FERPA

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. FERPA governs the release of and access to student education records maintained by HTC. The Act provides students the right to inspect and review their education records (with some exceptions, see below), to request an amendment to their education records, and to limit disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in their education records. Students who are currently enrolled in or formerly enrolled in institutions of higher education are protected under FERPA.

Education Records Defined

“Education Records” are those records that are directly related to a student and maintained by the institution or by a party authorized to keep records for the institution. Education records do not include files made by and kept in the sole possession of the maker that are not accessible to any other person.

Inspection and Review of Education Records

Students have the right to inspect and review their education record within 45 days after HTC receives the request for access. If you wish to review your education record, please contact the Office of the Registrar.

HTC is not required to permit students to inspect and review education records that include:

- Financial records of the student’s parents;
- Confidential letters of recommendation placed in the student’s education records before January 1, 1975, as long as the letters are used only for purposes for which they were specifically intended; and
- Confidential letters of recommendation placed in the student’s education records after January 1, 1975, if the student has waived his/her right to inspect and review those letters;

Request for Amendment to Education Records

Students have the right to request an amendment to their education records if they believe the contents are inaccurate or misleading. If you feel there is an error in your record, you should submit a statement to Office of the Registrar, clearly identifying the part of the record you want amended and why you believe it is inaccurate or misleading. The Registrar’s Office will notify you of his/her decision and advise you regarding appropriate steps if you do not agree with the decision, up to and including the right to request a hearing or in violation of their privacy rights.

Release of Information
Students have the right to provide written consent prior to disclosure by HTC of personally identifiable information contained in their education records, except to the extent FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

Such written consent must:

1. Specify the records to be disclosed,
2. State the purpose of the disclosure,
3. Identify the party or class of parties to whom disclosure may be made, and
4. Be signed and dated by the student.

Some examples of such exceptions include, but are not limited to:

- School officials with a “legitimate educational interest” may have access to a student’s educational record without the student’s consent. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the school official has a professional need to review your education record in order to fulfill his or her official responsibilities. This determination will be made by Registrar’s Office. Examples of individuals who may have access, depending on their official duties, and only within the context of those duties, include: HTC faculty and staff, agents of the institution, students employed by the institution or who serve an official institutional committees, and representatives of agencies under contract with the University.
- To officials of another school where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student’s enrollment or transfer.
- To federal officers pursuant to FERPA.
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
- As required by, or permitted pursuant to, Illinois law.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, HTC in order to (1) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (2) administer student aid programs; or (3) improve instruction.
- To accrediting organizations carrying out their accrediting functions.
- **To parents of dependent students as defined by the Internal Revenue Code.**
- In response to a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate law enforcement officials investigating specific criminal matters.
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency.

**Directory Information**

Directory information is information contained in the education record of a student that generally is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. HTC may disclose such information in a student’s education record that it has designated as “directory information” without a student’s prior consent. However, a student may restrict the disclosure of certain directory information. To do so, a student should contact the HTC Registrar’s office to complete the appropriate form indicating the information to be restricted.
HTC defines directory information to include a student’s name;,, address; telephone number; email address; date and place of birth; photographs; field of study; enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time); grade level; degrees, honors, and awards received; dates of attendance; the most recent educational institution attended; and participation in officially recognized activities and sports. Directory Information does not include a student’s social security number or student identification number, race/ethnicity/nationality, gender or student's family member names and addresses.