

# FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) Information

## Overview

For questions, comments, edits, updates please contact the Office of the Registrar at [registrar@uwf.edu](mailto:registrar@uwf.edu) for assistance

FERPA is The 1974 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as the Buckley Amendment, is a federal law (20 U.S.C. 1232g) that protects the privacy of a student's educational record. FERPA applies to all educational institutions receiving funds from the United States Department of Education, from kindergarten through university level.

This page is intended to collect information about FERPA for UWF constituents for their reference and convenience.

## UWF Student Educational Records Regulation

[UWF/REG-3.017](#)

## Official UWF FERPA information

[FERPA Information from the Dean of Students](#)

[FERPA and Student Records from the Office of the Registrar](#)

[FERPA U.S. Department of Education](#)








[FERPA Notes from NACUA - National Association of College and University Attorneys](#)

## FAQs

<http://uwf.edu/offices/registrar/resources/ferpa-student-records--privacy/#d.en.86365>

## Student/Parent Resources

### Do's and Don'ts

-  **DO** educate yourself regarding [FERPA](#), your rights and UWFs responsibilities.
-  **DO** check your [Contact and Privacy Information app](#) each semester to be sure your information is correct and your privacy settings are set.
-  **DO** be sure to add your parent or any other individual you deem appropriate to the *Release of Information* block in the [Contact and Privacy Information app](#). **You decide** who (if anyone) has access to your student educational record and how much access they have.
-  **DO** always communicate with your professors and other UWF personnel using your student email account. Using that account tells the person with whom you're communicating that you are indeed the student associated with that email address. [UWF Policy SA-19.02](#)
-  **DON'T** leave your computer open where anyone can find your MyUWF log-in information.
-  **DON'T** violate FERPA if you are a student who is also an employee at UWF - see [Faculty/Staff Resources](#) to the right.
-  **DO** contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) or the [Office of the General Counsel](#) with any FERPA related questions.











### FAQs

At the University of West Florida, the privacy of academic records is also protected by [Florida Statute Section 1002.22 \(2007\)](#). The U.S. Department of Education summarizes the rights afforded to students by FERPA as follows:

- The right to inspect and review educational records within a reasonable period of time and no more than 45 days after the institution has received the request
- The right to request to amend inaccuracies in their educational records
- The right to limit disclosure of some personally identifiable information
- The right to file a complaint with the [Family Policy Compliance Office](#) if they feel their FERPA rights have been violated.
- FERPA requires universities to provide students with annual notification of these rights. UWF's [annual notification](#) appear

## Faculty/Staff Resources

### Do's and Don'ts

-  **DO** educate yourself regarding [FERPA](#) and your responsibilities.
-  **DO** read and understand the information in the [FERPA Reference Sheet for Faculty/Staff](#)
-  **DO** check out additional [FERPA Training and Resources](#)
-  **DO** authenticate your student's identity before discussing their educational record.
  - See [Authenticating a Student's Identity](#) for guidelines concerning student interactions in-person, over the telephone, and via Email.
-  **DON'T** leave your computer open where anyone can view a student's information.
-  **DON'T** speak with any person other than the student if you have any question regarding their access to the student's record. Check the *Release of Information* block in the [Contact and Privacy Information app](#) or Contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) for assistance.
-  **DON'T** email a group of your students where their email addresses are visible to other students. If emailing in this fashion, be sure to use the BCC (blind carbon copy) feature.
-  **DON'T** leave graded assignments outside your office door for students to pick up.
-  **DON'T** at any time use the UWF ID of a student in a public posting of grades.
-  **DO** contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) or the [Office of the General Counsel](#) with any FERPA related questions.

### FAQs

No. The UWF student roster contains the students' photos and IDs.

