

General University Policies

Human Relations

Notice of nondiscrimination. Applicants for admission and employment, students, parents, and employees are hereby notified that Wichita State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, status as a Vietnam-era veteran, or disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning Wichita State University's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, or Section 504 is directed to the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, Wichita State University, 1845 Fairmount, Wichita, Kansas 67260-0145. The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity has been designated by Wichita State to coordinate the institution's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and Americans with Disabilities Act. Any person also may contact the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, regarding the institution's compliance with these regulations. The WSU bulletin is available in other formats. Inquiries should be addressed to the Office of Disability Services.

Student Responsibility

Students at Wichita State University have the following responsibilities:

1. To consult their advisors on all matters pertaining to their academic careers, including changes in their programs.
2. To observe all regulations of their college and select courses according to the requirements of that college.
3. To attend all meetings of each class in which they are enrolled (instructors will announce at the beginning of the semester if they consider attendance in computing final grades).
4. To fulfill all requirements for graduation.
5. To be personally responsible for fulfilling all requirements and observing all regulations at Wichita State University.
6. To answer promptly all written notices from advisors, faculty, deans, and other University officers.
7. To file an Application for Degree card in the dean's office of the appropriate college at least two semesters before the expected date of graduation.
8. To enroll in only those courses for which the stated prerequisite(s) (if there are any) have been satisfactorily completed. Failure to comply with this procedure may result in administrative withdrawal.

Students also should comply with the principles in the following statement:

Wichita State University reaffirms the principle of intellectual freedom in scholarly activity for

University students, and it recognizes the full citizenship rights of students in inquiry, discussion, and such actions as they may choose to take on public issues.

The rights and freedoms of students involve concomitant responsibilities. Incumbent on all students, as on all citizens, is the responsibility to observe the University's rules of orderly procedures and the laws of the larger community of which the University is a part. In the matter of actions on public issues, to speak one's opinion, to petition, to distribute literature, to assemble peacefully and hold meetings, to use the persuasion of ideas and other actions within the bounds of orderly and lawful procedures are sanctioned by the University. But infringement on the rights of others, acts or threats of violence to persons, destruction of property, disruption, or other interference with the normal functioning of the University and its personnel and other disorderly and unlawful acts will not be countenanced.

Within its sphere of responsibilities the University will afford students proper procedural safeguards to resolve matters in dispute. Those who willfully violate University standards must expect to face disciplinary action on the part of the institution, which may include reprimand, probation, or suspension, consistent with campus provisions for due process.

The Student Code of Conduct provides guidelines for students' behavior as well as an overview of the discipline process. The code is published in the Student Handbook, which is available in the Office of Student Life, 105 Grace Wilkie Hall. It is also available on the WSU web site (www.wichita.edu) under University Policy and Procedures Manual.

Academic Honesty

Opportunities for learning at Wichita State University involve the students' rights to express their views and to take reasoned exception to the views of faculty; to examine all questions felt to be appropriate to a course of study; to be protected from improper disclosure of their views and beliefs; to be examined in a fair and impartial manner; and to be treated with dignity and respect. Students are responsible, however, for learning the content of any course of study outlined by their instructors, regardless of any views or judgments privately held and for demonstrating their attainment in an honest manner.

Students who compromise the integrity of the classroom are subject to disciplinary action on the part of the University. Violations of classroom standards include:

1. Cheating in any form, whether in formal examinations or elsewhere;
2. Plagiarism, using the work of others as one's own without assigning proper credit to the source;
3. Misrepresentation of any work done in the classroom or in preparation for class;

4. Falsification, forgery, or alteration of any documents pertaining to academic records;

5. Disruptive behavior in a course of study or abusiveness toward faculty or fellow students;

A standard of honesty, fairly applied to all students, is essential to a learning environment. Students violating such standards must accept the consequences; penalties are assessed by appropriate classroom instructors or other designated people. Serious cases may result in discipline at the college or university level and may result in suspension or dismissal. Dismissal from a college for academic dishonesty constitutes dismissal from the University. Students accused of abridging a standard of honesty may protect themselves through established academic appeal procedures and are assured of due process and the right of appeal from accusations or penalties felt to be unjust.

