

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Graduate students must assume full responsibility for knowledge of rules and regulations of the college and department requirements concerning their individual degree programs. Requirements and programs are subject to change, and students must be aware of current regulations.

Academic Misconduct

All students are expected to display honesty and integrity in completing course requirements and complying with college academic regulations. Academic misconduct refers to plagiarism or cheating on examinations or assignments and is inconsistent with the aims and goals of Buffalo State. Specifically, students may neither use the work of another individual without proper acknowledgment nor perform work for another individual. Other examples of inappropriate academic conduct include prior acquisition or possession of an examination or submission of false data. As a result of a sustained allegation of academic misconduct, a low or failing grade for part or all of the coursework may be given to the student at the discretion of the instructor. No penalty for an alleged instance of academic misconduct may be imposed unless the student has been apprised of the allegation, the penalty, and the procedures of due process that are available.

A statement outlining formal college policies and procedures to be followed in cases of alleged academic misconduct is on file in each dean's office, the Academic Standards Office, and the Student Life Office.

Cases of severe infractions of acceptable standards may be brought before the Academic Misconduct Board, chaired by the director of Academic Standards, and may result in academic dismissal.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

All graduate students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (4.0 scale). A student is automatically placed on probation if the GPA falls below 3.0.

Matriculated full-time students are given one semester, and matriculated part-time students are given 9 credit hours to achieve a 3.0 GPA, provided total credit hours do not exceed the degree program by more than 6. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA within the specified time results in academic dismissal. In addition, failure to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation results in academic dismissal.

Premajor (undeclared) students must have a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12 or more credit hours. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12

or more credit hours of graduate-level coursework results in academic dismissal. A student with fewer than 12 credit hours automatically is placed on academic probation should the GPA fall below 3.0. Failure to achieve a 3.0 GPA by the completion of 12 credit hours results in academic dismissal. In addition, failure to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation results in academic dismissal.

Nondegree students have until the completion of the next semester in which enrolled to bring his or her GPA to 3.0 after being placed on academic probation. Failure to do so renders the student ineligible for further registration.

A student who has been academically dismissed must wait one full year from the time of dismissal before applying for readmission.

A student may be readmitted to the college only once after an academic dismissal. If readmitted, the student is automatically returned to academic probation if his or her cumulative GPA is below 3.0. The student then has one full-time semester or 9 credits of part-time study to achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA, and must maintain a minimum of 3.0 GPA during each semester of academic probation. Failure to do so results in final academic dismissal.

Alternative Methods of Earning Credit

Course by Contract

Students who have been accepted to a graduate degree program and are in good standing may request to take a course by contract by contacting the department offering the course. The instructor must be a member of the college's graduate faculty, and the course must be among those already approved by the college.

Under this option, a graduate faculty member provides the student with a course outline, bibliography, and a statement of responsibilities and dates by which these are to be met. The number of student-instructor conferences, the type of evaluation, and the culminating activity is determined by the faculty member and the student prior to registration for the course. These requirements must be filed with the department chair. Before initiating a graduate course by contract, the student must register for the course using the Individual Graduate Study Application form, obtained from the department office, the Graduate School, or www.buffalostate.edu/graduateschool/forms. This form must be signed by the instructor, the department chair, and the school dean by the Individual Study Application deadline. Consult the academic calendar online at www.buffalostate.edu/academics (click on Academic Calendar).

Cross Registration

Graduate coursework may be taken at any public or private college in Western New York with which Buffalo State College has a cross-registration agreement. Courses are taken on a space-available basis during the fall and spring semesters only. Students must be registered for at least one course at Buffalo State in order to cross register at another institution. International students must be registered for 9 credit hours at Buffalo State to participate.

Cross-registration forms are available in the Registrar's Office. They must be signed by the student's adviser and returned to the Registrar's Office for signature. Students then take signed forms to the campus where the course will be taken, where they follow the registration procedures of that campus.

Transcripts are forwarded automatically to Buffalo State at the end of the semester. Courses taken through cross registration are recorded as if they had been taken at Buffalo State; the credit hours and grades are included in the student's cumulative GPA.

Independent Study (XXX 590)

Independent study provides an opportunity for a student to pursue a topic that may be covered only briefly or not at all in a regular course offering. Independent study is never a substitute for a regular course.

Independent study may be offered by any member of the college's graduate faculty. All independent study is listed by the appropriate content area prefix and the number 590 (e.g., EDF 590). A maximum of 6 credit hours of independent study may be included in a master's degree program.

