

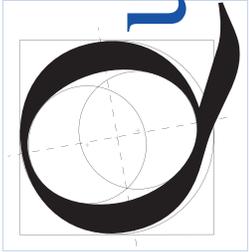
Disclosure of Information from Student Records

**A Quick Reference
for Faculty and GSIs**



Office of the Registrar
University of California, Berkeley

Questions



What is your FERPA quotient? Find out by reading the questions and information below. Then compare your responses to the answers on the next page.

- 1. Final exams are over and you have assigned the students' grades for the semester. To expedite the disclosure of these grades to your students, you post a list with student ID numbers and grades outside your office. Is this action appropriate?**
- 2. You have just completed grading papers or exams. Can you leave them in a bin outside your office for students to pick up?**
- 3. You're chatting with a fellow faculty member whose daughter is in your class. He wants to know how she is doing in your class and what grade she might get. Would it be permissible to divulge this information to that faculty member?**
- 4. A spouse of one of your students comes into your office in desperation. "I need to pull my husband out of class because his mother was seriously injured in an automobile accident. Can you please give me his class schedule?" You have access to the student's schedule. How would you respond in this instance?**

Many University faculty and staff have access to students' personal and academic records. In fact, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for many to do their work without this information. However, we are not at liberty to disclose just any information from student records to which we have access. The disclosure of information from student records is governed by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is intended to protect the student's right to privacy.

So, you may ask, what are student records and what can be disclosed to parties other than the student (including parents and spouses)? Student records maintained by UC or another group acting for UC include, but are not limited to: transcripts, grades, exam papers, test scores, evaluations, financial aid records and loan collection records. The following are NOT considered student records:

- Admissions records (for those who have not been admitted or who have declined admission)
- Alumni records
- Personnel/Employment records
- Police records
- Psychological/Medical records
- Personal records of instructional, supervisory, and administrative personnel and educational personnel that are (1) kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record, and (2) not accessible or revealed to any other individual.

Student records information falls into two general categories:

1. **Directory (public) information**, to which third parties* have access, and
2. **Confidential information**, to which third parties may have access ONLY if the student provides written authorization.

Directory information, which may be released without the student's prior consent, is information contained in a student record that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of

*anyone other than you as the record custodian and the student about whom the information pertains

privacy if disclosed. The following are data elements that may be released without the student's permission:

- Name of student
- Addresses (local/permanent/billing/e-mail)
- Telephone numbers
- Major field of study
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Last school attended
- Number of course units in which enrolled
- Degrees and honors received
- Participation in officially recognized activities
- Name, weight and height of participants on intercollegiate athletic teams

Everything in a student record that is not included in the aforementioned list of "directory information" is considered **confidential**. Policies also permit students to have the University treat some or all directory information as confidential, so third party access to the above information may be limited if a student so requests.

1. Under no circumstances should you post a list of student ID numbers and grades without first obtaining prior written consent from every student on that list. ID numbers and grades are confidential information, and posting such information is a violation of FERPA regulations. Particular care should be taken with the student ID number given that it is now one of two keys used for accessing student records electronically.

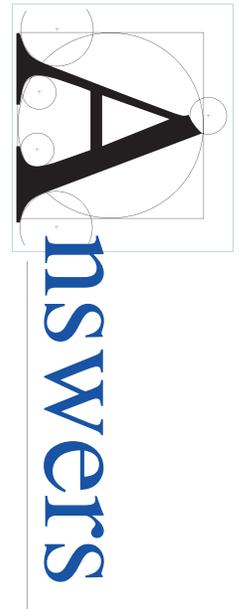
Instead of posting a grade list, you should refer students to Bear Facts, where they can view their grades within 24 hours of grade submission via E-Grades.

2. No. Exams and papers are considered confidential student records and therefore should not be left in a public area without first obtaining written authorization from each student.

Instead, distribute the exams/papers in class or leave them with a departmental staffperson, who can distribute them upon verifying the identity of each student.

3. You should not release to inquisitive parents (including fellow faculty members), or any other third party, a student's course work, grades, GPA, or other confidential information unless you have written authorization from the student. Faculty members, as with any other campus staff, can have access to confidential student information only under Legitimate Educational Interest situations as defined by FERPA.

4. A student's class schedule is confidential and cannot be released to a third party, including spouses and parents, without the student's written authorization. In such situations, refer the party to the UC Police Department at 1 Sproul Hall or 642-6760. The UCPD and the Office of the Registrar will determine whether the disclosure of student information is appropriate under FERPA's health and safety exemption (where there is imminent danger to the student or others or when the information is necessary to protect their health and safety).



Now that you are familiar with what can and cannot be disclosed to third parties, what can you disclose to students themselves? You can disclose almost every part of their own student records, including, but not limited to: transcripts, grades, exam papers, test scores, evaluations, financial aid records, and loan collection records. However, students are not allowed access to:

- Financial statements of parents/guardians (unless the parent or guardian has given written authorization).
- Confidential statements and letters of recommendation to which the student has waived access rights, such as letters of recommendation for a grant.
- Records containing information about another student, such as a course roster.
- Personal records relating to individual students (separate from their academic records) that are kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record and not accessible or revealed to any other individual.

The full text of the campus policy can be found at the following two UCB web sites:

<http://registrar.berkeley.edu/GeneralInfo/ferpa.html>

or

<http://uga.berkeley.edu/uga/disclosure.stm>

University-wide policies can be found at the UC systemwide web site at:

<http://www.ucop.edu/ucophome/uwnews/aospol/toc130.html>

For your convenience, we have enclosed a student information release matrix for your quick reference. Please bear in mind that each department is responsible for the confidentiality of the student information that it maintains.

If you have further questions regarding the disclosure of information from student records, please call the Office of the Registrar at (510) 642-2261.