

# POLICY 3.07: RELEASE OF INFORMATION

## Policy

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (Buckley Amendment), no information pertaining to a student's education record will be released without the written consent of that student.

An education record consists of the following information:

- Academic Records
- Disciplinary Records
- Financial Records
- Health Records

Students are informed of their rights via the "Annual FERPA Notification" that is posted to the institutional website and provided during registration and orientation.

VFMC has the right to disclose educational records without a student's written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with a legitimate educational interest. A school official has a legitimate academic interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her responsibility.

A school official is a person employed by VFMC in an:

- administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement personnel and health staff)
- a person or company with whom VFMC has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using VFMC employees or officials. This includes our legal counsel, auditors, and collection agencies
- a person serving on the College Oversight Committee or the Board of Trustees
- designated members of the Chain of Command.

VFMC, upon request, may disclose educational records, without consent, to officials of another school in which a student seeks to enroll. VFMC makes a reasonable attempt to notify each student of these disclosures.

The only information that may be released without the student's permission is Directory Information. Directory Information is data, determined by the College Registrar's Office that may be released by a school official without written consent from the student. Directory Information is not normally considered a violation of a person's privacy. students have the right to "block" the institute from distributing directory information.

VFMC also has the right to release directory information without a student's written consent. The following is considered directory information by VFMC:

- Student's name
- Honors
- Field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Enrollment status (full time/part time)
- Degrees awarded
- Participation in recognized athletic activities and extracurricular activities
- Rank in Chain of Command
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams

Directory Information CAN NEVER include a student's:

- Race
- Gender
- Social Security Number
- Grades
- GPA
- Class schedule
- County of citizenship
- Religion
- Disciplinary action
- Academic status (dismissal/probation)

This information CAN NEVER be released without the written permission of the student.

A VFMAC employee does not have permission to disclose any personally identifiable information regarding a student, to a third party, without the written consent of the student.

Personally identifiable information includes:

1. Name of student, student's parent, or any other family member
2. student's campus or home address
3. A personal identifier (social security number, student ID number)
4. A list of personal characteristics or other information which would make the student's identity traceable

### **Procedures for Release of Information**

At the beginning of a student's first term at VFMC, they are required to sign a FERPA Waiver for Academic and Disciplinary Information. The student has the right to sign the waiver indicating that no information can be released without their written permission.

If the student signs the form allowing VFMC (for disciplinary records) to release information to a third party, they will include the third party(s) name and the relationship of the third party(s) to them.

Information is only released per request by that third party, no information will be automatically sent to the third party. Information pertaining to grades is only released in writing, not over the phone or in an email.

Faculty and staff will be provided access to a spreadsheet of current students, and whether or not they have given permission for information pertaining to their education records to be released and to whom we may release the information.

If a faculty or staff member is contacted by a third party trying to gain access to information contained in a student's educational record, that the student has not given VFMC permission to release, the faculty or staff member is to automatically inform the individual that they cannot release any information and to contact the Registrar's Office. The Registrar will forward that individual to the correct overseer of the various sections of the student's educational record.

Each part of the student's educational records is administered and the release of that information is controlled by a specific office. The Offices which are responsible for release of specific information:

- Academic Records: Office of the Registrar (College)
- Disciplinary Records: Commandant's Office
- Health Records: Health Department
- Financial Records: Bursar's Office
- Counseling Records: Counseling Center
- Accommodations for Learning Disabilities: Academic Support Center (ASC)

Once a student has graduated, withdrawn, or been dismissed from VFMC, their educational record is sealed and the FERPA waiver is no longer valid.

All information from a student's educational record, that is requested to be released after they are no longer a current student, must have the written permission of the student.

If a request is made by a third party to release information from a former student's education record, that student must give permission in writing to release the information requested. All correspondence must be in writing, signed and the document must be notarized. No email correspondence for the release of information will be accepted.

If a student signs their written request in the presence of the responsible party releasing the information, notarization of the document is not necessary, and the responsible party will sign the document as a witness.

## **Requesting Copies of Educational Records**

Both current and former students may request copies of their educational records.

The “Request for Access to student Records Form” must be requested by the student. This form pertains to Academic and Disciplinary and ASC information only. Copies of health and financial records must be processed directly through those offices.

The form must be completed and returned to the appropriate office (Registrar, Commandant, and ASC). The Office has 15 business days to copy the records. A fee can be requested.

### **Policy Owner(s)**

- Provost
- Dean of College Services
- Registrar

### **Policy Access and Publication**

- Course Catalog
- Policy Manual

### **Policy Adoption and Revision History**

- Adopted: 2021
- Revised: 2021
- Revised: 2022