

EDUCATIONAL RECORDS AND STUDENT RIGHTS

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The following information concerning student records maintained by Lamar University is published in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) as amended (PL93-380).

Access to educational records directly related to a student will be granted to him or her unless the type of record is exempt from the provision of the law.

The types, locations and names of custodians of educational records maintained by the University are available from the Registrar.

Access to records by persons other than the student will be limited to those persons and agencies specified in the statute.

The release of information to the public without the consent of the student will be limited to the categories of information which have been designated by the University as directory information. The student may request this information be withheld from the public by making written request to the Records Office. Directory information includes name, all addresses (including e-mail addresses), all telephone numbers, major field of study, academic classification, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, enrollment status, degrees and awards received, last educational agency or institution attended, photographs, and class rosters.

A student has the right to challenge records and information directly related to him or her if it is considered to be inaccurate, misleading or otherwise inappropriate. Issues may be resolved either through an informal hearing with the official immediately responsible or by requesting a formal hearing. The procedure to be followed in a formal hearing is available in the Records Office.

Prior consent is not required from a student to disclose information to the Comptroller General of the United States, the Attorney General of the United States, the Secretary of State and State and local educational authorities.

A reasonable attempt will be made by Lamar University to notify a student of a records request to comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena.

The right of parental access to student records may be established by either of two methods: first, by the student filing a written consent statement or second, by the parent validating the student's dependence as defined by the Internal Revenue Service.

A student has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Lamar University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Lamar University may release personally identifiable information to school officials. School officials include faculty, staff, or student workers who have a legitimate educational interest in gaining access to a student's education record. Contracted individuals who are not employees of the institution, but who provide a service that the institution normally would perform itself, may also be classified

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR FIRST TIME IN COLLEGE STUDENTS, AS OF FALL 2007 - SIX DROP RULE

- Beginning fall 2007, the number of college courses that may be dropped are limited to six.
- New undergraduate students in Texas public colleges and universities will see a cap on the number of courses they may drop. The 80th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 1231 limiting the number of courses an institution of higher learning may allow an undergraduate student to drop. SB 1231 will affect any student enrolled as a first-time freshman at Lamar University and all other Texas universities and colleges, beginning in the fall 2007 semester.
- The bill requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to adopt and enforce new rules established in the bill. The coordinating board defines a "dropped course" as a course an undergraduate student at an institution of higher education has enrolled in for credit but did not complete.
- The new rules prohibit an institution of higher education from allowing a student to drop more than six courses during their undergraduate program, including any courses a transfer student has dropped at another university.
- A student will only be allowed to drop more than six courses if he or she can show "good cause" for dropping more than that number.
- "Good cause" includes situations that would affect the student's ability to satisfactorily complete a course, including: a severe illness or debilitating condition; a student's responsibility to care for a sick, injured or needy person; the death of a member of the student's family; active duty service by the student or a member of the student's family; a change in a work schedule beyond the student's control; or other good cause as determined by the college or university. Petition forms for exemptions are available from advisors or the Records Office.
- The new rules also state a course that a student is enrolled in concurrently with a lecture course, such as a lab, is not considered to be a course separate from the lecture course in determining the number of courses dropped.
- The rules established by this bill include guidelines for the refund or adjustment of tuition and mandatory fees for dropped courses and student withdrawals. The amount of money a student is refunded after dropping a course depends on the number of days they attended a course before dropping it.

After the official census date for a term, students must go to Room 102 in the Wimberly Building to drop or withdraw from classes. Please call (409) 880-8542, (409) 880-7529, or (409) 880-8362 for any questions.

TO WITHHOLD DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended (FERPA), allows a college or university to release certain pieces of information if that college or university has published that it will release information. Lamar University has published that the following information will be available to the public: name, all addresses (including e-mail addresses), all telephone listings, major field of study, academic classification, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, enrollment status, degrees and awards received with dates, last educational agency or institution attended, photographs, and class roster.

Any student who does not want directory information published or released must come to the Records Office, Wimberly 112, with a picture ID and complete a Directory Hold form. This should be done prior to census date for the term it is to become effective. If a student signs a directory hold form, it will remain in effect until the student rescinds the request in writing using the same procedure. No information on a student with Directory Holds will be released including graduation announcements

BACTERIAL MENINGITIS VACCINATION REQUIREMENT

Texas Senate Bill 62 requires that all new students under age 22 who attend on-campus classes at an institution of higher learning either receive a vaccination against bacterial meningitis or meet certain criteria for declining such a vaccination before the first day of the semester. The requirement also applies to returning students under age 22 who were not enrolled in the previous long semester. For more information, please go to <http://beacardinal.lamar.edu/bacterial-meningitis>.

MINI-SESSION POLICIES

STATE POLICIES:

1. All mini-session courses shall consist of the same number of class contact hours as similar courses offered in a semester or summer session; that is, normally 45-48 contact hours.
2. All mini-session courses shall have the same objectives, requirements, and quality of instruction as semester or summer session courses.
3. Students may not carry more courses at a time in a shortened format than will give them total credit of one semester credit hour per week of instruction.
4. No mini-session course shall consist of fewer than nine days of classes offered over not fewer than three weeks.
5. All requirements pertaining to three credit hour courses shall apply proportionately to courses for other credit hour values.
6. The Commissioner of Higher Education is authorized to permit exceptions to these requirements for research purposes or to determine the efficacy of teaching a specific course in a shortened format.

LAMAR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

1. Mini-session credit hours shall **NOT** be included as semester or summer session hours in the University's "Maximum Course Load" policy.
2. Course scheduling, classroom assignments, book/material orders and related instructional activities will follow the same university policies and procedures as those for semesters and summer sessions.
3. Please see Academic Calendar for list of deadline dates for Mini-Sessions
4. A minimum enrollment of 20 by Census date will be required for a course to be offered.
5. No financial aid, installment plans, or student loans will be available for the mini-session.
6. TSI-restricted students must consult with the Center for College Readiness prior to registering for a mini-session course.
7. No parking fee is required for the Mini-Session.