
ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY



MEMO TO: St. Mary's University Administration, Faculty, and Staff

FROM: Dean of Students
Christina Villanueva, Interim Registrar

RE: Your Duties Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

As members of the St. Mary's University community with access to student records, it is important for you to become familiar with and understand your responsibility regarding student records, information stored in those records and distribution of materials in those records.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or the "Buckley Amendment":

- Regulates the access to and the release of education records maintained by any educational institution which receives federal funding.
- Education records include, but are not limited to grades, test scores, courses taken, disciplinary records, documentation of attendance and health records.
- Education records are defined as those records directly related to the student and maintained by an educational institution or agency or by a party acting for the agency or institution.
- Education records **DO NOT** include: sole possession records (i.e. notes that are kept in the sole possession of the maker and are not accessible or revealed to others); law enforcement records (until they become part of a student's disciplinary record); records that are made and maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in his or her professional capacity or assisting in a paraprofessional capacity; records that are made, maintained or used only in connection with treatment of a student and are disclosed only to the person providing treatment; records that contain information about an individual after he or she is no longer a student at that agency or institution.
- Generally, the school **must have** written permission from the student before releasing any information from the student's record. **This includes the release of information to a student's parents, spouse, relatives, or friends.** School employees who have a need to know are permitted to have information from a student's record. Under certain circumstances the University reserves the right to notify the parents of dependent students regarding information that might be a part of the student's record. Additionally, the University is permitted to notify the parents of any student (without their permission) regarding violations of the alcohol or drug policies on campus.
- **The University may disclose, without consent, certain directory information. Directory information includes: name, address, telephone number, date, and place of birth, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, and degrees and awards received. Students can block this information in the Registrar's Office at the beginning of the semester.**

To avoid violations of FERPA rules, DO NOT:

- At any time use the entire social security number or St. Mary's ID number of a student in a public posting of grades.
- Link the name of a student with that student's social security number or St. Mary's ID number in any public manner.
- Leave graded tests or papers in a stack for students to pick up by sorting through the papers of all students.
- Circulate a printed class list with student name, social security number and/or St. Mary's ID number or grades as an attendance roster.
- Discuss the progress of any student with anyone other than the student (including parents and spouses) without the written consent of the student.
- Provide anyone with lists of students enrolled in your classes or organizations for commercial purposes.
- Provide anyone with a student's schedule or assist anyone other than campus employees in finding a student on campus.

It is equally important to be careful when disposing of records. Records covered under this law should be torn up or shredded for disposal.

Your attention to this matter will prevent student's information from being shared inappropriately or carelessly. Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or concerns regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

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