FERPA (STUDENT PRIVACY)

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Students have certain rights concerning their “education records” under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as amended, 20 U.S.C. 1232g et. seq. These include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day CSU receives the request for access. All enrolled and former students may have access to their education records maintained by CSU. Written requests identifying the record(s) to be inspected should be submitted to the Registrar’s Office, or, in the case of graduate studies, to the Graduate School. The CSU official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the CSU official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed. A student may receive one copy of each item of information contained in the education record at a cost of $.25 (charge subject to change) per page.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Students may ask CSU to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the CSU official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If CSU decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, CSU will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing. 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 disclosure of personally identifiable information (defined below) contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

Individuals and agencies having access to a student’s records without the student’s consent include “school officials,” defined below, with legitimate educational interests; parents claiming a student as a dependent on their federal income tax; scholarship and other financial aid organizations supporting the student; organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, student aid programs, or to improve instruction; organizations carrying out accrediting functions of programs offered by CSU; appropriate person(s) in an emergency; and any party designated by judicial order or subpoena, provided that, except for subpoenas and orders issued for law enforcement purposes, CSU first notifies the student of the order or subpoena. Any other individual or organization must have a student’s written consent to view or have access to the education record.

For purposes of disclosure of information about the student to school officials with legitimate educational interests, a “school official” is a person employed by CSU in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel in an educational role and health staff); a person or company with whom CSU has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); or a person serving on the governing board of CSU; or a student serving on an official committee, or in a volunteer capacity, such as a peer mentor or member of a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. Such officials have legitimate educational interests when they need to review a student’s education records to fulfill their responsibilities to CSU. As an example of a company with whom CSU has contracted, CSU works with the National Student Clearinghouse which provides a Current Enrollment Verification Certificate and/or degree verification to students and vendors indicating whether the students are enrolled for part-time or full-time status at CSU, or have received a degree.

Furthermore, CSU discloses students’ education records without consent, upon request, to officials of other schools in which a student seeks to or intends to enroll.

Students can authorize the release of their private information through FAMweb (http://parentsandfamily.colostate.edu/famweb), a secure online portal that provides limited access to a student’s education records to families and trusted individuals designated by the student. In RAMweb, the secure online student portal, the student sets permissions to allow others to access certain categories of education records that are frequently requested for release. The following types of student information can be viewed in FAMweb:

- eBilling information
- Grades for the last completed term
- Unofficial transcript
- Class schedule for the semester in session
- Tax information

An exception to the requirement for prior authorization for release of records exists for public release of “directory information” which is published in university directories and may be released to third parties. FERPA allows a student to limit the release of directory information; see the Registrar’s website (http://registrar.colostate.edu/student-resources/ferpa-student-privacy) for procedures to apply restrictions on directory information.

Colorado State defines “directory information” as the following:

- Student name
- Current mailing address
- E-Mail address
- Telephone number
- Major field of study
- Classification level (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, graduate)
- Dates of attendance
- Current or previous enrollment status (full-time, half-time, three-quarters, and/or less than half-time)
- Anticipated date/term of graduation and expected degree(s)
- Honors and degrees awarded
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Height and weight of athletic team members
- Video and photographic images of students with the exception of the official CSU identification photograph

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by CSU 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 Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.
Personally Identifiable (Private) Information
Personally identifiable, or private, information includes age, date and place of birth. It also includes grades, Social Security number, CSUID number, class schedule, residency, and class rank. None of these items may be released without the student’s permission, except as otherwise allowed by FERPA.

Deceased Student Information Disclosure
Due to the sensitivity and privacy issues involved in student deaths, a Confidential Information alert will be placed on the deceased student’s accounts and records to block public access to all personal and academic information once verification of the death is confirmed.

Access to Student’s and their Family’s Contact Information
CSU does not provide a service of producing student directory information lists for external requestors. Student directory information is available by individual name search in the Find People (http://search.colostate.edu/search-directory.aspx) public/online directory accessed through the CSU web page. Requests for family contact information (e.g., invitations to honorary societies or marketing for care packages) are limited and require advance approval from the Dean of Students.

Further information about CSU’s FERPA policy (http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=591) and related guidance and resources are available from the Office of the Registrar (http://registrar.colostate.edu).