



Office of the Registrar

Introduction to The Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act or FERPA



This presentation is to introduce you to the **Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act**, also known as **FERPA**, and the laws and policies at FSU that govern student privacy and rights. There is a brief quiz at the end of the presentation so you can check how much you've learned.

If you have questions or concerns not answered in this presentation regarding FERPA, please contact the Registrar's Office as they are the primary point of contact for FERPA issues at FSU. They will be happy to answer your questions or provide additional training.

FERPA is a federal law. It supersedes Florida's Sunshine State Open Records Laws.

Since FSU receives federal funding, it is vital we comply with FERPA regulations.

FERPA Key Points:

1. Transfers parental rights to student upon enrollment in a higher education institution or reaches age 18, even if parents are funding student's education.
2. Protects privacy of both **past** and **current** students' records.
3. Establishes students' right to review their educational records and provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate information



For detailed information, visit: <http://registrar.fsu.edu/records/ferpa/>

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As federal law, FERPA trumps Florida's open records laws and as the University and many of our students rely on federal grants and financial aid, it is vital FSU comply with FERPA regulations to avoid any potential negative impact to funding opportunities.

As soon as a student reaches 18 years of age **OR** enrolls in an institution of higher education, FERPA transfers parental rights to the student, granting the right to inspect their own records and, if they detect errors, it provides a way for the student to have his or her records corrected. In this way, it protects students' privacy by restricting the release of non-public information in their educational records to third parties, including parents even if those parents may be funding the student's education.

* Directory/Public Information

* Unless non-disclosure request on file.

Anything not included below, should be treated as Non-Directory/Non-Public Info

1. Name, date and place of birth
2. Local and/or permanent address
3. Telephone number (if listed)
4. Classification
5. Major field of study
6. Participation in official University activities/sports
7. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
8. Dates attended University
9. Degrees, honors & awards received
10. Last educational institution attended
11. Digitized photo (FSU Card)
12. EMPLID

** Non-Directory /Non-Public Information

1. Race and Gender
2. Social Security Number
3. Grades and student status
4. Email address
5. Country of Citizenship

** Some examples. Released only to:

- Parents/Individuals named in delegate access form by student
- School Officials with verified Legitimate Educational Interest
- Appropriate parties when emergency health or safety situations arise that could affect student or other individuals. (e.g. measles; suicide threat)

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The green box lists some examples of Directory or Public Information that may be released to any requesters ***unless a student has a written request on file with FSU not to disclose.*** Directory information is considered what people can generally obtain via the Internet or sources other than FSU.

Non-directory or non-public information in the red box should never be released to anyone unless the student has specifically granted third party access to the person via a signed permission on file.



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Permission to Release Non-Directory Information to Third Parties

Revised 3/7/2014

I, _____, understand that, in accordance with The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the University will not release non-directory information to third parties, except those listed below, without my written consent. I hereby request, give my permission and direct the faculty and instructional/academic support staff of _____ to discuss with and release the specified portions of my academic records, to the following individuals, prospective employers and/or academic committees:

To view a sample of the entire delegate access form, follow this link:

http://registrar.fsu.edu/forms/permission_to_release_info.pdf

This is a portion of the delegate access form, whereby a student can authorize the University to release non-public information to a third party, such as a parent or a potential employer.

To view the complete form, click on the link.

What to Avoid....

NEVER:

- Email grades.
- Use a student's entire social security number or link it to a student's name in a public manner.
- Leave graded tests in a stack for students to pick up by sorting through the papers of all students.
- **When doubt exists about whether or not student information should be released, contact the Office of the Registrar at <http://registrar.fsu.edu/> or (850) 644-1050.**

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It is our responsibility to protect our students' information. For this purpose we recommend using only FSU's official gradebook for posting grades. Here are some common pitfalls to avoid. Never transmit a student's grades via email or link their full social security number to their name. Likewise, graded papers should never be left in a pile for all students to sort through looking for their own.

If you have any doubts or questions regarding a FERPA issue, please contact the Registrar's office for guidance.

Recommendations

Remember a good rule-of-thumb: If you don't want it to become an educational record, don't write it down!

Always have the requesting party, whether on the phone or in person, provide all the pertinent identify information to you. Don't provide it for them or prompt them.

Verify that there is a signed release from the student, specifying the records to be disclosed, the purpose of the disclosure and the party to whom the disclosure is to be made. This applies to letters of recommendation as well.

When doubt exists as to whether or not student information should be released, contact the Office of the Registrar at <http://registrar.fsu.edu/> or call (850) 644-1050

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Treat our student records as though they were your own because you don't know who really may be making the request or their motives. Make every effort to help FSU remain in compliance with FERPA regulations and, if you're ever in doubt, contact the Registrar's office. We're here to help.

This concludes your introduction to FERPA.

To schedule additional training or obtain more information contact:

Office of the Registrar
<http://registrar.fsu.edu/> or (850) 644-1050

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The Office of the Registrar wishes to thank the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, the Federal Department of Education, and the National Association of College and University Attorneys for their contributions.

U.S. Department of Education web site:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>