

Policy Source: Combination of Gwinnett Tech and TCSG	Owner: Vice President of Academic Affairs	Effective: 1996
Division: Academic Affairs	Reviewed: 6/2005, 2/2010, 9/2015, 5/2019, 2/2023 Revised: 5/2019, 2/2023	

### **6.3.1 GT TCSG      Student Records**

Gwinnett Technical College follows the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) Policy 6.3.1 Student Records (<https://tcsq.edu/tcsqpolicy/files/6.3.1.pdf>), which is located in the Student Affairs section of the TCSG policy manual.

#### **Notification of Rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Access**

Annually, Gwinnett Tech informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). The College is committed to ensuring the privacy and personal information of all students, including those enrolled in distance education/online learning courses and programs. The College's learning management system and online grade submissions are password protected. Neither violates FERPA. Online instructors are required to respect students' privacy rights regarding educational records. Student educational records are maintained and disclosed according to the guidelines of this policy. This Act, with which the institution fully complies, was designed to protect the privacy of education records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their education records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings.

Educational records include any items (e.g., in handwriting and in print, on tape, film, computer, or other media) maintained by Gwinnett Tech that are directly related to a student as specifically outlined in the federal guidelines and in the catalog. Students who wish to allow parents or other third parties to have access to their confidential records and information must complete a "Consent to Disclose Information" form in the Enrollment Support Center (One-Stop). This form specifies what information may be released and to whom it may be released. Valid government-issued photo identification is required of all parties upon submission of the form. All parties are required to be present upon submission of the form.

Under FERPA, TSCG and its technical colleges must provide an eligible student with an opportunity to inspect and review his or her education records within 45 days following its receipt of a request. Students have the right to file complaints with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605, concerning alleged failures by the College to comply with the Act.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), a Federal law, requires that TCSG and its technical colleges, with certain exceptions, obtain a student's written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from that student's education records. However, TCSG or its technical colleges may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent unless the student has advised TCSG or the technical college to the contrary. 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 the student's prior written consent.

If a student does not want TCSG or the technical college to disclose directory information from his or her student education records without prior written consent, the student must notify TCSG or the technical college where he or she is enrolled in writing by the first day of the semester at the Registrar's Office at his or her technical college. A student needs only to file this notification once during his or her enrollment. However, if there is a break in enrollment or transfer to another TCSG technical college, a new notification must be filed.

Even if a student elects to prohibit the release of directory information, TCSG or the technical college may still implement policies requiring the student to wear or present a student ID badge.

The Technical College System of Georgia and its technical colleges define "directory information" as follows: full name of student, city of residence, county of residence, major and field(s) of study, dates of attendance, enrollment status (i.e., full or part-time, undergraduate, graduate), participation in official sports and activities, height and weight of athletic team members, degrees and awards and date received. No information (excluding directory information) will be released to a third party without the written consent of the individual or as directed by law. Additionally, certain state and federal laws require the release of certain student information without prior notification to the student.

Institutional policy explains in detail the procedures to be used for compliance with the provisions of the Act.

Copies of the Statement of Policy: Access to Student Records are available in the Registrar's Office. Gwinnett Tech guarantees students, regardless of dates of attendance, the right to inspect and review all official records created during their period of enrollment at the College. Any requests for a record review shall be presented in writing to the registrar. The registrar will complete a file review within a reasonable time frame as set by federal regulations. Any review of records will be conducted on College premises. No one can copy or remove material from the file.

Academic records for students are maintained by the Registrar's Office and include acceptance letters, entrance exam reports, admission applications, transcripts from other postsecondary institutions, high school transcripts, GED transcripts, relevant correspondence, transfer credit evaluations, graduation applications, graduation evaluations, and Gwinnett Tech transcripts.

Student records relating to disabilities and special services are maintained by the ADA/ Title IX coordinator. The records are confidential and are not released to any faculty or staff member without expressed permission from the student. The records are kept separately from academic files and are not used in determining admissibility for any program, club, or service provided by Gwinnett Tech.