



CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE PROMOTES interactive problem solving and open communication between students and their families. However, the College is required to share student information in accordance with federal and state regulations. The dominant regulation affecting student information is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). FERPA requires Champlain faculty, staff and representatives to discuss only the content of student's education record with their parents and guardians if specific regulations are met. Below is a list of frequently asked questions to help you understand these regulations.

*Q: What is FERPA?*

A: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents the right to access their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. When a student turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents to the student.

*Q: What can I do if I want faculty and staff to be able to talk to my parents about my education record?*

A: Simply complete the enclosed "Consent to Release of Education Records" form and return it to the Advising and Registration Center.

*Q: Can I submit the waiver form online?*

A: Not at this time. The U.S. Department of Education recently passed legislation allowing an electronic consent for the release of records. Champlain is in the process of adjusting procedures to permit submitting the waiver form online. However, until the new process is in place, it is necessary for students to submit the paper form.

*Q: Once I submit the waiver form, how long is it in effect?*

A: Consent will remain in effect until a student submits a subsequent written request to the Advising and Registration Center, revoking their consent to release information.

*Q: Do parents or guardians of college students have the right to see their children's education records? Does it make a difference if they are paying the tuition?*

A: The rights under FERPA transfer from parent to student once the student turns 18 or enters a postsecondary institution. The rights are not waived based upon who is paying for the student's education. An institution may disclose information from a student's education record to the parents of the student without the student's consent if the student is a dependent for federal income tax purposes. Neither the age of the student nor the parent's status as a custodial parent is relevant. If a student is claimed as a dependent by either parent for tax purposes, then either parent may have access under this provision. While Champlain will accept documentation of dependent status, we encourage submission of the waiver as a preferred approach to the release of education records since it does not have to be submitted annually.

*Q: What constitutes an education record?*

A: An education record is any record maintained by the institution that contains information directly related to a student. This includes, but is not limited to, grade information, disciplinary documentation and billing and financial aid data.

*Q: What is not an education record?*

A: Records not considered part of an education record include, but are not limited to, records of the law enforcement unit of an educational institution, records made or maintained by a physician or other recognized professional acting in his or her professional capacity, and records that only contain information about an individual after he or she is no longer a student at the institution.

*Q: Under what circumstances may an institution disclose information from education records without consent?*

A: There are several exceptions to FERPA's general prior consent rule that are set forth in the statute and the regulations. One exception is that institutions may disclose "directory information" at their discretion.

*Q: What is "directory information"?*

A: Champlain defines directory information as the following: name, sex, date and place of birth, marital status, home and school address, email address, phone number, major field of study, extracurricular activities, dates of attendance, degrees, honors or awards, photograph or video image, the most recent education institution attended, and parents' names, addresses and phone numbers.

*Q: What should I do if I want my "directory information" handled as confidential information?*

A: Students may choose at any time to have their directory information marked confidential. To do so, students must submit written notification to the Advising and Registration Center. Please consider carefully the consequences of a decision to withhold directory information. The College will honor your request to withhold directory information from non-institutional persons or organizations. Regardless of the effect upon you, Champlain assumes no liability as a result of honoring your instructions to withhold this information.

*Q: May an institution disclose to a parent, without the student's consent, information regarding a student's violation of the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance?*

A: Yes, if the student is under the age of 21 at the time of the disclosure. FERPA was amended in 1998 to allow such disclosures. Also, if the student is a "dependent student" as defined in FERPA, the institution may disclose such information, regardless of the age of the student.