

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Release of Transcripts and Disclosure of Educational Records

In compliance with federal regulations, William Paterson University has adopted institutional policies and procedures with regard to the disclosure of information from the education records of current and former students. The University's student records policy conforms to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (Public Record 93-380), copies of which may be obtained from the Office of Registration Services or on the web at <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html> . This policy gives a student the right to inspect his or her educational record within a reasonable length of time, to ask for interpretations, and to request that any inaccuracies be corrected. Copies of the student's official transcript are released only on the written request of the student and only after all obligations to William Paterson, financial and otherwise, have been fulfilled. Requests for transcripts should be made to the Center for Student Services. There are applicable transcript request fees <http://cms.wpunj.edu/centerss/faq-submenu/index.dot> for this service. Transcripts are issued within one week of receipt of the written request, except during the beginning and ending weeks of each semester, when more processing time may be required. Transcripts received from other schools are the property of William Paterson and are not copied or released. Grades and personally identifiable financial information cannot be released to parents, guardians, or other interested parties without permission of the student. Forms authorizing release of such information are available in the Center for Student Services. With the exception of directory information, William Paterson University does not permit access to or the release of education records without the written consent of the student. Records release exceptions will be made:

- a) to William Paterson University officials, including faculty and administrators who require such records in the proper performance of their duties;
- b) in connection with the student's application for or receipt of financial aid or Veterans Administration benefits;
- c) to organizations conducting studies for education and governmental agencies (in which case individual students are neither identified nor identifiable);
- d) to U.S. government agencies as listed in Public Law 93-380;
- e) to accrediting agencies;
- f) in order to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; and
- g) 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 any other person.

Directory information is defined as: student's name, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate), major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height for members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent educational agency or institution previously attended by the student. Students who do not wish to have their information released outside William Paterson University or published in the campus directory must give written notice to the Office of Registration Services annually by the day before the beginning of the fall semester.

Release Form

William Paterson University assigns student's identification number. As of the Fall of 2006 Social Security Number's will not used as student identification number. FERPA release forms are currently processed through the Center for Student Services. Students may authorize release of their academic, financial aid, student account and/or disciplinary records to a third party (i.e., parents, grandparents, etc.) by completing the FERPA form.

Notification of Rights under FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford students the following rights with respect to their educational records:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day William Paterson University receives a request for access. Students should submit to the Office of Registration Services 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 records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
2. The rights for the student to request that the University amend education records that he or she believes are inaccurate or misleading. The student should write to the William Paterson University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record he or she wants changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the University official 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. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when he or she is notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The school official is defined as a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic, or support staff position (including University police and campus wellness center personnel); 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 person assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.
4. William Paterson University considers the following as "directory information" and will release the following student information upon request:
 - Name
 - Student's e-mail address
 - Telephone listing
 - Degrees and awards received
 - Major field of study
 - Date and place of birth
 - Dates of attendance
 - Most recent previous school
 - Classification
 - Participation in officially recognized sports and activities

To prevent the release of the above referenced "directory information," the student must file the "Directory Information Release" form with the Office of the Registrar each year.

5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by William Paterson University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington D.C. 20202-4605