

Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

The purpose of this article is to give a brief overview of the Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) and point out some of the implications for institutional research professionals. The FERPA regulations of 1974 as amended, commonly known as the Buckley Amendment, were published in the Federal Register in 1976. The 1996 changes to FERPA affect higher educational institutions by

- Eliminating the requirement that each institution have a FERPA institutional policy,
- Requiring state educational agencies to afford access to student educational records, and
- Making a reasonable effort to notify a student of its intent to disclose educational records if legal action is initiated against that student.

Despite the first point, more and more institutions are creating or revising their campus FERPA policies rather than eliminating them.

FERPA was designed to protect the privacy of student educational records and to allow students to review

those records. The regulations apply to all who have been in attendance at postsecondary institutions. Excluded from FERPA are educational records of applicants for admission. It also does not pertain to educational records of former (alumni) students. An institution may not release a student's educational record outside the institution without the written consent from the student.

There are, however, some items from an educational record that can be released to external parties without consent from the student. These exceptions are designated as "directory (public) information." This includes the student's name, address, home telephone number, e-mail address, dates of college enrollment, major, campus attended, enrollment status, receipt of degrees, date of graduation and participation in officially recognized campus activities. Students have the right to withhold the release of "directory information" and are usually informed of this right on an annual basis. Once a student requests that his/her information be withheld, the hold remains in place until the student removes it.

Institutions may disclose educational records without the consent of the student to college employees who are deemed to have "legitimate" educational interest. The following criteria should be taken into account when determining the legitimacy of a request of student information:

- The information is within the context of his/her assigned responsibilities,
- The information is used within the context of official business, and
- The task must be determined to be consistent with the purposes for which the data are maintained.

The last two criteria are the crux of institutional research data requests. The Act specifically states

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A study conducted by the American Society of Training and Development concluded that in the next ten years:

- 74% of Americans working today will require retraining,
- 15 million manufacturing jobs will require different skills than are required today,
- 37 million people will need entry-level training, and
- Technical skills need updating every 4 years.

According to the U.S. Department of Education, by 1995

- 44 percent of all college students were over 25 years old,
- 54 percent were working,
- 56 percent were female, and
- 43 percent were attending college part time.

In 1997, more than 76 million American adults, 40 percent of the adult population, participated in one or more adult education activities, up from 32 percent in 1991.

Source: <http://www.microsoft.com/education/hed/online/extendcc.htm>

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Inside

President's Message

Greetings all, and welcome! First a personal note: as many of you have already learned, I have changed jobs—on July 16, I began my duties as Director of Institutional Research and Planning for the Connecticut State University System, but I will not forget my 21 years (out of 25) of community college affiliations. I expect to improve the linkages between the two systems, at least in Connecticut.

Anyway, I am expecting an absolutely wonderful year for NCRP and I would like you all to play an active role; the organization is only as active—or proactive—as its membership. To keep you informed of what's going on, one of our goals [see below] is improved communication. Therefore, a summary of the minutes of the officers' conference calls during the year will appear in this newsletter.

I know how much goes on during the year in community colleges and by community college faculty and staff; if it's related to research and/or planning, send a few sentences about your college's or regional activities to Katrin Spinetta, our *Parameters* editor. You'd be surprised how important those things are to maintaining and expanding our network.

From time to time, you may be contacted by one of the officers or your regional director to assist with special projects or to participate in AACC/NCRP events. Please say "yes." It is a very energizing experience. Also, if you are interested in long hours (for about a week), low pay (how much does a volunteer get these days?), but wonderful benefits, run for office or serve on a committee in NCRP, AIR or your regional AIR affiliate. From personal experience, it's great.

