

When I applied for admission, I requested recommendations from several people. I would like to see what they wrote, but I have been denied access. Why?

Ö Most likely, you signed a waiver of access form and thus waived your right to view the recommendation. You cannot change your mind now. The privacy of the recommenders' comments is secure. A waiver of access, however, is voluntary and cannot be required when submitting recommendations.

With more information being computerized, how does technology impact FERPA guidelines?

Ö As we move toward an environment with less paper, it is important to note that the same principles of confidentiality must be applied to all media, including but not limited to, electronic data, e-mail, and video or audio tapes.

For more information about the institutional policy regarding FERPA at:

(insert name of institution)

contact:
(insert name
address
email/phone)

(Additional institutional information may be inserted here)

INSTITUTION'S RETURN
ADDRESS



The Ohio Association of
Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
provides the following information regarding

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records. FERPA governs release of records maintained by an educational institution and access to those records. This publication is provided to help you better understand the intent of FERPA and the rights of students and parents with respect to the student's educational records.

FERPA is designed to protect the privacy of educational records and to provide information to parents (primary/secondary education) and students (higher education). In a higher education environment, it is intended that student's rights be broadly defined and exceptions narrowly construed. The basic concept is that the student is the "owner" and the institution the "keeper" of the record. There is some institutional flexibility so be sure to check with the individual institution for information about its application of FERPA to its students' records.

RECIPIENT'S MAILING LABEL

Student Rights Under FERPA

1. To inspect and review his/her record, except -
 - information about other students.
 - financial records of parents.
 - confidential letters of recommendation with access right waived.
 - notes made by and remaining in the sole possession of the maker.
2. To amend an *incorrect* record
3. To consent to disclosure of educational records (with exceptions) - A written signature is required prior to releasing all information except:
 - “Directory Information” (information considered public by the institution, [e.g., student address, telephone number, etc.])
 - to an employee/agent of the institution with a “legitimate educational interest” (i.e., the employee, including a student employee or outside contractor who needs access to education records information in order to perform his or her job).
 - to another institution where the student is seeking enrollment (if this is the policy of the institution).
 - to the Federal Department of Education.
 - to parents of dependent students.
 - to state/local officials in conjunction with legislative requirements.
 - to address a health/safety emergency, including to provide information about alcohol/substance abuse to parents of a student.
 - in connection with the receipt of financial aid
 - to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.

FERPA Definitions

- “Directory Information” - information that is not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. Each institution defines what it considers to be “directory information”. For example, most institutions consider date of birth and address as directory information.
- Educational Records - anything related to the student with the following exceptions: records retained solely by the maker, law enforcement records created by and for a law enforcement agency, employment records (unless employment is based on student status, e.g. a graduate teaching assistant or work-study student), medical/psychological treatment records, alumni records.
- Parent - either parent of a financially dependent student.
- Eligible Student - 18 years of age or enrolled in higher education.

NOTE: FERPA rights and the right to privacy end at death. Individual institutional policies should address records issues after the death of the student or a former student.

FERPA FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions)

Why don't you send my child's grades to me?

Ö FERPA requires that students 18 years of age or older, or those enrolling in a higher education institution, provide a signed release for the institution to provide information about them beyond Directory Information. Parents of a dependent child may request information by providing documentation that the student is dependent upon them.

An emergency has occurred and I need to reach my child. I can't get his/her class location since it is not directory information. What should I do?

Ö You should contact the campus security office, the Registrar's Office, or the student's advisor. Clearly state this is an emergency situation and provide necessary details. They will relay a message to the student. Although the information cannot be released directly to you, reasonable efforts will be made by the campus community to ensure prompt delivery to the student.

I want to review my student record, but the Registrar's Office says I have to take care of my past due financial obligation first. What can I do?

Ö FERPA states a student has access to his/her academic record, however, the institution may choose not to release a record to a third party until a financial obligation is met (if the institution has such a policy in effect). This may include the release of an official transcript to anyone. You should resolve your financial obligation to the institution so you will be cleared to review your record. The exception to this is if the student has filed bankruptcy and has been released of any financial obligation to the institution by the court.

I do not want any information released about me. What do I need to do?

Ö FERPA allows students to refuse to release information for any or all categories of directory information by submitting a written request.