

FERPA Policy

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* helps to protect the privacy of student education records. The *Act* provides for the right to inspect and review education records, the right to seek to amend those records and to limit disclosure of information from the records. The intent of the legislation is to protect the rights of students and to ensure the privacy and accuracy of education records. The *Act* applies to all institutions that are the recipients of federal aid administered by the Secretary of Education.

Disclosure of Directory Information

Heritage Christian University recognizes the importance of maintaining certain records for each student which contribute to and confirm the student's educational progress.

To protect the rights of students regarding these records, HCU has established policies and guidelines which describe the records maintained, provisions for releasing information, provisions for student inspection and review of records, and provisions for changes in records when warranted. These rules generally conform to State and Federal laws (the U.S. Department of Education has guidelines for the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended", known as the Buckley Amendment or FERPA). These policies are generally supervised by the Office of the Registrar. The following are the rules which relate to these student records:

1. Directory Information

1. The University designates the following information as public or "Directory Information" and may be disclosed upon request without consent of the student, unless the student has filed an objection with the Office of the Registrar by completing the Request for Confidential Status of Directory Information form:
 - permanent and local address
 - email addresses, telephone listings
 - date and place of birth
 - major fields of study, degrees and awards received
 - dates of attendance
 - most recent previous school attended
 - participation in officially organizations, activities, and sports
 - class schedule/roster, full or part-time status
 - weight and height of members of athletic teams
 - photographs and digital imaging

2. Confidential Information

2. All personally identifiable information other than that described in Directory Information is considered confidential information and may be disclosed by the University only as provided below. This information includes the following:

- academic records
- disciplinary records (except as provided by laws)
- financial aid records
- placement records
- letters of recommendation
- medical records (may be reviewed by student's doctor only)
- test scores
- Veteran's records, etc.

3. Disclosure of Confidential Information

3. With the student's written consent, any confidential information on file may be disclosed any individual or agency named by the student. There may be a cost to the student if duplication of materials is involved. Disclosure without the student's consent may take place only under the following conditions, except as required by law:

- When requested by University faculty and staff, when there is legitimate need in the student's educational interest to have the requested information.
- When required by judicial order (an attempt will be made to notify student where that is permitted by law).
- When required by evaluation agencies in connection with a financial aid application.
- When requested by an accrediting organization to carry out accrediting functions.
- When requested by parents of a dependent student who has completed and signed the Records Release form and/or the HCU Student Information Release Authorization form.
- When requested by Federal or State officials to audit and evaluate Federally- and State-supported programs.
- When needed for research purposes to improve educational programs.
- When, in the opinion of the University there is a threat to a student's life or physical well-being which may necessitate disclosure to public safety officials, the student's family members or another designated emergency contact.

Disclosure as described in this section will be recorded by the person responsible for the files, except in the case of first bullet under "Disclosure of Confidential Information," and this record also will be open to the student concerned. Disclosure to others at the student's request will not be made if any payments due the University by the student are in arrears.

When University officials disclose confidential information to authorized parties, the following message will be attached: "**The attached information has been forwarded to**

you with the understanding that it will not be released to other parties. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended prohibits release of this information without the student's written consent. Please return this material to us if you are unable to comply with this condition of release."

University Official is defined as those members of the University community who act in the student's educational interest within the limitations of their "need to know." These may include faculty, administration, agents acting on behalf of the University, clerical and professional employees and other persons who manage student educational information including student employees or committee members and agents.

4. Student Access to Confidential Information

4. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. They are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access. Students should submit to the Registrar written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official with whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
- The right to request the amendment of their educational records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the University to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the University will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Information regarding hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA or other laws authorize disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position; a person or company with whom the University has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Heritage Christian University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA can be found below:

Record type	Maintained by	Contents	Normal Access
Academic Advisement File	Registrar/ Office of Student Records	Admission application, transfer of credit evaluation, student worksheet for academic planning, official transcripts from prior schools	Student's Advisor
Academic Standing File	Registrar/ Office of Student Records	Correspondence and forms related to student's academic standing	Academic Affairs, Registrar
Academic Records	Registrar/ Office of Student Records	Courses, credits, grades, grade point average, school major, degree	Academic Affairs, Registrar
Testing/ Placement instruments and scores	Office of Institutional Effectiveness	Test scores, correspondence & related	Testing Coordinator, Director of IE
Disciplinary File	Registrar/ Office of Student Records	Correspondence and forms relating to disciplinary action taken against student	Dean of Students, University officials
Directory Information	Registrar/ Office of Student Records	Name, year level, school, major, credits enrolled for, terms attended, degree attained	Registrar, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dean of Students
Financial Aid File	Office of Financial Aid	Aid application, parents' confidential statements, award letters	Associate Director of Financial Aid, Director of Enrollment Services
Housing	Office of Dean of Students	Housing assignments, correspondence	Admissions, Dean of Students
International Students	Office of Financial Aid	Certification forms, correspondence, I-20, copies of Visas, I-539s.	SEVIS PDSO, Admissions Office Personnel
Campus Crime Reports	Office of Dean of Students and/or Director of Campus Security	Incident reports	Director of Campus Security, Dean of Students, VP of Academic Affairs
Student Accounts	Business Office	Record of payment for all tuition, fees, fines	Business Office, Registrar, Associate Director of Financial Aid
Veteran's File	Office of Financial Aid	Eligibility certificate, enrollment certification	Certifying Official

As of January 3, 2012, the U.S. Department of Education's FERPA regulations expand the circumstances under which your education records and personally identifiable information (PII) contained in such records, including your Social Security Number, grades, or other private information, may be accessed without your consent.

First, the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or state and local education authorities ("Federal and State Authorities") may allow access to your records and Personal Identifying Information (PII) without your consent to any third party designated by a Federal or State Authority to evaluate a federal or state supported education program. The evaluation may relate to any program that is "principally engaged in the provision of education," such as early childhood education and job training, as well as any program that is administered by an education agency or institution.

Second, Federal and State Authorities may allow access to your education records and PII without your consent to researchers performing certain types of studies, in certain cases even when we object to or do not request such research. Federal and State Authorities must obtain certain use restriction and data security promises from the entities that they authorize to receive your PII, but the Authorities need not maintain direct control over such entities.

In addition, in connection with Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems, State Authorities may collect, compile, permanently retain, and share without your consent PII from your education records, and they may track your participation in education and other programs by linking such PII to other personal information about you that they obtain from other Federal or State data sources, including workforce development, unemployment insurance, child welfare, juvenile justice, military service, and migrant student records systems.

NOTICE: This statement of policy is published so College students may be aware of its provisions. Any student who wishes the College not disclose any part of the information classified as directory information (see Directory Information above) should complete the FERPA Non Disclosure form in the Registrar's Office.

Family Policy Compliance Office
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