

## Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

### ☒Primary rights of students under FERPA include:

- Right to inspect and review their own educational record.
- Right to seek to amend their own educational record.
- Right to have some control over the disclosure of information from their educational records.

The **FERPA** guidelines apply to individuals who are enrolled at Cuesta College regardless of the age of the student. Under **FERPA**, schools may, but are not required to, provide parents of students who are dependent for tax purposes access to the student's educational records.

Cuesta College does **not** release information to parents without the written consent of the student.

### ☒On-Campus inquiries about students

School officials with a "legitimate need to know" that require student information in order to carry out their responsibilities, may request student information from the Office of Admissions and Records.

### ☒Off-Campus inquiries about students

Please forward requests for student information to the Office of Admissions and Records. The Records Office Staff provide official verification of student educational information including general requests and all requests made by subpoena. Law enforcement inquiries should be forwarded to the Public Safety Office or to the Office of the Vice President of Student Support.

### ☒What can we tell them? Directory Information:

Directory information or information from a student's educational record that can be disclosed without the student's written permission is defined as, "information contained in an education record of a student which would **not** generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed." Personal identifiers, such as student identification numbers or social security numbers, race/ethnicity, gender, religious preference, grades and GPA **can never** be designated as directory information. Cuesta College has identified the following elements as directory information:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Name                            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dates of Attendance  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Field of Study                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Level of Enrollment (# of units-full-time/part-time)       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Degrees and Certificates Earned | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Participation in officially recognized activities & sports |

As a general rule, **NO** additional information beyond directory information elements should ever be released to any party beyond Cuesta College staff and faculty without the specific written consent of the student.

### ☒Posting of Grades by Faculty:

The posting of grades either by the student's name, institutional student identification number, or social security number without the student's written permission is a violation of **FERPA**. This includes the posting of grades to a class/institutional Web site and applies to any public posting of grades for students taking distance education courses. Even with names obscured, numeric student identifier numbers are considered personally identifiable information. Therefore, the practice of posting grades by social security number, a portion of it, or student identification number violates **FERPA**.

Instructors and others who post grades should use a system that ensures **FERPA** requirements are met. This can be accomplished either by obtaining the student's uncoerced written permission to do so or by using code words or randomly assigned numbers that only the instructor and individual student know. The order of posting should not be alphabetical.

The **best** method for students to obtain their grades is through their institution's secured student information system, where faculty electronically posts their grades and students view their grades via a secure network ID and password. **This is the most secure and efficient way to notify your Cuesta College students of their grades. Grades become available within two weeks of their due date.**

*Documents, such as rosters and sign-in sheets, which have the student's social security number or other personal information, should not be left out for others to see. It is important to destroy or shred documents containing students' personal information that are no longer needed.*