



FERPA – General Information

Family Educational Right and Privacy Act of 1974

This document is prepared by the Office of Admissions of Carl Albert State College to explain this federal law concerning the release and access to a student's educational records and FERPA protection of students' rights regarding the privacy and accuracy of education records. Student may direct inquiries to the Registrar, Office of Admissions & Records, 1507 So McKenna, Poteau, OK 74953, or 918-647-1307.

What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 and its amendments establish certain rights and protections for students concerning their educational record. This act applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education, including both K-12 and post-secondary institutions. However, students have different rights once they are admitted and enrolled at the college-level.

In the following pages, this document will explain the rights of students as guaranteed under FERPA and the college's role in helping to protect the privacy of the student.

Rights of the Student

Student's educational records may not be disclosed without the written consent of the student, except when used for normal educational purposes and when legal authority exists.

When a student reaches 18 years of age or is attending an institution of post-secondary education, FERPA rights transfer from parent to student. Therefore, at Carl Albert State College (post-secondary level), all students have the same protections under FERPA, where parents have no inherent rights to inspect their son's or daughter's education records.

However, students may assign rights to parents/other using the CASC form "Permission to Release Education Record" in the Office of Admissions or available online at www.carlalbert.edu > Admissions&Aid > Student Forms .

FERPA is a federal law and establishes certain rights for students concerning their educational record including:

- Right to inspect and review the education records CASC is keeping on the student.
- Right to amend those records after inspection and in certain cases, append a statement to the record.
- Right to consent to disclosure of the education record.
- Right to file complaint with the FERPA Office in Washington, D.C.

Right to Inspect and Review Record

Students have the right to inspect and review the information that the institution is keeping on the student.

Students have the right to inspect and review their educational records maintained by CASC, or, when warranted, to have copies prepared for them. The Office of Admissions will comply with all requests within a reasonable period of time and no more than 45 days after the request is made. The Registrar must provide explanations and interpretations of the record and shall not destroy any record when a request has been made, but not fulfilled.

What is an Educational Record?

Student education records are maintained by CASC in the Office of Admissions and contained in its student information system and filing system. Education records are confidential and not disclosed without student consent, and include:

- Personal information (name, address, phone, social security number, etc.)
- Enrollment records (Application, test scores, transcripts, grades, military)
- Official college transcript
- Examination or class papers (instructor kept)
- Grades (transcript or grade changes on file)
- Financial Aid
- Billing

Right to Amend Record

Students have the right to amend those records after inspection and in certain cases, append a statement to the record.

After review of the education record, a student has the right to request that the college's office maintaining the record to correct a record they believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy. The record may remain as is or modified. Student may request formal hearing before the Academic Affairs committee to modify the education record after initial denial by the Office of Admissions. Student will be notified in advance of hearing date, time, and place.

After the Academic Affairs committee hears all evidence pertaining to the request, the evidence and decision is recorded in writing and all reasons for the decision documented. The student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his/her view about the contested information.

Right to Consent to Disclosure

Students have the right to consent to disclosure of the education record.

The Office of Admissions discloses a student's educational record only by written request of the student and through the *Transcript Request* form found in the Office of Admissions or online at www.carlalbert.edu > Admissions&Aid > Transcript Requests. However, FERPA allows the college to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (below does not cover all circumstance):

- School officials who are determined to have a legitimate educational interest to student information. Although not inclusive, school officials include Admission, Enrollment Management, Financial Aid, & Business Offices staff; instructors, advisors, division chairs, administrative officer, and college recruiter.
- Other colleges to which students seek to enroll or is transferring;
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- Accrediting organizations;
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies;
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law; and
- To parents of students who are dependents per income tax documents.

The Office of Admissions & Records is keep record of each request when a student's identifiable information is provided (Transcript Requests and computer information requests).

What is Directory Information?

Carl Albert State College does not disclose education records to a third party without the student consent to do so and never the student's social security number or other non-directory information that may identify the student. However, the college may disclose without the consent "directory information" (such as student's name, address, graduation honors, photograph, ...) of the student when legitimate educational (such as instructor) or legal authority exists. Common ways a student's name is published include graduation programs, newspaper announcement of graduation or Honor Rolls, athletic programs and events, club events, Miss CASC Pageant, Show Choir membership and events, others)

Directory Information is collected by the Office of Admission from the Application for Admissions and documents submitted; the education record is created and stored in the student information system software and within its filing system. The following is a list of what CASC declares to be Directory Information and may be disclosed without consent of the student, unless the student has filed a *Withhold Directory Information* form with the Office of Admissions.

