

PLEASE KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS

Student Records

South Plains College is bound by the Texas Open Records Law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and institutional procedures in determining access to or the release of student records. Student records are maintained by the following areas.

1. Academic Records: Admissions and Records Office, Department and Faculty Advisor Offices, Continuing Education Office and Counseling Center
2. Student Affairs Records: Dean of Students Office and Counseling Center
3. Financial Records: Business Office, Financial Aid Office and Special Services Office

A student's educational record normally consists of the following academic information: transcript of courses taken, grades earned, semester grade point average, cumulative grade point average, placement test scores information, admissions application, transcript and certificate evaluations, and tuition classification information.

Release of Information

Other than directory information that may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student, the college will not permit release of educational records of students without the student's written consent. This consent must be signed and dated by the student, and must indicate which records are to be released, the purpose of the release and the name of the agency to whom the records will be released. A student may request that all or part of directory information be withheld from the public by making written request to the Admissions and Records Office during the first twelve (12) class days of a fall or spring semester or the first four (4) class days of a summer term. This request will apply only to the current enrollment period. The following is considered directory information:

1. Name
2. Current and Permanent Address
3. Telephone Listing
4. Enrollment Status (full-time or part-time)
5. Classification
6. Participation in Officially Recognized Activities and Sports
7. Major and Minor Field of Study
8. Dates of Attendance
9. Degrees and Awards Received
10. Most Recent Educational Agencies or Institutions Attended
11. Photograph or other image of Student

Generally, the college will grant access to or release of records only to students, since the rights given to parents transfer to the student when he or she attends a post-secondary educational institution. Parents of a dependent student can obtain release of that student's records with proof of dependency. Transcripts pertaining to a student or former student will not be released if the student or former student has an outstanding debt. Only educational records originating at SPC will be copied for students. Documents submitted by or for the student in support of an application for admission or for transfer credit will not be returned to the student nor sent elsewhere on request. For example, a transcript from another college or high school record will not be sent to a third institution or given to the student.

Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. These rights include the following.

- 1.) The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days from the day the college receives a request for access. Students should submit to the Registrar, dean, departmental chairperson or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The college official 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.
- 2.) The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the college to amend a record that is believed to be inaccurate or misleading. The student should write the college official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record to be changed, and specify why it's 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.
- 3.) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's educational record except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
Exceptions which permit disclosure without consent include disclosure to school officials or individuals with legitimate educational interests. These individuals may include a person employed by South Plains 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 agent); a person serving on the Board of Regents; 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 educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, South Plains College discloses educational records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
- 4.) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by South Plains 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 Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

Student Conduct

Rules and regulations relating to the students at South Plains College are made with the view of protecting the best interests of the individual, the general welfare of the entire student body and the educational objectives of the college. As in any segment of society, a college community must be guided by standards that are stringent enough to prevent disorder, yet moderate enough to provide an atmosphere conducive to intellectual and personal development. A high standard of conduct is expected of all students. When a student enrolls at South Plains College, it is assumed that the student accepts the obligations of performance and behavior imposed by the college relevant to its lawful missions, processes and functions. Obedience to the law, respect for properly constituted authority, personal honor, integrity and common sense guide the actions of each member of the college community both in and out of the classroom.

Further information on rules and regulations regarding student conduct appear in the SPC Student Guide.

Academic Appeals Procedure

I. Appeal Restrictions

- A. Only final grades or dismissal resulting from academic discipline will be considered.
- B. The instructor's teaching ability or expertise will not be considered during the hearing.
- C. No grade or disciplinary action can be formally appealed after a period of six (6) months from the date that the student is informed.

II. Informal Appeal

- A. The student should schedule an appointment with the instructor of the course to discuss the final grade or disciplinary action.
- B. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she should schedule an appointment with the appropriate departmental chairperson to discuss the situation. The chairperson may request that the instructor also be present.
- C. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she should schedule an appointment with the Divisional Dean to discuss the situation. The dean may request that the chairperson also be present.
- D. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she should be advised of the formal appeal process.

III. Formal Appeal

- A. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the informal appeal, he/she should provide the following information, in writing, to the Vice President for Academic Affairs:
 1. A request for a formal appeals hearing.
 2. A brief statement of what is being appealed.
 3. The basis for the appeal.
 4. Pertinent facts relating to the appeal.

The agenda of the appeals hearing will include only those factors documented in the student's appeal request letter.

- B. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will determine the date, time and place of the hearing, and notify the student accordingly.

IV. The Hearing

- A. Composition of the appeals committee:
 1. Vice President for Academic Affairs will preside over the hearing.
 2. Faculty member of the student's choice.
 3. Faculty member and student selected by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
 4. President of Student Government Association.
 5. Dean of Students.
- B. Other persons who should be available at the hearing:
 1. The student who requested the hearing.
 2. The faculty member involved.
 3. Anyone the student or faculty member wishes to be present to substantiate the case.
 4. Chairperson and Divisional Dean.
- C. Hearing procedure: The committee will hear the student's appeal during which the parties to the controversy and such representatives as desired, will present all facts relating to the case. By majority vote, the committee will decide to sustain, amend or reverse the previous decision.

The decision of the committee is final and completes the academic appeals procedure.