



FERPA: Your Legal Rights as a Student

Athens Technical College will not release information about you, your whereabouts, your grades, or your progress in classes to anyone but you. Please make sure your parents, family, and friends understand that if they have questions about your records, they must ask you, not the college.

We want to take this opportunity to give you a brief summary of your rights under The **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**, the federal law that governs release of and access to student education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review your education record within a reasonable time after the college receives a request for access. If you want to review your record, contact the Office of Registration and Records to make appropriate arrangements.
2. The right to request an amendment of your education record if you believe it is inaccurate or misleading. If you feel there is an error in your record, you should submit a statement to the director of registration and records, clearly identifying the part of the record you want changed and why you believe it is inaccurate or misleading. The director will notify you of his or her decision and advise you regarding appropriate steps if you do not agree with the decision.
3. The right to consent to disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in your education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with "legitimate educational interests." A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official has "need to know" information from your education record in order to fulfill his or her official responsibilities. Examples of people who may have access, depending on their official duties, and only within the context of those duties, include college faculty and staff, agents of the institution, students employed by the institution or who serve on official institutional committees, and representatives of agencies under contract with the college.
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.

Release of student record information is generally not done at Athens Technical College without the expressed, written consent of the student. There are, however, some exceptions. For example, the college may release information to third parties requesting information that the technical college designates as "directory information" unless students place holds on their educational records, thus preventing the release of this information. Directory information includes student names; addresses (local, permanent, and e-mail); telephone listings (local and permanent); dates of registered attendance; schools or divisions of enrollment; major programs of study; nature and dates of diplomas, degrees, and awards received; and participation in student organizations and activities. Please note that you have the right to withhold the release of directory information. Students may prohibit the release of directory information by submitting a written request to the vice president for student affairs within ten days of registration. Please note two important details regarding placing a "No Release" on your record:

1. Athens Technical College receives many inquiries for directory information from a variety of sources outside the institution, including friends, parents, relatives, prospective employers, the news media, and honor societies. Having a "No Release" on your record will preclude release of such information, even to those people.
2. A "No Release" applies to all elements of directory information on your record. The college does not apply a "No Release" differentially to the various directory information data elements.

Questions concerning FERPA should be referred to the Office of Registration and Records.