

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Mitchell Community College strives to offer social and cultural activities that build well-rounded persons as well as a comprehensive program in academics. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with federal, state, and local statutes. Mitchell will cooperate with the respective law enforcement agencies in their enforcement. The Code Of Student Conduct And Student Appeals procedure is detailed in the *Student Handbook*, which is distributed to each student enrolled in a curriculum program or course.

Student Responsibility

Mitchell provides counseling services and academic advising to students. Course selection and a field of study should be considered carefully by the student with the support of counselors, academic advisors, administrators, faculty and staff. The student is responsible for his or her persistence in pursuing a program of study to completion and for planning entry into a career or transfer to a senior institution.

Student Records and Privacy Rights

Mitchell must maintain accurate and confidential student records and must recognize the rights of students to have access to their educational and personal records in accordance with existing College policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). College officials responsible for the proper maintenance of educational records include the Director of Admissions/Registrar and the Dean of Student Services. FERPA provides safeguards regarding the confidentiality of and access to student records. Students and former students have the right to inspect and review their official records and to request a hearing if they challenge the contents of these records. No records shall be made available to unauthorized personnel or groups outside Mitchell without the written consent of the student involved, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. Students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Mitchell to comply with the requirements of the Act. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.

“Educational Records” include files, documents, and other materials, which contain information directly related to students. The term “educational records” does not include the following:

- Records and documents of institutional personnel which are kept apart from educational records.
- Records on the student which are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, counselor, or other recognized professionals or paraprofessionals acting in their official capacity.
- Financial records on the parents of the student.
- Records of instructional, supervisory and administrative personnel kept in their sole possession provided they are “not accessible or revealed to any other person except a substitute.”

Release of Student Educational Records

The following “Directory Information” may be made available to the public by Mitchell without the student’s written permission unless the student notifies the Dean of Student Services in writing by the third week of the semester that such information concerning themselves is not to be made available.

- Student’s name, address, and telephone number
- Major field of study or program, club and sport activities
- Dates of attendance, degrees, diplomas, honors, or awards received and the most recent previous educational institution

School officials who demonstrate a legitimate educational interest will be permitted to look at the official student file for a particular student. School officials include those employed by Mitchell in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position; a person or company with whom Mitchell has contracted as its agent to provide a service instead of using Mitchell employees; a person serving on the Board of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her responsibilities for Mitchell.

Requests for confidential information shall not be honored without proper written consent. The written consent must specify the records or the specific data to be released and to whom it is to be released, and each request must be handled separately. Exceptions to this policy are:

- Requests for confidential information will be honored without prior consent of the student in connection with an emergency.
- Official requests in connection with the audit and evaluation of federal or state supported programs or in connection with enforcement of federal or legal requirements which relate to such programs.
- An official order of a court of competent jurisdiction.
- Subpoena. (Students will be notified immediately by registered mail that their records are being subpoenaed.)
- Persons or organizations providing financial aid to the student or determining financial aid decisions.

Services to Individuals with Disabilities

Mitchell operates programs, activities, and services to ensure that no qualified individuals with disabilities are excluded from participating in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination in College programs, activities, or services solely by reason of their disability. By federal law, a person with a disability is any person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment
- Has a record of such impairment
- Is regarded as having such an impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities such as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, or learning.

All students with disabilities have the responsibility of meeting each program's essential technical and academic standards. Reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids are determined on a case-by-case basis. Mitchell shall select among equally effective and appropriate accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids. Mitchell has a right to deny a request for accommodation if the documentation

- Does not identify a specific disability
- Fails to verify the need for the requested
- Is not provided in a timely manner

Mitchell can also deny a request for accommodation if the desired accommodation would

- Pose an undue administrative or financial burden on the College
- Fundamentally alter the course or program.

In the event a requested accommodation would pose an undue burden, Mitchell will endeavor to make an equally effective accommodation that would allow the requesting party equal access to programs. Guidelines for appropriate documentation of disabilities are available from the disabilities coordinator upon request.

While Mitchell will provide auxiliary aids and services, the College cannot provide attendant care services/personal assistants or items for personal use such as wheelchairs, other mobility aids or hearing aids. The disabilities coordinator can refer the student to a community resource for assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to initiate requests for accommodations. Students requiring services or requesting classroom accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of each semester. All requests should be made as far in advance as possible, as some accommodations will require time and resources to provide.

Special Populations

The purpose of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technology Education Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-332) is to develop more fully the academic, vocational, and technical skills of secondary and post-secondary students who elect to enroll in vocational and technical education programs. Special population students receiving services under this Act are defined as: individuals with disabilities; individuals from economically disadvantaged families, including foster children; individuals preparing for nontraditional training and employment; single parents, including single pregnant women; displaced homemakers; and individuals with other barriers to educational achievement, including individuals with limited English proficiency. Students may access services by contacting the Office of Special Populations.