

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) places certain limitations on the disclosure of personally identifiable student information maintained by PCOM with respect to students; limits access to academic records; and gives students certain rights with respect to educational records, including the right to access, the right to obtain copies, the right to seek correction of such records through informal and formal internal procedures, and the right to place a statement in such educational records explaining any information that they believe to be inaccurate or misleading.

PCOM considers certain information to be "directory information" under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and, therefore, subject to disclosure without prior consent of the student. Unless written objection is received by the Registrar, the College will treat the following as directory information to be released at the discretion of the Registrar's Office: student name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date and place of birth, enrollment status dates of attendance, major field of study, Dean's list, degrees and awards received and names of undergraduate and/or graduate schools attended, internships and residencies.

Right to Withhold Disclosure

Under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, currently enrolled students may withhold disclosure of directory information. The Registrar's Office must receive written notification from a student indicating the information to be withheld. Should a student decide to inform the institution not to release certain information, any future requests for such information from non-institutional persons or organizations will be refused. Decisions about withholding any information should be made very carefully.

PCOM will honor each request to withhold any of the categories of information indicated by a student. However, the College cannot assume responsibility to contact a student for subsequent permission to release them should requests be received.

PCOM assumes that failure to request the withholding of directory information indicates approval for disclosure.

Right to Consent to the Disclosure of Personally Identifiable Information

All personally identifiable information related to a particular student other than directory information is considered

Confidential information and may not be released without the written consent of the student. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions:

Other schools to which a student is transferring

Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes

Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student

Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
Accrediting organizations

To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena PCOM's Registrar will make reasonable attempt to notify the student

Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies

State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law

School officials with legitimate educational interest (including but not limited to administrative, supervisory, academic, research or support staff)

National Board of Medical Examiners (NBOME) – a school official is determined to have a legitimate educational interest if the information requested is required for that official to:

Perform appropriate tasks that are specified in his/her position/ description or contract/agreement Perform a task related to the student's education

Perform a task related to the discipline of a student Provide a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family such as health care, counseling, job placement or financial aid

The school official is not authorized to share this information with a third party without the student's written permission. Such information, when it has fulfilled its original purpose, should be returned to the originating office. All other access to a student's record is granted in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Right to Inspection and Review of Records

When the student matriculates, the Office of Admissions will forward the following materials to the Registrar's Office. Information retained in the file is as follows:

Current application AACOMAS profile (DO students)

CASPA profile (PA students)

PharmCAS profile

(PharmD students) Transcripts

Standardized test scores (e.g., MCAT, GRE, MAT)

Letters of acceptance and prepayment Completed Technical Standards form

Previous applications and decision-related correspondence

All other materials in the applicant file are purged in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended.

A current or previously enrolled student has the right to inspect and review his or her education records maintained by the school. This right does not extend to applicants, those denied admission, or those admitted who do not enroll. A ten day written notice must be submitted to the Registrar's Office. The Registrar's Office will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

Other data accrued during the student's tenure at the College including, but not limited to, transcripts, NBOME Board scores, academic status letters (e.g., probation, warning, dismissal), course related forms (e.g.,

withdrawal), name change, and change of status documentation will be placed in the student's file.

Transcripts or grade reports from other institutions, copies of scores from national tests (MCAT, NBOME Board scores, Praxis, etc.) and/or any other third party material will not be released by PCOM. Students must contact the institution that issued these documents to obtain copies.

Right to Amendment of the Educational Record

Under FERPA, an eligible student has the right to request that inaccurate or misleading information in their education records be amended. While a school is not required to amend education records in accordance with an eligible student's request, the school is required to consider the request. If the school decides not to amend a record in accordance with an eligible student's request, the school must inform the student of their right to a hearing on the matter. If, as a result of the hearing, the school still decides not to amend the record, the eligible student has the right to insert a statement in the record setting forth their views. That statement must remain with the contested part of the eligible student's record for as long as the record is maintained. However, while the FERPA amendment procedure may be used to challenge facts that are inaccurately recorded, it may not be used to challenge a grade, an opinion, or a substantive decision made by a school about an eligible student. FERPA was intended to require only that schools conform to fair recordkeeping practices and not to override the accepted standards and procedures for making academic assessments, disciplinary rulings, or placement determinations. Thus, while FERPA affords eligible students the right to seek to amend education records which contain inaccurate information, this right cannot be used to challenge a grade or an individual's opinion, or a substantive decision made by a school about a student. Additionally, if FERPA's amendment procedures are not applicable to an eligible student's request for amendment of education records, the school is not required under FERPA to hold a hearing on the matter.

Complaints regarding alleged violations of rights accorded students by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act or the regulations promulgated thereunder may be directed in writing to:

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office

Department of Education

Room 4511, Switzer Building

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20202

For more information, visit <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html> (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/>)