

Santa Barbara City College Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Tips for Faculty

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of education records. FERPA governs the disclosure of education records maintained by an educational institution and access to those records.

SBCC maintains all student records in strict accordance with FERPA regulations. The responsibility for protecting student records belongs to all “school officials” (faculty, staff and administration). In order for “school officials” of the college to gain access to student records a “legitimate educational interest”, or “educational need to know”, must be established.

All students, regardless of age, are protected under FERPA. FERPA rights transfer from the parent to the student upon enrollment at an institution of higher education.

Students must authorize the release of their educational records to third parties (except for directory information). A student may file an Authorization for Release of Information to Parents Form in Admissions & Records. This authorization allows SBCC Admissions & Records to release documents (transcripts, verifications of enrollment, schedules, etc.) from the student record but does NOT permit a parent to advocate or negotiate with college faculty, staff and administrators regarding college grades, records, disciplinary procedures or actions related to academic standing on behalf of his/her student.

In the event you are approached by a third party (family member, partner, law enforcement) seeking information about a student in connection with an emergency, you are encouraged to refer the third party to Campus Security. Campus Security will determine if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals and take appropriate action. Contact Campus Security at 730-2400.

Faculty providing letters of recommendation on behalf of students are strongly encouraged to secure a written release if they intend to include information from the student record (grades, GPA, etc.) in the letter.

Grades may not be posted publicly by student name or SBCC Student ID number.

The password protecting of all electronic files containing student data is highly recommended.

Ensure that your Pipeline password is secure.

Tips for email:

- Do not include the student ID number in the subject line
- Communicate with students through their SBCC assigned emails when communicating any information from the student’s educational record

If you are concerned about a student who appears to be experiencing challenges or difficulties, you are encouraged to submit the online “Student of Concern” report which will alert campus professionals. The report will be confidentially researched and intervention will be provided when appropriate. The form is available on Pipeline under the Campus Security channel.

It is always better to err on the side of student privacy – when in doubt, don’t give it out!

Referrals and Resources:

- Ben Partee, Dean, Student Support Services
- Allison Curtis, Associate Dean, Student Support Services
- Admissions & Records Faculty Support webpage www.sbcc.edu/admissions/facultysupport
- Admissions & Records FERPA webpage www.sbcc.edu/admissions/ferpastudentprivacy