Students must register for graduate-level independent study by completing the Individual Graduate Study Application, available from academic departments, the Graduate School, or www.buffalostate.edu/graduateschool/forms. The application must include a written paragraph describing the proposed course, including the purpose, objectives, method of instruction (e.g., readings, individual consultations with instructor, etc.), and method of evaluation (e.g., research paper, examination, etc.). The application must be signed by the instructor, the department chair, and the school dean by the Individual Study Application deadline. Consult the Academic Calendar for appropriate deadlines, online at www.buffalostate.edu/academics (click on Academic Calendar).

Workshops (XXX 594), Conferences (XXX 596), and Microcourses (XXX 598)

Workshops, conferences, and microcourses are graduate courses offered— at variable times and places—on particular themes outside the usual schedule of classes. These courses also carry variable credit. A maximum of 6 credit hours of workshops, conferences, and micro-courses may be included in a master's degree program. Workshops emphasize process and implementation of theory, and they involve participants in the accomplishment of individualized objectives on a specific theme. Conferences emphasize a unique, one-time experience on a given theme. Microcourses offer intensive instruction with a specific, limited objective.

Auditing Courses

Graduate students who are registered for one or more courses may audit courses, provided they have the approval of the department chair and the course instructor. An auditor attends a course without formal recognition, is not on the official class list from the Registrar's Office, is not required to meet the course requirements, is not charged tuition or fees for the course, and does not earn credit for the course.

Special audit: Individuals age 60 or older may audit courses on a space-available basis with the approval of the instructor. Arrangements can be made through the Admissions Office, Moot Hall 110, (716) 878-5511.

Course Load

1. The full-time student course load is 12 credit hours per semester.
2. During summer session, students may earn a maximum of 19 credit hours.
3. The average maximum load for graduate assistants is 9 credit hours per semester, but varies according to assignment. Responsibility for approving specific maximum course load rests with the student, the adviser, and the staff member controlling the service assignment or college appointment.
4. Financial aid eligibility is affected by a student's course load. Contact the Financial Aid Office to determine eligibility: (716) 878-4902 or www.buffalostate.edu/financialaid.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

To earn a graduate degree or certificate, a student must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B) on a 4.0 scale in all graduate courses completed at the college. Transfer credits are not included in the average. Undergraduate coursework completed while working toward the graduate degree is not included in the average but is shown on the transcript. Grades received for coursework completed at another institution through cross registration are included in the average.

At the graduate level, grades of C or higher may be applied toward credit requirements for a master's degree. Typically, no more than 9 credit hours with a grade of C can be accepted toward a master's degree, and some degree programs permit even fewer than 9 credit hours of C work. Grades of C– or lower are not used to satisfy degree requirements. Grades of C– or lower may be repeated (see Repeating Courses, page 12).

Grading

The college uses letter grades (including plus/minus) to indicate the scholarly achievement of a student at the completion of a course. All grades are awarded at the sole discretion of the faculty member in charge of the course. A grade must be submitted for each student on the course roster at the end of the semester. Students are apprised of class evaluation policies in each class at the beginning of the semester. Questions regarding grading policies or a grade received in a particular course should be addressed to the instructor or the instructor's department chair.

Grading System

- A = Superior
- A– = Above Average
- B+ = Above Average
- B = Average (required minimum cumulative GPA)
- B– = Below required average, but may be used to meet degree requirements
- C+ = Below required average, but may be used to meet degree requirements
- C = Below required average, but may be used to meet degree requirements
- C– = Below required average; may not be used to meet degree requirements
- D+ = Below average; may not be used to meet degree requirements
- D = Below average; may not be used to meet degree requirements
- E = Failure or unofficial withdrawal
- S = Satisfactory
- U = Unsatisfactory
- P = Pass; may not be given for graduate coursework
- F = Fail; may not be given for graduate coursework

The following letters are used to indicate status:

- I = Incomplete
- N = Grade delayed
- X = Grade not submitted
- W = Withdrawn

Explanation of Grades

S (Satisfactory) and U (Unsatisfactory) grades are reserved for student teaching or other field experience that is not suitably evaluated using standard letter grades. S and U grades may be given only for courses so designated.

