ACADEMIC RECORDS INFORMATION

Student Standing

The student's standing is determined by the number of semester hours of credit earned as follows:

- Freshman: 0-29.5 semester hours of credit (inclusive)
- Sophomore: 30-59.5 semester hours of credit (inclusive)
- Junior: 60-89.5 semester hours of credit (inclusive)
- Senior: 90 or more semester hours of credit

Academic Load

Academic (or course) load refers to the number of credits taken by a student each semester. It is used to determine full- or less-than-full-time status and may change throughout a student's academic career for various reasons. Students may change their academic load through the myWCU portal; consideration should be given to the impact it may have on financial aid, housing, and other credit-dependent services. Undergraduate academic loads are broken down as follows:

**Fall or Spring**

- **Academic Load**
- **# of Credits**
- Less Than Half-time: 0.01 - 5.50
- Half-time: 6.00 - 8.50
- 3/4-time: 9.00 - 11.50
- Full-time: 12.00 - 18.00
- Full-time with Overload: >18.00

**Summer**

- **Academic Load**
- **# of Credits**
- Maximum (per summer semester): 7.00

**Winter**

- **Academic Load**
- **# of Credits**
- Maximum: 7.00

Transcripts

Requests for official transcripts are made online.

Students who attended during or after 1985 order through the myWCU portal and have the option to order a paper transcript, to be mailed or picked up, or an eTranscript (certified PDF) to be emailed.

Students who attended during or before 1984 order through our partner, Parchment. Students who may request an exception because of a disability should refer to, "Services for Students with Disabilities" (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/services-students-disabilities).

### The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

West Chester University is committed to protecting the privacy of its students and to maintaining the confidentiality of student education records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Students at West Chester University are afforded the following rights regarding their education records:

1. The right to inspect and review their education records within 45 days from the date the University receives the student's request for access.

   The Registrar has been designated by the University to coordinate the inspection and review procedures of student education records. Students must submit a written request to the Office of the Registrar identifying the item or items of their record they wish to inspect. The Registrar's Office will contact the student as soon as possible, but no later than 45 days from the date the request was received, to arrange a time and place for the student to inspect the requested records. At the time of inspection, the student will be required to show photo identification and must inspect the records in the presence of a representative from the Office of the Registrar.

2. The right to request an amendment to their education records, if he or she believes the record contains inaccurate or misleading information.

   If a student believes his or her education record contains information that is inaccurate, misleading, or is otherwise in violation of his or her privacy rights, the student may request in writing that their record be changed. Students seeking a change of grade should refer to the Grade Appeal policy found in their undergraduate (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/grading-information) or graduate (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/graduate/academic-policies-procedures/grade-information) catalog. The written request must clearly identify the part of the record the student wants amended and must specify why the record is inaccurate or misleading. If the Registrar agrees with the student's request, the appropriate records will be amended. If the Registrar decides not to amend the record, the student will be notified of the decision, within a reasonable period of time, and the student will be advised of his or her right to a formal hearing.

Student WCU E-mail Accounts

All incoming students to West Chester University will be issued an official WCU e-mail address. Students are advised to check this e-mail account frequently since University administrators and faculty will be communicating information regarding classes, financial aid, billing, emergency announcements, and other important notifications. These e-mails will only be sent to a student's "wcupa.edu" e-mail account and not to any other personal e-mail address.

Changes in Name or Address

Students may update their address through the Change my Address link within their myWCU account. Detailed instructions are located on the Registrar's website (http://wcupa.edu/registrar/documents/ManageStudentRecords.pdf).

Any student wishing to change his/her name from that currently on record must provide legal documentation supporting the change, such as: a marriage license, court order, divorce decree, etc. A driver's license is not adequate. All name change requests must go through the Office of the Registrar (http://wcupa.edu/registrar/default.aspx). Requests for name changes received through the mail will be acknowledged by letter.

