

## Chapter 5

### **GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES**

#### **I. SEMESTER SYSTEM**

NNU uses the semester system for its academic calendar. The year is divided into three semesters known as: summer, fall, and spring semesters.

##### **A. Semester Length**

The fall and spring semesters normally consist of 75 days of classes and at least three days of examinations. Courses during the summer semester are set at various lengths while assuring that the appropriate amount of time is planned for each such course.

##### **B. Semester Credit**

One semester credit is a quantitative measure representing a class meeting once a week for fifty minutes, and lasting for one semester.

The average undergraduate (graduate) student should be expected by his/her professor to spend a total of about four hours per week in class and eight hours out of class in order to achieve average mastery of a course carrying four semester credits. Thus, if a semester has 15 weeks, the student's time commitment for that class for the entire semester is about 180 hours.

#### **II. REGISTRATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

##### **A. Registration**

Registration dates are found in the official university calendar. All students are expected to be present and to complete registration on the days scheduled for this purpose.

Instructions for registration will be furnished for each student at the time of registration. Students are not enrolled in classes until all registration materials are completed and approved by advisors, other authorized persons, are presented to the Registrar's Office, and satisfactory financial arrangements made and approved in the Business Office.

##### **B. Late Registration**

A registration period is scheduled at the beginning of each semester. Registration for regular course work after the last day to add classes must be approved by the Registrar.

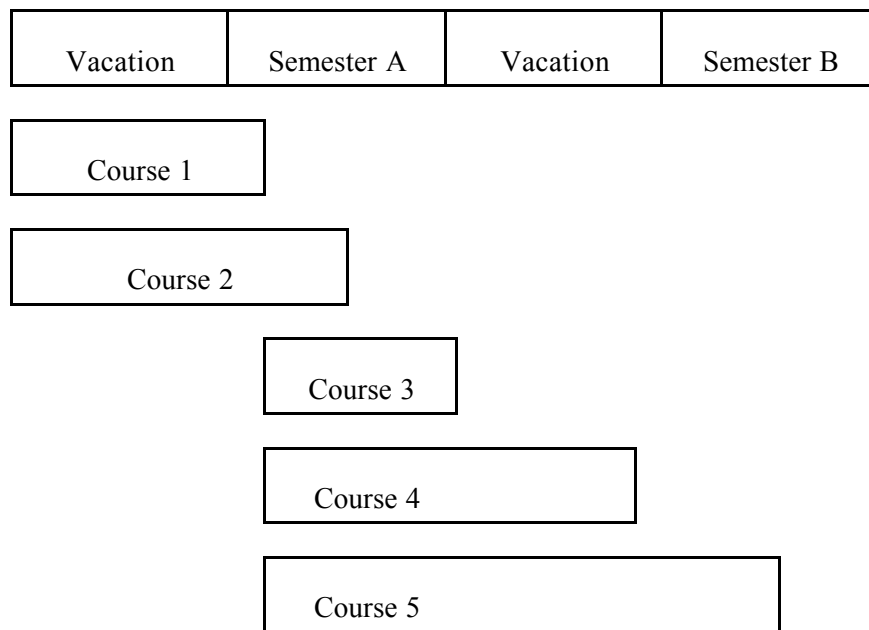
**C. Registration and Tuition Charges for Courses Beginning at Irregular Times**

If the academic activities for a course begin during a vacation period, the course registration shall be a part of the following semester's registration. Tuition charges are to be made on the basis of the student's total registration for the following semester.

If the academic activities for a course begin sometime after the start of a semester, registration shall be for the semester in which the academic activities began. Tuition charges are to be made on the basis of the student's total registration for the semester in which the academic activities began.

Registration and financial arrangements shall be completed before the academic activities for the course are started.

**EXAMPLE:**



In all of the above examples the registration will be assigned to Semester A, and tuition charges will be based on the student's total registration for Semester A. Semester A might be either a semester during the regular academic year or a summer session.

**D. Official Date for Course Withdrawal**

The official date on which a student is considered to have withdrawn from a course will be determined by the Registrar's Office for undergraduate students or the program coordinator for graduate students upon the receipt of the withdrawal form. This is the date which will be recorded in university records and which will normally be used by all offices in the university in determining the level of any tuition refunds, financial assistance, housing arrangements and charges, etc. This policy for assigning the official date will also be used for applied music classes. Normally the student would pay only for the number of music lessons taken.