Access to Records (Privacy Law)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is a Federal law which provides that the institution will maintain the confidentiality of student education records.

Wichita State University accords all the rights under the law to students who are declared independent. Those rights are: 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 to ensure that they are not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights; 3) the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent; 4) the right to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by Wichita State University to comply with the requirements of FERPA; and 5) the right to obtain a copy of Wichita State University's student records policy. You can obtain a copy of the policy from the Registrar's office.

No one outside the institution shall have access to, nor will the institution disclose any information from students' education records without the prior written consent of the student(s) except to personnel within the institution who have a legitimate educational interest, to persons or organizations providing students financial aid, to accrediting agencies carrying out their accreditation function, to persons in compliance with a judicial order, and to persons in an emergency in order to protect the health or safety of students or other persons. All these exceptions are permitted under the Act.

Within the Wichita State University community, only those members, individually or collectively, acting in the students' "legitimate educational interests" are allowed access to student education records. These members include personnel in the offices of

Admissions, Registrar, Controller, Computing Center, Dean of Students, Financial Aid, Career Services, Cooperative Education, Planning, Testing, Library, College deans, academic advisors, and other administrative and academic personnel within the limitation of their need-to-know. "Legitimate educational interests" means 1) the information or records requested is (are) relevant and necessary to accomplishment of some task or determination; 2) the task or determination is an employment responsibility for the inquirer or is a properly assigned subject matter for the inquirer's employment responsibility. Social Security number and student status data may be provided to other state agencies for use in detection of fraudulent or illegal claims against state monies.

Public Notice Designation

At its discretion the institution may provide "Directory Information" to anyone in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

Wichita State University hereby designates the following student information as public or "Directory Information." Name, address(es), telephone number(s), dates of attendance, classification (freshman, sophomore, etc.), course load (full-time, half-time, less than half-time) class type (day, day/evening, weekend only) previous institution(s) attended, major field(s) of study, awards, honors (includes Dean's list), degree(s) conferred (including dates), past and present participation in officially recognized sports and activities, physical factors (height, weight of athletes). Currently enrolled students may withhold disclosure of "Directory Information" (on an all or none basis) to non-institutional persons or organizations. You have an option to protect your privacy and not have such information as your address and telephone number released. Forms requesting the withholding of this information are available in the Registrar's Office, 117 Jardine Hall, and are returned to that office. Otherwise, the University assumes that you approve of disclosure of that information. The completed form must be received at the Registrar's Office by the end of the second week of the Fall Semester if you do not want to be included in the Campus Directory, which is published each Fall and which is available to people outside WSU. Requests to withhold "Directory Information" must be filed annually. Other than the Campus Directory, the University does not give or sell lists of students to private companies.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

1. Definitions

A. Consent: consent shall be in writing and shall be signed and dated by the student giving consent. It shall include: (a) specification of records to be released; (b) purposes for such release; and (c) parties or class of parties to whom such records may be released.

B. Directory Information: That information described in Section 99.3 of the "Final Rule on Education Records, Privacy Rights of Parents and

Students." The information is defined by the code as: "Information relating to a student: Name, current address, level and school, date of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational institution attended by the student. The name(s) and address(es) of the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) may be disclosed when used for an official University news release about the student's receipt of degrees or awards or about participation in officially recognized activities or sports."

C. Disclosure: permitting access or the release, transfer, or other communication of education records of the student or the personally identifiable information contained therein, orally, or in writing, or by electronic means, or by any other means to any party.

D. Education Records: those records that are directly related to a student and that are maintained by the University or by a party acting for the University. Excluded from the category of "education records" are the following and to which the law does not guarantee the right of student access:

(1) Records created by an individual staff member that are not revealed to any other individual except to a person who might substitute for, or replace, the original staff member.

