

Procedures to Protect the Privacy of Students Enrolled in Distance Education

Frank Phillips Collee adheres to requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) for all students, regardless of location or mode of delivery. Privacy for students enrolled in distance-education classes (online, instructional television, correspondence, and Virtual College of Texas) is protected in numerous ways.

Unique Identification Numbers and Passwords

Upon registration, students are given a unique identification they will use to access the student portal and their email. This number remains consistent for the student regardless of enrollment status. Students must protect their unique ids and passwords, and FPC recommends that students change their passwords at least once every 90 days.

Students must log into the student portal and their email using the unique id. Students enrolling in online courses also must use the student id to access their courses, and faculty, who are assigned a unique id as well, must log into the faculty portal to access the gradebook for the course as well as any uploaded assignments. Faculty may post the graded assignments into the student's account, and no one can access the graded assignments, gradebook, or assignment submissions without using their unique id for log in.

Students enrolled in online courses must protect their privacy via student ids by creating a unique password and changing the password periodically. If students encounter a problem logging in, they should contact Patty Kasch (pkasch@fpctx.edu 806-457-4200, ext 770) or Michele Stevens (mstevens@fpctx.edu 806-457-4200, ext 707). Students taking courses at any site should contact Kasch or Stevens as they can reset the information most quickly.

Procedures for Assuring Identity of Distance-Learning Students

1. **Secure login and password:** each student enters a user name assigned by the college upon enrollment that uses a system-generated number that combines the student's last name with the student's unique identifier information. The student then enters a password he or she created that is not available to other students or college personnel. If the student forgets the password, The Director of Enrollment Management or her designee can reset the password but cannot view the student's existing password.
 - a. Students accept responsibility for the security of their passwords.
2. **Proctored Examinations:** Students enrolling in distance-learning courses are required to take examinations under the supervision of a proctor. When students enroll in the Virtual College of Texas network of courses, the FPC liaison attempts to find courses that require proctored testing at the Frank Phillips College campus to ensure that the students enrolled are the students receiving credit. Students must identify themselves in the remote location

with an acceptable picture ID card. Faculty must approve the testing site and proctor and these locations may include:

- a. Testing centers at colleges or universities, including Frank Phillips College sites in Borger, Dalhart, and Perryton sites of Frank Phillips College;
- b. Professional testing centers such as Sylvan; or
- c. Local independent school districts, proctored by a teacher, administrator, or librarian.

Frank Phillips College does not charge students for proctoring exams and encourages students to find no-cost centers in their remote locations. However, any cost associated with securing a proctor is the responsibility of the student. FPC does not charge students to proctor exams for other institutions of higher education.

3. Faculty members teaching distance-learning courses have a role in ensuring the identity of the students. Through different methods of engagement, faculty members begin to recognize the student's voice in such a way that the personal work can be authenticated. Faculty who suspect the student is not creating his or her own work can contact the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs for support in proceeding with an investigation into the student's body of work.

Security of Data

Personal information is secured on computer servers that are locked in secure rooms and protected against unauthorized users. Usernames and passwords are encrypted through Secure Socket Layer (SSL) software.

Faculty and staff are responsible for maintaining the security and integrity of student data. Faculty do not share academic information about a student without written consent from the student except in the cases where an FPC employee has a legitimate need for the information.

Policies and Procedures Applicable to All Students, Regardless of Location or Mode of Delivery

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

Frank Phillips College informs students of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 through the college website and catalog. Incoming students are informed at Student Central and during registration at remote sites and provided an opportunity to choose who may access their records. In addition, an email is sent to all students, including those enrolled in distance or correspondence education, each fall, spring, and combined summer semesters explaining how to

access FERPA information. This Act was designated to protect the privacy of educational records and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings. Students also have the right to file complaints with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) concerning alleged failures by the institution to comply with the Act. Questions concerning the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act may be referred to the Office of Educational Services.

Statement of Confidentiality

Student records are released only for use by faculty and professional staff for authorized college-related purposes. The release of student records for off-campus use occurs only with the student's knowledge and signed written consent or where required by law or regulation. Information is released to high-school counselors upon request if the student is currently enrolled as a dual-credit student.

A student's record is open for inspection by the student's parents or guardians if the student is under eighteen years of age. The rights of the parents are transferred to the student on the student's 18th birthday.

The Director of Enrollment Management is the custodian of a student's academic record. A student's academic record may include application for admission information, residency certificate, immunization certificate, date of school entry, student schedules and schedule changes, academic work completed, attendance, standardized achievement test scores, transcripts from previous schools attended, and various Veterans' Administration forms. Transcripts from previous schools attended and test scores are the property of Frank Phillips College.

Public information, which may be released upon request, includes a student's name, dates of attendance, classification, degrees and certificates received, awards received, the type of award received (academic, technical or continuing education), field of study, enrollment status (full-time, part-time, undergraduate, etc.), current address (including email), participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, and name of most recent institution attended. **If a student does not wish for this public information to be released, the student is responsible for notifying the Director of Enrollment Management by the last official day to register for a given semester.**

It is the intent of Frank Phillips College to comply fully with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 which protects the privacy of educational records, establishes the rights of students to inspect and review their education records, and provides guidelines for correction of inaccurate or misleading data.

Other than directory information or legally required releases of information, the College will not permit release of educational records without the student's written consent. The 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 which the records will be released.

Permission Release Form

A permission release form can be filed in the Office of Educational Services as the written consent of the release of educational records to any person or persons listed on the permission release form. The permission release form stays on the student's record as long as the student is continuously enrolled at FPC. It becomes null and void once the student misses one long semester (fall or spring). If students would like to change the form at any time, it is their responsibility to notify the Office of Educational Services.

Request for release of student information or for additional information concerning FERPA should be directed to the Director of Enrollment Management.

Review of Records

Students are entitled to review information contained in their permanent educational records. Any student who desires to review his or her record may do so upon written request to the office immediately responsible for the record. After review, students are entitled to challenge the accuracy of records through informal and formal hearings.