Incomplete (I) Grades: An instructor may submit a grade of I (Incomplete) only when circumstances leading to a student's failure to complete course requirements are known to be beyond the student's control (e.g., serious illness or unavailability of material) and only when the department chair or program coordinator has been properly notified. The student must complete course requirements and the instructor must submit a grade change by the 10th week of the following spring or fall semester or the grade automatically converts to an E (Failure). In the event that the instructor who granted the I grade is unable to evaluate whether the student has fulfilled the course requirements during the stipulated time period, the chair or program coordinator takes responsibility for evaluating the student's work and changing the grade.

A grade of N (Grade Delayed) may be submitted in the case of a thesis/project, research work, or internship that carries forward from one semester to another (e.g., a two-semester project). This letter indicates that the student has devoted an adequate amount of time to the work scheduled, but gives no indication as to the quality of work. When the work is completed, the instructor submits a grade change, replacing the N with a final grade.

A grade of W (Withdrawn) may be submitted only when a student has officially withdrawn from a course.

Quality Point System

The grade point system is used to determine all cumulative GPAs. A student receives four grade points for each A earned; three points for each B; two points for each C; one point for each D; and zero points for each E. Instructors may choose to assign plus or minus grades as well. No other letter grades carry grade-point value. The possible grades and corresponding grade points are as follows:

A	=	4.0	C	=	2.0
A-	=	3.67	C-	=	1.67
B+	=	3.33	D+	=	1.33
B	=	3.0	D	=	1.0
B-	=	2.67	E	=	0.0
C+	=	2.33			

A student's cumulative GPA is computed by dividing the total number of grade points awarded by the total number of semester hours attempted in which a grade carrying grade points is earned.

Change of Grade

Grades submitted at the end of the semester are considered final. In the case of a clerical error or other extenuating circumstance resulting in an incorrect grade, the instructor must submit a written justification to the appropriate associate dean requesting a grade change. The appropriate associate dean must approve all grade changes and forward the grade change form to the Registrar's Office.

Repeating Courses

A student may repeat a given course once for which a C-, D+, D, or E grade was earned. The repeated course must have the same prefix, number, title, and credit. The repeated course must be taken at Buffalo State. Only the passing grade and those credit hours completed will be used to calculate the GPA. Graduate students may repeat a maximum of two courses of the total degree program.

All grades remain on the permanent record. A passing grade will not replace a U grade, since the U is not computed in the GPA. Courses with letter grades A through C cannot be repeated. Illegally repeated courses are not used to calculate the cumulative GPA.

Practicum courses may differ. Contact the academic department.

Repeating courses affects financial aid. Contact the Financial Aid Office for the current policy.

Once a student has completed a master's degree or certificate of advanced study, a final average for that degree or certificate is computed. Courses for that degree or certificate may not be repeated, and that final average is not affected by any subsequent coursework completed at Buffalo State.

Registration

Students are expected to complete registration within two weeks after they become eligible to register and to attend the first meeting of all classes in which they have enrolled.

Immunization Requirement

All students matriculated in a degree program born on or after January 1, 1957, are required to submit proof of immunization against measles, mumps, and rubella. All students (matriculated or nondegree) must submit a completed Meningitis Information Response Form indicating immunization or decision not to obtain immunization. Students who do not submit proof of immunizations are not permitted to register. Contact the Weigel Health Center to submit proof of immunizations or for more information at (716) 878-6711 or www.buffalostate.edu/weigel.

Advisement

The department chair designates a member of the graduate faculty to serve as an adviser to the student and to assist in planning the course of study. It is the student's responsibility to seek a conference with the adviser before registration, application to degree candidacy, and application for graduation.

Change of Name, Address

Students are responsible for notifying the Graduate School of any change of name or address so that registration information and other mailings can be properly directed. Download data change form from www.buffalostate.edu/registrar/forms.xml and submit it along with name change proof by fax to (716) 878-5630 or by mail to: The Graduate School, Cleveland Hall 204.

Dropping Courses

Students may drop courses online through the first week of a fall or spring semester or the first two days of a summer session without financial penalty. Officially dropping a course removes all record of the course from the student's transcript, and no financial penalty is assessed.

Withdrawal from Courses

Students who wish to discontinue a course after the drop/add period but before the final withdrawal date (the end of the 10th week of the semester or the equivalent point in a summer session; see Academic Calendar) must complete and submit an official withdrawal form to the Registrar's Office, Moot Hall 210.

Withdrawal forms are available at most academic department offices or at the Registrar's Office. A course from which a student has officially withdrawn remains on the transcript, recorded as W.

