

# **Isothermal Community College**

## **Student Record Policies**

Isothermal Community College in the execution of its responsibilities to students, must maintain accurate and confidential student records. The Student Affairs Division has the responsibility for maintaining these records in accordance with existing state laws, college policy, USA Patriot Act, Solomon Amendment and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended.

### Student Academic Record

The Admissions and Student Records Office will develop and maintain a permanent academic record for each curriculum student who enrolls in the college. This record will include name, address, social security number, date of birth, sex, and major. The academic portion of the record will include courses taken, grades, hours attempted, hours earned, quality points, quality point averages, courses and credits transferred (if applicable), Dean's List, academic probation or suspension, notation and degrees, diplomas or certificates earned. A transcript(s) of the official academic record may be released or obtained by the student upon written request to the Student Records Office. An official transcript will not be released unless all tuition, fees and other obligations due the college have been satisfied.

### Educational Records And Privacy Rights

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, is a Federal law which states (a) that a written institutional policy must be established and (b) that a statement of adopted procedures covering the privacy rights of students be made available. The law provides that the institution will maintain the confidentiality of student education records.

Isothermal Community College accords all the rights under the law to students who are declared independent. No one outside the institution shall have access to nor will the institution disclose any information from students' education records without the written consent of students except to personnel within the institution, to accrediting agencies carrying out their accreditation function, to persons in compliance with a judicial order, and to persons in an emergency in order to protect the health or safety of students or other persons. All these exceptions are permitted under the Act.

Within the institution only those members, individually or collectively, acting in the students' educational interest are allowed access to student education records. These members include personnel in the Offices of the Student Affairs Division (Admissions/Records, Financial Aid, Dean of Students and the Career and Testing Center) and academic personnel within the limitations of their need to know.

At its discretion Isothermal may provide Directory Information in accordance with the provisions of the Act to include: student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, degrees, and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student and participation in officially recognized activities. Students may withhold Directory Information by notifying the Student Records Office in writing within two weeks after the first day of class for any semester. Requests for non-disclosure will be honored by the institution for only one academic year; therefore, authorization to withhold Directory Information must be filed annually in the Student Records Office.

The law provides students with the right to inspect and review information contained in their education records, to challenge the contents of their education records, to have a hearing if the outcome of the challenge is unsatisfactory, and to submit explanatory statements for inclusion in their files if the decision of the hearing panel is unacceptable. The Dean of Students at Isothermal has been designated by the institution to coordinate the inspection and review procedures for student education records, which include admissions, personal, academic, and financial files. Students wishing to review their education records must make written requests to the Dean of Students listing the item or items of interest. Only records covered by the Act will be made available within forty-

five days of the request. Students may have copies made of their records with certain exceptions, (e.g., a copy of the academic record for which a financial or other "holds" exists). These copies would be made at the students' expense. Education records do not include records of instructional, administrative, and educational personnel which are the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to any individual except a temporary substitute, records of a law enforcement unit, student health records, employment records or alumni records. Health records, however, may be reviewed by physicians of the students' choosing.

Students **may not** inspect and review the following as outlined by the Act: financial information submitted by their parents; confidential letters and recommendations associated with admissions, employment or job placement, to which they have waived their rights of inspection and review; or education records containing information about more than one student, in which case the institution will permit access only to that part of the record which pertains to the inquiring student.

Students who believe that their education records contain information that is inaccurate or misleading, or is otherwise in violation of their privacy or other rights, may discuss their problems informally with the Dean of Students (or designee). If the decisions are in agreement with the students' request, the appropriate records will be amended. If not, the students will be notified within a reasonable period of time that the records will not be amended; and they will be informed by the Dean of Students of their right to a formal hearing. Student requests for a formal hearing must be made in writing to the Dean of Students, who, within a reasonable period of time (30 days) after receiving such requests, will inform students of the date, place, and the time of the hearings. Students may present evidence relevant to the issues raised and may be assisted or represented at the hearings by one or more persons of their choice, including attorneys, at the students' expense. The hearing panel which will adjudicate such challenges will be the Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, the appropriate Division Dean and the Dean of Students.

Decisions of the hearing panel will be final, will be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, and will consist of written statements summarizing the evidence and stating the reasons for the decision, and will be delivered to all parties concerned. The education records will be corrected or amended in accordance with the decision of the hearing panel, if the decision is in favor of the student. If the decision is unsatisfactory, the student may place with the education record statements commenting on the information in the records, or statements setting forth any reasons for disagreeing with the decisions of the hearing panel. The statement will be placed in the education records, maintained as part of the students' records, and released whenever the records in question are disclosed.

Students who believe that the adjudications of their challenges were unfair or not in keeping with the provisions of the Act may request, in writing, assistance from the President of the institution to aid them in filing complaints with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office (FERPA).

A general statement of this policy will be published in the college catalog biennially and in the student handbook annually. It will also be made available in the new student orientation packet, which is issued to all new students each semester. Revisions and clarifications will be published as experience with the law and institution's policy warrants. Copies of this policy and the Guidelines and Procedures used to enforce it are located in the Student Affairs Office and may be examined upon request.. Copies are also located in the library and academic divisions. The policy will be distributed to faculty and staff annually. The retention and disposition of records will be governed by the Public Records Retention and Disposition Schedule published by the Department of Community Colleges (revised 2001).