

## Student Records

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### Confidentiality of Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. 1232g, is a federal law that protects the confidentiality of student educational records. Snead State Community College officials recognize their obligation to exercise discretion in recording and disseminating information about a student. To implement this law and to meet the obligation to the student, a written institutional policy governing student records has been formulated. Annual notification will be made to Snead State students of their rights relative to educational records via the College Catalog. For purposes of this policy, a student is defined as an individual who has been admitted and is enrolled or has been enrolled at the College. A student has the right of access to his/her educational records and may inspect and review the information contained therein. Exceptions to a student's rights of access are stated in the college policy. Educational records refer to all records maintained directly pertaining to an individual as a student. At the postsecondary level, parents have no inherent right to inspect a student's education record. The right to inspect is limited solely to the student.

#### Distance Education Privacy

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Procedures for protecting distance education student privacy:

1. **FERPA:** Snead State Community College protects the privacy of all students, including those enrolled in distance education courses, through the strict adherence of the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974* (FERPA). The official FERPA statement is available for student and public view through the Snead State website and College Catalog. Snead State employees complete required FERPA training annually.
2. **Student Number (A#):** Snead State issues each student a nine-digit student identification number. This number becomes the unique identifier for all students throughout their academic history at the College. The A# differs from the student's social security number.
3. **Secure Login and Password:** The A# is required to access Blackboard, Snead State's learning management system. Each Blackboard user enters his/her nine-digit A# as the user ID and personal password to access the system. All parties accept responsibility for the security of their personal passwords and must not share them with anyone. All parties are strongly encouraged to change their passwords at least every 90 days.
4. **Blackboard Privacy Features:**  
Faculty are restricted to accessing information associated with the specific courses within Blackboard they are teaching, or assisting in teaching.

The Associate Dean for Online Learning and designated Blackboard administrators may access user information within Blackboard to assist users.

Students are restricted to courses for which they are enrolled. If a student drops or withdraws from a course, access to the course in Blackboard is automatically disabled.

Course and user profile information within Blackboard is not visible to anyone without a Blackboard account. Guest access to courses is not allowed.

Blackboard's Privacy Options feature allows users to control the release of personal information, and allows students to block communication from other students on a course-by-course basis.

Students enrolled in distance education courses are expected to communicate with instructors via the messaging system contained within the Blackboard learning management system. This is to ensure privacy associated with the unique login and password attached with the student

## **Student Access to Records**

### **• The student has the following rights:**

1. To inspect and review contents of educational records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access;
2. To be given responses by the Director of Admissions and Records to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of these records;
3. To request amendment of any part of these records considered by the student to be inaccurate or misleading;
4. To be afforded hearings, should the requests to amend the records be declined;
5. 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; and
6. To file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Snead State Community College to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

### **• The student does not have access to the following records:**

1. Financial information submitted by parents;
2. Confidential letters and recommendations placed in the educational record prior to January 1, 1975, provided these letters were collected under established policies of confidentiality and were used only for the purposes for which they were specifically collected;
3. Confidential letters and statements of recommendation placed in the records after January 1, 1975, to which the student has waived his/her right to inspect and review and that are related to the student's admission, application for employment or job placement, or receipt of honors;
4. Education records containing information about more than one student; however, in such cases, access will be permitted to that part of the record which pertains only to the inquiring student;
5. Instructional, supervisory, administrative, and certain educational personnel records that are in the sole possession of the maker;
6. Campus law enforcement unit records;
7. Employment records, except when such employment requires that the person be a student;
8. Institutional records that contain only information relating to a person after that person is no longer a student at the College; and
9. Physical or mental health records created or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professionals.

### **• Procedures for Access**

The Director of Admissions and Records may require that a college official be present when a student inspects and reviews his/her educational records. A student should submit to the Director of Admissions and Records a "Request to View Records Form" that identifies the record(s) he/she wishes to inspect. If it is an inappropriate time to retrieve the record(s) on short notice, the Director of Admissions and Records 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 Director of Admissions and Records, the student will be advised of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed. Any questions concerning a student's access to records should be directed to the Director of Admissions and Records.

