

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Designed to protect the privacy of educational records; establish rights of students to inspect their records; and provide guidelines for correcting inaccurate data.

Does FERPA Apply to All Students?

- Yes. All students, (regardless of age), who attend or have previously attended postsecondary institutions have FERPA rights.
- Attending student: Any individual who is or has been in attendance at the University of Tennessee and for whom the University maintains education records. An individual is considered to be in attendance when he or she registers for an academic offering at the University, whether or not the academic offering is offered for credit or no credit, and whether or not the academic offering is offered in person or by paper correspondence, videoconference, satellite, internet, or other electronic information or telecommunications technologies for students who are physically present in the classroom. 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.

Who is Responsible for Seeing that FERPA is Enforced?

All members of the university community, (faculty, staff and students), who have access to student records are responsible for guarding their confidentiality.

What Does FERPA Guarantee Students?

FERPA gives students the right to:

- inspect and review their own records;
- request amendments to their record;
- have some control over the release of personally identifiable information from their records; and
- file a complaint with the Department of Education concerning an alleged failure to comply with FERPA regulations.

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 is student data that is not generally considered harmful if disclosed. Directory information may be disclosed UNLESS the student has invoked the FERPA right to limit disclosure. Directory information includes:

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

What is Not Directory Information?

Social Security Number	Student ID Number
Grades	GPA (Term or Cumulative)
Student Schedule	Academic History
Academic Standing	

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WHAT IS MEANT BY “DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION”?

The University is not allowed to share information, other than “Directory Information”, without a student’s written consent.

CAN A STUDENT LIMIT RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION?

Yes. Students can be excluded from directory creation or have more stringent privacy measures instituted. Students can learn more at: FERPA and Student Privacy website: <http://ferpa.utk.edu/> or through the Office of the University Registrar, 209 Student Services Building, (865) 974-1501.

HOW DO I KNOW IF A STUDENT HAS ASKED THAT NO INFORMATION BE RELEASED?

Look for the words “Confidential Information For . . .” printed near the top of the academic history, and a confidentiality warning on student information screens accessible by departmental personnel in colleges and administrative offices.

SPECIAL NOTE TO CLASSROOM INSTRUCTORS

*University faculty and staff with a legitimate educational interest **do** have the right to access information about the student’s academic status and progress (for example, academic advisors or counselors in the Early Alert Program).*

DO NOT:

- 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

WHICH REQUESTS SHOULD YOU FORWARD TO THE OFFICE OF THE UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR?

- Requests for transcripts - only the Office of the University Registrar can generate an official transcript
- Certification requests - verification of enrollment for lenders, health insurance, good student car insurance discount forms
- Questions regarding the academic record of any student

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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