(2) Medical and psychological records that are maintained only in connection with provision of treatment to the student and that are not available to persons other than those providing treatment except that such records may be personally reviewed by a physician or other appropriate professional of the student's choice and with the student's written consent.

(3) Records of the WSU Police Department maintained solely for law enforcement purposes, which are maintained separately, and which are not disclosed to individuals other than law enforcement officials sharing the same territorial jurisdiction.

(4) Records that contain only information relating to a person after that person was no longer a student at the University. An example would be information collected by the University or the Alumni Association pertaining to the accomplishments of its alumni.

(5) Employment records of any person if maintained in the normal course of business and used only for purposes relating to the employment, unless the person is employed at the University only because of her/his status as a student (that is, student hourly). In such cases, student employment records are education records but are to be maintained separately from other education records.

E. Legitimate Educational Interests: the interests of University personnel who have a demonstrably legitimate need to review records in order to fulfill their official professional responsibilities. Such responsibilities must involve the University in its primary educational and scholarly functions and/or

secondary administrative functions of maintaining property, disbursing funds, keeping records, providing living accommodations and other services, sponsoring activities, and protecting the health and safety of persons or property in the University community. If a question arises concerning the legitimacy of a request to review records, such question shall be referred to the vice president for student affairs.

F. Parent: includes a parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent of a student in the absence of a parent or guardian.

G. Personally Identifiable Information: includes the name of the student; the student's parent or other family member; the address of the student; personal identifiers, such as social security or student numbers; personal characteristics or other information that would make the student's identity easily traceable.

H. School Official: faculty, staff, student employees or committees (when the members of the committee are appointed or elected to an officially constituted committee) that perform a function or task on behalf of, and at the request of, the University, its faculty, colleges, schools or divisions.

I. Student: for purposes of this policy, anyone who is or has been enrolled at Wichita State University, with the following exception:

A person who has applied for admission to, but has never been in attendance at a component unit of the University (such as the various schools and colleges of the University), even if that individual is or has been in attendance at another component unit of the University, is not considered to be a student with respect to the component to which an application for admission has been made.

J. Unit Custodian of Student Records: except as otherwise designated in this policy, the head of each academic or administrative unit is responsible for the education records within the unit.

2. Student Access to Education Records

A. A student has the right and shall be accorded the opportunity to inspect, review, and/or receive copies of his or her educational record, except as provided for below. The University must comply with the student's request within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 45 days after the request.

B. The student has the right to a reasonable request for explanation of the records and to copies of the records where necessary to provide full inspection and review. Such copies will be provided at the student's request and expense; however, the charge to the student for any such records may not exceed \$.25 per page. The University may not charge a fee to search for or retrieve a record. If any question arises as to the identity of the requesting student, the student shall be asked to provide his or her University identification card and/or other positive identification.

D. The University is not required to afford inspection and review of the following records:

(1) Financial records of the student's parents submitted as part of the financial aid process;

(2) Confidential letters and statements of recommendation that were placed in the student's education records prior to January 1, 1975, if such letters were submitted with an understanding of confidentiality, and are used only for the purpose for which they were specifically intended;

(3) Confidential letters and statements of recommendation received after January 1, 1975, for which the student has signed a waiver of the right to access and which pertain to: (a) admission to this or any other educational institution or agency; (b) application for employment; (c) receipt of an honor or honorary recognition so long as these letters are used solely for the purpose(s) for which they were specifically intended.

E. An individual who is an applicant for admission to the University, or to one of its component parts, or who is a student in attendance at the University, may waive his or her right to inspect and review confidential letters and confidential statements of recommendation, except that the waiver may apply to confidential letters and statements only if:

(1) The applicant or student is, upon request, notified of the names of all individuals providing the letters or statements;

(2) The letters or statements are used only for the purpose for which they were originally intended;

(3) Such waiver is not required by the University as a condition of admission to or receipt of any other service or benefit from the University.

