

## **FERPA - Information for Parents**

### **What is FERPA?**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), also known as the “Buckley Amendment”, is a federal law which provides that colleges and universities will maintain the confidentiality of student educational records. The law basically states that no one outside the College shall have access to students’ educational records nor will the College disclose any information from those records without the written consent of students. There are exceptions, such as allowing certain personnel within the College with a legitimate educational interest to see the records, or releasing the records in an emergency in order to protect the health or safety of students or other persons.

### **Directory Information**

Under FERPA, PRCC can release directory information about our students without their prior authorization. PRCC considers the following directory information: name, address, telephone number, email address, place of birth, enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate, fulltime or part-time), major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, height and weight of members of the athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees, honors and awards received (including scholarships), and most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student.

Under the provisions of FERPA, as amended, students have the right to withhold disclosure of any or all of their directory information. Students wishing to restrict their directory information must complete the FERPA Request form IN Wildcat Web.

### **Parents Access to Educational Records**

As a parent you may want access to your child’s educational records. We recognize how important family members are to the success of our students, but we are limited by FERPA on the information we can share.

At the post secondary level, parents have no inherent rights to inspect their child’s educational records. The right to inspect is limited solely to the student. Student records may be released to parents only under the following circumstances: (1) through the written & signed consent of the student, (2) in compliance with a subpoena, (3) by producing a copy of the most recent Federal income tax form showing that the student was claimed as a dependent, (4) in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals, or (5) if the student has violated any Federal, State or local law, or any rule or policy of the College governing the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, if the College determines that the student has committed a disciplinary violation regarding that use or possession and the student is under 21 at the time of disclosure. We recommend that parents request the needed information directly from their student. For unusual or special circumstances, please contact the Assistant Vice- President of Student Services directly.

### **Health and Safety Emergencies**

If non-directory information is needed to resolve a crisis or emergency situation, PRCC may release that information if it is determined that the information is “necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals”. Factors to be considered in making a decision to release such information in these situations are: the severity of the threat to the health or safety of those involved; the need for the information; the time required to deal with the emergency; and the ability of the parties to whom the information is to be given to deal with the emergency.

### **Riverguide & Wildcat Web Access**

All PRCC students are given a username and password allowing them access to River Guide, our online portal. Riverguide contains the students’ PRCC email account, and contains a variety of information to help students succeed. Through Riverguide, students can enter Wildcat Web. Students use Wildcat Web to register for courses, receive midterm and final grades, view their academic transcript, view and pay their tuition and fees, view their financial aid, etc. One way to view your son or daughter’s academic information is to have your son or daughter share their Riverguide username and password with you.

### **Who should I contact if I have questions or concerns?**

If you have any questions or concerns about FERPA, please contact the Student Services Office. We are located in the Administration Building on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Our main office number is: 601-403-1132. Maghan James, Assistant Vice President of Student Services, can be contacted at: 601-403-1253. Please send emails to: [mjames@prcc.edu](mailto:mjames@prcc.edu).