

Conception Seminary College Policy

Access to Student Records

- 1) Conception Seminary College will fully comply with all statutory law concerning access by students and parents to official student records. In two instances, however, full access will not be granted:
 - a) when the disclosure of certain information would, in the judgment of qualified professionals, be detrimental to the student's mental health;
 - b) when there is a clear conflict of confidentiality rights.
- 2) Student access to their own school records is founded on the assumption that such access will aid in promoting trust, objectivity, and personal growth. At the same time, it shall afford them an opportunity to review critical opinions, challenge the accuracy of factual information, and petition the removal of specific items from the file or the inclusion of written explanations.
- 3) Clinical data which the school may have in its possession must be guarded with utmost care. The student himself is barred from access to sensitive or peripheral information of this kind, while access by all others, whether inside or outside the institution must, in every case, be regulated by the canons of professional ethics and, except for documents ordinarily on file with the Director of Counseling Services, shall include the requirement of the student's informed and written consent.
- 4) Persons within the institution having a legitimate and demonstrable need for information concerning students as a result of past or present duties shall be allowed access only to those records directly related to their duties and functions. Whenever possible, the information they need shall be supplied by the officials having supervision and custody of the records, without direct examination of the records themselves.
 - a) Permission to examine individual student evaluations, as well as medical reports furnished to the Department of Character Formation shall be obtained from the President-Rector or the Dean of Students.
 - b) The Spiritual Director and a student's resident Chaplain enjoy ordinary access to the documents mentioned under (a) above, but only after notifying the Dean of Students.
 - c) The student's academic record is accessible at all times to his own Academic Advisor. Others wishing to examine it must first obtain permission from the President-Rector, the Academic Dean, or the Registrar.
 - d) Official letters of recommendation written on behalf of Conception Seminary College administration, faculty and staff which are based on student records are to be written only by the President-Rector, the Vice Rector, the Dean of Students, the Academic Dean, or the Director of Spiritual Formation. Recommendations prepared by persons other than these must rely on direct personal knowledge.

- e) Final authority for determining extraordinary access to official student records by persons within the institution shall reside with the President-Rector.
- 5) No identifiable information contained in student records may be released to any person or agency outside of the institution, for any purpose, without the written consent of the student, based on full knowledge of the intended uses of such information, with the following exceptions:
- a) Certain items of information, labeled "Directory Information", may be released as matters of public record and may be released upon proper identification, statement of legitimate purpose, and written item-by-item request.
 - b) Service of a subpoena for a student's records will be accepted only by the secretary of Conception Abbey, Inc. In the event of such a subpoena, the student will be notified without delay, allowing him to take whatever legal action he deems appropriate.
 - c) Urgent requests stemming from an obvious family emergency will be honored with any of the items of information categorized under (a) and (b) above.
 - d) Scholars engaged in bona fide research, when prior written consent of the student(s) involved cannot reasonably be obtained, may be given selected categories of student information at the sole discretion of the President-Rector and under enforceable terms of complete confidentiality (e.g., a waiver absolving the institution of legal responsibility for breach of confidentiality, etc.).
 - e) External agencies providing scholarships or other direct assistance, as well as church bodies providing ecclesiastical sponsorship, shall be given periodic reports of a student's progress if these are requested as a condition of support. It must be insured, however, that the student is fully informed as to the kinds of information required and the manner in which it is to be reported.
 - f) Academic transcripts are released only at the student's explicit written request. Their release to colleges and universities to meet an urgent deadline, however, may be justified by good evidence of implied consent.
- 6) A record is to be kept of all requests for information contained in a student's files including the name of the requesting individual or agency, date, purpose of request, and disposition of request. The only exception being routine verifications of student directory information. Students should have access to this record at any time.