

# Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA") governs the privacy of student education records maintained by Bridgewater College. FERPA provides students access to their education records while also protecting their right to privacy, by limiting the disclosure of records without the students' consent. The following is a summary of the College's FERPA policy and is intended to assist all members of the Bridgewater College community in understanding the provisions of FERPA as they apply to Bridgewater College. A complete and current statement of the College's FERPA policy may be found on the College's website at <https://www.bridgewater.edu/legal/consumer-information/ferpa/>.

## Notification of FERPA Rights

FERPA affords eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. An "eligible student" under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution at any age. For purposes of the College's FERPA policy, a student is deemed to have "attended" Bridgewater College if he/she is currently, or was formerly, enrolled in a credit or non-credit class at the College. A student is enrolled in a class once he/she has registered for the class. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
3. The right to provide written consent before the College discloses personally identifiable information from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA or another statute or regulation authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-8520

## Disclosure without Consent

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's education records, without consent of the student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in 34 C.F.R. § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Those conditions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- To other College officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the records. A College official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the College.
- To officials of another College to which the student seeks or intends to enroll, or in which the student is already enrolled.
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received.
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code.
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- In connection with a health or safety emergency if the College determines that there is an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individual(s).
- Information the College has designated as "directory information" under 34 C.F.R. § 99.37 (see below).
- To parents of a student regarding the student's violation of any Federal, State, or local law, or of any rule or policy of the College, governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance if the College determines the student committed a disciplinary violation and the student is under the age of 21.

## Directory Information

The College has designated the following categories of student information as "Directory Information." FERPA permits the disclosure of Directory Information at the College's discretion, without prior written consent of the student.

- Name
- Date and place of birth
- Previous educational institutions attended and degrees awarded
- Current enrollment status
- Dates of attendance
- Current classification (e.g., first year student; full-time/part-time)
- Major(s)/Minor(s)
- Degree(s) sought
- Expected date of completion of degree requirements and graduation
- Degree(s) earned and dates awarded
- Past and present participation in officially recognized sports, activities and organizations
- Scholarships, awards, honors and special recognitions (e.g., Dean's List)
- Height and weight of members of athletic teams
- Photographic and videotaped image

The College may disclose any of this information at its discretion, without prior consent, unless the student notifies the registrar in writing that she or he does not wish to permit such disclosure. Requests for nondisclosure by the student are in effect from the date received in writing from the student until rescinded in writing by the student. A student should carefully consider the impact of a decision to withhold Directory Information. The College will not be permitted to provide the student's name or other information in news releases to the media (e.g., Dean's List), in campus event programs (e.g., award ceremonies, plays or musical performances), or to prospective employers. This includes verification of education/degrees earned at the College.

Students are encouraged to contact the College Registrar (Flory Hall, ext. 5313, email address [chowdysh@bridgewater.edu](mailto:chowdysh@bridgewater.edu)) with questions about the College's FERPA policy.