Instructors are required to apprise students of their academic standing no later than the end of the ninth week of the semester (or the equivalent point in a summer session; see Academic Calendar). If a student stops attending but does not officially withdraw from a class, a grade of E (Failure or unofficial withdrawal) is recorded.

An exception may be made for unusual circumstances beyond the student's control. In such cases, procedures for Waiver of Academic Regulations apply. Withdrawal from a course may affect eligibility for financial aid in current and future semesters. For additional information about financial aid eligibility, refer to the Financial Aid section of this catalog (page 19) or www.buffalostate.edu/financialaid.

Students withdrawing from coursework may be eligible for a tuition refund in accordance with the schedule published on page 18 of this catalog. No refunds are issued beyond the end of the refund period.

A student who does not register for any course or withdraws from all courses during his or her first semester should inform the Graduate School.

Transcripts

Official transcripts are not issued directly to students but are forwarded, upon request, to authorities whom the student designates. Student copies may be ordered for personal use. A \$5 fee is charged for each transcript request. Photo identification is required when picking up student copies. Transcript request forms are available in the Registrar's Office, Moot Hall 210, or download from www.buffalostate.edu/registrar/transcripts.xml.

Transcripts will not be furnished for students who have incurred a financial obligation to the college.

Transcript requests sent by mail must include the student's name, current address, social security number, dates of attendance, graduation date (if applicable), name and address of the party to whom the transcript is to be sent, the student's signature authorizing release of the transcript, and a \$5 check or money order payable to Buffalo State College. All checks or money orders must include the student's Banner ID number.

Transcript requests by telephone cannot be honored. Requests are filled in the order they are received. Sufficient time is necessary for processing. Requests for transcripts should be made well in advance of the date needed.

Unit of Credit

The credit hour is the unit of course credit. It represents completion of one 50-minute class period per week for one semester. A course having three class periods a week will earn 3 credit hours. Studio, laboratory, and shop classes usually earn 1 credit for each two hours of attendance. The college expects student preparation of two hours for each hour in class.

Student Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals

Buffalo State complies with New York State Education regulations requiring that campuses have procedures in place for filing complaints and seeking resolution of perceived problems.

Academic Appeals: Waiver of Academic Regulations

Students are expected to adhere to all regulations of the college. However, unusual and extenuating circumstances may warrant a modification of certain regulations.

Students should not request a waiver of any regulations without very strong evidence to justify the waiver. Requests for waivers are made by completing an Academic Appeals Petition in the Academic Standards Office, Twin Rise 100.

The director of academic standards makes decisions on requests for waivers that do not relate to a student's major after consulting with the Academic Appeals Committee. The director's decision is final. A minimum of one month is necessary to process academic appeals.

Decisions on requests for a waiver related to a student's major are made by the appropriate department chair in accordance with procedures established by the department or area faculty.

Student Complaints Regarding Discrimination

If the complaint involves alleged harassment or discrimination based on race, sex, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or marital or veteran status, the student should use procedures administered through the Equity and Campus Diversity Office. Acts of discrimination should be reported immediately to this office for confidential discussion of the alleged acts. Students have 45 days from the alleged act of discrimination or 45 days after receipt of a grade to file a complaint. A copy of the procedures may be obtained in Cleveland Hall 415.

Student Complaints Regarding Nonacademic Issues

If the complaint involves nonacademic issues, the student should deal with procedures administered by the Dean of Students Office, Campbell Student Union 306. However, students are encouraged to seek resolution of the perceived problem directly in the unit in question before initiating processes that are more formal.

Student Complaints Regarding Academic Issues

The procedures outlined in the next section pertain to complaints about academic issues other than those dealing with waiver of collegewide academic regulations or graduation issues, which are addressed by petitions to the Academic Appeals Committee. The college seeks to resolve student grievances as promptly and informally as possible. No adverse action will be taken against any student initiating a complaint.

Students who feel aggrieved regarding any aspect of the academic program have a right to request a resolution by bringing the matter to the attention of the appropriate college personnel. The academic appeals process regarding a waiver of academic regulations is outlined in the Waiver of Academic Regulations section. If the perceived problem pertains to a grade or the conduct of a particular course, students should follow the Student Academic Grievance Procedures, below.

Student Academic Grievance Procedures

The procedures that follow pertain to alleged violations or misapplication of college and/or course policies. They are also directed at a student grievance alleging that the student has been treated unfairly, in violation of established academic policy or practice. These procedures reflect the college's commitment to a fair and prompt resolution of student academic grievances.