When you receive a request from a student about the status of their grade or work in the course you can respond as appropriate. To ensure compliance with FERPA, you should only send back to the official UWF email - [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_@students.uwf.edu](mailto:_____@students.uwf.edu). By only responding to the UWF email, we know that the student has to authenticate to access their UWF email which for us is a form of authenticating their identity. It is very much like them being there in person and asking for that information.

s in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs. Students who suspect that a FERPA violation has occurred, should contact [Student Affairs](#), the [Office of the Registrar](#) or the [Family Policy Compliance Office](#) within the U. S. Department of Education.

An education record is any record directly related to a student that is maintained by an educational agency or institution, or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

**Examples of an academic record include, but are not limited to:**

- Biographical information including date and place of birth, gender, nationality, information about race and ethnicity, and identification photographs
- Grades, test scores, evaluations, courses taken, academic specialization and activities, and official communications regarding your status
- Coursework including papers and exams, class schedules, as well as written email or recorded communications that are part of the academic process
- Disciplinary records
- Financial aid and financial aid records
- Internship program records

**Academic records do not include:**

- Sole possession records that are used only as memory aids and not shared with others
- Law enforcement unit records
- Employment records, unless the employment is dependent on the employee's status as a student (such as evaluations of graduate assistants)
- Medical records
- Records that only contain information about an individual after he or she is no longer a student at that agency or institution

If a student is attending a postsecondary institution - at any age - the rights under FERPA have transferred to the student. However, in a situation where a student is enrolled in both a high school and a postsecondary institution, the two schools may exchange information on that student. If the student is under 18, the parents still retain the rights under FERPA at the high school and may inspect and review any records sent by the postsecondary institution to the high school. Additionally, the postsecondary institution may disclose personally identifiable information from the student's education records to the parents, without the consent of the eligible student, if the student is a dependent for tax purposes under the IRS rules.

Please see the [Office of the Registrar FERPA site](#) for details.

If for any reason you are uncomfortable with the information being asked of you, you can err on the side of caution. It can be acceptable for those on-campus students to indicate to the student that you would prefer they come in person or just provide back to the student that they are currently passing the course. If there is a failing grade or area of concern, it may be better to advise the student to make an appointment (in-person or online if applicable) during office hours to discuss their grade.

This is only acceptable if the grades are associated with a randomly generated numeric identifier known and available only to you and the student; this list must not be arranged by alphabetic order. Never post the list using Social Security numbers or UWF IDs.

It is possible that you will receive inquiries from UWF offices charged with tracking certain student populations. Some of the more common inquiries will come from Athletics (Compliance or Student Support) or the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC). These are very legitimate inquiries and under FERPA you are able to share information as appropriate.

- Please make sure that you have the requesting employees information for your own documentation - their entire email signature is necessary.
- Regarding Athletics, it's very important that any student information released be to [Intercollegiate Athletics](#) staff charged with monitoring and handling athletic compliance.
  - It is not appropriate to release information directly to coaches without permission from the Senior Associate Athletics Director.

Statements made by a person making a recommendation that are made from that person's personal observation or knowledge do not require a written release from the student.

However, if personally identifiable information obtained from a student's educational record is included in the letter of recommendation (grades, GPA, etc.), the writer - whether a faculty member or department employee - is required to obtain a signed release from the student (via their UWF email or in written form) which (1) specifies the records that may be disclosed, (2) states the purpose of the disclosure, and (3) identifies the party or class of parties to whom the disclosure can be made. If this letter of recommendation is kept on file by the person writing it, it would be part of the student's educational record, and the student has the right to read it unless he or she has waived that right to access.

Sample student release -

Directory Information	Personally Identifiable Information
(May be disclosed, unless the student requests otherwise. Refer such requests to your department office or to the Registrar's Office.)	(any data other than "Directory Information")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Address</li> <li>• Official University Email</li> <li>• Date of Birth</li> <li>• Major</li> <li>• Dates of Attendance</li> <li>• Enrollment Status (Full/Part-time)</li> <li>• Degrees/Honors/Awards Received</li> <li>• Participation in Officially Recognized Activities and Sports</li> <li>• Athletes' Weight/Height</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Security Number</li> <li>• UWF ID</li> <li>• Residency Status</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Religious Preference</li> <li>• Student's Class Schedule</li> <li>• Grades/GPA</li> <li>• Race/Ethnicity</li> <li>• Test Scores</li> <li>• Academic Standing</li> </ul>

Yes.

