Reference Letters and FERPA: What You Should Know

It’s that time of year again! When writing your letters of reference for students, please keep the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 restrictions in mind. FERPA is an educational privacy act that restricts the disclosure of information considered personally identifiable about a student (i.e. gender). Directory information is able to be revealed and can include things like the student’s name, contact information, previous institutions, enrollment status, and expected graduation date, major, awards and academic honors received to name a few (for a full list refer to the source below). Notice that GPA is not considered directory information, thus it is something that should not be shared without a student’s permission.

Source: www.potsdam.edu/offices/registrar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Evaluation Summaries for the Grad Fair:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59% Response Rate from 179 seniors that attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27% Response Rate from 92 juniors that attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12% Response Rate from 40 sophomores that attended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% Response Rate from 5 freshmen that attended</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I found the grad fair to be helpful</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The fair increased my understanding of the admissions process</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The fair helped to expose me to a variety of diverse graduate programs</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attending the fair helped me to decide and/or clarify the school I will apply to</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Upcoming Events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date and Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Major Affair</td>
<td>October 23 – 5:30-7pm – Union MPR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Careers in NYS Presentation by Stephen Acquario, '88</td>
<td>November 18 – 3-4pm – Fireside Lounge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 Jobs in 50 States Presentation by Daniel Seddiqi</td>
<td>November 20 – 6:30-7:30pm – Union MPR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Request Career Planning to present to your class on any of the services we provide. Fill out a ‘Presentation Request Form’ at: www.potsdam.edu/career/faculty

Career Planning Office Information:

206 Sisson Hall
Monday-Friday
8:30am- 4:30 pm
315-267-2344
www.potsdam.edu/career
career@potsdam.edu

“Like” us on Facebook: SUNY Potsdam Career Planning

SUNY Potsdam
Career Planning
Faculty Newsletter Fall 2013

Graduate & Professional School Fair: A Success!

Held on September 10th, the fair attracted 83 colleges and universities that sent representatives to promote their programs. The event allowed for SUNY Potsdam students to connect with graduate school representatives all across the country. These representatives welcomed approximately 350 students in attendance!

Student Comments:

- “Seeing all of the different programs helped me decide on a path.”
- “I received a lot of information on tuition and programs that I couldn’t find online.”
- “I went knowing very little about Grad programs, and learned a lot from the Grad School Fair.”

Representative Comments:

- “The student’s were fantastic! They were well prepared, friendly, and a pleasure to meet!”
- “This is one of the best, well attended, well-organized, and welcoming grad fairs I have been to!”

We thank all that were involved in making this event a success for the SUNY Potsdam community.
Services for the Undeclared Majors

Do you have students who have not decided on a major? Career Planning offers several services to assist students with this decision and they are FREE! Our most popular service is FOCUS, a self-assessment tool that gauges their interests, abilities, and values to guide students in learning about majors and what career options connect with them.

Other services include the following:

- Individual appointments
- “A Major Affair” → For majors and minors!
- “What Can I do with a Major In...” handouts → For each major!
- FY 215 Career Development Course in the Fall
- Career Lending Library → Books to borrow on specific careers in every major!
- Freshman/Sophomore Newsletter
- BearTracker → Online database of mentors, jobs and internships
- Skype Service → We offer a quiet, professional setting available to reserve for interviews
- Assistance with informational interviews with career professionals
- Career Status Report on Alumni Employment/Graduate School
- “Major Decisions” workshops
- Targeted emails regarding these services

If you think your students could benefit from any of these services, please direct them to Career Planning, 206 Sisson Hall.

“Collaboration Partner of the Month!”

September’s “Collaboration Cupcakes” were awarded to the Graduate Studies Office for the following projects: Reference Letters, Resume Workshop, Webinar Development, Newsletter Articles. Thank you Grad Studies for your outstanding collaboration! If you are curious as to how your department can be our next Partner of the Month, contact our office today.

Skills Employers Want

According to a survey by NACE Job Outlook, “Employers are looking for team players who can solve problems, organize and prioritize their work, and communicate effectively.” These skills ranked between 4.48 and 4.55 on a five-point scale, where one = not at all important and five = extremely important. Other skills listed include “ability to create and/or edit written reports and the ability to sell or influence others.” Check out the full results here for a complete chart!

Starting Salaries Rise

NACE Job Outlook has also reported a 2.4% increase in starting salary averages for the Class of 2013 compared to that of 2012. The average salary for recent graduates with a bachelor’s degree was $45,327; ranging from $37,791 to $62,062. For a more in-depth look at the study, click here.

Job Outlook for the Class of 2014

Lucky for students graduating this May, NACE’s Job Outlook 2014 survey has reported a 12% hiring increase of new college graduates by employers for the upcoming year. This is anticipated for all the company’s locations both U.S.-based and globally compared to the hiring rates of last year’s graduating class. The results indicated a 7.8% increase for specifically those U.S.-based. Take a look below at the top paying and top hiring industries!

Source: www.naceweb.org (September 26, 2013)

Sample Job Titles: Instructor of Hospitality & Tourism, Financial Analyst, Technical Support Engineer, Exploration Geologist, Special Education Teacher

Sample Employers: Sitel, Music Box Studios, Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park, Northwestern Mutual, Enterprise City Schools, IBM, Frederick Remington Art Museum, Liberty Travel

Sample Grad Schools: Leiden University, Binghamton University, Georgia Tech, Birmingham Conservatoire, University of Michigan, D’Youville College, Plymouth State University

Written by Alisa Hitchman, Marketing and PR Intern, Career Planning