

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act Annual Notice to Students

At least annually, Houston College of Law through the Registrar's Office informs students of their rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the regulations relating to FERPA promulgated by the Department of Education. Together, FERPA and the FERPA regulations provide that:

- (a) each student has a right to inspect and review his or her education records;
- (b) each student may request that any such record be amended if he or she believes that it is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of his or her privacy;
- (c) the College will obtain the student's written consent prior to disclosing personally identifiable information about the student from his or her education records, unless such consent is not required by FERPA and the FERPA regulations;
- (d) each student has a right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office of the Department of Education if he or she feels the College has failed to comply with the requirements of FERPA and the FERPA regulations;
- (e) each student may obtain a copy of the College's Guidelines for Compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. These guidelines are available from the Registrar's Office or at <http://www.stcl.edu/registrar/FERPA.htm>.

Access to Records

Students who wish to review their education records must file a written record request with the Registrar's Office. The request should specify what records are to be inspected. Students will be notified when the records are available for inspection.

Amendment of Records

If a student believes that any of the education records relating to the student contain information that is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights of privacy, the student may ask the College to correct or delete such information. The student may also ask that additional explanatory material be inserted in the education records.

Requests for amendment of the education records or the addition of explanatory material should be submitted in writing at the conclusion of the education records

review to the Registrar's Office. The reasons for the request should be set forth and should clearly identify the part of the education records the student wants changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. There is no obligation on the part of the College to grant such a request. If the College declines to amend the education records as requested by the student, it will so inform the student, and the student may request a hearing. The right to challenge the contents of the educational records may not be used to question substantive educational judgments that have been correctly recorded. For example, a hearing may not be requested to contest the assignment of a grade. Grades given in the course of study include written evaluations that reflect institutional judgment of the quality of a student's academic performance. Information concerning hearing procedures is outlined in the College's Guidelines for Compliance with FERPA.

Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information

Among other exceptions authorized by FERPA, prior consent of the student is not needed for disclosure of directory information (see next section) or for disclosure to school officials with a legitimate educational interest in access to the student's educational record. School officials having a legitimate educational interest include any College employee acting within the scope of employment, and any duly appointed agent or representative of the College acting within the scope of the appointment. In addition, the College may, at its sole discretion, forward education records to the officials of another institution (a) in which a student seeks or intends to enroll if that institution requests such records, or (b) if the student is enrolled in, or is receiving services from, that institution while she or he is attending the College. Other exceptions are listed in the College's Guidelines for Compliance with FERPA.

Notice Designating Directory Information

Pursuant to FERPA and the FERPA regulations, the College hereby designates the following student information as "directory information": name, street and email addresses, telephone numbers, a photograph, dates of attendance, degree(s) conferred (including dates), prizes, honors and awards (including dean's list), and past and present participation in officially recognized activities, including positions held.

Such information may be disclosed for any purpose, at the discretion of the College, except as provided below. Under federal law, address information, telephone listings, and date and place of birth are also considered directory information for military recruitment purposes. For military recruitment purposes, address refers to "physical mailing address" but not e-mail address.

Currently enrolled students may refuse to permit disclosure of this information. To do so, a student should complete duplicate copies of a Student Directory Information Opt-Out Procedure Form requesting nondisclosure at the Registrar's Office and submit it to that office

A hold will be placed on the release of directory information filed with the Registrar, which will remain in effect until the student files with the Registrar's Office a written request to remove it.

If a student does not specifically request the withholding of directory information by filing the appropriate form, as indicated above, the College assumes that the student approves of the disclosure of such information. The College disclaims any and all liability for inadvertent disclosure of directory information designated to be withheld.

Complaints

A student who believes there has been a violation of the provisions of FERPA may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S. W., Washington, DC 20202-5920. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of FERPA has occurred.