Under the provisions of the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), you have the right to withhold disclosure of the information listed below. The following items are designated as "Directory Information" and may be released by this University to non-institutional persons or organizations:

- Name (legal and preferred);
- Address (local and permanent);
- Enrollment Status (e.g. undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time);
- University assigned E-mail Address;
- Current Telephone number (local and permanent);
- Major field of study;
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports, including the birthdate, place of birth, weight and height of members of University athletic teams;
- Dates of attendance at UWF;
- Degree(s) earned at UWF;
- University recognized Degrees, Certificates, Thesis/Dissertation Titles, Awards and Honors received (including Dean's List and President's List);
- Grade classification (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior or Graduate Student);
- Most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

Your request to withhold directory information will be honored. The University will not assume responsibility to contact you for subsequent permission for release of these items. The University assumes no liability for honoring your request that such information be withheld.

I give permission to Prof. Smith to write a letter of recommendation to:

Allstate Insurance

324 Wilkins Drive

Atlanta, GA 33011

Prof Smith has my permission to include my GPA and grades.

I waive (or do not waive) my right to review a copy of this letter at any time in the future.

Signature/Date

\*\*The release is considered a permanent part of the students file and should be attached/documented along with a copy of the recommendation letter. This can be added to the students file in the Document Imaging system via the academic college's imaging repository or to the students academic notes in Navigate.

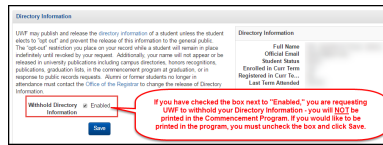
Please see the [Office of the Registrar FERPA site](#) for details.

Directory Information	Personally Identifiable Information
(May be disclosed, unless the student requests otherwise. Refer such requests to your department office or to the Registrar's Office.)	(any data other than "Directory Information")
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name</li> <li>• Address</li> <li>• Official University Email</li> <li>• Date of Birth</li> <li>• Major</li> <li>• Dates of Attendance</li> <li>• Enrollment Status (Full/Part-time)</li> <li>• Degrees/Honors/Awards Received</li> <li>• Participation in Officially Recognized Activities and Sports</li> <li>• Athletes' Weight/Height</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Security Number</li> <li>• UWF ID</li> <li>• Residency Status</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Religious Preference</li> <li>• Student's Class Schedule</li> <li>• Grades/GPA</li> <li>• Race/Ethnicity</li> <li>• Test Scores</li> <li>• Academic Standing</li> </ul>

FERPA does not assume that all school officials have a legitimate educational interest in all student records. To assume they do would effectively render the statutory requirement meaningless.

However, a "legitimate educational interest" exists if the school official needs to have access to the records in order to do his or her job—which does not necessarily depend on the student's area of study. Section 99.7(a)(3)(iii) of FERPA requires each institution to include in its annual notice to students if it has a policy of disclosing education records under section 99.31(a)(1), and a specification of criteria for determining what constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest.

Yes. If you have indicated Privacy in the [Contact and Privacy Information app](#) in MyUWF, we cannot print your name in the program. You will need to uncheck that box and save very early in the semester of your graduation to ensure that your name will be printed.



**Withholding your Directory Information** prevents UWF from disclosing to the general public any information from student educational records which is designated as "directory information." See [Privacy section](#) of Using the Contact and Privacy Info Wizard.

