SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

General Internal Procedures

Requesting and Accessing Public Information

This document is designed to assist you in obtaining public information from Southwest Minnesota State University. It answers such questions as who to contact for access to different kinds of public information, and how to make a request. Our goal is to respond to requests for public information in a timely and efficient manner.

General Guidelines for Requesting and Accessing:

- Any member of the public is allowed to view public information without charge.

- Viewing of public information will be at reasonable times and places.

- Viewing does not include receiving copies of information unless providing a copy is the only way for us to provide viewing.

- Viewing includes remote access and the ability of the public to download the data on the public’s own computer, but in some cases, we may charge for such access.

- We will provide access to public data as soon as we reasonably can, but we may not be able to provide the information you want immediately because we need to locate or copy the information.

- We do not have to provide data that we do not keep.

- Upon request, we will provide copies of public data. We will charge for copies in accordance with applicable law. Information about SMSU copy charges is attached.

- You are not required to identify yourself unless we need the information for some purpose such as sending the data, or clarifying your request; you don’t have to tell us why you want the information.

- Upon request, we will explain the content and meaning of the data.

- If we store the public data you want on a computer, you may ask that we provide a copy to you in electronic form, and we will do so if we reasonably can. We do not have to provide the data in a format or program that is different from how we store it, but if we agree to do so, we will charge you for the cost of providing the copy.

- If we decide that the data you request is not public, we will notify you orally or in writing as soon as we reasonably can, and will tell you which law applies. If you ask, we will provide our decision in writing.

HOW TO MAKE ROUTINE REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION
A. **TELL US WHAT YOU WANT**

Southwest Minnesota State University requires that requests for public information be in writing.

Please state that you are making a request under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. Make your request as specific as possible; describing the information you want as clearly as you can. We may need some time to locate the information you are requesting; clearly stating your request will help us to respond more efficiently.

B. **SEND YOUR REQUEST TO THE APPROPRIATE PERSON**

**For STUDENT AFFAIRS [ACADEMIC] RECORDS contact:**
Scott Crowell, Dean of Students/Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, located at 1501 State Street, Founders Hall 217, phone number (507) 537-6844.

**For PERSONNEL RECORDS contact:**
Deb Almer, Director of Human Resources, located at 1501 State Street, Bellows Academic 263; phone number (507) 537-6243.

**For OTHER PUBLIC RECORDS contact:**
Deb Almer, Director of Human Resources, located at 1501 State Street, Bellows Academic 263; phone number (507) 537-6243.

**IF YOU HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT ACCESS TO PUBLIC DATA CONTACT:**
Deb Almer, Director of Human Resources, located at 1501 State Street, Bellows Academic 263; phone number (507) 537-6243.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION ONLINE**

Much public information about the MnSCU System and its colleges and universities is available on the Internet. The following sites may provide you with the information you need.

**MnSCU Web Sites**

Internet Sites – These web sites can be accessed by MnSCU staff, faculty, students, as well as the public.

- [www.mnscu.edu](http://www.mnscu.edu) – Much public information about the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, the Board of Trustees, and system office is available at this website.

- [www.Budget.mnscu.edu](http://www.Budget.mnscu.edu) - **Budget & Negotiations.** The MnSCU Budget Unit provides financial leadership and information to improve the decision-making of institutions, the Governor, the Legislature, and the Board of Trustees.

- [www.hr.mnscu.edu](http://www.hr.mnscu.edu) – The Human Resources Department in the MnSCU system office provides support and assistance to the Human Resources staff at each of the colleges and universities; and administers system-wide programs.
SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Charging Members of the Public for Copies

Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) shall collect all necessary fees prior to releasing copies, unless other arrangements for payment have been agreed upon. Other governmental entities will not be charged for copies provided as part of the normal course of business. Checks for copies provided by SMSU should be made out to "Southwest Minnesota State University."

100 or Fewer Paper Copies: $.25 Per Page
Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes § 13.03, subd. 3 (c), SMSU charges $.25 per page (or $.50 per two-sided copy) if the request is for 100 or fewer pages of black and white, letter or legal-sized paper copies.

Most Other Copies: Actual Cost
For requests for more than 100 pages of paper records, or for copies of data in other media such as electronic data, photographs, tapes, microfilm, etc., the charge will be the actual cost of providing the copies, as permitted by law. When calculating actual costs, the law permits inclusion of: employee time to search for and retrieve data that has been requested for copying; employee time to make copies; cost of media (paper, CD ROMs, DVDs, etc.; mailing costs; employee time to prepare copies (sort, label data, remove staples, paper clips, take data to copier); and costs of reproduction that cannot be done by SMSU. Charges do not include employee time to separate public from not public data and other factors that are not permitted by law.

Copies of data that have commercial value may be subject to additional fees, as permitted by law.

SMSU may provide an estimate of costs before completing a request.

NOTE: SMSU retains the discretion to reduce or waive charges for copying in appropriate circumstances, such as when the copying costs are minimal.