



Vermont
College of
Fine Arts

VERMONT COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS ACADEMIC POLICIES

STUDENT RIGHT TO PRIVACY (FERPA)

Approved: April 2009

POLICY:

Vermont College of Fine Arts complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended. The purpose of the act is to afford certain rights to students concerning their education records. The primary rights afforded are the right to inspect and review the education records, the right to seek to have the records amended and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from the records. The Act does not apply to students admitted to Vermont College of Fine Arts who have not officially enrolled. VCFA affords all of the rights under the law to its students.

PROCEDURE:

Educational Officials

FERPA specifies that VCFA staff and faculty and certain government or accrediting officials with a legitimate educational interest do have the right to review student records without consent. This includes any person employed by the college in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or other administrative position; individuals serving on the Board of Trustees; a student serving on an official committee (such as a grievance or disciplinary committee) or in a supervised Work Study position; individuals, organizations and other entities employed by or under contract to VCFA (such as an auditor, attorney, or collection agent); and other accrediting or financial aid agencies and state and federal officials conducting lawful activities. VCFA staff and faculty with legitimate access to education records must be aware of their FERPA obligations with respect to privacy and disclosure of student information.

Legitimate Educational Interest

Education officials have a legitimate educational interest when, in the exercise or completion of their administrative, supervisory, academic, research or other administrative responsibilities on behalf of the institution, incur the need to know specific information from education records.

Annual Notification

Students will be notified of their rights as stipulated by FERPA annually, by publication in the Student Handbook or any other method deemed appropriate by the Registrar.

Directory Information

Student records are confidential, with access limited to those directly involved in the administrative or academic process. In accordance with FERPA, the college will not release student educational information without the expressed, written consent of the student. There are, however, some exceptions. As specified under the provisions of FERPA, certain information is considered to be public information, or “directory information,” provided that students are given the opportunity to prohibit the disclosure of such information.

At VCFA, the following information is considered “directory (public) information”:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone #
- Email Address
- Photographs/Digital Images/Audio/Video
- Date of Birth
- Major Program of Study
- Class Schedule
- Dates of Attendance
- Grade Level
- Enrollment Status
- Degrees Received

Students have the right to withhold the release of “Directory Information.” To do so, a student must make a written request for withholding this information to the Registrar. All students making this request will be required to meet with the registrar. It should be noted that if a student asks for “Directory Information” to be withheld, it will be withheld from a variety of sources, including: friends, relatives, prospective employers, honor societies and the news media. Students should be aware that directory “blocks” are permanent and will not be removed without written request.

-Examples of other exceptions:

-Emergency situation

-Lawfully issued subpoena

-Educational “need to know” by appropriate faculty or staff at the college.

Students have the right to review any of their educational records. Students should submit to the Registrar and Program Director written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect.

Students have the right to seek amendment of educational records that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. They should write to the Registrar and Program Director, clearly identifying the part of the record they want changed and specifying why it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the Registrar and Program Director decide not to amend the record as requested by the student, the student will be notified of the decision and advised of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing. Students who disagree with the resolution of a challenge are allowed to document their objection, and this statement must be retained and released with the education record to which the student objected.

Students have the right to file complaints with the Department of Education concerning alleged failure by Vermont College of Fine Arts to comply with the law. Written complaints should be directed to the following office:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
600 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605
(202) 260-3887, Fax (202) 260-9001