records without written consent from the student. The student can obtain a Permission to Release Information Form from the Office of Student Services. Responsibility for protection of the privacy of students educational records rest primarily with the Dean of Students of the College. Educational records are defined by FERPA to include records, files, documents, and other materials that contain information directly related to students and are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a person acting for such agency or institution. There are five exceptions to this definition of educational records as published in the GUIDELINES FOR POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 AS AMENDED, Revised Edition 1998, a publication of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

A. Student Access to Educational Records

All students have the right to review their educational records with the following exceptions as outlined by FERPA:

1. Financial information submitted by parents.
2. Confidential letters and recommendations placed in their files prior to January 1, 1975, provided these letters were collected under established policies of confidentiality and were used only for the purposes for which specifically collected.
3. Confidential letters and statements of recommendation placed in the records after January 1, 1975, to which the students have waived their right to inspect and review and that are related to the students' admission, application for employment or receipt of honors.
4. Educational records containing information about more than one student; however, in such cases the College must permit access to that part of the record which pertains only to the inquiring student. To review records, students and former students may go to the Admissions/Records Office, present a valid photo identification card, and ask to review the record. If it is an inappropriate time to retrieve the record, students may be asked to complete a written request to review records in the Admissions/Records Office. The College may delay to a maximum of 45 days release of the records for review. The College is not required to provide access to records of applicants for admission who are denied acceptance or if accepted, do not attend.

Wallace Community College Selma does not provide copies of the contents of student records unless a student is not within commuting distance of the College and is, therefore, physically unable to be present to view the records on campus. A copying fee of 25 cents per sheet will be assessed.

B. Challenge of the Contents of Educational Records

Students may challenge information in their educational records that they believe to be incorrect, inaccurate, or inappropriate. This challenge must be in writing and must be submitted to the appropriate records custodian who is responsible for the division in which the students are enrolled. The records custodian must decide within a reasonable period of time whether the corrective action will be taken, and the records custodian must provide written notification to the student and the Dean of Students of the corrective action that has been approved. Students who are not provided the full relief sought by their challenge must be referred to the Dean of Students who will inform them of their right to a formal hearing. Students must make their request for a formal hearing in writing to the Dean of Students. The following procedures shall apply:

1. The hearing panel that will adjudicate such challenges will be the Grievance/Appeals Committee.
2. Within a reasonable period of time after receiving the written request for a hearing, the chairperson of the Grievance/Appeals Committee must inform students of the date, place, and time of the hearing reasonably in advance of the hearing.
3. Students will be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issue raised. They may be assisted or represented at the hearing by one or more persons of their choice, including an attorney, at their expense.
4. Decisions made by the Grievance/ Appeals Committee must be in writing, must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision. The decision should be delivered in writing to the student and the Dean of Students. Decisions made by the Grievance/ Appeals Committee must be in writing, must be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision. The decision should be delivered in writing to the student and the Dean of Students.
 - a. The Admissions/Records Office will correct or amend the educational record in accordance with the decision of the hearing if the decision is in favor of the student and inform the student in writing of the amendment.
 - b. Should Wallace Community College Selma decide not to amend the record in accordance with the student's request, the Dean of Students must inform the student of the following: The student has the opportunity to place with the educational record a statement commenting on the information in the record or a statement setting forth any reason for disagreeing with the decision of the hearing.
 - c. The statement placed in the educational record by the student will be maintained as part of the record for as long as the record is held by Wallace Community College Selma.
5. This record, when disclosed to an authorized party, must include the statement filed by the student.

C. Disclosure of Educational Record Information

Wallace Community College Selma shall obtain written consent from students before disclosing any personally identifiable information from their education records. Such written consent must: (1) specify the records to be released, (2) state the purpose of the disclosure, (3) identify the party or class of parties to whom disclosure may be made, and (4) be signed and dated by the student.

FERPA states that certain information from student records may be classified as directory information. The following information has been declared by Wallace Community College Selma as directory information:

Name
 Address
 Telephone Listing
 Place and Date of Birth
 Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
 Major field of study
 Weight and height of a member of an athletic team
 Dates of Attendance
 Degrees and awards received
 Most recent educational institution attended

The information will be released to inquiring individuals or agencies unless students sign a Do Not Release Directory Information Form during the first two weeks of the term. Do Not Release Directory Information Forms are available in the Office of Student Services: Admissions/Records. THIS FORM MUST BE RE-SUBMITTED ANNUALLY.