**The Full Confidentiality Hold** is used only in rare circumstances. **Your entire educational record will be suppressed** (this includes the Directory Information listed above). But, in addition, all conversations about your educational record must be conducted in person or via your UWF email account. We cannot discuss your record with you (or anyone you designate) over the phone, fax, regular mail, or any email address other than your official UWF email account.

No. If your daughter has authorized us to discuss her records with you and she now has the Full Confidentiality Hold, all conversations about her educational record must be done in person.

If you believe your FERPA rights have been violated, please contact either [Student Affairs](#), the [Office of the Registrar](#) or the [Office of the General Counsel](#) for assistance.

## Additional Helpful Links

[Division of Academic Affairs Collection and Use of Social Security Numbers](#)

[FERPA Frequently Asked Questions - FERPA for Parents and Eligible Students - Family Policy Compliance Office - US Department of Education](#)

## Student Employee FERPA Training Information

The FERPA statute has always required that school officials' access to the education records of a particular student or category of students be limited to circumstances where the official has a legitimate educational interest in those records. Given the ubiquity of electronic records, the FERPA regulations were amended in 2009 to clarify and reinforce the "legitimate educational interest" requirement (see sec. 99.31(a)(1)(ii))—whether the records were hardcopies or electronic.

So, if you are unsure we suggest you pick up the Phone and contact the [Office of the Registrar](#) for Assistance. We will help you work through the inquiry and determine if it meets this criteria.

The answer is perhaps. It would be a FERPA violation to include information about any student who has directed the university not to release his/her information. Additionally, without advance written consent, it would be a violation to disclose grades or performance indicators for any student. If you obtain written permission from each student, it would be permissible to include the information. The department would need to retain the written permission as documentation about the release.

All requests for student information, whether by subpoena, court order or authorization, should be sent to the Office of the Registrar or the Office of General Counsel for review and processing. If the request calls for more information than is available directly from the Office of the Registrar, those materials will be gathered together under the direction of the Office of General Counsel and submitted as a package in response to the request. Do not be intimidated by a badge. Refer all inquiries to the Office of the Registrar or the Office of General Counsel.

Yes. FERPA permits the disclosure of information from student educational records "to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals." For example, if a student sends an email to his resident assistant disclosing that he has just been diagnosed with a highly contagious disease such as measles, the institution could alert the student's roommate, and perhaps others with whom the student has come in close contact, to urge them to seek appropriate testing and medical care. Safety concerns warranting disclosure could include a student's suicidal statements or ideations, unusually erratic and angry behaviors, or similar conduct that others would reasonably see as posing a risk of serious harm to the student and to others.

This exception does not authorize "broadcast" disclosures, but a limited disclosure to a limited number of people, made in good-faith, in light of the facts available at the time. Such disclosure is highly unlikely to be deemed a violation of FERPA, even if the perceived emergency later turns out not to have been one. In general and when reasonably possible, the initial disclosure should be made to professionals trained to evaluate and handle such emergencies, such as campus mental health or law enforcement personnel, who can then determine whether further and broader disclosures are appropriate.

The Federal Family Policy Compliance Office reviews and investigates complaints of violations of FERPA. If the Secretary of Education finds that an institution has failed to comply with FERPA and determines that compliance cannot be secured by any means, he/she can, among other options, direct that no federal funds under his or her administrative control (financial aid, education grants, etc.) be made available to that institution.

Yes. Although a student may have granted consent for access to the parent that does not grant the parent the right to act on behalf of the student. In this case, an advising appointment is a transaction between the student and academic advisor for purposes of discussing their academic progress. A student may elect for a parent or other interested party to join them, but they cannot send the parent or third party in their place of that appointment.

If this happens, it is best to advise the parent and/or third party that consent for access under FERPA grants the university the right to have a conversation with them, but it does not grant them the right to act in the students place, especially attending an academic advising session in the students stead.

## **Additional Helpful Links**

**[FERPA Frequently Asked Questions - FERPA for School Officials](#) - Family Policy Compliance Office - US Department of Education**