Individual administrative offices such as the Business Office or the Student Development Office have the authority to determine how their normal policies concerning refunds and the like are applied in particular cases. It is recommended that any exceptions to the normal policies concerning arrangements with students made by these offices should be made only after

consultation with the Registrar's Office or the graduate program coordinator to ascertain any special circumstances which surrounded the establishment of the official date for withdrawal from a course.

#### **E. Withdrawal from Courses**

Students desiring to withdraw from courses after the 14th day after the first day of classes in any semester must complete a course withdrawal form available in the office of the Registrar and obtain approvals from the instructor, major advisor, or Office of Academic Advising. Seniors must also secure written approval from the Registrar. Withdrawals will be recorded on the permanent record as a "W" and will not be granted after the Friday of the eighth week of the semester.

The official date on which a student is considered to have withdrawn from a course will be determined by the Director of Student Advising for students who are classified as freshmen, sophomores and juniors or by the Registrar for seniors or post-baccalaureate. This is the date which will be recorded in university records and which will normally be used by all offices in the University in determining the level of any tuition refunds, financial assistance, housing arrangements and charges, etc.

#### **F. Withdrawal from University**

Students who find it necessary to withdraw from university before the close of the semester must secure withdrawal forms from the Office of Academic Advising if they are freshman, sophomores, or juniors. Seniors and Post-baccalaureate students secure their withdrawal from the Office of the Registrar.

### **III. CANCELLATION OF COURSES**

If a scheduled class has an enrollment sufficiently low, it may be dropped from the schedule. If the professor desires to cancel the course, she or he must consult first with the department chair and school dean.

### **IV. CLASS ATTENDANCE**

#### **A. Class Attendance by Professor**

Class sessions are not to be canceled except in serious emergencies. If a professor must be absent from a class because of illness or other compelling circumstance, arrangements should be made for a substitute instructor. These arrangements should be made in consultation with the department chair and school dean. NNU has no system for paying for the services of substitute instructors, except under exceptional circumstances, or where otherwise required by law. Normally, colleagues are willing to assist each other on an informal basis.

#### **B. Student Class Attendance**

In all regular classes, instructors are expected to keep an accurate record of class attendance. The use that is made of this attendance record in determining a student's course grade is entirely up to the individual professor but should be clearly explained in the class syllabus. A possible guideline is to consider that absences greater than one more than the number of class sessions per week are excessive and may result in reduction in grade. This is not required, but may be established at the discretion of the professor. In deciding whether to make grade reductions for excessive absences, a professor should consider such factors as the level, nature, and objectives

of the course. For example, attendance should be considered of prime importance in classes of a seminar, laboratory and activity nature, since these classes are built around a high level of direct student participation. Attendance is of less importance in a class having a high degree of specific cognitive content and less active student participation.

If, with good reason, a student is absent from class for a significant portion of a semester for good reason, especially during the latter part of the semester, he/she should be encouraged, if necessary, to apply for a grade of "incomplete" in the course.

**C. Extended Absence from Class**

If any student is missing from class for unknown reasons or without a reasonable explanation for a period exceeding one week, the professor should notify the Registrar's Office.

## **V. INDEPENDENT STUDY**

A small fraction of NNU's course registrations are classified as independent study. In most of these cases no class attendance is expected. However, a carefully formulated plan of study, readings, conferences, testing, etc., must be approved and filed in the appropriate offices. Normally a student is allowed a maximum of one independent study course per semester. Independent studies are not to be used to solve schedule conflicts resulting from student employment or other personal responsibilities.

The forms for application and approval of an independent study course should be obtained by the student in the Registrar's Office prior to the registration procedure. They are to be filled out cooperatively by the faculty member and the student and returned before registering for the class. All independent study forms must be completed by the last day to add classes. This type of independent study class carries one of the following numbers: 199, 299, 399, 499.

The Registrar's Office cannot complete registration or accept grades until an Independent Study contract is completed and filed in the students folder to document the validity of credit.

## **VI. ACADEMIC OVERLOADS**

Undergraduate students taking more than 19 credits, and graduate students taking more than 16 credits in a semester are considered to be on academic overload. Before being permitted to register for an overload undergraduate students will need the permission of the registrar and graduate students will need the permission of the graduate advisor.

