



Policy 4001: STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

Policy Category: Students

Responsible Administrator: Vice President for Student Affairs

Related Procedures and Documents:

[Notice of Student Privacy Rights](#)

[“Request to Prevent Disclosure of Directory Information”](#) Form;

[“Authorization to Release Education Information”](#) Form

Related College Policies: [Policy Statement on Privacy and Confidentiality](#)

I. SCOPE

This policy applies to and is binding on all College students and on all employees who, as part of their employment duties, have access to student records.

II. POLICY STATEMENT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) of 1974, as amended, is a federal law designed to protect students’ education records and ensure that institutions of higher education maintain the confidentiality of these education records. Students’ primary rights under FERPA are the right to inspect and review their education records, to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from these records, and to have a mechanism for seeking to amend these records. Educational institutions must notify students annually of their FERPA rights in accordance with the institution’s adopted procedures. Suffolk County Community College (“SCCC” or “the College”) notifies students of their FERPA rights by publication in the schedule of classes, College catalog, student handbook, and on the College’s website. It is the responsibility of the Office of the College Registrar to ensure that appropriate notification occurs.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Student – any person who attends or has attended SCCC (i.e., taking either credit or non- credit courses), and for whom SCCC maintains education records.
- B. Education Record – any record maintained by SCCC (or an agent of SCCC) that is directly related to a student, except as listed below.

Education records do not include:

- Medical treatment records¹
 - sole possession records (e.g., private notes of a faculty member)
 - records created and maintained by the College Office of Public Safety for purposes of law enforcement
 - employment records, other than records related to student employment at the College (e.g., work-study)
 - alumni records
 - financial records of students' parents
- C. Personally Identifiable Information (“PII”) – this information includes, but is not limited to the student’s name, the names of student’s parents and other family members, social security number, student ID number, biographical information such as the student’s date and place of birth, and other similar information which would allow identification of the student.
- D. College Official – a person employed by SCCC in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research or support staff position; a person or company retained as a contractor, consultant, or agent to whom the College has outsourced certain services, functions, or special tasks, such as an attorney, auditor, or a collections firm; a person serving on the Board of Trustees; a student serving in an official capacity, such as membership on a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another College official in carrying out their duties.

IV. POLICY

A. STUDENTS’ RIGHTS TO INSPECT AND ACCESS THEIR EDUCATION RECORDS

1. Students may review the contents of their education records by making a written request to the Chief Campus Student Affairs Officer on their home campus. A meeting will be scheduled within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 45 days from the day the written request is received by the College, at which time the records may be reviewed.
2. Original records may not be removed from the College. Students may receive copies of their education records through established procedures. However, copies of records that did not originate at SCCC, such as high school or transcripts from other colleges, will not be provided.
3. SCCC is not required to permit students to review the following records:
 - financial information submitted by their parents
 - confidential letters and recommendations associated with admissions, employment, or job placement or honors to which students have waived their rights of inspection and review

¹ Records made or maintained by a psychiatrist, psychologist, physician or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in his professional or paraprofessional capacity, or assisting in that capacity, and which are made, maintained, or used only in connection with the provision of treatment to the student, and are not available to anyone other than persons providing such treatment, expect that such records can be personally reviewed by a physician or other appropriate professional of the student’s choice.

- confidential letters and recommendations placed in students' files prior to January 1, 1975, provided those letters were collected under established policies of confidentiality and were used only for the purposes for which they were collected
- education records containing information about more than one student, in which case SCCC will permit access only to that portion of the record which pertains to the inquiring student.

B. STUDENTS' RIGHTS TO CHALLENGE AND CORRECT THEIR EDUCATION RECORDS

1. If a student feels that their education records contain information that is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of the student's right of privacy, a request may be made to have these records amended. The student should make a written request to the Chief Campus Student Affairs Officer, identifying the part of the record to be amended, and the reason for the request. The Student Affairs Officer will discuss the matter with the student and attempt to arrive at a mutually-acceptable resolution.
2. If an agreement cannot be reached, the student may request a hearing to challenge the contents of the record. A hearing will be conducted by a hearing panel comprised of the College Registrar or designee, a student selected by the Director of Campus Activities (preferably from the student governing body), a faculty member selected by the Chief Campus Academic Affairs Officer, and the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, who will serve as the non-voting chairperson. The hearing will be conducted within a reasonable amount of time after the student's request. The student may elect to be assisted by an advisor or attorney at the student's expense.
3. If the hearing panel determines that the record in question does, in fact, contain information that is misleading, inaccurate or a violation of the student's right of privacy, the panel will notify the student of such determination, in writing, within five (5) business days after the close of the hearing. If the hearing panel determines that the record does not contain information that is misleading, inaccurate or a violation of the student's right of privacy, the panel will notify the student of such determination, in writing, within five (5) business days after the close of the hearing, and advise, further, that the student may submit a written statement, disagreeing with the decision. This statement will be attached to the challenged record and maintained by SCCC as part of the student's education record.

C. STUDENTS' RIGHTS TO PROVIDE WRITTEN CONSENT BEFORE COLLEGE DISCLOSES THEIR EDUCATION RECORDS TO THIRD PARTIES

The College will not disclose personally identifiable information contained in a student's education records to any third parties without the prior written consent of the student, except in the following circumstances, as authorized by FERPA.

