**Chowan University FERPA Policy**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student’s education records. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children’s education records at Chowan University. These rights transfer to the student, or former student, once he or she becomes an “eligible student” by beginning to attend Chowan University.

Eligible Students have the right to inspect and review all of their education records maintained by the university. This right may be exercised by making a written or verbal request to the Registrar. The university generally is not required to provide copies of materials in the education record; it may charge a fee for copies.

Eligible Students have the right to request that the university correct records believed to be inaccurate or misleading. This right may be exercised by making a written request to the Registrar. If the university decides not to amend the record, the Eligible Student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the university still decides not to amend the record, the Eligible Student has the right to place a statement with the record commenting on the contested information.

Generally, the university must have written permission from the Eligible Student before releasing any information from the student’s record. However, the law allows the university to disclose records, without consent, to the following parties:

* Either or both parents of a dependent student, as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. (Payment of tuition is not sufficient proof that a student is a dependent.)
* University officials who have a legitimate educational interest as determined by university policy and administered by the Registrar (see Definitions below).
* Other schools or universities to which a student is transferring.
* Certain government officials in order to carry out lawful functions.
* Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student.
* Organizations conducting certain studies for the university.
* Accrediting organizations.
* Individuals who have obtained court orders or subpoenas.
* Persons who need to know in cases of health and safety emergencies.
* State and local authorities within a juvenile justice system.

The university may also disclose, without consent, “directory information.” The university considers the following items to be directory information: name, class, photograph(s), full-time or half-time status, home town and state, university e-mail address, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees honors and awards, and dates of attendance.

An Eligible Student may notify the university in writing that the university may not release any or all of the information categorized as directory information without prior consent. This notice must be given annually, and must be received by the Registrar’s office before the end of the first week of the academic year.

An Eligible Student may notify the university in writing at any time during a given academic year that his/her e-mail address should not be listed in the university’s public access e-mail directory. Such notification shall remain in effect until the beginning of the next academic year.

Eligible Students may file a complaint with the Department of Education concerning alleged failures of the university to comply with the requirements of FERPA. A timely complaint is defined as one that is submitted to the Department of Education within 180 days of the date that the complainant knew or reasonably should have known of the alleged violation of FERPA. An eligible student may obtain a complaint form by calling (202) 260-3887.

**University Official:** a person employed by the university in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a company with whom the university has contracted, e.g., attorney, auditor, collection agent; a member of the Board of Trustees or Board of Visitors; a student employee; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

**Legitimate Educational Interest:** A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.