

TO: Liberal Arts Department and Program Heads

FROM: David Reingold

DATE: July 1, 2016\*

SUBJECT: Confidentiality of CLA documents and records

The University has several memoranda that provide guidelines regarding the confidentiality of University documents and records. University Policy VIII.A.4, Access to Student Educational Records, protects the privacy of educational records of students. University Policy VIII.A.3, Disclosure of University Records: In Connection With the Access to Public Records Act, and in Response to Third Party Subpoenas, presents the University's position regarding access to University records. Both of these memoranda are included in the Department Heads' Handbook. Please be sure that you are familiar with them.

In addition, I would like to clarify the college's position regarding the confidentiality of college and departmental communications.

1. Primary committee discussions, and the documents presented to that committee, are considered confidential. They are not shared with anyone other than members of the Primary, Area, or University Promotions Committees. Of course, individuals under consideration for promotion and/or tenure will be familiar with the contents of their own document (except for comments of an evaluative nature from external or internal sources).

In a parallel manner, Area and University Promotions Committee deliberations and discussions and documents presented to that committee are also confidential.

2. Memoranda between faculty and staff members, or the department head and faculty or staff, should be sent only to those people addressed and to those copied (including blind copies) on the memo. Memos should not be distributed by anyone other than the one(s) who sent them originally. There may be times when the sender and the receiver of the memo both agree to distribute the memo more widely. If all parties agree, memoranda may be distributed more widely.

3. Evaluative discussions or letters of any kind, whether they involve evaluation of the performance of a student, staff, or faculty member, should retain confidential status. Envelopes containing these evaluative letters should be clearly stamped as confidential.

There will always be unique circumstances that require judgment. If you have questions about a situation, don't hesitate to contact the Dean's Office. However, in most instances, common sense is the best guideline.

\* revision of a policy originally distributed in 1994 by Dean David Caputo