

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law enacted in 1974 that affords students certain rights concerning their student educational records. It is also known as the “Buckley Amendment.” The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. The Office of the Registrar serves as the official custodian of FERPA guidelines. All questions or concerns regarding FERPA issues should be routed to this office.

EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

All records containing information directly related to a student and maintained by an educational institution or by a party acting for the institution are considered educational records. This term has a very broad scope. Any information which makes a student personally identifiable, such as an ID number or home address, is considered part of an educational record.

Examples of education records include but are not limited to academic records (admission application, transcript, grades, papers, tests, etc.); student course schedules; test scores; financial aid records; advising records and disciplinary actions.

Although this law ensures student information is protected, institutions identify some student information as “public” or “directory information.” Directory information may be disclosed without student approval unless the student has specifically prohibited release of that information.

PUBLIC OR DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The University of Central Oklahoma designates the following student information as public or directory information:

- Student’s name, local and mailing address, e-mail address, home phone number(s), classification (freshman, sophomore, etc.), dates of attendance at UCO (first/last day of term), enrollment status (full-time or part-time) major field of study/degree program, educational institutions previously attended, degrees and awards granted, educational background degree(s) held and date(s) granted, and institutions granting such degree(s).
- Date and place of birth, participation in officially recognized organizations, activities and sports, weight and height of participants in officially recognized sports.

This information may be disclosed by the institution for any purpose, at its discretion.

Students may withhold disclosure of all categories of directory information under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. Forms requesting the withholding of “Directory Information” are available in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions/Enrollment Services, Room 124 of the Nigh University Center.



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The University of Central Oklahoma assumes approval for disclosure unless a student specifically requests the withholding of "Directory Information." It is the policy of the University to release personally identifiable information from the educational records of a student, without written consent, to University and/or school officials (faculty, staff and agents of the University having responsibility for working with that student in admissions, registration, advisement, counseling, teaching, financial aid, payment of fees or any other activity directly related to the student's academic program, or pursuant to law or governmental regulation). School officials may also include University of Central Oklahoma employees or volunteers located offsite at select other educational institutions who provide academic advising to prospective, current, and former UCO students.

FERPA also allows schools to disclose records without written consent to the following parties or under the following conditions: other schools to which a student is transferring or is currently enrolled as long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer; lending institutions of which the student has applied for financial aid; specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; accrediting organizations; to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and state and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific state law.

Under FERPA, students wishing to withhold disclosure of directory information will have all categories of information withheld and cannot decide which category is or is not disclosed. Students may use the UCO Proxy Access tool in their uconnect account to allow parents, spouses, employers, etc. access to information on their educational record such as grades, registration, financial account, financial aid, and more. For more information on how to set up this access, visit www.uco.edu/em/registrar/proxy.

Attempts by other individuals or organizations to access student records without the written consent of the student are considered a violation of University policy and federal law. Examples of violations include, but are not limited to: 1) illegally accessing information from student, faculty, or University computers; 2) misrepresenting themselves to obtain another student's transcript, semester grades, or class registration; 3) using a student's ID number without his/her permission to gain access to University services.



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NOTICE

In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, eligible students are entitled to access official educational records directly related to their collegiate experience, including the right of inspection and review. For records kept in Enrollment Services, requests for access should be directed to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions/Enrollment Services in accordance with University regulations. (Parents of a dependent student as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 may be allowed to access official educational records of their dependent student at the discretion of the institution). Students may authorize third party access to their student educational records through the form "Student Permission for Parental, Guardian or Third Party Access to Student Records" in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions.

ACCESS RIGHTS

The right of access shall include:

- A. The right to be provided a list of the types of educational records maintained by the institution that are directly related to students;
- B. The right to inspect and review the content of those records;
- C. The right to obtain copies of those records (except transcripts on hold by the University for financial indebtedness), which may be at the expense of the eligible student or parent. Parents of a dependent student as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 may have access to official educational records of that student at the discretion of the institution;
- D. The right to a response from the institution to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of those records;
- E. The right to an opportunity for a hearing to challenge the content of those records (see Hearing Procedures section on next page for more information); and
- F. The right to inspect and review or to be informed of specific information about themselves which is contained in any material or document on more than one student.



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HEARING PROCEDURES

- A. The hearing shall be conducted and decided within a reasonable period of time following the request for the hearing;
- B. The hearing shall be conducted, and the decision rendered by an institutional official or other party who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing;
- C. The eligible parents or student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised under subpart C, section 99.20 of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974;
- D. The decision shall be rendered in writing within a reasonable period of time after the conclusion of the hearing.

LIABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY NOTICE

Whether enrolled in an on-campus class or in a UCO internship, practicum, course, or activity involving domestic or foreign travel, students are responsible for their own medical treatment and are liable for their own actions. In the event of injury or illness while participating in a UCO sponsored activity, UCO cannot approve a claim for treatment or reimbursement. Information on one insurance policy for students is available in the Office of International Services. Also, a number of reasonably priced insurance policies are available from the private business sector. Each student is strongly encouraged to invest in the appropriate coverage.

