

# The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, is a federal law requiring Meredith College to protect the confidentiality of student educational records. Meredith College has adopted the policies outlined below to comply with the law, to inform students of their privacy rights, and to maintain the protection of student educational records.

Although student educational records are protected, Meredith College is not required to protect information that is classified as “directory” information. Meredith College has the right to release the following directory information without a student’s prior consent

- Name, address, telephone number, e-mail address
- Dates of attendance, academic major, degrees and awards received
- Institutions attended
- Weights and heights of athletic team members
- Participation in sports and activities
- Student photographs

Any student who would like his/her directory information protected under the same guidelines as educational records should submit a written request to the [Office of the Registrar](#). This written request must be submitted to the appropriate office by the 20th classroom day of the Fall or Spring semester. It is not retroactive.

Meredith College is permitted by law to release and share your student educational records and personally identifiable information without your prior consent to the following parties:

- Meredith College employees with a legitimate educational purpose
- Officials of other schools in which the student seeks admission
- Federal or state officials as defined in paragraph 99.37 of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974
- State and local officials authorized by state statute
- A third party designated by federal or state authorities to evaluate a federal- or state- supported education program or to researchers performing certain types of studies
- Organizations conducting studies for, or on the behalf of, Meredith College for the purpose of assisting in accomplishing the College’s stated goals
- Accrediting organizations, to carry out their functions
- Parents of a dependent student as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (Written consent may be allowed from either of these separated or divorced parents subject to any agreement between the parents or court order.) In the case of a student whose legal guardian is an institution, a party independent of the institution, appointed under state and local law to give parental consent, may be allowed to do so.
- In compliance with judicial order or subpoena
- Appropriate persons in connection with an emergency if such knowledge is necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other person.

NOTE: With the exception of Meredith College employees who have been determined by the College to have a legitimate educational purpose, all individuals and agencies who have requested or obtained access to a student’s records (other than directory information) will be noted in a record which is kept with each student’s educational records. A request must be in writing stating the purpose of the request. This record will also indicate specifically the legitimate interest that the person or agency had in obtaining the information. If the legitimate educational purpose of the request is in question, the matter will be referred to the president of the College for adjudication.

Meredith College will comply with FERPA to protect student educational records from unauthorized access.

Students have the right under FERPA to inspect and review their education records and to appeal to the appropriate office to have any incorrect information corrected. Students also have the right to file complaints with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office concerning alleged failures by Meredith to comply with the Act.

# Procedures for Accessing Education Records

Meredith College, in compliance with FERPA, permits students to have access to their educational records. Students wanting access to their educational records should file a written request to the Office of the Registrar. If there seem to be corrections needed to the educational record requested by the student, the student may submit an appeal in writing for a formal hearing. The president of the College will appoint an Appeals Committee which must meet within 45 days of the receipt of the written appeal. The committee will allow the student to present evidence to substantiate the appeal and shall render a written decision to the student within 45 days of the hearing.

## Definitions

**Education Records** are those records, files, documents and other materials which (1) contain information directly related to a student; and (2) are maintained by Meredith College or by a person acting for the College.

**Records** are information records in any medium, including, but not limited to, the following; handwriting, print, electronic media, tapes, film, microfilm, and microfiche. Educational records do not include: (1) personal notes, (2) records available only to law enforcement personnel, (3) employment records, unless the student's status is a condition of employment or (4) medical and psychiatric records (These are accessible by the student's physician), (5) directory information previously defined.

**School officials or employees** are persons employed by the College, elected to the Board of Trustees or employed by or under contract to the College to perform a special task, such as an attorney or auditor or a graduate student serving as a Teaching Assistant or serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee. Legitimate educational purpose is the performance of a job-related task related to a student's education, performance of the task related to the discipline of a student, or providing a service or benefit related to the student, or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.

**Students** are persons who are or have been enrolled at Meredith College. Applicants who do not enroll or who are declared ineligible to enroll have no inherent right to inspect their files. Whenever "student" is used in reference to personal rights, an eligible parent or a dependent student has similar rights.

**Eligible parents** are those who have satisfied Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 and who present such proof to the Registrar. Normally the proof will be a certified copy of the parent's most recent Federal Income Tax Form.

## Exclusions

FERPA does not give students access to the following records or information:

- Financial records of parents or any information therein;
- Confidential letters and statements of recommendation which were placed in the education record prior to January 1, 1974;
- Records to which access has been waived by the student. (This exclusion applies only if a student, upon request, is notified of the names of all persons making confidential recommendations and if such recommendations are used solely for the purpose for which they were intended.)

## Destruction of Education Records

Meredith College will retain student educational records as long as information is valid and useful. Student educational records will be destroyed when the records are no longer of use to the institution. Any such records will be destroyed by means of confidential disposal.