Parental Access to Student’s Education Records:

When a student reaches the age of 18 or begins attending a postsecondary institution regardless of age, FERPA rights transfer to the student. According to FERPA, institutions are not required to release any information to parents. Parents may obtain directory (“public”) information only at the discretion of the institution. Parents may obtain non-directory (“private”) information only at the discretion of the institution and after it has been determined that their student is legally their dependent (that is, that the parents claim the student on their tax return). It is necessary to complete a form in the Academic Dean’s Office. Parents may also obtain non-directory information by obtaining a signed consent from their student. Young Harris College policy does not allow parental access to educational records as a matter of course. Under certain circumstances, the college may allow parental access, but we do require that both conditions stated above be met (legal dependent status established by form, signed consent from the student) except in extraordinary circumstances.

Here are some practical suggestions for keeping informed about your student’s academic progress while helping us comply with federal regulations:

1. Please encourage and allow your student to be responsible for his/her own academic program. You can do this by encouraging him/her to:
   a. pay attention to e-mails s/he receives from the Registrar, and other college personnel.
   b. be a responsible student by complying with college policies, as they appear in the catalog and the Guide to Student Life, in a timely way.
   c. meet with an instructor at the first sign of any difficulty with a course.
   d. remain in contact with his/her academic adviser.

2. If your student calls you and is very upset about something, please advise him/her to make use of the many college resources that are available to help students. If your student is not sure where to start in getting help, suggest his/her academic adviser or the Registrar’s Office for academic matters; for personal matters, suggest the Dean of Student’s office. You might check in with your student the next day to see if the problem has been resolved. Sometimes problems that initially seem insurmountable are relatively easy to resolve once the proper source of help has been found.

3. If you sense that something is very wrong, and that your student is not getting the help s/he needs, by all means, contact either the Registrar or the Dean of Students for advice. We will seek out the student.

4. Please ask your student to keep you informed of his/her academic progress.

5. By all means, become familiar with and make use of all of the available resources on the Young Harris College website when you have a question. Here are some places to start:

6. Please **do not**:
   a. ask your student to give you his/her YHC password; students have been specifically requested to keep this password confidential.
   b. call faculty members and ask for information about students in their classes. This puts them in a very difficult position, since they are asked to comply with FERPA regulations and are not completely aware of circumstances of individual students, some of which may preclude revealing information to any third party whatsoever. Talk with your student. If this is not possible, please call the Registrar.