In closing, an appreciative thank you to our outgoing officers and directors for their service to NCRP:

- Gene Atkin, President, but staying on as Past President,
- Karen Conklin, Secretary-Treasurer,
- Ben Dilla, Membership Coordinator and Director Region 6,
- Katrin Spinetta, Past President, but staying on as *Parameters* Editor,
- Mary Ellen Goldstein, Director Region 1,
- Mary Lou D'Allegro, Director Region 2, who is leaving early for professional advancement in Chicago—best of luck),
- Suzanne Fischer, Director Region 4,
- Jackie Freeze, Director Region 8,

- Frankie Laanan, Director Region 9, who is leaving early to join the professoriate at the University of Illinois—Champaign-Urbana (I guess eventually some community college folks do transfer), and
- Jack Bautsch, Director Region 10.

All the best for a successful year.

—Alan Sturtz
Connecticut State University System

From the Past President

I hope each of you has had some fine vacation time and is now "back in the harness." Over the summer, leadership of NCRP shifted to our new president, Alan Sturtz. Alan has a number of projects in mind for the coming year. I have appreciated the willingness of many of you to participate in various NCRP projects, and encourage any of you who haven't participated in the past to do so in the future. One great way to get the new year started is to call your regional director and the *Parameters* newsletter editor, Katrin Spinetta, with news of publications, conferences, or whatever you think may be of interest to other members. If you haven't already done so (and have e-mail), it's useful to subscribe to the NCRP list serv. Directions are elsewhere in this issue of *Parameters*. Over the summer, ERIC asked NCRP for permission for materials posted to NCRP's home page to be indexed in ERIC. The officers discussed it and decided it would be in our interest to do so. If you haven't visited our web pages recently, why not log on and see what's there: www.raritanval.edu/ncrp. Have a great year.

—Gene Atkin, *Oakton Community College, IL*

Education Statistics at a Glance

Education Statistics at a Glance is a new web application that brings together data from several sources published by NCES including: *The Condition of Education*, *The Digest of Education Statistics*, and *Projections of Education Statistics*. You will be able to find information, including published tables, in these compendiums by searching documents by subject area, through full text and table title word searches, as well as by having access to the entire documents through simple navigation. To view this new area, please visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/edstats>

NCRP Goals for 1999-2000

The following goals for the current year were presented at the board meeting at AIR in Seattle and were confirmed by the new officers during their conference call on July 6.

GOAL ONE: MEMBERSHIP

Increase membership during 1999-2000 by fifty members.

Key board members: Richard Rindone, Membership Coordinator. Ideally, this would translate to one new member per state or five new members per region. Reality dictates that this may not be feasible, since some states may have reached their saturation point and some regions have a greater potential for growth than others. Having said that, I would still like to see at least one new member per state with the larger states going one or two better. Retirements and resignations will also affect our net gain. Regional directors, try to keep track of members moving from state to state within your region or out of your region. Encourage continuation of membership. In the case of retirement, if the position is posted and filled, contact the new person and explain the benefits of NCRP membership.

Although Richard Rindone, Membership Coordinator, is the key board member, personal contact of regional directors at state/regional AIR meetings is very helpful.

GOAL TWO: COMMUNICATION

Expand the use of print and electronic media to improve communication and the flow of information within NCRP.

All officers and regional directors are key in this area, but the individual member needs to keep us informed as well. I realize we are all very busy in our “day” jobs—which is the reason we are actively involved in this organization. What I would like to add is that we all take a bit of what is gleaned from our professional tasks and add that to the NCRP knowledge base. I would ask each director to send a brief summary of regional events to *Parameters* each quarter. Someone from each state in each region could provide local information. Send links to the NCRP home page; post your own surveys, reports, etc. or even your own home page or links to your state/regional affiliate page. Quarterly conference calls will be the primary tool for the officers to conduct NCRP business; minutes will be sent to the regional directors and our AACC board liaison. A summary will be printed in *Parameters*.

GOAL THREE: SERVICE TO AACC

Encourage the use of the resources available through NCRP to assist AACC research staff on key issues and to participate at AACC council meetings and at the AACC annual conference.

We are our own best resource and should become the primary contact for AACC for these issues. While Susan Bach, President-Elect, and I will be attending the fall AACC meeting and the national convention in the spring, I strongly encourage all of you to get involved when asked for assistance.

