

## **Purpose**

Virginia State University (VSU) respects your privacy and information security, and has established policies to protect your confidential information. Plus, confidential information that you entrust to VSU will be protected from inappropriate use and will not be shared or published unless you provide your consent or where such disclosure or publication is required by law. As part of its commitment to maintain the privacy of its Web users, Virginia State University has developed this privacy policy:

1. To educate our Web users about privacy issues and
2. To inform Web users about specific privacy policies and guidelines employed at Virginia State University.

## **Authority, Responsibility, and Duties**

This policy applies to all Virginia State University Web sites. Virginia State Web sites contain "vsu.edu" in the address, such as "www.vsu.edu/" or "library.vsu.edu." This includes Web sites of academic and administrative units of the university.

## **Definitions**

**Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)** is a Federal law that protects 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.

## **Policy Statements**

**1. Virginia State Web Sites Covered by This Policy:** The University prohibits the entering of confidential information on VSU.edu unless the site uses encryption. One way to know whether a site uses encryption is if the Web address starts with **https** instead of http (i.e. https://webapps.vsu.edu).

**2. Types of Information Collected by Virginia State Web Sites:** Virginia State does not automatically collect personally identifiable information (PII) about our Web site visitors. Examples of confidential information and/or PII are Social Security numbers, Virginia State identification numbers, credit card numbers, passwords, and birthdates.

- A. Web server usage logs may include the Internet protocol (IP) address of the computer used to access Virginia State as well as other non-personal information including the type of Web browser used, the operating systems used, and the Web sites from which our visitors are referred to our site. We aggregate and use this information to determine general activity levels on our Web site, as well as, to identify broken links and related problems, and also to help organize the content on our Web site to make the most popular content easy to find.

- B. Most pages on VSU.edu do not collect names, telephone numbers, usernames, passwords, or other such information, however where this type of personal information is collected, the Web page where it is requested will identify the purposes for which the information will be used. For example, personal information is required if you are filling out an online admissions form, paying tuition and fees, registering for class, or purchasing event tickets.

**3. Links to Other Sites:** While visiting VSU.edu, you may encounter links to web pages and sites which are not owned or controlled by VSU. Such Web sites do not contain a "vsu.edu" address, such as "www.vsu.edu" or "web.vsu.edu." Remote sites may have different policies regarding privacy (or no policies at all) and hence you should avoid entering personal information into such remote sites unless you have an independent and reasonable belief these sites can and should be trusted.

**4. Web "Cookies":** The VSU.edu uses cookies to help your browser keep track of your Web browsing session, and also to help VSU understand Web browsing and usage patterns. If you have configured your Web browser to reject all cookies, please be advised this may cause certain sections of the Web site to fail or function in unpredictable ways.

**5. Directory Information Such as E-Mail and Mailing Addresses:**

**A. Web Site Visitors and Alumni**

1. Certain sections of VSU.edu may ask for your e-mail address for the purpose of sending you follow-up information. It is also possible to "opt in" to certain mailing lists for specific interests. In certain cases, VSU contracts with third-party vendors to execute or provide a variety of business transactions, and in such cases we will disclose your e-mail address for the limited purpose of facilitating your request to receive additional information from VSU. Third-party vendors must agree not to use information shared by VSU for their own use beyond what they have contracted with Virginia State to do, or to share or sell this information to other parties without permission.
2. VSU will not publish on its Web site directory information such as addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers of its alumni or donors without their permission.

**B. Students and Employees**

1. VSU will not knowingly publish on its Web site confidential information of its students, employees, alumni, or other constituents. In particular, the release of student information is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (also known as FERPA or the Buckley Amendment). FERPA is applicable to all students who are age 18 or older.
2. Under FERPA guidelines, VSU can release directory information, such as names, addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers, except if a student has indicated they do

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Title: Web Site Privacy Policy

Policy: 6140

Not want pieces of their directory information released. Non-directory pieces of information are not to be released unless we have the students' written permission or it falls in a prescribed section of signature exceptions. Students have the right to restrict any and all pieces of directory information.

**6. Communicating via Email and Web Page:** Web pages which solicit personal confidential information (such as your password or identification number) use encryption to protect your privacy. Before entering personal information which should be kept confidential, verify that the web page is using encryption (https instead of http) and by viewing the "lock" which normally appears in the lower right hand corner of the bottom toolbar. A closed padlock icon indicates the page is encrypted, while an open padlock indicates that the page is not encrypted.

**7. Your Online Password:** VSU students, faculty, and staff are given online passwords that are unique to their accounts. In addition, students interested in attending Virginia State are required to establish a password if applying online. Your password is designed to protect your account from unauthorized use. VSU will not be responsible for any lost, stolen, or otherwise disclosed passwords. Your password should be guarded and not provided to anyone. VSU employees will never ask for your password.

**8. Privacy Policy Changes:** VSU may occasionally make changes to its privacy policy to reflect changes in legal and regulatory requirements, or as necessary as we upgrade or modify our technology, applications, and service offerings. We recommend you visit our site occasionally to review our privacy policies.

**9. Third-Party Cookies:** Cookies may be set by an organization other than VSU.edu. These "third-party cookies" may, for example, originate from websites such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Google Plus or other social media services for which VSU.edu has implemented "plug-ins." Since the cookie policies of these sites change over time, you should determine their policies by visiting the privacy policy pages of these sites directly.

**References**

None

Approval By: \_\_\_\_\_



President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