All waivers under this paragraph must be executed by the individual, regardless of age, rather than by the parent of the individual. All waivers must be in writing and signed by the student.

If an education record contains information on more than one student, the student may inspect only the information on herself or himself.

3. Waiver of Rights

The University may request, but not require, students to waive rights under this policy; the waivers must be in writing and signed by the student. Applicants for admission to the University and eligible students may waive rights to review confidential letters of recommendation only if:

(1) The applicant or student, upon request, is notified of the names of all persons providing letters;

(2) The letters are used only for the purpose for which they were originally intended;

(3) The waiver is not required as a condition of admission or for any other service or benefit of the University.

Waivers may be made with respect to specified classes of education records and/or persons or institutions. The student may revoke any waiver in writing, the revocation to apply only to documents received or entered into the record after the date of execution of the revocation.

4. Disclosure of "Personally Identifiable" and "Directory" Information

The University shall obtain the written consent of the

student before disclosing personally identifiable information from the education records of a student, other than directory information, except as otherwise provided in this policy.

The University may, without the consent of the student, disclose directory information, as described earlier. If a student wishes to have such information withheld, he/she must notify the Office of the Registrar. If a student wishes to prevent the publication of such information in the University telephone directory, he/she must notify the Office of the Registrar.

The University may disclose personally identifiable information without the consent of the student to school officials within the institution determined to have legitimate educational interests; to authorities to comply with a judicial order or subpoena, provided the University makes a reasonable effort to notify the student in advance of compliance; to financial aid personnel in conjunction with an application for financial assistance; to organizations conducting studies for accrediting functions; to appropriate persons in a health or safety emergency. Disclosure of personally identifiable information without the consent of the student may also be made when required by law or government regulation.

The University may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student without a student's consent in connection with a student's request or receipt of financial aid, provided the disclosure is needed: (1) to determine the eligibility of the student for financial aid; (2) to determine the amount of financial aid; (3) to determine the conditions which will be imposed; (4) to enforce the terms or conditions of the financial aid.

The University may disclose personally identifiable information from the education records of a student to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. Disclosures for this purpose shall take into account: (1) the seriousness of the threat to the health or safety of the student or individuals; (2) the need for the information to meet the emergency; (3) whether the parties to whom the information is disclosed are in a position to deal with the emergency; (4) the extent to which time is of the essence in dealing with the emergency.

The University Student Health Service is required to report to the Kansas Department of Health the names of students who have certain communicable diseases such as hepatitis, tuberculosis, and venereal disease. The Health Service is also required to report to local law enforcement officials the name of any student who is wounded with a deadly weapon.

5. Release of a Student's Grades

Board of Regents policy provides that the University may not withhold the written record of grades earned by any dependent student when the University receives a written request for any such grades from a student, a student's parents, or a stu-

dent's legal guardian. The student will be notified in writing of any disclosure of grades made to his or her parents or legal guardian. Dependency, for this purpose, is defined by the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, Section 152. Should the student be financially indebted to the University, the transcript request will not be honored and the person submitting the request will be so notified.

6. Notice to Third Parties

The University must inform the parties to whom personally identifiable information is given that they are not permitted to disclose that information to others without the written consent of the student and that the information is to be used only for the purpose(s) intended.

7. Providing Copies of Disclosed Records

When the unit custodian discloses personally identifiable information from the education record of a student, the unit custodian shall, at the student's request and expense, provide a copy of the disclosed record to the student, unless otherwise specified by this policy.

8. Destruction of Records

Each office which maintains education records shall adopt its own policy with regard to destruction of education records. No education record, however, may be destroyed if there is an outstanding request to inspect and review the record. Also, the record of access to the education record and any explanations which are a part of the record must be maintained for as long as the education record to which it pertains is maintained.

