

## FERPA Frequently Asked Questions

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville protects the privacy of student records in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g and 34 CFR Part 99 (FERPA) and state student privacy laws. This policy sets forth the measures implemented by the University to control the access to student information consistent with the requirements of FERPA and state law (<https://ferpa.utk.edu/policy/>).

### What does FERPA guarantee students?

- The right to inspect their education records.
- The right to seek to have their education records amended.
- The right to limit the disclosure of personally identifiable information from their educational records (Directory Information); and
- The right to file a complaint with the Department of Education concerning an alleged failure to comply with FERPA regulations.

### Who is responsible for ensuring student rights are protected under FERPA?

The responsibility for safeguarding student rights under FERPA rests on the shoulders of every member within our university community, including faculty, staff, and fellow students. Each person with access to student records is tasked with preserving their confidentiality and upholding the principles of FERPA.

### Does FERPA apply to all students?

- Yes. All students, regardless of age, who currently attend or have previously attended postsecondary institutions have FERPA rights.
- Attending student: Any individual who is currently enrolled in or previously attended the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and for whom the University maintains education records. An individual is in attendance when they register for an academic offering at the University, whether the academic offering is offered for credit or no credit, and whether the academic offering is in-person, online, or any combination thereof. The following persons are not students: (1) applicants who were denied admission to the University; and (2) applicants who were admitted to the University but did not register for courses.

### How are students made aware of FERPA?

Notification at the University of Tennessee is furnished at Freshmen Orientation; through Hilltopics, Graduate and Undergraduate Catalogs; and on the FERPA and Student Privacy website: <http://ferpa.utk.edu/>.

### What is Directory Information?

Directory Information about a student is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed, and it can be released without additional consent from the student. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville defines Directory Information as the following:

Name	Graduate or Undergraduate level
Semester (local) address	Full-time or Part-time status
Permanent address	College
NetID	Major
Email address (university-supplied)	Dates of Attendance
Telephone number	Degrees, Honors and Awards
Classification	Participation in school activities and sports and photographs of such
Most recent previous educational institution attended	Weight and height of students participating in intercollegiate athletics

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Any personally identifiable information (e.g., student ID number, grades, class schedule, transcripts, academic history reports, GPA, class roles, photographs, ethnicity, country of citizenship, etc.) not listed as Directory Information cannot be released to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party without a signed consent to release on file.

### Can a student restrict the disclosure of Directory Information?

Yes. Students wishing to restrict the disclosure of this information may submit the [Restricting Disclosure of Directory Information form](#) to the Office of the University Registrar in 209 Student Services Building or by sending it to [registrar@utk.edu](mailto:registrar@utk.edu) from their UTK-issued email address. Students can learn more at: FERPA and Student Privacy website: <http://ferpa.utk.edu>.

### How do I know if a student has restricted the disclosure of their Directory Information?

Look for the words “Confidential Information For...” printed near the top of the academic history. A confidentiality warning is also displayed on student information screens accessible by department personnel in colleges and administrative offices.

#### *Special Note:*

*University faculty and staff with a legitimate educational interest have the right to access non-directory student information in order to perform the duties of their position (e.g., academic advisors and student success coaches).*

#### *FERPA Don'ts:*

- Use student IDs or social security numbers in a public posting of grades
- Link the names of students with their IDs in any public manner
- Leave tests or papers for others to review (including collecting or distributing assignments in open mailboxes or other public places)
- Circulate a printed class roll listing student ID numbers or grades as an attendance roster
- Post individual student record information on a public website
- Discuss the progress/grades of any student with anyone outside of the University without written consent of the student (including parents/guardians)
- Provide anyone with lists of students enrolled in your classes for any commercial purpose
- Provide anyone with a student schedule or academic history or assist anyone other than UT employees in finding a student on campus
- Leave computers on with student information accessible

### Where can I find more information about FERPA?

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers:  
<http://www.aacrao.org/compliance/ferpa/>

The FERPA and Student Privacy website: <http://ferpa.utk.edu/>.

### Concerns or Questions

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