

South Puget Sound Community College

Federal Education and Privacy Act (FERPA) Procedures

All SPSCC employees who have access to any student information must be aware of their responsibility in handling that information. Please follow these guidelines:

Keep this document nearby for reference.

- If you have any access to our electronic records, do not leave your terminal logged on if you are planning to leave the area. Exit to the student data base system.
- Be aware of the accessibility of your work area to the public. Cover or file student records; do not leave anything visible on your desk.
- If you use a network printer, get the copies out quickly in order to maintain confidentiality.
- When finished with confidential information, it must be shredded –not just thrown in the trash bin. This may include phone messages or personal notes.
- Class rosters and grade scanners must be shredded since they contain student name, ID numbers, attendance and phone number. They should not be thrown in the trash or recycling bin at home or the college. Instructors may not post class rosters, grade scanners, exam scores and/ or final; grades on their office door.
- Before you share students' e-mail address (for example in a class's group email), provide students with a chance to provide a non-identifiable alternative.
- Remember even discussing student records or mentioning that a student attends SPSCC can be a breach of confidentiality. **You do not know who has placed a "non-Disclosure" request on their record, so you must assume every student has.**
- If you are asked to release information, such as verifying class attendance or a grade, please gain student permission first.
- If you are asked to write a letter of recommendation for a student, please keep the following in mind: If you are making statements from personal observation and knowledge, a written release from the student is not required. If you are describing information from student educational record (grades, GPA, courses taken, etc.) then you must have the students' written permission to provide that information and the student has the right to read the letter of recommendation written by you, since it contains educational record information.
- Requests for information from law enforcement agencies should be referred to Enrollment services or Security.
- If you have any doubts about releasing information or if there is any emergency situation, contact the Dean of Enrollment services. **When you receive an inquiry, please say "I am sorry, I do not have access to such information; I will refer you to our Enrollment Services Office." Or Say "I am sorry, but I am unable to respond to this type of request: I will refer you to our Enrollment Services Office."**