GOAL FOUR: PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Encourage NCRP members to make professional presentations at state, regional and/or national AIR meetings.

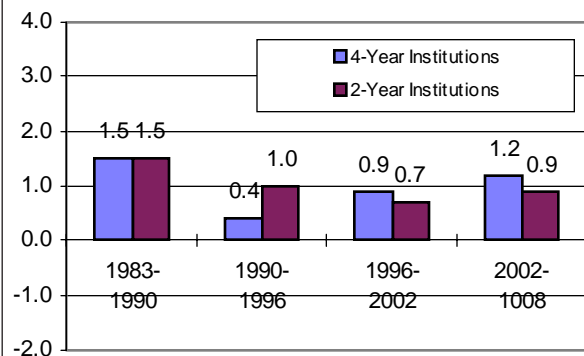
This is self-explanatory: Increase NCRP member representation on AIR committees and encourage members to run for elected positions within AIR. The only way we can accomplish this is for you all to volunteer. If you are concerned because you are relatively new to the field, there are “seasoned” members in your state or region who will be happy to serve as mentors.

GOAL FIVE: ORGANIZATION

Improve organizational effectiveness and service to the membership.

This is the job of the officers and regional directors which will be accomplished by achieving the goals and objectives noted above.

Average annual growth rates for total higher education enrollment, by type of institution



Enrollment in 2-year institutions is projected to increase at an annual growth rate of 0.7 percent during the 1996-2002 period and 0.9 percent during the 2002-2008 period.

Source: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/pj2008/p98f19.html>

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that faculty, administration and clerical employees can demonstrate legitimate interest by proving that they “need-to-know” specific educational information for the effective functioning of their office. Persons at other institutions in which the student seeks to enroll and who can supply “need-to-know” evidence are also privy to educational records.

There is no provision in FERPA for the denial of student information, especially “directory information.” And much of the student information sought by institutional researchers is “directory information.” However, FERPA does allow institutions to implement a stricter policy than defined in the regulations. The institution can withhold any or all items considered to be “directory” or public information and still be in compliance.

Caution should be taken when requesting educational records. During the data collection process, the number of students who requested that information be withheld, should be ascertained. Students who requested that their educational records be withheld could possibly be different than those who have not made that request. That risk should be vigorously investigated.

Collectively, FERPA is good news to institutional research offices. It sets guidelines for the sharing and collection of student educational records. If FERPA is adhered to appropriately, all institutions should have a somewhat equal ground to share information, a much needed collaboration, for “legitimate” educational use.

Mary Lou D’Allegro
Raritan Valley Community College, NJ

Manuscripts for the NCRP Journal

We are now accepting manuscripts for the fall 1999 issue of the NCRP Journal. Information about manuscript guidelines can be found on the NCRP homepage at <http://www.raritanval.edu/ncrp/journal.html>.

Since we are in the process of seeking a new editor, please send your manuscripts to

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Scot can be contacted for questions at
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Center for Community College Policy

The United States Department of Education (USDE) has announced a \$750,000 three-year federal grant to the Education Commission of the States to create the Center for Community College Policy, under the direction of Katherine Boswell. The purpose of the center is to create a clearinghouse to collect, develop, and release information on effective community college policies and practices. Ms. Boswell is located at 707 17th Street, Suite 2700, Denver CO 80202-3427, 303/299-3645, kboswell@ecs.org. ■

NCES Newsflash Subscription Service

You may wish to become a member of the NCES Newsflash Subscription Service, which provides members with information about the latest reports published by NCES. For example, the following three publications have just been released:

“Baccalaureate and Beyond Longitudinal Study: 1993/97 Second Follow-up Methodology Report” describes the methodological aspects of conducting the second follow-up survey of 1992/93 Bachelor’s degree completers. It includes response rates, weight definitions, and example corrections for standard errors based on the sample design as well as facsimiles of the computer assisted (CATI) instruments used to collect telephone interview data. <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=1999159>>

