

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as Amended (**FERPA**) requires institutions accepting federal monies to protect the privacy of student information. In addition, FERPA affords students the right to review their education records, to request correction of inaccurate records, and to limit information disclosure from those records. An institution's failure to comply with FERPA may result in the Department of Education withdrawal of federal funds.

All UC faculty and staff are obliged to comply with FERPA regulations.

As a faculty member, you need to know the difference between **Directory Information** and **Personally Identifiable Information** or **Education Records**:

Directory Information

May be disclosed, unless the student has requested otherwise. *Please refer such requests to your department office or to the Registrar's Office.*

- Name
- Student Identifier (non-SSN)
- Current mailing address
- Current telephone number
- UC e-mail address
- College
- Class
- Major
- Dates of attendance
- Enrollment status (full/part-time)
- Degrees/honors/awards received

Personally Identifiable Information

(any identifying data other than "Directory Information")

Including, but not limited to:

- Social Security Number
- Date of birth
- Residency status
- Gender/race/ethnicity
- Religious preference

Education Records

Including, but not limited to:

- Class schedule
- Grades/GPA and academic standing
- Test scores
- Academic transcripts

"Personally Identifiable Information" or "Education Records" **may be released only to the student** and then only with the proper identification. *Parents and spouses must present the student's written and signed consent authorizing UC to disclose personally identifiable information or education records.*

In all cases, refer callers to the Registrar's Office. This office will review authorization documents, consult the instructor and other offices as necessary, and release information as appropriate.

General Practices for Protecting Student Information and Education Records

- Do not leave exams, papers, or any documents containing a SSN/UCID/Username, grade, evaluation, or grade point average outside your office door or in any area that is open-access.
- Do not record attendance by passing around a class list, which contains the student's SSN/UCID/Username.
- Do not provide tests and assignments scores, evaluations or final grades via e-mail.
- When contacted by phone, first ask identifying questions (e.g., "What was your mid-term score?") but not "What is your UCID?").

Posting Grades

Under FERPA, student grades **must not** be released or made available to third parties. Instructors therefore are restricted from posting grades in classrooms (except as follows), or on web-sites and/or online course management systems unless the student's identity is concealed by a secure student identifier + password entry interface. Do not post grades by SSN/UCID/Username (**neither in whole nor in part**).

How to Post Grades

- 1) Ask the student to supply you with a self-chosen code identifier. This identifier may be known only to you or your teaching assistant; **or**
 - 2) You may create and assign a unique list of randomly generated numbers/characters known and available **only** to you (or your teaching assistant) and the student.
- **For each option above, arrange the grade list so students do not fall in alphabetic order.**

Records Access by University Personnel

As a faculty member, you may be allowed access to a student's educational records **if** you can establish *legitimate educational interest* for the request, meaning that you need the information to fulfill a specific professional responsibility.

The following is a list of information items that **are not** considered educational records and therefore are not subject to a student's request for review:

- Law-enforcement records, medical treatment records, alumni records;
- Records maintained exclusively for individuals in their capacity as employees. Records of those who are employed as a result of their status as students (i.e., work-study, student workers, etc.), however, are considered educational 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. So long as no one other than you ever reads these notes they remain private and are not subject to FERPA. If you share them with another person, regardless of the reason, these notes no longer are considered "sole source." They become part of the student's educational record and are subject to disclosure under FERPA.

⇒ **Grade books are not considered "sole source" documents under FERPA and so must be made available to written student requests for record disclosure.** If a student requests grade book disclosure, all notations pertaining to other students would be stripped out of the pages provided for review.

For More Information or a FERPA Consult

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