- name
- address
- telephone number
- email address
- photograph
- major
- dates of attendance
- grade level
- enrollment status
- degrees
- sport activities
- weight and height of athlete
- graduation honors & awards
- most recent college attended
- year of birth

Withhold Directory Information

Students may restrict or prevent the publication of Directory Information by completing a Withhold of Directory Information form located in the Office of Admissions & Records. The students' education record, both electronic and hard-copy file are marked to prevent disclosure.

For example, students who file the Withhold of Directory Information form with the Office of Admissions will not have their name published in programs or newspaper for commencement or athletic events.

Social Security Number

The college does not permit the student's social security number to be published to an Internet site or other publicly accessible document. CASC issues an ID number and student generates a personal PIN number; this practice ensures secured access to a student's electronic date.

Right to File Complaint

Students have the right to file a formal complaint with the FERPA office located in Washington, D.C.

A student may file a written complaint with the FERPA compliance office regarding an alleged violation under the Act. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact which give reasonable cause to believe that a violation of the Act has occurred. Complaints are acted upon within 180 days of the date of allegation, but may be extended. The FERPA Office may or may not elect to initiate and investigation, but, the college is given the opportunity to respond and comply to with the Act. The ultimate penalty for an institution's lack of compliance is a withholding of funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. The address in which a student may formally file a complaint is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5902

Annual Notification to Students

CASC students are notified each year of their FERPA rights in CASC's College OSU Catalog.

FERPA and CASC Employees

Faculty and staff interact with student in different ways and for different reasons.

However, general guidelines for the CASC employee exit:

- Caution students to protect their social security number, and college-issued ID and PIN number by not giving these personal numbers to any one who calls, writes, or emails them requesting this information. College personnel have access to these numbers and do not need to request them, especially by phone or email and once fully admitted with all student documentation on file. However, during the initial admissions and registration process, clarifications may be required, but, Admissions staff will clearly identify who they are and use a contact number submitted by the student.
- Caution students to not leave their course schedules or transcripts unattended. Their name, ID number, address, and academic history is displayed.
- Caution student that their CASC issued ID number is a 9-digit number and not their lengthy debit card number.
- Advise students to keep the Office of Admissions current on their mailing address, telephone number, or email address. Correct contact numbers will prevent personally identifiable information from being delivered to the wrong parties and with unintended results.
- Be aware of FERPA. Although it is not necessary to understand the entirety of the law, it is important that we recognize that it exists and dictates how student information is displayed. If you have access to a student's education record, you share liability with the college for non-compliance or complaint reasons.
- Understand that curiosity is not a legitimate educational reason to view a student's education record and that access to a student's record does not include the right to view it.
- When in doubt, ask for help and do not give out or never display student information. Refer all questions about a student's education record to the Office of Admissions.

Do's and Don'ts:

- Do not post grades with a student's name, social security number, or student ID in such a way that one student can see and understand the grade of another student.
- Do not publicly post a student's social security number. Never, ever!
- Do not leave the student's education record viewable on the computer screen. Use screen guards or turn monitor away from view.
- Do not share your computer login and password to a work-study or student helper.
- Do not leave your computer active with the software open.
- Do not circulate a printed class list with a student's name, social security number, or grades on a class roster.
- Do not give to anyone a list of students enrolled in your class for any commercial or private mailing lists.
- Do not give a student's class schedule to anyone other than a college employee for the purpose of finding a student on campus. Call Student Affairs who will handle this request.
- Do not ask students to retrieve their course schedule or transcript from a common printer where multiple students may see another's records.
- Do not give to parent information about their child's progress without the student's consent or tax documentation is provided proving dependent status. Call Office of Admission; consent forms are on file and can be verified.

Questions on education records may be directed to:

Office of Admissions, 1507 So McKenna, Poteau, OK 74953 ■ 918-647-1307 Registrar ■ 918-647-1302 Director of Admissions