FERPA established rules stating that some personnel and agencies may have access to students' "educational records" without the written consent of the students. Wallace Community College Selma will disclose information from a student's educational record only with the written consent of the student except to:

1. College officials who have been determined by the College to have a legitimate educational interest in the records. College officials include counselors and instructors who are involved in counseling students, administrators who assist in counseling and who advise students with other problems, professional and clerical staff who directly relate to the administrative tasks of the College, College law enforcement officials, and College attorneys.
A College official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or by a contract agreement, performing a task related to a student's education, or performing a task related to the discipline of a student. When doubt is raised by the Dean of Students about an individual's "need to know" or legitimate educational interest in having access to specific information, the issue shall be decided by the President of Wallace Community College Selma.
2. Certain officials of the U.S. Department of Education, the Comptroller General, and state and local educational authorities in connection with certain state or federally supported education programs.
3. A student's request for or receipt of financial aid, as necessary to determine the eligibility, amount, or conditions of the financial aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of that aid.
4. State and local officials to whom information is specifically required to be reported or disclosed pursuant to state statute adopted prior to November 19, 1974.
5. Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of Wallace Community College Selma.
6. Accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions.
7. Parents of eligible students who claim the students as dependents for income tax purposes.
Determining dependency, as defined by Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code, requires a copy of the parents' most recent Federal Income Tax Form. In case of a divorce, separation, or custody when only one parent declares the student as a dependent, Wallace Community College Selma will grant equal access to the student's education records upon demonstration of dependency as described above.
8. Appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency, subject to a determination by the President or Deans.
9. Personnel complying with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena*, provided that the Admissions/Records Office makes a reasonable attempt to notify students in advance of compliance. (Within 10 calendar days)
10. An alleged victim of any crime of violence (as that term is defined in 18 U.S.C. 16) of the results of any institutional disciplinary proceeding against the alleged perpetrator of that crime with respect to that crime.

***Note:** Wallace Community College Selma is not required to notify students if a federal grand jury subpoena, or any other subpoena issued for a law enforcement purpose, order the College not to disclose the existence or contents of the subpoena.

Wallace Community College Selma will inform parties to whom personally identifiable information is released that they are not permitted to disclose the information to others without the written consent of the student. Wallace Community College Selma will maintain a record of all requests for, and/or disclosure of, information from a student's educational records. The record will indicate the name of the party making the request, any additional party to whom it may be disclosed, and the legitimate interest the party had in requesting or obtaining the information. The record may be reviewed by the eligible student.

The following is a list of the types of records that Wallace Community College Selma maintains and their custodians.

Type of Record	Custodian
Admission	Dean of Students
Cumulative (current/ former students)	Dean of Students
Admission/Academic (new students, currently enrolled)	Dean of Students
Financial Aid	Financial Aid Director
Student Accounts	Dean of Business and Finance
Athletic Eligibility	Athletic Director
Disciplinary	Dean of Students

D. Annual Notification of FERPA Rights

Wallace Community College Selma will give annual notice to current students of their rights under the Act by publishing information in the WCCS Catalog and Student Handbook.

E. Permission to Release Student Information Form

If you register for a WCCS course, you hold the FERPA rights for that course and the College may not release your records for that course (or any other academic records) to anyone (including your parents or spouse) without your written permission. If you wish to release your student information to any other party, you must sign a Permission to Release Student Information Form (available in the Dean of Students' Office) and specifically designate the individuals to whom you wish to have your records released.

F. Facsimile Records (FAX)

Wallace Community College Selma honors FAX requests to send official transcripts to third parties, and Wallace Community College Selma will accept FAX transcripts for advising purposes only. An official transcript is required for admission purposes.

G. Computer Access to Records

Wallace Community College Selma has established policies for initially instructing and periodically reminding school officials of FERPA's confidentiality requirements before it gives them access to the computer system. These school officials are informed of the criteria Wallace Community College Selma uses to determine legitimate educational interest and of their responsibility for assuring that access is not abused.

H. Students Rights After Ceasing Attendance or Graduation

Students who have ceased attendance or have graduated from Wallace Community College Selma have basically the same FERPA rights as students currently attending, including the right to (1) inspect their educational records, (2) have a hearing to amend an educational record, and (3) have their educational record privacy protected by Wallace Community College Selma. Former students do not have the right to request of Wallace Community College Selma nondisclosure unless they asked, at their last opportunity as students, that no directory information be disclosed.

I. Privacy Rights of Deceased Students

For twenty-five years following the death of a student, the release of education record information will not be made unless authorized by the student's parents or the executor/executrix of the deceased student's estate.