## VII. GRADING AND EXAMINATIONS

### A. Grading System

The academic work of the student is graded in accordance with the following system.

Grade	Explanation	Points
A		4.0
A-	Distinctly superior or exceptional work	3.7
B+		3.3
B	Meritorious work	3.0
B-		2.7
C+	Average work	2.3
C		2.0
C-		1.7
D+	Less than satisfactory work but passing	1.3
D		1.0
F	Unsatisfactory work	0.0
S	Passing work, but no rank assigned	
I	Incomplete work	
L	Long-semester	
X	No final examination	
K	Conditional mark	
W	Withdrawal	
NC	No Credit	

A grade of "F" indicates failure and necessitates a satisfactory repetition of the course before credit can be allowed.

The "S" grade is used only for a limited number of appropriate courses. Normally all members of the class, and not just selected members, will be on an "S/F" basis. An instructor wishing to use "S/F" grades in a class must receive prior approval from the school dean.

A grade of "I" or "X" indicates incomplete work. An instructor may give a mark of "I" only upon approval from the Academic Council or by persons delegated by it. The grade of "I" or "X" will always have attached to it as a suffix the letter grade which the student will receive if no further work is done on the course, e.g. "IC", "ID", "IF", "XD", etc. Normally if the incomplete work is not made up before the close of the semester following the one in which the mark was incurred, the prefix "I" or "X" will be dropped from the grade, unless a request is made and granted to have the period of the incomplete extended.

A grade of "L" may only be given in courses that require more than one semester to complete. The "L" grade will be replaced by either an "S" grade or a point-receiving grade upon course completion. An "L" grade will not normally extend beyond one calendar year.

A grade of "K" is a temporary grade to be used in sequence courses when a student has failed the first course, but has been given permission to continue in the next course. An appropriate grade will be given to replace the "K" when the second course is completed. If the second course is not completed, the grade of "K" becomes an "F".

A grade of "W" is recorded when a student has withdrawn according to prescribed procedures. Ordinarily, no withdrawals will be granted after the Friday of the eighth week of the semester.

No credit is awarded for a course receiving a grade of "W". The "W", "S", "I", "L", "X", and

"K" are neutral grades and no quality points are given for them. The grade point average of a student is determined by dividing the total number of quality points earned in any semester by the total number of credits in his/her academic load, excluding neutral course units.

**B. Change of Grade**

A grade cannot be changed, other than I, X, L, or K unless the instructor provides in writing an acceptable reason for the change of grade.

**C. Avoidance of Grade Inflation**

As stated above, a grade of "A" is to be assigned only for distinctly superior or exceptional work and a grade of "B" only if the academic work is meritorious. Careful adherence to these definitions should prevent grade inflation.

**D. Academic Progress Reports**

The calendar calls for a progress report grade for all students after they have completed approximately seven weeks of each semester. Often less than half of the planned activities, assignments and evaluations have been completed at this point. However, students (and especially lower division students) need an accurate report of their progress in each course while time still remains for them to make improvement, if needed. The professor should include provisions in each course plan for the necessary evaluations so that the progress reports will give each student a carefully made and accurate indication of how he/she is doing and will alert the Office of Academic Advising of a student in academic difficulty.

No official mid-semester examination period is observed. The professor, at his/her discretion, may set up either a series of unit tests or one major test before the progress reports are due in the Registrar's Office. In any case, a professor should have sufficient data on hand to be able to formulate a reliable and valid evaluation. Forms will be supplied on which the progress report grades are to be reported. The campus calendar lists the dates on which progress reports are to be submitted.

Both the student and the Office of Academic Advising will be sent the progress report grades by the Registrar's Office. These grades are used extensively in the counseling program.

The normal letter grades are to be used for the progress reports. The grade of "S" is normally not to be used for a progress report grade, unless the course has been approved for use of this type of grade. In the case of incomplete work the grades "IC", "ID" or "IF" should be used. The letter suffix is to indicate the grade the student would receive at the time of the report if the incomplete portion of the course is not made up.