These procedures begin with an informal process, but include a formal process that centers on hearings and recommended resolution of the grievance in a way that maximizes the opportunity for a full and impartial solution. Request to waive or otherwise alter college academic policies shall continue to be the province of the Academic Appeals Committee (see Waiver of Academic Regulations section).

The procedures below do not deal with grievances that are based on issues of sexual harassment or discrimination. Such grievances are handled through the Equity and Campus Diversity Office. Similarly, complaints that deal with other nonacademic issues are administered by the Dean of Students Office (see previous section).

For academic grievances, students are advised to retain all documentation from the course, including (but not limited to) the syllabus, tests, quizzes, papers, and any graded evaluations. These materials are required to substantiate any grievance.

1. Jurisdiction

A grievance shall include, but not be restricted to, a complaint by a student:

- a. That college regulations and/or policies have been violated or misapplied to him or her.
- b. That he or she has been treated unfairly, defined in terms of established academic policy or practice governing or affecting students at the college.

2. Time Limit

- a. At the informal level before the fifth week of the following semester.
- b. At the formal level before the 10th week of the following semester.

3. Grievance Resolution Process

The process includes the possibility of hearings at two levels: the department and the school.

a. At the department level, a student with a complaint should attempt to resolve the complaint informally with the faculty or staff member involved. The assistance of the chair may be sought to resolve the dispute to the satisfaction of both parties. A student must initiate the process no later than five weeks into the following semester. The student who is not able to achieve resolution with the instructor may initiate a formal grievance or grade appeal process no later than 10 weeks into the following semester by preparing a written statement, which includes:

1. A statement of the case in detail.
2. All information about the conference with the instructor.
3. A statement of the reasons the student believes he or she is aggrieved or, in the case of a grade, why it should be reconsidered.
4. All relevant supporting materials, which should be identified and listed in an index.

The student shall submit complete copies of the written statement and attachments to the chair of the department and the faculty member identified in the grievance. The chair shall carefully review the statement, confer with the student and instructor, and attempt to reach a resolution of the dispute. The chair may ask members of the department to serve as a committee to review the materials and assist him or her in reaching a decision. The chair's response must be made within 10 days of the date of the student's request.

In conformance with state regulations, the department shall maintain adequate documentation about each formal complaint and its disposition for at least six years after final disposition of the complaint. If the department chair is the party against whom the grievance is brought, the student should initiate a review at the dean's level, which follows.

b. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction at the departmental level, he or she may request a hearing at the school level by writing to the dean of the school and forwarding the documentation to that office. The request must be made within 10 academic days of the receipt of the recommendation of the department chair.

The dean or designee shall convene a three-person committee drawn from a panel of available faculty within 10 days. Such committee shall include one faculty member from the department in which the faculty member resides. Furthermore, after the committee is constituted, the faculty member and the student have the right to review the committee membership and request alternate members in the event it is believed a member of the committee is not neutral. The committee shall meet and review the materials presented and solicit a response from the instructor to each count of the student's case. In the case of a grade appeal, the committee will familiarize itself with the standards and objectives of the course and evaluative material presented. Concerns shall be limited to consideration of the fairness of the application of the standards and objectives, and whether the standards and objectives were made known to the student in a reasonable manner. The difficulty of the standards shall not be an issue.

The burden of proof shall be on the student, who may be asked to appear before the committee.

In the case of a grade appeal, if the majority of the committee feels no case can be made, the original grade will remain. If it finds that the standards and objectives were not reasonably known to the student or were unfairly applied, it may recommend a different grade and give its reasons for so recommending. The committee shall report its findings in writing to the student, the instructor, and the dean.

If the panel recommends a different grade, the instructor shall have 10 working days from receipt of the panel's report to inform the dean of the school of the intent to change the grade. If necessary, the dean may direct that the grade be changed. A change of grade shall not be interpreted as an admission of unfairness in grading.

In the case of a grievance, if the majority of the committee members adjudge the grievance to be without foundation, written notification of their findings will be forwarded to the student, the instructor, and the dean of the school. If, in the judgment of the committee, there is a basis for the grievance, a written report will be forwarded to the dean of the school with specific recommendations for redress. Copies shall be forwarded to the student and the instructor.

The dean of the school will notify all parties of his or her final decision regarding the grievance within 10 working days of receipt of the committee's findings and recommendations.

