

**PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS/CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE
AND AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION**

Federal law affords students privacy regarding nearly all aspects of their academic performance. This includes any information regarding their performance in the classroom including grades, test scores, and class schedules. When any individual, including a parent/guardian(s) or potential employer, contacts a University official or professor regarding a student's academic performance, the official/professor must first obtain written permission from the student before releasing that information. This release form protects the rights of the student as well as affording protection to University personnel (see example release form).

When a parent/guardian asks to speak with a faculty member concerning their child's academic performance, the faculty member must decide if such a conversation is warranted and beneficial to the student. Whether the conversation takes place via phone, e-mail, or in a face-to-face meeting, written permission must be obtained from the student. When a face-to-face meeting takes place, and especially when the meeting has the potential to be confrontational in nature, it is in the best interest of both the University staff member and the parent/guardian to request that a third party observer be present. For example, faculty members might request the chair of their department be present, and a parent/guardian might ask a friend or relative to attend the meeting. The presence of an observer(s) helps to ensure a productive meeting and a more accurate representation of the content of the meeting, if needed, in the future.

Prior to a face-to-face meeting with a parent/guardian over a student's academic performance, the University official/professor must (1) obtain the student's written permission and (2) should also notify the parent/guardian of their option of having an observer attend the meeting—and that an observer may be present from the University. Following the meeting, the parent/guardian should be informed of other avenues that can be pursued (i.e. grade appeals, a separate discussion with the College Dean) if they are not satisfied with the outcome of the initial meeting.

Example Release Form

**AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION FROM EDUCATION RECORDS
REGARDING COURSE PERFORMANCE**

Professor _____:

I authorize you to release information from my education records regarding my performance in _____ (insert course name and number) to _____. This release authorizes you to provide the grades I have received on course assignments, clinical assignments, quizzes, tests, and similar evaluative documents, as well as my final grade. The purpose of this disclosure is to _____.

I understand that by signing this authorization I am authorizing you to release to the person or class of persons named above information that would otherwise be private and not accessible to them. This authorization expires one year from the date of signature. I am consenting to the release of this information freely and voluntarily, and I understand the consequences of providing this authorization.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____