**E. Final Examinations**

1. Final examinations are normally given on the date and time published in the final examination schedule.
2. If a study day is on the calendar, examinations should not be scheduled for that day.
3. If a student wishes to take a final examination on a day or hour during the four-day examination period other than that for which the course is scheduled, the faculty member who teaches the course has the authority to re-schedule the final examination provided that this time falls within the examination period.
4. If a student proposes taking a final examination before the regular four-day final examination period, this deviation must be approved by the faculty member teaching the

course.

5. If it is not feasible for the student to take the examination during the scheduled examination period, and if taking it before the scheduled examination period is not approved, the "X" grade may be considered as an option.
6. The instructor's policy regarding deviation from the final exam schedule should be included in the course syllabus.
7. In all cases the first point of contact for a student is with the faculty member who is teaching the course.

#### **F. Grade Reports**

Grades are distributed to students by mail at the end of the summer and spring semesters. Fall semester grades are distributed to students at registration check-in at the beginning of spring semester. Parents of students will be mailed grade reports if the student has provided the registrar with a signed release or if the parent has presented the registrar with evidence of the student's current dependent status as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

### **VIII. PROMOTING ACADEMIC HONESTY**

The following guidelines are offered for the assistance of professors in promoting honesty on examinations and semester papers.

- A. The professor should make clear to his/her class at the beginning of the semester the ethical standards expected in the preparation of semester papers and the writing of examinations.
- B. Each professor should promote an environment for honesty. A professor should not set up a situation conducive to cheating on examinations in the classroom. If special arrangements for an examination have been made with a student at a time other than the regularly scheduled examination time, the professor should arrange the circumstances and setting for the examination in such a way as to discourage cheating. The exam should be proctored.
- C. If during an examination period a professor considers a student's activity to be less than honest, the professor should move in immediately on the situation, remove the exam, inform the student that he/she cannot proceed with that type of behavior, and inform him/her that he/she will be receiving an "F" grade for the examination. Most importantly, the professor should document and act immediately on the situation.
- D. If a student has clearly been guilty of plagiarism on a semester paper, the student should be required to prepare a completely new semester paper. The professor may also penalize the student for turning the paper in late.
- E. If unethical behavior occurs either in a written examination or the preparation of a semester paper, a written report of the incident should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Office. This report will be kept on file for use in case of repeated violation of ethical standards in academic matters.
- F. In flagrant cases of cheating by a student, he/she may be asked to withdraw from the course. This decision should be made after consultation with the school dean.

- G. A student who repeatedly violates academic ethical standards will be referred to the Undergraduate Academic Council. In these cases, counseling is advised. In extreme cases, the Undergraduate Academic Council may recommend suspension of the student from the university.
- H. An appeal process for students is provided and described in the *Crusader Handbook* and below.

## **IX. ACADEMIC APPEAL PROCEDURES**

All academic appeals by students enrolled in courses shall follow the procedure herein cited:

1. Initial action by the appellant shall be to informally discuss the issue with the faculty person or persons directly involved and, where appropriate, with the department chair to whom that faculty person reports. Normally, an appeal shall occur within 30 days of the semester in which the issue occurred.
2. If Step 1 does not meet with resolution of the issue, the appellant may present a written appeal to the school dean and may request a hearing. The dean's ruling and response shall be in writing with a copy forwarded to the faculty member(s) involved.
3. If Step 2 does not meet with resolution of the issue, the appellant may present a written appeal with supporting documentation to the chair of the Undergraduate Academic Council or Graduate Council, depending on the level and type of course involved. The council shall then elect a committee of not less than three faculty members to consider the appeal. The chair of the council shall name one of these three to chair the committee. The appellant may request a hearing before this appeal committee. The chair of the appeal committee will respond in writing to the appellant with copies forwarded to the chair of the council and to the vice president for academic affairs. Said appeal shall be presented no later than 30 days following receipt of the written response in Step 2.
4. If Step 3 does not meet with resolution of the issue, the appellant may present a written appeal with supporting documentation to the appropriate council. The appellant may request a hearing before the council. Any members of the council directly involved in the case shall be excused from deliberations. The chair (or acting chair) of the council will respond in writing to the appellant informing her/him of the decision of the council. A copy of this response shall be forwarded to the vice president for academic affairs. The decision of the council shall be final. Said appeal shall be presented no later than 30 days following receipt of the written response in Step 3.
5. The vice president for academic affairs shall, upon appeal, review decisions at each step to determine if proper procedure has been followed and all evidence impartially reviewed. If discrepancies or impropriety has occurred, the vice president for academic affairs may return the appeal for review and subsequent action to the appropriate step.

