

FERPA for Students

What Every MSU Student Should Know

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Prepared by the Office of the Registrar

What is FERPA?

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act affords students certain rights concerning their student educational records. The law is also known as FERPA.
- You have a right to gain access to and challenge the content of your educational records.

Student Records and FERPA

- MSU complies fully with the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which governs access to, and confidentiality of, student records.

As a means of complying with this act, the University has developed detailed Guidelines Governing Privacy and Release of Student Records, available on the web at:

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.asp>

Student Rights Relating to Educational Records

As a student, you have a right to expect that information in your educational records (including computerized records) will be kept confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as allowed by law.

For example:

- Grades
- Enrollment records
- Schedules
- Class Lists
- PID (personal identification number)
- SSN (social security number)



Student Rights Relating to Educational Records (continued)

- When you reach the age of 18 or begin attending a post-secondary institution regardless of age, FERPA rights transfer to you--the student. This limits the student educational record information that may be released to third parties without your written permission unless it is “directory information.”

Student Rights Relating to Educational Records (continued)

- You have the right to inspect and review your educational records; seek amendment of the records you believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of your privacy rights; consent to disclosures of confidential information except to the extent that the law permits disclosure without your consent; and file a complaint concerning alleged failures of the University to comply with the law.

Directory Information

FERPA identifies a category of information as “directory information,” which institutions may usually release without student permission.

For example:

- student’s name, addresses, and telephone numbers
- current enrollment status or dates of attendance
- program level, class level, major
- candidacy for degree and/or teacher certification
- employment status as a graduate teaching or research assistant, office address and office phone number
- MSU awards, degrees, and honors achievements
- weight and height of athletic team members

Directory Information (continued)

- If you wish to restrict release of any or all “directory information,” you must complete a Directory Information Restriction Request in Room 150 Administration Building or at:
<http://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/DirRestrict/DirRestrict.asp>


Disclosures Without Consent

FERPA permits the release of some information without student permission. For example:

- To school officials with legitimate educational interests – must have a need-to-know
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena (after appropriate notice to the student)
- To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency, such as parents, Department of Police and Public Safety (DPPS), Olin Health Center
- To officials of another school, in which a student seeks or intends to enroll (MSU's practice is to release transcripts based on student request.)

Disclosures Without Consent (continued)

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for aid, the amount of the aid, the conditions for the aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid
- To certain government officials in connection with state or federally supported education programs
- To accrediting organizations
- To attorneys representing MSU
- To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the University (with certain conditions)



Important note: This presentation is intended to raise awareness and give general information about FERPA and to acquaint you with some of the privacy issues surrounding students' educational records. It is not intended as nor is it a substitute for legal advice on any particular issue.



For additional information on FERPA and MSU's guidelines, see the Office of the Registrar's website at:

<http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.asp>