

CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT INFORMATION

POLICY NUMBER	ADM 02-2
APPROVAL DATE	JANUARY 19, 1994
PREVIOUS AMENDMENT	APRIL, 1989
REVIEW DATE	JANUARY, 1999
AUTHORITY	PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL
PRIMARY CONTACT	REGISTRAR

POLICY

- I. Thompson Rivers University (TRU) regards the information contained in a student's permanent record as personal and private. Information of a personal nature that a student discloses to any TRU staff member is also considered private and confidential. Therefore, no personal information about a student will be released except in the following circumstances:
 - a. to the student (including medical files) upon providing reasonable notice;
 - b. with the written authorization of the student;
 - c. to a student's sponsoring agency only upon receipt of a written waiver signed by the student;
 - d. in response to a court order;
 - e. to government departments for the purpose of statistical analysis and research, provided there is an assurance of anonymity;

As well, employees should not discuss confidential student matters in such a way or location as to be overheard by other staff or students.

II. STUDENT DIRECTORY

A student's name, address and telephone number will be included in a student directory unless the student selects confidentiality on the application for admission form. A copy of this directory will be provided to the TRU Students Union only for the purpose of conducting its elections.

REGULATIONS

I. GENERAL

The Registrar is responsible and accountable for the administration of all student records retained by TRU except interim statements of grades and other interim student evaluations which may be held by individual instructors, departmental chairpersons and other university staff.

Official transcripts are to be issued in a sealed envelope by the Registrar's Office upon payment of a fee determined by TRU policy. The official transcript and any certificate or diploma issued by the university constitutes the only official statement made regarding students.

II. ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

In general, only the Registrar and staff of the Registrar's office have unrestricted access to all student records, having according accountability. Other TRU staff may inspect student records if they have a legitimate need for specific information in order to carry out their responsibilities.

III. MEDICAL RECORDS

Student medical records are submitted to and maintained by the Occupational Health Office. Medical information is not released without appropriate approvals as described below.

Specific medical information may be released by the student, or by the Occupational Health Office to deans, chairpersons, instructors, or counsellors for students within their jurisdiction:

- a. upon written consent provided by the student to the Occupational Health Office; or
- b. in cases where the student's condition may be a threat to public safety.

The Occupational Health Office will advise, by letter or in person, all students with medical conditions which have the potential to be life threatening. The notification will:

- a. outline the benefits of the student advising faculty of their condition; and
- b. make available a "release of information" document for the student to give consent for the Occupational Health Office to release specific medical information to the chairperson or instructor of the specific department concerned.

IV. TRANSCRIPTS

Transcripts of grades will be released:

- a. to a student only upon written request by that student;

- b. to a third party on behalf of a student only upon written approval by the student concerned;
- c. to TRU staff who require the transcript to do their job.

V. REQUEST TO LOCATE A STUDENT

1. Point of Contact

All requests are to be referred only to the Occupational Health Office during work hours or to security after hours.

2. Under What Circumstances

When there is either a phone or personal request to locate a student, the request is responded to at the discretion of the Occupational Health Officer. Generally, there are four circumstances when an attempt is always made to locate a student. These are:

- a. in the event of a family medical emergency (e.g. death, serious illness, accident); or
- b. when the health or well-being of a student's child is affected; or
- c. when the R.C.M.P. present an arrest warrant; or
- d. in emergency cases, to pass a message to a student to contact the R.C.M.P., sheriff or other appropriate government agencies. The inquiring individual will be advised that the student has been given the message, or was unable to be located.

It is always explained that a student will be located only if they are physically present in class. If the student does not have a class, or is not present, location is not possible.

3. Method

If the message is urgent, the Occupational Health Officer will interrupt a class by:

- a. knocking on the door and excusing for the interruption;
- b. ask if the student is in the class;
- c. give the message to the student or in certain cases, e.g. writing an exam, leave message with the instructor to have the student visit the Occupational Health Officer for the message.

If there is an in-person request to locate a student in an emergency, the requesting person will normally accompany the Occupational Health Officer, and the above point (3) followed. The accompanying person is normally asked to stand in such a location so that they could not be seen when the door is opened.

VI. REQUEST FOR STUDENT INFORMATION

TRU regards the information contained in a student's permanent record as personal and confidential.

Students are requested at the time of registration to indicate on the application for admission form (public/private) whether student directory information (name, address, phone number) may be released in the circumstances indicated below.

1. Private

a. External Inquiries

If the student indicates "private" then no information is to be released about the student without the student's written consent or a court order.

b. Internal TRU Staff Inquiries

Student information may be released to TRU staff only in cases where the staff member needs it to do her/his job.

2. Public

a. External Inquiries

If the student indicates "public" on the application for admission, then the following information may be given out:

- i. confirmation of enrolment only (no addresses, phone numbers or other information) will be given to general inquiries, bailiffs, lawyers, financial institutions and the like;
- ii. a copy of the student directory to the TRU Students Union for their election purposes;
- iii. to R.C.M.P., unemployment insurance, and other government agencies: name, address and phone number only. (No course grade information will be released unless written consent of the student is provided.)

All other information about a student may only be released with either a student's written consent or a court order.

b. Internal TRU Staff Inquiries

Student information may be released to TRU staff only in cases where the staff member needs it to do her/his job.