## **X. FACILITIES FOR DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS**

Northwest Nazarene University accepts the opportunity of facilitating disadvantaged as determined by statute students and, hereby, affirms that, as an institution of higher education, we hold:

- A. That no student may be excluded from any course or any course of study solely on the basis of handicap;
- B. That modifications in degree or course requirements may be necessary to meet requirements of some handicapped students;

- C. That prohibitive rules, such as those banning tape recorders from the classroom, must be waived for some handicapped students;
- D. That auxiliary aids must be permitted in the classroom when they are required to ensure the full participation of handicapped students;
- E. That alternate testing and evaluation methods for measuring student achievement will be necessary for students with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those are the skills being measured);
- F. That classes may have to be rescheduled to alternate locations to permit access for students with mobility impairments;
- G. That special equipment or devices used in the classroom (and in some cases, teaching techniques that rely upon the sight, hearing, or mobility of students) may require adaption in individual cases; and
- H. That it is discriminatory to counsel handicapped students toward more restrictive careers than non-handicapped students, unless such counsel is based on strict licensing or certification requirements in a profession.

## **XI. TRANSCRIPT OF ACADEMIC RECORD**

Students may review their academic records upon request and presentation of photo identification. Students may have an official transcript of their record prepared upon completion of a signed request in the Registrar's Office. Such official transcripts will be supplied only when the student's account is in good standing. Usually a minimum of two days is required for processing official transcripts.

## **XII. ACCESS TO RECORDS**

Northwest Nazarene University is in compliance with the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Any student at Northwest Nazarene University may personally inspect, review, and, have a copy made of any record kept on him or her. Where information regarding a student is commingled with that relating to other students, the student may have the information concerning only herself or himself transmitted orally. Anything in a student's record that the student does not understand will be explained. The records are reviewed, and materials expunged, periodically.

In order to protect the right to privacy, the University will not make records available, without the student's written consent, to anyone other than NNU officials with a legitimate educational interest, officials of other schools to which the student has applied, certain government officials, and certain persons in connection with an application for financial aid.

## **XIII. PROCEDURE FOR CHALLENGING DEROGATORY INFORMATION**

If a student concludes that his or her record contains inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise inappropriate data, the student may request an informal meeting with the appropriate administrator to see if, through discussion, a satisfactory agreement can be reached concerning correction, explanation, or deletion of material.

If satisfactory agreement cannot be reached informally, the student may proceed with the university judicial process. The claim of incorrectness must be proved before any material will be removed. The

result of the judicial process will be provided to the student in writing within a reasonable period of time and is final.

#### **XIV. UPPER-DIVISION CREDIT FOR LOWER-DIVISION COURSES**

If a senior student is unable to plan his/her schedule in such a way as to earn the required number of upper- division credits, a special petition may be prepared in which the student requests permission to earn upper- division credit for a lower-division class. The course will carry the regular course number followed by "u" (previously numbered 300).

A request to have a lower-division course carry upper-division credit will normally be approved only if the student is a senior who has changed his/her major or who has transferred to NNU during his/her junior or senior year. A planned course schedule for all three semesters must demonstrate the need for the request. The request should be for a course in the student's major field. In limited situations a required general education course, e.g., Theology 201, will be approved.

The forms for approval of this type of request should be obtained by the student in the Registrar's Office prior to the registration procedure. The forms should be filled out cooperatively by the faculty member and the student, and returned before registering for the class.

#### **XV. STUDENT RECORDS**

In keeping with the compliance requirements of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, NNU makes the following statements about student records:

##### **A. Kinds of Information Maintained About Students**

###### **1. Academic Information**

- a. All official records and documents pertaining to a student's academic standing and progress (admission application, transcripts, course change records, testing results, grade summaries, etc.) are maintained by the Registrar's Office in a student's cumulative academic folder or on a permanent academic record sheet.
- b. Cumulative files containing academic information are maintained by the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Academic Advising, and the Testing Office.