The following disclosures are permitted without students' written consent:

1. To College officials who have a legitimate educational interest in a student's records. A

College official has a legitimate educational interest in reviewing or assessing a student's records if the official is:

- performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or contract;
 - performing a task directly related to a student's education
 - performing a task related to student discipline;
 - providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family;
 - maintaining the safety and security of the campus.
2. To appropriate parties (such as law enforcement officials and SCCC Public Safety Officers, public health officials, trained medical personnel, including school nurse, physician and psychologist, and parents) in connection with a health or safety emergency, if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals;
 3. To officials of another institution in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or with which SCCC has a joint admissions and/or articulation agreement;
 4. To certain officials of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Comptroller and U.S. Attorney General, and state and county educational authorities, in connection with audit or evaluation of certain state- or federally-supported education programs, or improvement in instruction;
 5. To appropriate officials in connection with a student's request for or receipt of financial aid to determine the eligibility, amount or conditions of the financial aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid;
 6. To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of SCCC or other educational agencies, upon the prior approval of the College Registrar, in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs;
 7. to accrediting organizations to carry out their functions;
 8. To comply with a federal or New York State judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena² (i.e., after providing the student with written notification and a reasonable amount of time to take appropriate legal action, if warranted, and notify the College, accordingly), unless the disclosure is in compliance with a federal grand jury subpoena or any other subpoena issued for law enforcement purposes where the court or other issuing agency has ordered that the existence or the contents of the subpoena or the information furnished in response to the subpoena not be disclosed. The Office Legal Affairs should be contacted if a subpoena for student records which directs or requests that the student not be informed is received.
 9. Disclosures of Directory Information, as designated by SCCC, in accordance with the provisions outlined under paragraph (F), herein.

²NOTE: subpoenas served on SCCC for production of student records must be forwarded immediately to the Office of Legal Affairs to ensure timely compliance.

10. To the alleged victim of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense in connection with the final results of any disciplinary proceeding conducted by SCCC against the alleged perpetrator of said offense;
11. To the general public of the final results of a disciplinary proceeding, if the College determines that the student is an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense and the student has committed a violation of the College's Code of Conduct. Information which may be disclosed shall be limited to: the name of the student, the violation committed, and the sanction imposed against the student by the College. Names of any other students involved (i.e., victim or witness) may only be disclosed upon the written consent of such other students.
12. Disclosure is to the student's parent about the student's violation of any Federal, State or local law, or any policy of the College which governs the use and possession of drugs or alcohol, but only if the student is under 21 years of age.
13. To U.S. military recruiters pursuant to the Solomon Amendment;
14. to a court or legal counsel if a student or parent has initiated legal action against SCCC, or if SCCC has begun legal action against a student or parent;
15. As needed, to comply with other federal legislation passed subsequent to FERPA, which supersedes FERPA confidentiality requirements.

D. DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Certain information, known as "Directory Information," may be released by SCCC without the prior consent of the student, if considered appropriate by College officials. Directory Information is information which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if it is released.

1. Suffolk County Community College designates the following items relating to students as Directory Information:
 - Student's name
 - Address (permanent, local and email)
 - Telephone number (permanent and local)
 - Photograph
 - Dates and status of enrollment
 - Major field of study
 - Honors, awards or special recognition
 - Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team
 - Prior schools attended and degrees awarded
 - Participation in officially-recognized activities and sports
2. Only staff members in the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Student Affairs or the Office of Legal Affairs, who have received appropriate FERPA training, may respond to requests for student Directory Information.

3. Requests for Directory Information must be submitted in writing, to the Office of the Registrar.
4. **Opting Out of Directory Information:** A student may request that the College not release their Directory Information under any circumstances by completing the [“Request to Prevent Disclosure of Directory Information” form](#). This form must be submitted to the campus Registrar’s Office, and will be in effect until the student revokes the request in writing.

E. PROCEDURES FOR DISCLOSURE OF EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

1. The Registrar’s Office on each campus will maintain a record of all requests for and/or disclosures of information from a student’s education record. The record will indicate the name of the party making the request, any additional parties, if any, to whom such information may be re-disclosed, and the party’s reason for requesting the information.
2. Any requests for non-directory information (e.g., student’s grades or GPA) require a signed release from the student, unless they fall into one of the FERPA recognized permissible disclosures, as listed in section E of this Policy.
3. Requests for letters of recommendation that will contain protected information (grades, GPA, etc.) made by students to College officials require a signed “Authorization to Release Education Information” form.
4. GPAs are not to be included in letters or other printed material, or discussed in public, without a student’s written consent.
5. Under no circumstance may any part of a student’s social security number be displayed, including on rosters, computer-generated reports and final grade-posting by faculty. It is also impermissible for the student I.D. number to be used for grade-posting.
6. While SCCC allows student workers to be placed in the Registrar and Dean of Student Services Offices, students will not be involved in any aspect of the Directory Information release process. Student workers in all College offices are required to sign a confidentiality statement upon assignment.

F. RIGHT TO FILE A COMPLAINT

A student who believes that Suffolk County Community College has not complied with the requirements of FERPA may file a complaint with the United States Department of Education’s [Family Policy Compliance Office](#):

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-4605

V. POLICY APPROVAL AND REVISION DATES:

Board of Trustees Approval: 9/13/2012; Revised: 5/12/2022; Revised: 10/20/2022