

The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

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

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access. Students should submit to the appropriate records custodian written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The records custodian 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 College official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading. A student should write the College official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the College decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the College will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of 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.
- 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 the College in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the College has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agency); a person serving on the College Board; 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.

FERPA permits institutions to identify certain items of student information as "directory information." Germanna identifies directory information as the: Student's name, address, telephone listing, curriculum, course credit load, date of birth, dates of attendance, and degrees and/or certificates received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports. Students must submit written notification to the office

of the College Registrar to prevent the disclosure of directory information. Germanna may disclose any of these items without prior consent, unless the student notifies the Admissions and Records Office, in writing during the first ten days of the semester, that this information remains confidential.

- 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. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:
Family Policy Compliance Office, U. S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

According to FERPA, Germanna Community College may release information without the student's written consent to the following:

- school officials, as identified by Germanna Community College, determined by Germanna Community College to have a legitimate educational interest,
- officials of other institutions in which the student seeks to enroll,
- persons or organizations providing to the student financial aid, or determining financial aid decisions,
- accrediting organizations, carrying out their accrediting functions,
- parents of a student who have established that student's status as a dependent according to IRS Code of 1986, Section 152,
- persons in compliance with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena,
- persons in an emergency, if the knowledge of information, in fact, is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other persons.

Questions on this policy can be directed to the Registrar.

Student Notification: Students will be notified each semester (Spring and Fall) of their Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) rights in the Schedule of Classes.

Refusal to Provide Copies: Germanna Community College reserves the right to deny transcripts or copies of records not required to be made available by the FERPA in any of the following situations:

- The student lives within commuting distance of Germanna Community College; if student is within commuting distance, the student may be asked to come and view the file at the office rather than making a full set of copies of all file contents.
- The student has an unpaid financial obligation to the College.
- There is an unresolved disciplinary action against the student.

Student Handbook

Fees for Copies of Records: Germanna Community College does not charge a fee for the copying of a transcript at this time. However, a reasonable charge may be assessed to provide copies of other records and to cover the expenses of copying time and postage.

Types, Locations, and Custodians of Educational Records: Admissions & Records

Location: Registrar's Office
Custodian: Registrar

Cumulative Academic Records

Location: Registrar's Office
Custodian: Registrar

Financial Aid Records

Location: Financial Aid Office
Custodian: Coordinator of Financial Aid

Financial Records

Location: Business Office
Custodian: Business Manager

Placement Testing

Location: Counseling Centers at both campuses
Custodians: Coordinator of Counseling, Locust Grove Campus;
Coordinator of Counseling, Fredericksburg Area Campus

Disciplinary Records

Location: Student Services
Custodian: Dean of Student Services

Retention of Student Records

The College permanently retains an electronic record of a student's academic transcript (student permanent record). Other records will be maintained in paper form for periods ranging from one year after the date of origination to three years from the date of a student's separation from the College. The College retains student records according to the regulations set forth by the Virginia Public Records Act of the Code of Virginia.

Changes to Official Student Record

Students wishing to make any changes or corrections to identifying information on file at the College must complete a Change Form. This includes changes of name, address, telephone number, and curriculum. Change Forms are available in the Admissions and Records Office.

Facsimile Documents

It is not the policy of the College to facsimile transcripts or other academic documents. Germanna Community College reserves the right to decline to send and/or receive records via facsimile transmission if the College considers the use of facsimile documents inconsistent with policies or the best interest of the institution or its students.

Bookstore

The College bookstore, operated by Follett's Bookstores, Inc., is located adjacent to the student lounge at both campuses.

New and used, required textbooks and supplies may be purchased there, as well as gift items, cards, clothing, etc. Follett's offers a textbook buy back service throughout the school year. As an added service, the bookstore will special order any textbooks, paperbacks, etc., from publishers.

Follett's Bookstore - Refund Policy:

- Full refund for Fall and Spring given 15 days after the first day of class.
- Full refund for Summer given 7 days after the first day of class.
- New and used books are the only items refundable.
- New books must not be written in.
- If the book was purchased wrapped in plastic, money will be refunded only if the book is returned unopened in the plastic wrap.
- The original receipt must be presented for a full refund.
- There is a 10-day waiting period on refunds/returns if payment was made with a check.

Bulletin Boards

Bulletin boards for student are located at designated areas at both campuses. There are several boards for the express use of designated clubs and contain information about upcoming activities and events. Bulletin boards for general notices are located in the student lounge area at both campuses. The Dean of Student Services must approve the designation of bulletin boards for specific use. All flyers, posters, and other promotional material must be stamped by the Counseling Center before it can be posted. Any flyer not stamped will be removed. Also, any flyer in a non-designated will be removed. Guidelines for posting notices are available in the Student Activities Office at both campuses.

Student Lounge

Vending machines and a short-order grill are available in the Student Lounges for the enjoyment of students, faculty and staff. Students are expected to act in a manner respectful of the rights of others to comfortably use the same facility.

Student E-Mail Accounts

Student e-mail accounts are available to all students. All students must use their official Germanna e-mail account for correspondence with the college including interactions between students and faculty. To access your student e-mail account as well as Germanna's other online systems, go to www.germanna.edu/mygcc and login to MyGCC. These accounts remain active for as long as you are an enrolled student at Germanna Community College.