### **• Amendment of Education Records**

A student may ask for amendment of a record that he/she believes is inaccurate or misleading. The student should make the request in writing to the Chief Student Services Officer, clearly identify the part of the record requesting to be changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the decision is not to amend the record as requested by the student, the Chief Student Services Officer will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his/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.

### **• Release of Directory Information**

The College may release directory information to others without the necessity of obtaining permission from the student. Directory information to be released includes:

1. Student's name, address (local and permanent), and telephone number;
2. E-mail address;
3. Date and place of birth;
4. Major field of study;
5. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
6. Weight and height statistics for athletic team members;
7. Dates of attendance;
8. Grade level;
9. Enrollment status;
10. Degrees and awards received;
11. Previous educational college most recently attended;
12. Photographs; and
13. Honors.

*If a student does not wish directory information release, he/she may so indicate by notifying the Chief Student Services Officer in writing at the time of registration, and the College will withhold the information during that particular semester. The request for nondisclosure of directory information should be renewed each semester.*

Directory information will not be disclosed to private or profitmaking entities other than employers, prospective employers, or representatives of the news media. Directory information will be released only on the condition that the party to whom the information is disclosed will not disclose the information to any other party without prior written consent of the student. When directory information is disclosed to a college, agency, or organization, such information may be used by its officers, employees, and agents but only for the purposes for which the disclosure was made.

#### • **Release of Educational Records**

The student may request release of copies of those educational records that are subject to release. The student must submit a written request in the Office of Student Services and specify the following information:

1. Record to be released;
2. Purpose of disclosure; and
3. Party and address to whom information is to be released.

All requests must have the student's signature (not printed name) in the space provided for the signature and the date. Copies of transcripts from other colleges or universities are not released to the student or other parties. A student may request to view his/her educational records under the supervision of the Director of Admissions and Records. Student educational records may be released to the following without prior written consent from the student:

1. School officials within the College who have been determined by the College to have a legitimate educational interest; School officials include advisors and instructors who are involved in advising students, administrators who assist in counseling and who advise students with other problems, professional staff and clerical staff who directly relate to the administrative task of the College, College law enforcement officials, College attorneys, auditors, student workers, and a student serving on an official College committee. A school official is determined to have legitimate educational interest if the information requested is necessary for that official to a) perform appropriate tasks that are specified in his/her position description or by a contract agreement; b) perform a task related to a student's education; c) perform a task related to the discipline of a student; or d) provide a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.
2. Authorized representatives of the Comptroller General of the United States, the Secretary of the Department of Education, or state educational authorities;
3. Veterans Administration officials;

4. Organizations providing financial aid to students, or determining financial aid decisions concerning eligibility, amount, condition, and enforcement of terms of said aid;
5. Organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the College to develop, validate, and administer predictive tests, to administer student aid programs, or to improve instruction. Those organizations may not disclose personally identifiable information on students, and information secured must be destroyed when no longer needed for their projects.
6. Accrediting organizations carrying out their accrediting functions;
7. Persons in compliance with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena, provided that the College makes a reasonable attempt to notify the student in advance of compliance;
8. Persons in an emergency, if the knowledge of information, in fact, is necessary to protect the health or safety of students or other persons; and
9. Alleged victims of any crime of violence of the results of any institutional disciplinary proceeding against the alleged perpetrator of that crime with respect to that crime.

The Office of Student Services will maintain records of all requests and disclosures of personally identifiable information from the educational records of a student except for information requested in writing by the student and directory information. The student may inspect the record of requests, disclosures, and the legitimate interests of the parties requesting or obtaining information. Any student who believes that his/her rights under the Privacy Act have been violated by the College may notify and request assistance from the Vice President/Chief Student Services Officer and may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-5920.