

FERPA Reference Sheet for UCF Faculty and Staff

FERPA, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, is a federal law that protects student records privacy, review and disclosure rights. The law guarantees these rights for both current and former UCF students.

1. The right to inspect and review their educational records within 45 days.
2. The right to seek to amend educational records they believe is inaccurate.
3. The right to have some control over the disclosure of information from educational records.
4. The right to file a complaint with the Department of Education concerning alleged failures by a university to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

What is an education record? Any information maintained by the University, in any medium, that is directly related to the student is an education record.

It is important to understand the two different categories of education records:

- 1) **Directory Information**
- 2) **Non-Directory Information (Personally Identifiable Information PII)**

Directory information is data or information, the disclosure of which generally is not considered to be harmful or an invasion of student privacy:

Examples Include:

- Name
- Mailing Address
- Phone Number
- Date of Birth
- Major
- Dates of Attendance
- Degrees/Awards Received
- Participation in Officially Recognized Activities and Sports
- Athletes' Height/Weight

NOTE: Students do have the option to restrict their directory information from disclosure without the student's permission. This is referred to as a "privacy hold" or a "FERPA hold." 

Non-directory information (PII) is Data or information that includes personal characteristics that would make the student's identity easily traceable.

NOTE: this information can never be disclosed without the student's consent through the online records release authorization.

Examples Include:

- Social Security Number
- Student ID - UCFID (PeopleSoft)
- Religious Preference
- Race/Ethnicity
- Email Address
- Grades/GPA
- Class Schedule
- Residency Status
- Test Scores
- Academic Standing
- Academic Transcript

What is NOT an education record?

The following are examples of items that **are not** considered education records under FERPA.:

- Law-enforcement records.
- Records related to employment (unless employment is conditional on being a student).
- Medical treatment records.
- Sole-source/Sole-possession documents: these are notes (memory joggers—**not** grade or GPA related) created and maintained by you, meant for your personal use exclusively. Notes kept by an individual educator, not shared with others (e.g., private advising notes). Once these records are shared, they become an education record and thus, subject to FERPA.

To whom can university officials disclose education records without written consent?

- School officials (examples include: Registrar's Office staff, Financial Aid staff, instructors, advisors) within the University that have a legitimate educational interest.
- School officials at other institutions where the student is seeking to enroll.
- Personnel or organizations determining financial aid decisions or providing financial aid to the student.
- Parents of students where the student status is determined as a dependent under IRS code of 1986, section 152.
- Accrediting organizations in the performance of their accrediting duties.
- Persons in compliance with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. The institution shall first make reasonable attempt to notify the student, unless the subpoena is issued from a federal grand jury, or issued for a law-enforcement purpose, and orders the University not to notify the student.
- Persons in an emergency, if the knowledge or information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or others.

PARENT REQUESTS FOR STUDENT RECORDS

FERPA rights transfer to the student at age 18, or once he or she attends a post-secondary institution regardless of age. Parents or legal guardians may obtain Non-Directory Information at the discretion of the institution, only if they can establish that the student is a financial dependent or by obtaining the student's written consent. The student is considered "financially dependent" if either parent or the legal guardian claimed the student upon his or her most recent Federal Income Tax return. The Registrar's Office will require that the parent(s) or legal guardian provide a copy of the filed tax return before it releases the requested information.

RECORDS ACCESS BY UNIVERSITY PERSONNEL:

As university employees with access to student records, you have access to certain education records as a result of having an established **legitimate educational interest**. (Access is needed to fulfill your job responsibilities for the university.)

For more Information <https://registrar.ucf.edu/ferpa>

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