Exception to Academic Policies

Students may file a petition that requests exception to academic policies. Petition forms are available in the Office of the Registrar (http://www.wcupa.edu/registrar) and on the Registrar's web page. Students who may request an exception because of a disability should refer to, "Services for Students with Disabilities" (http://catalog.wcupa.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies-procedures/services-students-disabilities)."
Student requests for a formal hearing to contest the Registrar's decision must be made, in writing, to the Associate Provost. A hearing committee will be appointed and the student will be notified of the date, time and place of their hearing. The student may present evidence relevant to the issues raised and may be assisted or represented by one or more individuals of their choice, including an attorney, at their own expense. Decisions of the hearing committee, which will be based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, will be final. Following the hearing, the committee will provide their written decision and a summary of the hearing to the concerned parties. If the decision is in favor of the student, his or her education record will be amended accordingly.

Students who are dissatisfied with the result of their hearing may place in their education record an explanatory statement commenting on the information that was under review. The explanatory statement will be maintained as part of the students' education record and will be released when the records in question are disclosed.

3. The right to provide consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information contained in their education records.

No one outside the university shall have access to, nor will the university disclose, any information from students' education records without the students' prior written consent, except to the extent permitted under FERPA. (See " (p. 2)WCU Use of Student Directory Information").

FERPA does establish several exceptions that allow the university to disclose student education records without prior consent. Some of these exceptions include:

- To school officials with a legitimate educational interest.
  A school official is a person employed by West Chester University in an administrative, academic, research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); members of the board of trustees; third-parties acting on behalf of the university; or individuals, including students, serving on university committees. School officials are considered to have a legitimate educational interest if the student education information is necessary in order for that official to: complete a task specific to their job description/contract, perform a task related to a student’s education, perform a task related to the discipline of a student, or provide a service or benefit relating to a student.

- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
  The university will make an effort to notify the student in writing prior to disclosing information, unless directed otherwise by the order or subpoena.

- To persons or organizations providing the student financial aid, or who determine financial aid decisions concerning eligibility, amount, conditions and terms of the financial aid.

- To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.

4. The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by West Chester University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

FERPA is administered by the Family Policy Compliance Office. Student complaints can be sent to:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

5. Additional Provisions

For the purposes of this policy, the term “student” refers to any individual who has secured admission to the University in the form of a deposit, has enrolled in a course, has completed a non-degree application, or any individual who has previously attended West Chester University. The term “education records” refers to any records directly related to a student, with certain exceptions, that are maintained by the university or its agents. These records include but are not limited to grades, transcripts, class lists, student course schedules, student financial information, student identification card photo, and student discipline files.

For the purposes of record inspection and release, the University reserves the right to redact records so that personally identifiable information pertaining to other students can be removed. Pursuant to a subpoena or record request, student records shall be reviewed for all personally identifiable information related to students that are not named as part of the subpoena or request. Once identified, this information shall be redacted to ensure protection of student information as provided by FERPA.

It is the policy of West Chester University that no records of deceased students be released to third parties, unless specifically authorized by the executor of the deceased’s estate or in response to a validly issued subpoena.

**WCU Use of Student Directory Information**

Directory information is information contained in your education record that generally would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.

Under FERPA, West Chester University may release the following categories of information without students’ prior consent:

- Student’s name
- Local and permanent address
- Telephone number
- WCU email address, which includes WCU student ID number
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Enrollment status
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height, if a member of an athletic team

The University will limit information that is made public to categories such as these but will not necessarily publish all such information in every listing.

West Chester University does not make directory information generally available to the public. West Chester University limits its release of directory information for official University purposes, such as: identifying athletic team members, publishing names of scholarship recipients, graduation lists and Dean’s Lists, issuing academic awards, verifying enrollment or degree status, and providing such information to faculty and/or staff as it pertains to their job responsibilities or with whom the University has a contractual relationship. West Chester University’s Office of Commuter Services does provide West Chester Borough Department of Building, Housing, and Codes Enhancement with student’s enrollment status.

Staff, faculty, student employees, and others with whom the University has a contractual relationship are not permitted to use or disclose student’s directory information for purposes other than those pertaining...
to their job responsibilities. Release of directory information may not be performed by anyone not authorized to do so.

Undergraduate and Graduate students who do not wish to have their directory information published, without their prior consent, must submit a Non-Disclosure of Directory Information Request form (http://www.wcupa.edu/registrar/documents/nondisclosureDirectoryInformationRequestEN.pdf) to the Office of the Registrar. Forms must be submitted within the first 15 calendar days of the semester. Once a student restricts the release of their directory information, the restriction will remain in effect until the student makes a written request to the Office of the Registrar to reverse the non-disclosure restriction.