###### **2. Behavioral Information**

- a. Behavioral information records, including all documents pertaining to disciplinary proceedings and notices of sanctions imposed as a result of official university disciplinary action, are maintained in confidential files. These files are kept separate from a student's cumulative academic folders.
- b. Confidential files containing behavioral information are maintained in the Office of Student Development.

###### **3. Intercollegiate Activity Information**

Information about student progress and eligibility shall be made available to the athletic director, athletic coaches, members of the athletic council, university administrators, accreditation agencies, forensics director, student development director, and athletic

associations on a need to know basis or as required by law.

4. **Other Student Information**

- a. Cumulative files for teacher education and placement are maintained under the supervision of the director of teacher education.
- b. Cumulative files containing financial aid applications with supporting data and records of financial aid awards are maintained in the Office of Enrollment Management under the supervision of the director of financial aid.
- c. Cumulative files containing scholarship applications with supporting data and records of scholarship awards are maintained in the Office of Enrollment Management, the Office of the President, or the office of the secretary of the Scholarship Committee.
- d. Cumulative files containing student health information with supporting data are maintained in the Student Health Center under the direction of the university nurse.

**B. Who Has Normal Access to These Files**

1. **Academic Information**

Designated university personnel have access to academic information only for purposes related to their educational function and/or job responsibilities. Personnel from the Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of the Registrar have access to all pertinent records any time. The director of the Study Skills Center and the director of academic advising have access to the records of students they are advising. Faculty advisors have access to files on their advisees.

The director of financial aid and the financial aid officers have access to information on current semester grades, total grades, and GPA. The student accounts supervisor and other Business Office personnel have access to information on student enrollment status and course enrollment. The vice president for student development and the director of counseling have access to student folders for evaluation relating to counseling needs. The

director of residential life has access to information on student status as it relates to GPA (i.e., students above or below a certain GPA criterion.)

2. **Behavioral Information**

The vice president for student development, director of residential life, and director of counseling are the persons who normally have access to student behavioral information maintained in the Office of Student Development. Other university personnel have access to student behavioral information maintained by the Office of Student Development only for purposes related to their educational function and/or job responsibilities. Persons and agencies outside NNU have access to student behavioral information maintained by the Office of Student Development only with the written consent of the student or as required by law.

3. **Other Student Information**

University personnel directly related to the Office of Teacher Education, Enrollment

Management, and the Health Center normally have access to the information maintained in each respective office. Other university personnel have access to other student information only for purposes related to their educational function and/or job responsibilities. Persons and agencies outside NNU have access to this information only with the written consent of the student or as required by law.

**C. Procedures to Gain Access to Files**

Students who wish to gain access to their personal file within a university office should contact the chief administrator or supervisor of that office. The chief administrator or supervisor of the office will advise the student of the necessary steps to be taken and of costs to be assessed to students for reproduction of file material.

**D. Copies of Cumulative Record Documents**

Copies of documents contained within a student's cumulative file will be made available to the student upon written request, with the following exceptions:

1. Copies of transcripts and records furnished by other universities, or schools will not be made available to the student if the document in question is available through the initiating agency.
2. Confidential information supplied by references will not be made available if the student previously signed a waiver.

The actual cost of reproducing these records may be assessed to the student. Upon receiving a request to reproduce documents in the cumulative files, the office involved will notify the student requesting the documents of any reproduction costs that the student must pay.

**E. Challenge Procedures**

Students who wish to challenge the accuracy of any document contained within a cumulative file should see the director of the office that maintains that file. The director will hear the student's reasons for the challenge and attempt informally to resolve or arbitrate any contested points or issues. If any informal disposition cannot be made, the student has the right to the appeals procedure as outlined in the *Crusader Handbook*.

**F. Student Information Which May be Disclosed Without Student Consent**

The following information pertaining to students is considered to be information that may be disclosed by the institution at its discretion:

1. Student's name
2. Dates of registered attendance
3. NNU box number and campus phone
4. Home address and home phone
5. Classification
6. Major area of study
7. Degrees granted by NNU and dates conferred
8. Honors and awards conferred by NNU

Students have the right to withhold the disclosure of any or all of the information listed previously. A written request to prevent disclosure of this information must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar.

Students are advised that information other than that which is listed above may be released in

emergency or life-threatening situations.