

Student Confidentiality/ Access Policy (FERPA)

Access to Student Educational Records by the Student

Students who want to review their educational records must make a written request to the Registrar's Office listing the item(s) of interest. Educational records include those files and their contents, which are maintained by official units of the university. Educational records do not include:

1. Records of instructional, administrative and educational personnel that are the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any individual except a temporary substitute authorized by the maker.
2. Records of a law enforcement unit.
3. Student health and counseling records.
4. Employment or alumni records.

Students may not inspect and review the following:

1. Financial records of parents or guardians.
2. Confidential letters and recommendations associated with admissions, employment or job placement, or honors to which they have waived their rights of inspection and review.
3. Education records containing information about more than one student, in which case the institution will permit access only to that part of the record that pertains to the inquiring student.

Students may have copies of their records with the following exceptions: academic records for which a financial hold exists, or transcripts of an original or source document which exists elsewhere. Students will be charged for these copies.

Students who believe that their educational records contain information that is inaccurate or misleading, or is otherwise in violation of their privacy or other rights, may discuss their concerns with the registrar. If the registrar agrees with the students' requests, the appropriate records will be amended. If the registrar does not agree, the students will be notified within 30 days that the records will not be amended and of their right to a hearing.

Student requests for a hearing must be made to the Academic Dean in writing, specifically stating the nature of their disagreement with their educational records. The Academic Dean will appoint a Hearing Committee and schedule a hearing. The Committee will include: a representative from the Registrar's Office and the student's advisor or another faculty member from the school. The Academic Dean informs the student of the time, date and place of the hearing. Students may present evidence relevant to the issues raised and may be assisted or represented at the hearing by one or more persons of their choice, including attorneys, at the student's expense.

Decisions of the Hearing Committee will be final, based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, will consist of written statements summarizing the evidence and stating the reasons for the decisions and will be delivered to all parties concerned. If the decision is in favor of the students, the educational records will be corrected or amended.

If the decision is unsatisfactory to the student, the student may submit a statement commenting on the information in his or her records, or statements setting forth any reasons for disagreeing with the Hearing

Committee's decision. The statements will be placed in the education records, maintained as part of the students' records, and released whenever the records in question are disclosed.

Access to Student Educational Records by Others

1. Directory Information:

By the end of the first week of fall registration, the Registrar's Office sends to students a notice of the student's right not to have student directory information released. Students may, at any time, request that directory information not be released by writing to the Registrar's Office. Information already published will not be affected by this request. Without such written request, the university may release directory information to outside parties if considered appropriate. Students may request in writing that future releases of directory information not be made.

Directory information includes: name, address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, photograph and participation in officially recognized activities. Only the Registrar's Office should disseminate directory information. **All inquiries for such information should be forwarded to the Registrar's Office.**

Student Services may distribute in-school directories to students if the school adheres to this policy. If additional information is added, the school must receive signed waivers from students whose names and other information will appear in the directory. Names or lists must not be released to outside parties.

2. Non-directory Information:

The university maintains the confidentiality of student educational records and such non-directory information may be released only with the students' written request. However, information may be released to the following:

1. Officials of other institutions in which students seek to enroll.
2. Persons or organizations providing students financial aid.
3. Accrediting agencies carrying out their accreditation function.
4. Persons in compliance with a judicial order.
5. Persons in an emergency in order to protect the health or safety of students or other persons.

Health and counseling records may be provided to physicians and licensed psychologists of the students' choosing.

Faculty and staff access to student educational records for administrative reasons is allowed provided that such persons are properly identified and can demonstrate a legitimate educational interest in the material. Student workers may have access to appropriate information as designated by the dean or department head. If a breach of confidentiality occurs, appropriate formal disciplinary action will be taken. In order to remind the Bethel College community of the confidentiality policy, the Registrar's Office will inform the Administration, the Faculty, and the students at the Student orientation and the Faculty meetings.

3. Parental Access

The definition of "Student" under FERPA refers to a person who either has reached the age of 18 or who is attending an institution of post-secondary education. At the post-secondary level parents have no inherent rights to inspect student records; this right is limited solely to the student. It is the College's policy to release academic or financial information to parents and/or guardians of students (whether or not the student has

reached the age of 18) only upon the student's written authorization. The student may complete a "Student Information Release" (FERPA waiver), available in the Registrar's Office to grant this authorization.