9. Maintaining Records of Request and Disclosures

The unit custodian shall maintain records of requests and disclosures of personally identifiable information from a student's education record. The record shall include, whether requests are granted or not, the name(s) of the person(s) who requested the information and their legitimate interests in the information. Records of requests and disclosures will not be maintained:

(1) for requests made by the student; (2) for requests for which the student has given written consent; (3) for requests made by school officials with legitimate educational interests; (4) for requests for directory information.

The record of requests and disclosures may be inspected by the student, by school officials responsible for the custody of the records, and by federal and state officials who have been given permission to access by the vice president for student affairs.

10. Students' Right to Challenge Information Contained in Education Records

A student may challenge the content of an education record on the grounds that the record is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student. No hearing under this

policy shall be granted for challenging the underlying basis for the grade. However, the accuracy of its recording could be challenged.

The following procedure for challenging the content of an education record shall apply:

(1) The student has the right, upon reasonable request, for a brief explanation and interpretation of the record in question from the respective unit custodian.

(2) The unit custodian of the challenged education record, after reviewing the record with the student, may settle the dispute informally with the student with regard to the deletion or modification of the education record. The unit custodian shall make his or her decision within a reasonable amount of time and shall notify the student of the decision.

(3) In the event the unit custodian disapproves the student's request to delete or modify the record in question, the student shall be notified by the unit custodian, in writing, of the decision and of the student's right to a formal hearing upon the request.

(a) All requests for formal hearings by the student shall be directed to the vice president for student affairs, and shall contain a plain and concise written statement of the specific facts constituting the student's claim.

(b) The hearings shall be conducted by a University staff member (hearing officer) who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the challenge and who shall be appointed by the vice president for student affairs or designee. The hearing shall be held within a reasonable time of receipt of the student's request, and the student shall be notified reasonably in advance by the Hearing Officer of the date, place, and time of the hearing.

(c) At the hearing the student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant

to claim and may, at his or her expense, receive assistance or be represented by any individuals of choice.

(d) Based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing and within ten (10) working days of the hearing, the hearing officer shall make a written recommendation to the vice president for student affairs or designee together with written findings of fact concerning the student's request. Within an additional fourteen (14) working days of receipt of the hearing officer's report, the vice president for student affairs or designee shall notify the student in writing of the decision. The decision must include a summary of the evidence and the reasons for the decision.

(1) In the event the decision of the vice president for student affairs is adverse to the student's request, the student shall be notified of the opportunity to place with the education record a summary statement commenting upon the information in the records and/or setting forth any reason for disagreeing with the decision. If the questioned document is released to a third person, the student's summary statement shall accompany the release of any such information. The summary information shall be maintained for as long as the contested record is maintained.

(2) If a student challenge to the content of a given record is successful, the University shall amend the education record accordingly and so inform the student. Upon the student's specific written request to the vice president for student affairs, the University shall make a reasonable effort to contact student-designated third persons who have received copies of the previous record to inform them of the change which has been made.

11. Complaint Procedure

If a student believes that the University is not in compliance with the Privacy Act, he/she should check first with the office involved and/or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

If a student wishes to file a complaint with the federal government concerning the University's failure to comply with the Privacy Act, he/she must submit the complaint, in writing, to the Office of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 330 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201. The FERPA office will notify the student when the complaint has been received. The FERPA office will investigate the complaint, and may require further information of its findings and basis for such findings. In the event the University is found not to be in compliance, it will be afforded the necessary time to comply. If it does not then comply, the matter will be sent to a review board for a hearing. For guidelines concerning this hearing procedure, see Section 99.64 and following of the Privacy Act.

Accident or Injury

The State of Kansas and Wichita State University do not insure against accidents or injury to students which may occur during University-sponsored activities on or off campus. The University will make every reasonable attempt to advise students concerning potential danger of accident or injury. Students are expected to act responsibly by taking necessary precautions to prevent accidents. Students also are advised to protect themselves from the financial burden of accident or injury through a personal insurance policy.