

FERPA

Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions

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

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access. Students should contact the Registrar's Office with requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate. Students may ask the College to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They 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. 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. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. 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. 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 College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or support staff position (including security personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the College has contracted (such as an attorney or auditor); 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. 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. Upon request, the College discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Mailing Address: U.S. Department of Education, Student Privacy Policy Office, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C., 20202-8520.

The College may release information without the student's consent where the information is classified as "Directory information." The following categories of information have been designated by the College as directory information: name, address, telephone listing, e-mail address, photograph, place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, full-time/part-time status, and the most recent previous educational institution attended by the student.

Direct questions concerning this law and the College's policy concerning release of academic information to Office of Advising, Records and Registration Services, 941-359-6116.

Limitations on Student Rights

There are some limitations on the rights of students to inspect records. Students shall have no right of inspection or review of:

1. Financial information submitted by their parents/guardians.
2. Confidential letters and/or recommendations in the student's file prior to Jan. 1, 1975, if such documents were intended to be confidential and were only used for the purpose intended.

3. Confidential letters and/or recommendations in the file subsequent to Jan. 1, 1975, associated with admissions, employment, or job placement or the receipt of an honor or honorary recognition, if the student has waived his or her right to inspect confidential letters and/or recommendations.
4. Educational records containing information about more than one student, in which case the institution will permit access only to that part of the record pertaining to the inquiring student.

Waiver of Student Rights

Students may waive any or all of their rights under FERPA. Ringling College does not require waivers and no institutional service shall be denied to students who fail to supply waivers. All waivers must be in writing and signed by the student. Students may waive their rights to inspect and review either individual documents (e.g., letter of recommendation) or class of documents (e.g., admissions file). The items or documents, to which students have waived the right of access, shall be used only for purpose(s) for which they are collected. If used for other purposes, the waivers shall be void and the student may inspect the documents. The student may revoke the waiver in writing, but by revoking it, he or she does not regain the right to inspect and review documents collected while the waiver was in force.

Eligible Persons Able to View the Record

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), the student records at Ringling College (in the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services) are open for inspection only by the student and as per paragraph #99.31 of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and to the following:

1. College officials who have legitimate educational interests.
2. State educational authorities.
3. Federal and state officials representing state or federal programs.
4. Persons having written authorization for release.
5. Officials in compliance with judicial orders.

Viewing the Records

Permanent records are never allowed out of the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services.

Students may view their records at the counter in the presence of office personnel.

Students may view their transcripts from other institutions, but may not obtain a copy of the record, except by writing to request a copy from the institution from which the transcript originated.

Prior Consent for Disclosure or Release of Records

Transcripts are only released upon written consent of the student.

Permanent File

In addition to the academic transcript, a student's permanent file contains transcripts from other institutions and the transfer credit evaluation, admissions application and other documents, such as test scores. Students may see their files upon request in the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services. The information contained in the file is not disclosed to any party outside the College without the student's written consent, as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Correcting Permanent Records

If a student feels there is an error in their permanent record, they should contact the Office of Advising, Records, and Registration Services to arrange a hearing according to paragraph #99.22 of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974:

1. The hearing will be within a reasonable period of time after the request has been received by the institution.
2. The student shall be given notice of date, place, and time reasonably in advance.
3. A written decision shall be made by the educational institution within a reasonable period of time after the hearing. The written decision and summary will be based on evidence presented.

Directory Information

Directory information includes the following: student name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, picture ID, dates of attendance, class year, previous institutions attended, major, awards, honors, degrees conferred, past and present participation in officially recognized sports and activities, date and place of birth. Directory information is only withheld upon written request made to the Registrar at fall semester registration.