

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHT TO PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) afford students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review your education records. Students should contact the Registrar's office to determine the location of appropriate records and the procedure for reviewing such records. A student should submit to the College Registrar a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The Registrar will provide access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the school official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
2. The right to request the records believed to be inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA, be amended. The request should be submitted in writing to the ATOM Registrar or office responsible for maintaining the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed and specify why it should be changed. If the request for change is denied, the student has a right to a hearing on the issue.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records. Generally, ATOM must have written permission from the student before releasing any information from the student's record. FERPA does however authorize disclosure without consent in certain situations as listed below:
 - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
 - Representatives of the Secretary;
 - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
 - Accrediting organizations;
 - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
 - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies;
 - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law, and
 - School officials with legitimate educational interest.

A school official is a person employed by ATOM in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position; or a person serving on the board of trustees; a person or company with whom the school had contracted (such as an auditor, attorney, or collection agency) or a student volunteering to assist another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for ATOM.

4. Upon request, ATOM will disclose education records without consent to officials of another school in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.
5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by ATOM to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

6. The school may release information without the student's consent where the information is classified as "Directory Information." The following categories of information have been designated by ATOM as directory information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Email address
- Degrees or Diplomas, honors, awards received
- Dates of attendance
- Student participation in officially recognized activities
- Enrollment status (full-time, half-time, part-time; undergraduate or graduate)
- Major Field of Study
- Most recent educational agency or institution the student has attended

Directory information is considered public and may be released without written consent unless specifically prohibited by the student concerned. Students who do not want such information released without their consent should provide formal written notification to the Registrar.

PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS

Policies and procedures concerning the privacy of student records maintained by ATOM and its faculty and staff are governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-380). Student records are maintained by campus Registrar's Office (academic records) and Financial Aid Department (financial aid records). Student records are maintained by the College in permanent files. Under Section 438 of the General Provision Act (Title IV of Public Law 90-247), students aged 18 or over have access to their personal record files kept by the College. The Registrar maintains a log with dates the records were checked out and used by other departments. All authorized College personnel have access to student records for official purposes. A student (or in some cases eligible parents) is given access to his/her record within a reasonable time after submitting a written request to the custodian in possession of that record (Registrar and Financial Aid). If the content of any record is believed to be in error, inaccurate, discriminatory, misleading or in violation of student rights or otherwise inappropriate, it may be challenged, and a written explanation included in the record. A student's right to due process allows for a hearing, which may be held at a reasonable time and place at which time evidence may be presented to support the challenge. Student information is released to persons, agencies or legal authorities as required by subpoena/legal process or by consent of a student (or eligible parent). Information is released on a consent basis in cases where a student or eligible parent has provided a written consent, signed, dated, and specifying the information to be released and name(s) of persons to whom the information is to be released.

If a student is attending a postsecondary institution – at any age – the rights under FERPA have transferred to the student. However, in a situation where a student is enrolled in both a high school and a postsecondary institution, the two schools may exchange information on that student. If the student is under 18, the parent/guardian still retains the rights under FERPA at the high school and may inspect and review any records sent by the postsecondary institution to the high school.

If a student wishes to file a complaint, please contact the Department of Education: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education: 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.