



Center for Accessible Resources

## **Information for parents and advocates Center for Accessible Resources (CAR)**

Starting college is a time of transition for students and families. It is an exciting time, but parents and advocates may also be experiencing some concerns about their student. The Center for Accessible Resources' (CAR) goal is to empower students by building self-advocacy skills and resilience. CAR is asking parents and advocates to encourage student independence and responsibility. CAR is also here to help students as they learn the differences between K-12 and post-secondary environments.

### **Parents, students, and CAR**

Students receive support for their unique needs when they work directly with their CAR accommodation specialist. These initial interactions between student and trained professional allow their CAR accommodation specialist to gain an understanding of the student's strengths and challenges, and assess CAR's ability to support them in facilitating a successful college experience.

CAR requests that parents and advocates do not sit in on the initial meeting between student and their CAR accommodation specialist. This allows the accommodation specialist to get a feel for how knowledgeable and confident the student is in sharing information about past services and what accommodations the student hopes to have at the college level.

### **Rules governing disability services**

Confidentiality laws prohibit CAR staff from discussing students' information with anyone—including parents—without written consent. CAR recognizes the constructive role parents and advocates play in encouraging their student to apply for necessary accommodations—and then allowing the student to take on that responsibility him/herself. Choosing whether or not to obtain disability accommodations is one of the valuable experiences students will gain in college.

Rules governing disability services are different in college than in K-12. Here at Lane Community College, the entire accommodation process must be student-initiated. The student is responsible for his or her own accommodation requests and disability-related decisions. CAR cannot honor requests from parents or advocates.

CAR encourages students to have an open dialogue with their parents/advocates. CAR suggests parents and advocates meet with their student beforehand to:

- Assist the student in becoming a competent self-advocate.
- Ensure the student knows his/her diagnosis and can communicate needs, strengths, interests, and challenges.
- Allow the student to practice stating his/her needs.

## **Confidentiality laws**

What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law protecting the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

What does FERPA mean for college parents/advocates?

Generally, FERPA rules mean at the post-secondary level:

- Student academic information will be given to the student and not to the parents/advocates.
- College representatives are prohibited from discussing information about the student's academic record with parents/advocates.
- Parents and advocates do not have access to disability-related records unless the student provides express written consent.
- The only exception is in cases where a student is considered a threat to themselves or others.

College parents/advocates often feel frustrated by FERPA regulations. They feel they need access to student information. College students are working toward increased independence and responsibility; allowing them to determine who receives their academic information is a part of that growing independence. As with many aspects of the college experience, increased communication between college parents and college students often yield a smoother experience.

To request this information in an alternate format please contact the Center for Accessible Resources at (541) 463-5150 or [accessibleresources@lanecc.edu](mailto:accessibleresources@lanecc.edu).

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