



University of the Arts
Office of Educational Accessibility
Confidentiality Statement

The Office of Educational Accessibility treats any documentation obtained to verify a disability, to plan for or document appropriate services or accommodations, and all communication with this office as strictly confidential.

- All disability related information regarding students served by the Office of Educational Accessibility is retained securely in the Office of Educational Accessibility.
- Disability related information may include, but is not limited to, test data; psychological, psychiatric, or psychoeducational and/or neuropsychological exams; medical records; letters or other information from physicians; grades; transcripts; biographical history; case notes; and any other information required to document, arrange for and provide accommodations to students with disabilities.
- All documentation of a disability, communication between students and the Educational Accessibility Advisor, and other written materials produced by the Office of Educational Accessibility is kept in secured file cabinets and is retained separately from any other files concerning a student maintained by the University of the Arts.
- Only the Educational Accessibility Advisor has access to these files.
- Disclosure of any information to any person other than the student will occur only with the express written permission of the student. This includes parents, spouses, faculty, and administrators.
- A student may request to review the contents of his/her own file. This must be done in the presence of the Educational Accessibility Advisor. All information contained in a student's file is the property of the Office of Educational Accessibility. Students may receive copies only of disability related records verifying an impairment and the need for services and/or accommodations. Students must sign a release for the copies and an inventory of all materials copied will be kept as part of the student's record.
- Five (5) years after the last date of enrollment, all materials maintained by the Office of Educational Accessibility will be destroyed.

Information Disclosure

Periodically, the Office of Educational Accessibility is asked to provide information about students served through this office. These data are reported in a manner that strictly maintains the anonymity of all students. *The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)*, also known as *The Buckley Amendment* and *the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)* do not allow faculty access to disability related information except as needed to provide reasonable accommodations.

If you have any additional questions about confidentiality practices, please contact the Office of Educational Accessibility at disabilityserv@uarts.edu or call 215-717-6616.



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Under FERPA, University faculty, staff, and administrators will only have a need to know (1) that a student has been through the disability documentation review process at the University of the Arts and has had such documentation certified by the Educational Accessibility Advisor; and (2) what accommodations have been approved by the Office of Educational Accessibility to meet the student's needs.

The Office of Educational Accessibility highly values the privacy of its students and the confidentiality of the personal, educational, and medical information entrusted to us. In order to protect this privacy, the Educational Accessibility Advisor has instituted policies and procedures to limit disclosure of personal information to that which is minimally necessary for the provision of services and accommodations for a registered student, those persons whom the student has given express written permission to review their records, and/or those persons as required by law or to protect public safety. The Office of Educational Accessibility is required by law to notify the appropriate authorities if a student is considered a threat to themselves or others, or is suspected of abuse of a child or incapacitated adult.

Information may be released in the following four (4) ways:

1. **Signed Release of Information.** Information related to the provision of accommodations may be disclosed to the persons whom the student has designated in a signed Release of Information Form. The student can add or remove names by completing a new Release of Information Form at any time. Only the most recent Release of Information Form will be used to release information concerning a student's record.
2. **Legal Requirements.** Person and/or documented disability information may be disclosed as required by a court or administrative order, subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process, such as if a student files a disability-related complaint, appeal, grievance, or lawsuit against any university office or employee(s). It may also be disclosed when legally requested by national security, intelligence, or other federal officials.
3. **Contact.** The student may be contacted by the Office of Educational Accessibility to provide appointment reminders or other information pertaining to disability related benefits, programs, or services that may be of interest to the student.
4. **Other Uses.** Disability information can be disclosed to the proper authorities to prevent injury to the student or others as required by law.

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Uses and disclosure of disability and personal information other than described above will be made only with the student's express authorization. Such authorization may be revoked in writing by the student at any time.

The student has certain rights related to their records maintained by the Office of Educational Accessibility. These include the following:

1. **The right to inspect and/or obtain copies of personal disability related information.** Any such requests must be made in writing by the students. A cost-based fee may be charged for the duplication of disability records. The Office of Educational Accessibility may deny, in writing, the release or viewing of any personal disability related information if the Educational Accessibility Advisor determines that the release of the requested information may prove harmful to the student or others. When such a request is denied, the student may appeal the decision to the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs. Such requests must be made in writing to the Office of Student Affairs in 311 Gershman Hall.
2. **The right to request limits on the amount or types of disability related information to be released.** Such request must be made in writing to the Office of Educational Accessibility. The Educational Accessibility Advisor may deny such requests when it is deemed to not be in the best interests of the student or when such release is mandated as outlined above.
3. **The right to request that communication between the student and the Educational Accessibility Advisor be kept confidential.** The Office of Educational Accessibility is required by law to maintain the privacy of protected disability related information and to abide by this notice of its legal duties and privacy practices. Under no condition, except as mandated by law or with the express written permission of the student, will the Office of Educational Accessibility release a specific diagnosis or any medical documentation, including to other offices at the University.

University faculty, staff, and administrators will only have a need to know (1) that a student has been through the disability documentation review process at the University of the Arts and has had such documentation certified by the Educational Accessibility Advisor; and (2) what accommodations have been approved by the Office of Educational Accessibility to meet the student's needs.

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