“Salaries and Tenure of Full-time Instructional Faculty on 9- 10-Month Contracts 1997-1998” presents detailed tabulations for academic year 1997-1998 of the number, tenure and average salaries of full-time instructional faculty on 9- 10-month contracts. <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=1999193>>

“New Entrants to the Full-Time Faculty of Higher Education Institutions” includes comparisons between full-time faculty who in the Fall of 1992 were in the first seven years of their academic career (new entrants) with full-time faculty who in the Fall of 1992 had eight or more years of full-time college experience (senior faculty). <<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=98252>>

Go to <http://nces.ed.gov/newsflash> for information about this service. ■

Regional News

Region I: New England
Lois Alves, Corby Coperthwaite
Regional Directors
CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT

Alan Sturtz, formerly of Gateway Community-Technical College has recently accepted the position of Director of Research and Planning for the Connecticut State University System. The Connecticut Community-Technical College System welcomes Karim Ladha as Director of Research and Planning. Karim comes to us from Savannah State College.

Region III, Mid Atlantic
Hershel Alexander, Regional Director
DE, DC, MD, PA, VA, WV

Stephen Cunningham, Director of Strategic Planning and Research at Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, finds himself in the midst of an institution celebrating its 10th anniversary. Ten years ago, the Williamsport Area Community College merged with Pennsylvania State University, becoming an independent affiliate of PSU. The college had previous incarnations as the Williamsport Technical Institute (1941 to 1965) and as the Williamsport Area School District Adult Vocational School (1914 to 1941).

Although the college mission has not changed greatly, the legislation creating Pennsylvania College of Technology authorized the awarding of bachelor's degrees in applied technologies. In 1992, the college greeted its first B.S. students. Seven years later, the institution has awarded 547 B.S. degrees, and B.S. enrollments constitute a quarter of all enrollments. The college is now identifying peer institutions for benchmarking purposes, particularly two-year colleges that offer bachelor's degree programming.

At Chesapeake College (MD), Linda Cashman has been assisting with strategic planning efforts. Chesapeake College, a two-year regional community college serving five counties on Maryland's Eastern Shore, embraced the development of a strategic plan two years ago. What is happening as the college heads into a second year? Attempting a grassroots "bottom-up" approach, the college asked each department/unit for two things: First, an outcomes-oriented departmental

vision statement that is linked to the college's strategic plan; second, a set of three or more "benchmarks" to serve as performance goals or standards. The plan is for departments to use benchmarks to monitor performance and to provide evidence that departments are achieving their vision. For example, the admissions office has benchmarks to increase credit enrollment by 3 percent and to receive guidance counselor satisfaction ratings of 90 percent. Sources for benchmark data include surveys of students, faculty, alumni and other groups as well as internal management information systems. Academic departments will be phased into the benchmarking process during FY2000, when it is expected that benchmarks will include data on program enrollments, graduation goals, and learning outcomes.

As of May 17, William Campbell was promoted from Director of Planning and Institutional Research to Vice President for Administrative and Fiscal Services at Montgomery College (MD). Among the functions in his new area are auxiliary services (including the bookstore, child care center, and cafeteria), budgeting, facilities (including construction, operations, and maintenance), finance, human resources, information technology (including libraries), planning and institutional research, and procurement.

Region VI: Central South
Fred Lillibridge, Regional Director
AR, LA, NM, OK, TX

New Mexico Accountability in Government Act
(HB37)

The Accountability in Government Act - House Bill 37, as amended by the House Government and Urban Affairs Committee, creates the Accountability in Government Act and provides that state agencies, including the judicial branch of government and institutions of higher education, submit performance-based program budget requests. The provisions will be phased in over a five-year period. Agencies and institutions will be required to submit a list of all programs they provide, which must be approved by the Department of Finance Administration in consultation with the Legislative Finance Committee. Once approved, performance measures and benchmarks will be identified for each program. Performance is evaluated, and the results are used in making funding recommendations. This bill includes an emergency

clause and the Governor must submit the budget to the Legislature no later than December 15 of each year.

