



**SUMMARY: FERPA GUIDELINES
FOR FACULTY & STAFF**

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

- 1.) the right to inspect their education records
- 2.) the right to request an amendment of the records that the student believes are inaccurate
- 3.) the right to control disclosures of their records except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. The law applies regardless of the medium of storage of the data (electronic, hard copy, scanned, microfiche, etc.)

**GUIDELINES FOR RELEASE OF
DIRECTORY INFORMATION**

One of those exceptions permitted by FERPA is the release of *Directory Information* to parties outside the institution. *Directory Information* is defined as information which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The following *Directory Information* may be released by IUP without the student's written permission:

- Name, address, telephone number
- Dates and status of attendance (enrolled, part-time/full-time) and previous institutions attended
- Degrees conferred
- Major field of study and class
- Awards and honors
- Past and present participation in officially recognized sports and activities as well as physical factors of athletes (such as height and weight)
- EMAIL username

The information above can be released without a student's signature unless the student signs a Non-disclosure Form in the Registrar's Office. The university is obligated to notify students annually that they have the right to withhold directory information. When a student signs a Non-disclosure Form, a "**Confidential**" flag appears on the student's records in the database. **NO information** is to be released about that student unless the non-disclosure is rescinded in writing.

In most instances, all other student educational record information may not be released without written consent of the student, other than to school officials with a "legitimate educational interest". This includes grades, social security numbers, ethnicity, ID number, academic progress, or any other non-directory information.

For additional information see www.iup.edu/registrar/ferpa or call the Registrar's Office at 724-357-2217.

WHAT IS "LEGITIMATE EDUCATIONAL INTEREST"? (Need to Know)

When accessing an educational record, ask yourself:

- a. Am I performing a task related to the student's education?
- b. Am I performing a task related to the discipline of a student?
- c. Am I providing a service to benefit to the student?
- d. Am I performing a task that is specified in my position description or my contract agreement?

Being a school official does not give you carte blanche access to all education records of all students. If you cannot answer "yes" to any of these questions above, **YOU MAY BE IN VIOLATION.** "School officials" include faculty, administration, and clerical and professional employees, including student workers.

WHAT ABOUT PARENTS?

In post-secondary institutions, once a student registers for class, regardless of age, the rights to the record no longer belong to the parents. FERPA does not prohibit release of information to parents of dependent students. However the problem is determining true dependency. Therefore, **IUP considers all students to be emancipated** and requires a student's signature in order to release educational records (grades, class schedule, disciplinary status, enrollment verification, etc.) to parents.

WHAT CAN I DO TO UPHOLD FERPA?

- **Never** use your access to student records to go beyond your "legitimate educational interest" which you have received by nature of your employment at the university.
- **Never** release student education records to a third party without the student's signed and dated consent.
- When asked for directory information, **check** Banner, our database system. The word "Confidential" will appear on the screen above the student's name/ID. A "Confidential" notation indicates that **no information** can be released.
- **Train** your student workers about FERPA and their responsibilities in complying.
- If you find yourself in a situation where you think you might be in violation of FERPA if you take a particular action, it is best to err on the side of caution. Call Lisa Bray in the Registrar's office for guidance, 724-357-2217.
- **Keep learning** about FERPA. The Registrar's Office is the central point for inquiries. If you have questions or if you desire employees in your area to have FERPA training, contact Lisa Bray, Associate Registrar for Student Records at lbray@iup.edu.

OPERATIONAL REMINDERS

If your office is in an open area:

1. Close all files when not in use or when 3rd parties are present.
2. Position your computer screen so that third parties cannot see information.
3. Close out of student records whenever leaving your work area.
4. Check to see if printers, copiers, and fax machines are in secure areas; if not, arrange to secure.
5. If discussing educational record information with the student, go to a private office or area if at all possible so that conversations cannot be overheard.