Dual Credit/FERPA
Parent Information Sheet

Transitioning from high school to college can be a significant challenge, but the benefits of a college education are invaluable. As a dual credit student, your child is now officially a UNM-Taos student. It is important to understand how access to their educational records works under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the differences between high school and college educational records.

What is FERPA?

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. This law applies to all schools that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education.
- FERPA grants parents specific rights regarding their child's education records. These rights transfer to the student when they reach the age of 18 or *enrolls in a college or university.*

What does this mean for you?

Under FERPA, parents have the right to access their child's high school records. **However, once a student enrolls in college, they own their educational records *regardless of their age*.** Therefore, UNM-Taos staff and faculty cannot speak to parents/guardians about their student's course schedule, grades, or transcripts without the expressed permission of the student.

In accordance to the agreement between UNM-Taos and your student's high school, information about post-secondary educational records will be shared between both institutions. If your child is under 18 years old, you still have rights under FERPA at the high school level and may inspect and review any records sent by the college.

UNM-Taos encourages parents of dual credit students to respect their child's ownership of their college records. There are ways for parents to stay informed while also honoring their student's rights. Instructors of dual credit courses will primarily communicate with students, a crucial part of their development as *independent college learners*.

For more information, please refer to the back of this document for frequently asked questions regarding FERPA. If you have additional questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact Kelsey Mead, Dual Enrollment Operations Specialist, at UNMTaosDC@unm.edu or (575) 737-3775.

Dual Credit/FERPA
Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have access to my student's academic records at UNM-Taos?
College officials may assist only the student with access to their UNM-Taos student portal, *LoboWeb,* which contains records covered under FERPA. Students must act on their own behalf. Parents, guardians, relatives, or friends of UNM-Taos students are not permitted to enroll, drop, or add classes on behalf of the student.

How can I obtain access to my student's academic records?
Under FERPA, students must grant permission for third parties, including parents/guardians, to access educational record information. These records include: course schedules, class rosters, grades, transcripts, and student financial information. At their discretion, students may grant UNM-Taos permission to release educational record information to third parties by completing a FERPA Release Proxy Form. This process *must* be initiated by the student and can be revoked *at any time*.

Can I contact my student's college instructor about content, assignments, and grades?
Your student is enrolled in a college course and it is important to understand that instructors will work exclusively with students. This may be different to the type of interactions you may be familiar with in a high school setting. Even with student permission, instructors are under no obligation to speak with parents.

Instructors establish a syllabus for each course outlining course content or objectives, assignments, a general guide to the pacing of the course and information about how grades will be determined. Once a student receives the syllabus for the course from the instructor and the student decides to remain enrolled in the course, the syllabus becomes the contract between the student and teacher.

Since the community college environment addresses the learning needs of adults, there may be concerns to consider when enrolling in courses, including possible controversial course content and maturity level of minor students. General questions about course content can be directed to UNM-Taos' Dual Enrollment Operations Specialist.

Can I request a grade progress report from my student's college instructor?
Under FERPA, instructors are not required to discuss student performance or other student-related issues with parents/guardians, including progress or grades.

For a comprehensive overview of FERPA, please visit https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/