

Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

We provide the following information to inform students and parents of their rights under FERPA. Without the student's consent, we cannot provide information about their educational records including billing, financial aid, and/or grades. We encourage parents and guardians to discuss FERPA with their student prior to attending MECA&D.

What is the purpose of FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords eligible students and, in certain cases, students' parents, rights with respect to their education records. FERPA protects students who are matriculated at a post-secondary institution regardless of their age.

What are educational records?

Educational records, according to FERPA, are documents or materials that are maintained by the MECA&D, which contain personally identifiable information of an individual student. Almost all academic, financial, conduct, and administrative information (both print and electronic) are considered educational records.

What information can be released?

Directory information can be released. Directory information can be released by MECA&D without consent of the student unless the Registrar's Office receives written notification from the student not to release directory or any information. Other student records, billing, financial aid, conduct, schedules, and grades can be released if a student signs a FERPA waiver form from the Registrar's Office located in the Administrative Center. This form references specific educational records to be released and to whom. In addition, most educational records can be shared within MECA&D and between professional staff and faculty who have a legitimate educational interest, or need to review the information in order to fulfill his/her employment responsibilities. Mental health and counseling records are not covered under FERPA and are not released to any member of the MECA&D community or others unless the student provides specific written information to the MECA&D Counseling team.

What information does MECA&D consider as directory?

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a student's prior written consent. MECA&D considers the following information as directory information: name, current academic level, student images including photographs and video recordings, and whether that student is currently enrolled at the campus.

What if a student does not want certain information published?

Students may choose to elect not to release certain or all information. To limit access to a student record(s), the student must complete a FERPA form with the Registrar's Office. A student may choose to change their FERPA release form at any time.

What are a parent's rights under FERPA?

Parents may not have an automatic right to inspect their student's educational records, depending on their situation. Parents who wish to access their student's records must have their student sign the FERPA waiver form in the Registrar's Office authorizing the parent, guardian, spouse, or any other person to view the student's record. For more information about this waiver, please contact Anne Dennison, Registrar at 207.699.5054 or adennison@MECA&D.edu.

Whom does MECA&D share information with, without consent?

FERPA permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from students' education records, without consent of the student based on several exceptions in the regulations. Among those is the "school official" exemption, whom MECA&D has determined have legitimate educational interests in the information, including contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services. Although the term "school official" is not defined in the statute or regulations, MECA&D generally interprets the term to include parties such as: professors; administrators; board members; support or administrative staff; attorneys; nurses and health staff; counselors; human resources staff; information systems specialist; security personnel; and contractors, consultants, volunteers or other party to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions. These parties generally have a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Where can I get more information about FERPA?

The US Department of Education enforces FERPA and maintains a website with numerous resources. For more information on FERPA, please visit US Department of Education FERPA. MECA&D FERPA-Educational Records Policy.

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

They are:

- Inspect and review educational records:
 - The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day Maine College of Art & Design receives a request for access. Students should submit to the Registrar's Office written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the Registrar's Office, the student shall be advised of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
- Right to request amendments:
 - The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate. Students may ask Maine College of Art & Design to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the Registrar, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If Maine College of Art & Design decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the student shall be notified of the decision and advised as to his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- Disclosure of information:
 - 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. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by Maine College of Art & Design in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom Maine College of Art & Design has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, consultant, or collection agent); a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting 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 in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. As allowed within FERPA guidelines, Maine College of Art & Design may disclose education records without consent to officials of another school, upon request, in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

- Complaints:
 - The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Maine College of Art & Design 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, 20202-4605. At its discretion Maine College of Art & Design may provide Directory Information in accordance with the provisions of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. Directory Information is defined as that information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Designated Directory Information at Maine College of Art & Design includes the following: student name, permanent address, local address, temporary address, electronic mail address, telephone number, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities, theses titles/topics, photograph, full-time/part-time status, most recent previous school attended, date and place of birth, class schedule. Students may withhold Directory Information by notifying the Registrar in writing; please note that such withholding requests are binding for all information to all parties other than for those exceptions allowed under the Act. Students should consider all aspects of a Directory Hold prior to filing such a request. Although the initial request must be filed during the first two weeks of the enrollment period, requests for non-disclosure will be honored by the for no more than one academic year. Re-authorization to withhold Directory Information must be filed annually in the Registrar's Office within the first two weeks of the fall semester.