

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.

Possible Federal and State Data Collection and Use

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 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.

Release Form

William Paterson University assigns student's identification number. As of the Fall of 2006 Social Security Number's will not be 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.

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[Family Policy Compliance Office \(FPCO\) Home](#)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
 - Other schools to which a student 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; and
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students

annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the [Federal Relay Service](#).

Or you may contact us at the following address:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520