

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

(Enacted in 1974; revised in January 2009)

The essence of FERPA:

- Students at postsecondary institutions are permitted to inspect and review their education records.
- School officials may not disclose personally identifiable information from a student's education record, without written permission, unless such a disclosure is permitted by one of the FERPA signed-consent exceptions.
- Institutions are responsible for ensuring that all of its school officials comply with FERPA.

Directory Information at MSU

- Student name, addresses, telephone listings, campus email address, date and place of birth, fields of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, enrollment status (full-time, part-time, not enrolled), degrees (pending and received), awards or honors received, the most recent previous educational institution attended, and the student's photograph.
- *Note:* directory information may be released without permission, unless the student has requested that their directory information be kept confidential.
- All other (personally identifiable) information may not be disclosed without written permission. MSU students may complete a Student Information Release form and file it with the Registrar's Office. This form allows them to designate who they authorize to receive personally identifiable information.

Admissions-Related FERPA Issues

- An admitted student has the right to access the information in his/her admissions file, once in attendance at the institution.
- Student admissions files for all admitted students should be reviewed in order to destroy items which have fulfilled their admissions-related purpose and no longer need to be maintained.
- Once the applicant becomes a student, all the admissions records that have not been removed and destroyed become part of the student's education record and therefore covered by FERPA (which means they may be reviewed by the student).
- Records cannot be destroyed once there is a request to inspect and review.

Admitted vs. Enrolled/In Attendance Students

- Individuals who applied for admission but were not accepted have no rights under FERPA.
- The institution's definition of "enrolled" or "in attendance" is the first day of the semester the student begins taking courses at Murray State University. The student's FERPA rights begin on the first day of the first semester of enrollment.

What is NOT an Education Record?

- "Sole Possession Notes" (These are notes that are made for the creator's eyes only. If they are ever distributed to even one other person, they become education records. Emails are never to be considered sole possession notes.)
- Law enforcement records
- Medical and treatment records
- Alumni records
- *Important Note:* Records of individuals who are employed as a result of their status as students (such as work-study) ARE considered educational records.

References

- AACRAO 2010 FERPA Guide, edited by LeRoy Rooker
- <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/pdf/ferparegs.pdf>