

FERPA Reference Sheet for Faculty

FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as Amended, protects the privacy of student education records. It gives students the right to review their educational records, the right to request amendment to records they believe to be inaccurate, and the right to limit disclosure from those records. **An institution's failure to comply with FERPA could result in the withdrawal of federal funds by the Department of Education.**



As a Faculty Member, you need to know the difference between:

Directory Information and **Personally Identifiable Information** or **Education Records**:

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

(May be disclosed, unless the student requests otherwise. *Please refer such requests to the Records Office.*)

- Name
- Current Mailing Address
- Phone
- Email Address
- Date of Birth
- Major
- Dates of Attendance
- Enrollment Status (Full/ Part-time)
- Degrees/Honors/Awards Received
- Participation in Officially Recognized Activities and Sports
- Athletes' Weight/Height

PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION (any data other than "Directory Information")

Including, but not limited to:

- Social Security Number
- Residency Status
- Gender
- Religious Preference
- Race/Ethnicity

EDUCATION RECORDS

Including, but not limited to:

- Student's Class Schedule
- Grades/GPA
- Test Scores
- Academic Standing
- Academic Transcripts

Personally Identifiable Information or Education Records **may not** be released to **anyone** but the student and only then with the proper identification. *Parents and spouses must present the student's written and signed consent **before** the University may release to them personally identifiable information or education records.*

General Practices to Keep in Mind in order to avoid violations of FERPA:

- Please do not leave exams, papers, or any documents containing a student's social security number, grade or grade point average in any area that is open-access.
- Please do not record attendance by passing around a class roster which contains the student's Social Security Number.
- Please do not provide grades or other Personally Identifiable Information/Education Records to your students via telephone or email.
- Please do not discuss the progress of any student with anyone (including parents) other than the student unless you have written consent from the student.
- Do not provide anyone with student schedule information or assist anyone other than UNM Employees in finding a student on campus or in your classroom. Refer requestor to Student Services Administration.

EMAIL:

Correspond only to the student's official @unm.edu e-mail address when discussing or revealing any personally identifiable information or information pertaining to education records.

POSTING GRADES:

According to FERPA, student grades must not be released or made available to third parties. UNM policy, therefore, restricts instructors from sharing grades in classrooms.

How to Post Grades:

- Please refrain from posting grades by Name, Social Security Number, UNM ID Number
 - Post grade lists using either per-student unique code words or randomly generated numbers known and available **only** to you and the student.
 - Arrange the grade list so students do not fall in alphabetic order.
- **The best practice is to release this information individually.

RECORDS ACCESS BY UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS:

“School Officials” at UNM are defined as those members of the institution who act in the student's educational interest within the limitation of their “need to know.” As a faculty member, you may be allowed access to a student's educational records **if** you can establish *legitimate educational interest* for the request, meaning that you need the information to fulfill a specific professional responsibility.

Employees at UNM who are parents, spouses, partners, friends or relatives of any kind, of a UNM student do not have access to information on these students beyond directory information. If you are feeling pressure to comply with a request for information beyond that which can be given out, refer the requestor to UNM-LA Student Services Administration.

AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER:

Return to the student or destroy any materials that might include Personally Identifiable Information or Educational Record Information.

HEALTH, SAFETY, EMERGENCY:

FERPA permits disclosure of information in a health and safety emergency to other school officials and/or emergency personnel (police, EMS, etc.). If someone needs to reach a student because of an emergency, all such inquirers should be directed to UNM-LA Student Services Administration.

FURTHER FERPA INFORMATION:

UNM Registrar's Office

<http://registrar.unm.edu/privacy-rights/ferpa.html>

United States Department of Education

www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html

FOR QUESTIONS:

Contact:

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