FERPA Rights and Responsibilities for Faculty and Staff

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. This includes but is not limited to Social Security numbers, class rolls, advising files, tests, degree audits, and a student's class schedule. As an employee of Murray State University you are expected to comply with this federal law. The Registrar's Office is the official source for all student data, and the Registrar is the authorized party to determine right of access to student data. Murray State identifies faculty members as school officials with a right to access certain specified student records based on an appropriate "need to know."

Before an employee can gain on-line access to data he/she must participate in FERPA training provided online by the Registrar's Office.

Key points to keep in mind when working with students or student records are:

- do not post grades in a location where anyone can see them;
- do not post or share your password with anyone;
- unless you are positive of a student's identification, ask for the answer to their security question or ask for an ID with photo before discussing or releasing any information about that student to that student;
- keep all confidential documents in a secure location;
- refrain from discussing confidential information in public places such as hallways, classrooms, common areas and office spaces that are not secure;
- do not let other students or employees see information for which they have not been authorized;
- do not allow students to look through a stack of tests or papers for their specific documents;
- get signed permission forms before preparing letters of recommendation, and keep those forms for at least one year after the student has left the University or one year after the letter was written, whichever is later;
- include confidentiality/FERPA issues in training or performance evaluations for all student workers or employees that you supervise;
- since you are given access to student data only for your professional needs, refer third-party requests for student data to the Office of Institutional Diversity; and
- when in doubt contact the Registrar for guidance on issues that relate to confidentiality of student records.

FERPA Online Training

Click here to connect to Canvas and complete the online FERPA training and quiz.

Once you have finished the tutorial, you will be prompted to complete a quiz over the tutorial material. Receiving a quiz score of 100% will create a record that you have successfully completed FERPA training.

This tutorial is a learning tool designed to equip faculty, staff and students with a better understanding of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The tutorial is not an exhaustive study of the topic of FERPA, but it does address the essential elements of the law. It is not intended to be a substitute for legal advice. Specific questions regarding FERPA should be answered by the Registrar's Office.

University Registrar
msu.registrar@murraystate.edu