In July, Bruce Hamlett, Executive Director of the New Mexico Commission on Higher Education formed the Inter-Agency Task Force on Implementing the Accountability in Government Act. A statewide meeting on accountability efforts met July 22, 1999, in Albuquerque. The purpose of the meeting was to align accountability indicators and efforts developed by the New Mexico Association of Community Colleges: Performance Indicator Group and a similar group formed for four-year institutions and develop an integrated approach to this year's accountability reporting requirements for the executive branch and legislature.

Rocky Mountain Association for Institutional Research Fall Meeting

The 1999 RMAIR Annual Meeting will be held October 20-22, 1999 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Las Vegas, NV. Vic Borden, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and Terry Russell, Association for Institutional Research will be the featured speakers. Information about the conference can be found at <http://www.nmsu.edu/~RMAIR/>.

New Mexico Higher Education Assessment Conference

The 2000 New Mexico Higher Education Assessment Conference will be held jointly with the first annual State Retention and Persistence conference in Las Cruces. The combined state effort will provide an opportunity for faculty, staff, and administrators to share ideas about assessment and retention initiatives that promote student success. Vincent Tinto will be the featured speaker.

The conference will be held at the Las Cruces Hilton Hotel February 24-26, 2000. More information will be available at <http://www.nmsu.edu/~NMHEAC/> as it becomes available.

Region VII: Central Midwest Ron Pennington, Regional Director IA, KS, MO, NB

Data collection of the active transfer group in the Missouri Community College Research and Assessment Consortium (MCCRAC) statewide Missouri Transfer Experience Project is more than 50 percent completed. MCCRAC, a voluntary association of institutional research directors at the community college level in

Missouri, initiated the Missouri Transfer Experience Project earlier this summer. This research project represents the first statewide effort to systematically examine students' attitudes related to the transfer experience. This examination includes the following two groups of transfer students:

- Students who completed at least 24 hours from a community college and were enrolled with a Missouri, public four-year college during the fall, 1998 term; and
- Students who completed at least 24 hours from a community college and graduated from a Missouri, public four-year college in spring, 1998.

Students' attitudes related to the transfer experience will be examined with special attention directed to whether or not students lost credit hours as a result of transferring. Additional data regarding transfer performance will also be examined in relation to the students' academic preparation at the community college. Preliminary data analysis for both groups of students should be available by the first week of October and a presentation of the project's results has been scheduled for the Missouri Community College Association's annual convention. Finally, this research project is being viewed as an excellent example of statewide cooperation that can serve as a model for future transfer analysis. MCCRAC has received several calls from other colleges across the country asking for the project's research model. More detailed project findings will also probably be presented at several regional and national research conferences during the next year.

Region X: Northwest Melissa Banks, Regional Director AK, ID, OR, WA, British Columbia

The Oregon Community College Council of Institutional Researchers (OCCCIR) is an active, self-governing group that meets quarterly to wrestle with federal, state and local research issues. Recent hot topics included the new federally mandated race and ethnicity categories, performance measures developed by the Oregon Board of Education, recently developed guidelines for auditing FTE at community colleges, and the availability—or, more accurately, lack of availability of data on student employment and transfer. Our OCCCIR has been so successful that researchers in Washington are now hoping to build a similar consortium of research professionals.

Region IX: Southwest
Ken Meehan, Regional Director

CIP-2000

NCES has completed a draft version of its updated Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP-2000) which is now being posted for public review and comment. The CIP-2000 is the first update to this taxonomy in ten years and substantive changes in program classifications, scope, and content have occurred over this period. Your review of this draft will help ensure that these changes are adequately reflected in the CIP update. To view the pdf version of this draft document please visit:

<http://nces.ed.gov/npec/papers/cipPreface.html>

