

## FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, (hereafter referred to as FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access.
- The right to request the amendment of the education records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Students should write the College 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 College decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the College will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Exceptions can be found at [ferpa.mercyhurst.edu](http://ferpa.mercyhurst.edu).
- The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Mercyhurst College to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

FERPA permits disclosure without consent to school officials with a legitimate educational interest. A school official is:

- A person employed by the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position, including but not limited to health, athletic, or medical staff.
- A person elected to the Board of Trustees.
- A person employed by or under contract with the College to perform a special task, such as an attorney or auditor, or other outside contractor hired to perform a specific function for the institution.
- A person who is employed by the Mercyhurst College Police & Safety Office.
- A student performing work study for the College, or serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or judicial committee, or who is assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:

- Performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or contract agreement.
- Performing a task related to a student's education.
- Performing a task related to the discipline of a student.
- Providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement or financial aid.
- Maintaining the safety and security of the campus

Upon request, the College discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, as well as institutions where the student has already enrolled. Students have the right to request that the College withhold the disclosure of what is known as "Directory Information." Directory Information is defined as that information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Mercyhurst College has designated the following as directory information: name, address, e-mail address, telephone number, dates of attendance, class standing, enrollment status (undergraduate, graduate; full or part-time), major or minor fields of study, degrees conferred (including dates), honors received, participation in officially recognized sports and activities, height and weight of athletic team members, photographs, date and place of birth, and most recent educational agency or institution attended.

Directory information may be released without the student's prior written consent unless the student has requested the directory information be withheld. **Please consider the effect non-disclosure may have on future employment and verification of enrollment.** Insurance companies frequently request verification of a student's enrollment from the Office of the Registrar. Prospective employers request verification of graduation. Additionally, withholding directory information means that the College cannot indicate any awards or honors you have received without specific written permission. This includes listing your name and degree in the graduation program. A request to prevent disclosure will remain in effect until changed by the student. Instructions on how to opt-out of having your directory information shared can be found at [ferpa.mercyhurst.edu](http://ferpa.mercyhurst.edu).

**FERPA rights become effective once a student attends his/her first class at the institution.**