

A STATEMENT OF PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Preamble

Mindful of the fact that the institution was founded by parents and has continued to be sustained, in part, by parental support, Beacon College desires to lay down certain parental rights and responsibilities that will establish and enshrine the relationship between the College and those who send their sons and daughters here to be educated. It is understood that federal law inures to students those rights provided to parents¹ prior to matriculation. Accordingly, the College has no obligation whatsoever to communicate with parents. However, the College does not wish to sever all connections with parents and, therefore, herein sets forth certain protocols that will permit communication with parents in ways that are appropriate and conform to legal requirements.

Section One – Waiver of FERPA Restrictions

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires written permission from the student to inspect her/his educational records except for prescribed officials, authorities, and organizations who are accorded the right of inspection. Parents are not included among those who have the right of inspection. Therefore, unless a student provides written permission for parents to inspect educational records or receive verbal information regarding the same, the College is bound by the provisions of the FERPA Act. The College will respect all mechanisms for the student to provide written permission. Specifically, the College will provide the opportunity for the student to grant written permission during new student orientation. The College will encourage the granting of this permission but cannot require it.

Section Two – Academic Notifications

If a student has provided written permission for parents to receive notifications and communications from the College, certain academic eventualities will trigger said notifications and communications. If the student is failing any course at mid-term (roughly eight weeks into the semester), the Academic Vice President or her/his designee will notify parents of the failing performance. In addition, the Academic Vice President and/or the Director of the Center for Student Success or their designees may, but are not required to, contact parents prior to mid-term to notify them of problems in academic performance.

Section Three – Academic Freedom

Beacon College endorses the principle of academic freedom, generally defined as the liberty to teach, pursue, and discuss knowledge without restriction or interference. Therefore, the faculty and academic support personnel are granted authority to determine what is to be taught and how it is to be taught. Given the mission of the College, however, every reasonable effort is to be made to accommodate to the student's learning disability or executive control problem. Input

¹ Herein the term *parents* is understood to include guardians.

from parents regarding appropriate accommodations is appreciated but in no instance may a parent dictate accommodations or interfere with the privilege of academic freedom.

Section Four – Student Services Notifications

If a student has provided written permission for parents to receive notifications and communications from the College, certain social and behavioral eventualities will trigger said notifications and communications. In the event that a student's behavior violates institutional policies and/or sufficiently disrupts the educational environment, which includes the residence halls, to occasion suspension or expulsion, the Vice President for Student Services or his/her designee will notify the parents of the action taken. In addition, if the student suffers from a significant emotional and/or physical problem that compromises educational performance for a sufficient length of time to endanger the student academically, the Vice President for Student Services or his/her designee may notify the parents.

Section Five – Parent-Initiated Communications

Parents may, at any time, contact the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Student Services. If a student has provided written permission for parents to receive notifications and communications from the College, the appropriate vice president or his/her designee may provide a response either verbally or in writing. The student's learning specialist may engage in ongoing communication with parents concerning academic progress. With respect to counseling staff engaged in clinical counseling, rights to privacy guaranteed by state law are in force on campus.

Section Six – Parental Visitations to Campus

Parents are welcome to visit the campus at any time. However, parents are not allowed to attend classes, to observe academic support staff, or to interact with counseling personnel without prior permission. Parents are to check in with the Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees upon arrival on campus. A Classroom Visitation Policy (available from the Vice President for Academic Affairs) is in force and prescribes procedures to be followed when parents desire to attend a class or session with academic support personnel. In no instance is a parent to engage in conversation about her/his student with a peer tutor or other student employee (e.g. resident assistant, new student orientation leader, work/study student, etc.) without the Vice President for Academic Affairs or Director of the Center for Student Success present.