FERPA and Confidentiality of Student Records

The university ensures the confidentiality of student records in accordance with the provisions of various federal, state, and university regulations, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, also known as the Buckley Amendment. The statutes and regulations also provide certain rights to students concerning their education records.

FERPA Student Rights

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access. A student who wishes to request the review of their education records under FERPA should write the University official responsible for the record in order to fulfill their professional responsibilities for the University. B) Upon request, the University will schedule an appointment for the student to review the education record. C) The student has the right to have the record reviewed by an official who is not assigned to the educational record, but is trained in the confidentiality of student education records.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records to be accurate, complete, and not misleading. A student who requests an amendment should write the appropriate University official with whom the request was submitted. If the student believes the amendments made are not appropriate, they have the right to a hearing. The student should write the University official responsible for the record to which the request should be addressed.

3. The right to provide written consent before the University discloses personally identifiable information from the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. A student should write the appropriate University official with whom the request was submitted to the extent that the request is to release directory information.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U. S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University of Florida to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

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Release of student record information is generally not permitted at the University of Florida without the express, written consent of the student. There are, however, some important exceptions.

Directory Information is defined as the student’s name, class and college, local and permanent addresses, telephone number, email address, enrollment status, dates of attendance at the University of Florida, majors, minors, certificates, concentrations and degrees earned, nature and place of employment at the University, honors and awards received, publication titles, participation in officially recognized or registered activities and sports, and weight and height of members of athletic teams.

Under FERPA, the university may release directory information without a student’s prior consent, unless the student tells the university not to release this information, by placing what is known as a privacy hold. Please note that selecting the “Do not publish” option in the UF directory is not the same as placing a privacy hold under FERPA. In order to place a privacy hold, the student must complete a Request for Restriction of Directory Information (Full Privacy Hold). This form is available by contacting the Office of the University Registrar by email (help@registrar.ufl.edu), phone (352.392.1374), or by visiting the Registrar’s Information Counter in 222 Criser Hall.

Two important details regarding placing a privacy hold on a student’s record:

- The university receives many inquiries for directory information from a variety of sources outside the institution, including friends, parents, relatives, prospective employers, the news media and honor societies. A privacy hold will preclude the release of such information, even to those people.
- A privacy hold applies to all elements of directory information in a student’s student record. The Office of the University Registrar does not apply the privacy hold differentially to the various directory information data elements. A request for a privacy hold will result in all data elements being withheld. Changes made by the online student directory will not be reflected on the student’s academic record.

A copy of FERPA, more details (http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/ferpa.html) about student rights and any university policies related to the FERPA are available from the Office of the University Registrar. Please refer any questions concerning FERPA to that office in 222 Criser Hall, 352.392.1374.

Confidentiality of Student Records

Directory Information that can be released to the public is limited to:
FERPA and Confidentiality of Student Records

- Student name
- Class and college
- Local and permanent addresses
- Listed telephone number
- Email address
- Enrollment status
- Most recent previous educational institution attended
- Dates of attendance at the University of Florida
- Majors
- Minors
- Certificates
- Concentrations
- Degree earned
- Nature and place of employment at the university
- Honors and awards received
- Publication titles
- Participation in officially recognized or registered activities and sports
- Weight and height of university athletes

The Office of the University Registrar routinely releases directory information to the public. Directory information may also be released by other university departments and/or employees. Currently enrolled students who want to restrict directory information must contact the Office of the University Registrar for assistance.

More Info (http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/currents/addresschange.html)

Student educational records may be released without the student’s consent to school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in accessing the records. School officials shall include:

- An employee, agent or officer of the university or State University System of Florida in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research or support staff position;
- Persons serving on university committees, boards and/or councils; and
- Persons employed by or under contract to the university to perform a special task, such as an attorney or an auditor.

Legitimate educational interest shall mean any authorized interest or activity undertaken in the name of the university for which access to an educational record is necessary or appropriate to the operation of the university or to the proper performance of the educational mission of the university.

The university also may disclose information from the student’s educational record without their consent to individuals or entities permitted such access under applicable federal and state law.

Students have the right to review their own educational records for information and to determine accuracy. A photo I.D., other equivalent documentation or personal recognition by the custodian of record will be required before access is granted. Parents of dependent students, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service, have these same rights upon presentation of proof of the student’s dependent status. Each spring when the catalog is published, students are notified of their FERPA rights.

If a student believes their educational record contains information that is inaccurate, misleading or in violation of their rights, they can ask the institution to amend the record. The UF Student Guide outlines the procedures for challenging the content of a student record, as well as the policies governing access to and maintenance of student records.

More Info (https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/students/student-conduct-code)

If a student believes the university has not maintained the confidentiality of their educational record as required by law, they may file a complaint by contacting:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901