FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT

Worcester State University complies fully with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. This federal law protects the privacy of education records, establishes the rights of students to:

1. Inspect and review their education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access. Students should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department or other appropriate official written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the University official to whom the request was submitted does not maintain the records, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. Request the amendment of the education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the University to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the University 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 University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the University 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. File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning the alleged failures by Worcester State University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

   FAMILY POLICY COMPLIANCE OFFICE
   DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INDEPENDENCE
   AVENUE, SW
   WASHINGTON, DC 20202-4605

Worcester State University accords all the rights under the law to students who are declared independent. No one outside the institution shall have access to nor will the institution disclose any information from students' education records without the written consent of students except to personnel within the institution, to officials of other institutions in which students seek to enroll, to persons or organizations providing students' financial aid, to accrediting agencies carrying out their accreditation function, to persons in compliance with a judicial order, and to persons in an emergency in order to protect the health or safety of students or other persons. All these exceptions are permitted under the Act. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); 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. At its discretion the institution may provide Directory information in accordance with the provisions of the Act to include: student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, degree and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight of members of athletic teams, and other similar information. Currently enrolled students may withhold disclosure of Directory Information by notifying the Registrar in writing of the request prior to the end of the first week of classes in the Fall. Such requests will be honored for the duration of the academic year—September through August; therefore, authorization to withhold Directory information must be filed annually with the Registrar. The University assumes that failure on the part of the student to specifically request the withholding of categories of Directory Information indicates individual approval of disclosure. A request to withhold the above data in no way restricts internal use of the material by the University. In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, the University reserves the right to disclose information to parents of a student under 18 and/or the parents of a student who is dependent upon such parents for Federal Income Tax purposes.