

# STUDENT RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Certain items of information about individual students are fundamental to the educational process and must be recorded. This recorded data concerning students is used for only clearly defined purposes and is safeguarded and controlled to avoid violations of personal privacy.

SPU has the responsibility to effectively supervise any access to and/or release of official information about its students. In this regard, SPU is committed to protecting the right of privacy of all individuals about whom it holds information, records, and files. Access to such records is restricted to the student concerned, to parents of a dependent student, to others with the student's written consent, to officials within the University, and to a court of competent legal jurisdiction.

The policies outlined on this page have been established to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (<http://spu.edu/student-academic-services/ferpa/>) of 1974 (hereafter referred to as the "Act").

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## Public Information

The Act provides that public "directory information" about a student may be made available to third parties without permission of the student. However, public notices must be given of intent to publish the information, so that those students wishing to withhold information from public access (such as an unlisted telephone number) may do so.

A definition of directory information may be found in Section V, part E of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (<http://spu.edu/student-academic-services/ferpa/>) page.

## Release of Information

With the exception of directory information, no information in any student file may be released to any individual or organization without prior written consent of the student. When disclosure of information is mandated by court order or subpoena, the staff member receiving such orders must immediately notify in writing the student concerned, prior to compliance with the legal order.

Information from University records about students is released for approved research purposes only if the identity of the student involved is fully protected.

## Student Access

With certain exceptions, official student information collected and maintained by SPU is available for inspection and review at the written request of the student. Clarification of exceptions may be obtained by contacting the University Registrar.

A request for general access to all official records maintained by the University must be made in writing to the University Registrar. A request for access to information maintained by a particular office may be

addressed to the administrative head of that office. When making such a request, the student must provide proper identification.

The designated staff person must supervise the review of the contents of the record with the student. The student is free to make notes concerning the contents, but no material may be removed from the record. Student requests for access to appropriate information must be granted within 45 days of the written request.

If health reasons or extreme distance from the University prevent the student from inspecting the education record, then copies of specific education records will be made. The student must pay all copying expenses in advance of release of the record. Unless stipulated otherwise in the University's current Undergraduate or Graduate Catalog, all copies are 25 cents per page.

## Confidentiality

The University allows any enrolled student the option of becoming confidential in the computer system to protect the student's identity from outside sources.

A request for confidentiality must be submitted in person to the Office of the Registrar. When an SPU student requests their records and identity to be flagged as confidential, the following ramifications may apply:

- The University will respond to inquiries about the confidential student as though the student is not known at the University.
- The confidential student may not obtain any information about records over the telephone, but must appear in person with proper identification to make any inquiry.
- The confidential student will not appear in any student publications or listings, including, but not limited to, the Commencement brochure and the online directory.

Student loan agencies may have difficulties accessing information necessary to carry out their functions. Since the University will not be able to confirm attendance, the confidential student's loans could possibly be placed into repayment status.

## Before Graduation

- A student graduating from the University should remove the confidentiality status at the time of graduation or at the time the student leaves the University.
- If the confidentiality status is not removed, the student may have difficulty obtaining information, and staff may be unable to identify them quickly or easily.
- If the confidentiality status is not removed, this confidential status could prevent future employers from gaining access to educational records.

Students who wish to remove their confidential status must come in person to the Office of the Registrar with proper identification.

## Student Correction of Education Records

A primary function of the Office of the Registrar is to uphold academic integrity by ensuring that records of a student's course registration, course completion, and grades are accurate and comprehensive. Therefore, academic history data are not subject to erasure by request under the European Union General Data Protection Regulations or any other regulation.

Students who believe that information contained in their education records is inaccurate, misleading, or violates privacy or other rights, may request that the University amend the records. The first step is to contact the University Registrar (<http://spu.edu/administration/office-of-the-registrar/meet-the-staff/>) or records custodian.

The University will decide within a reasonable period of time whether or not to comply with the student's request. If the University declines to amend the student's records, it will inform the student of the right to a hearing. Upon written request, the University will provide an opportunity for a hearing to deliberate the student's case. However, a hearing may not be requested by a student to contest the assignment of a grade.

If the hearing panel determines that the student's challenge is without merit, the student may place in their record a statement commenting upon the information and setting forth reasons for disagreeing with the University's decision. For more information, view a complete copy of the University's policy concerning the Act (<http://spu.edu/administration/office-of-the-registrar/resources/ferpa/>).

Students have the right to file complaints concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of the Act.

Such complaints should be addressed to

Family Policy Compliance Office  
Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave. SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901