In conformance with state regulations, the dean's office shall maintain adequate documentation about each formal complaint and its disposition for at least six years after the final disposition of the complaint.

4. Committees

Committee members shall be drawn from a list of faculty nominated by departments. In naming the committee to hear a grievance, the dean shall take care to ensure that no member has an interest in the case being heard.

5. Confidentiality

Once the grievance committee has been convened to hear a complaint, principals and committee members shall have the obligation to maintain the confidentiality of the proceedings and of all materials presented.

6. Review

This procedure must be reviewed after two years. The review process should identify any irregularities in grade changes. To facilitate this review, a copy of all documentation/findings at the formal level shall be retained in the department office.

Complaints to State Education Department

Any individual who continues to feel aggrieved after pursuing the options outlined previously, is unable to resolve the problems, or believes the institution has not properly addressed the concerns may file a written complaint with the State Education Department within three years of the alleged incident. The complainant may telephone the Postsecondary Complaint Registry to request a complaint form at (212) 951-6493 or write to the New York State Education Department, Postsecondary Complaint Registry, One Park Ave., 6th Floor, New York, NY 10016.

Students Unable to Attend Classes on Certain Days Because of Religious Beliefs

1. No person shall be expelled from or be refused admission as a student to an institution of higher education because he or she is unable, due to religious beliefs, to register for or attend classes, or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirements on a particular day or days.

2. Any student in an institution of higher education who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to attend classes on a particular day or days shall, because of such absence on the particular day or days, be excused from any examination or any study or work requirements.

3. It shall be the responsibility of the faculty and the administrative officials of each institution of higher education to make available to each student who is absent from school, because of his or her religious beliefs, an equivalent opportunity to register for classes or make up any examination, study, or work requirements that he or she may have missed because of such absence on any particular day or days. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such equivalent opportunity.

4. If registration, classes, examinations, study, or work requirements are held on Friday after 4 p.m. or on Saturday, similar or makeup classes, examinations, study, or work requirements shall be made available on other days, where it is possible and practical to do so. No special fees shall be charged to the student for these classes, examinations, study, or work requirements held on other days.

5. In effectuating the provisions of the Education Law, it is expected that faculty and administrative officials will exercise the fullest measure of good faith. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student for availing himself or herself of the provisions of this section.

6. Any student who is aggrieved by the alleged failure of any faculty or administrative official to comply in good faith with the provisions of this section shall be entitled to maintain an action or proceeding in the supreme court of the county in which such institution of higher education is located for the enforcement of his or her rights under this section.

7. The term "religious beliefs" shall mean beliefs associated with any corporation organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes, which is not disqualified for tax exemption under Section 501 of the United States Code.

8. At Buffalo State College, we sharpen the mandate of the state and endorse the policy that prohibits administering evaluative examinations on Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Good Friday.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students the following rights with respect to their education records:

1. The right to inspect and review student education records within 45 days of the day the college receives a request for access. Students should submit to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The college official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the college official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of student education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the college to amend records that they believe are inaccurate or misleading. Students should write the college official responsible for record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the college decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the college will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his or her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment.

Additional information regarding hearing procedures will be provided to students when they are notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in student education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the college in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the college has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the College Council; 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; and National Student Loan Clearinghouse officials. 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.

Upon request, the college discloses education records without consent to officials of other schools to which a student seeks admission or intends to enroll.

Buffalo State hereby designates the following categories of student information as public or directory information. Such information may be disclosed by the institution for any purpose at its discretion:

a. Name, address, e-mail address, telephone number, dates of attendance, part-time/full-time status, class.

b. Most recent institution(s) attended, major field-of-study, awards, honors (includes dean's list), degree(s) conferred (including dates).

c. Past and present participation in officially recognized sports and activities, physical factors (height, weight of athletes), date and place of birth, photographs.

Currently enrolled students may withhold disclosure of any category of information under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. To withhold disclosure, written notification must be received by September 15 in the Registrar's Office, Moot Hall 210, Buffalo State College, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222-1095. Nondisclosure of information will commence thereafter and be effective until September 14 of the following year. Written notification to withhold disclosure must be made each academic year. Buffalo State assumes that failure on the part of any student to specifically request the withholding of categories of directory information by the deadline date indicates approval for disclosure.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Buffalo State to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Address written complaints to: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

Assessment

Buffalo State is committed to continuous improvement through assessment. Periodically students are expected to participate in assessment activities designed to elicit information that serves as a basis for quality improvement in our programs and services.