

What documents does a student not have a right to see?

- Financial data submitted by parents
- Confidential letters and recommendations placed in student's file before 1/1/75
- Confidential letters, etc., associated with admissions, employment, job placement or honors to which a student has waived rights of inspection and review
- Educational records containing data about other students such as
 - Grades
 - Test scores, etc.

What is personally identifiable information?

Includes, but is not limited to:

- Student name
- Name of student's parent or other family member
- Address of the student or the student's family
- A personal identifier (PUID, SID, SSN)
- Biometric record
- Other indirect indicators (birth date, place of birth, mother's maiden name)
- Other data alone or in combination that would make the student's identity easily traceable

What happens if non-compliance occurs?

The student has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education in Washington, D.C. This complaint may result in the loss of federal funding for financial aid and educational grants for Purdue University and the filing of civil litigation. Action to terminate funding is generally taken only if compliance cannot be secured.

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Public Posting of Grades

The public posting of grades, either by the student's name, institutional student identification number, or social security number is a violation of FERPA. Using an assigned random number that only the student and instructor know would be an appropriate way to post grades. Even then, the order of posting should not be alphabetic.

Protect Stored Student Data

You are responsible for making sure that student data in your possession is secured. Avoid having sensitive student data stored locally on your computer or in paper form: "You can't lose what you don't have".

If you must have student data in your possession, take measures to protect against unauthorized access to data stored on a personal computer, a disk, a network or any other storage media.

These measures can help you protect student data from unauthorized access:

- Use password protection on computer files
- Keep memory storage devices and media in a secure, locked location
- Restrict access to your computer
- Never leave student data displayed on your computer screen
- When you have finished a computer task involving student data, exit all files, sign off all applications, and close all application windows
- Shred printed material that contains sensitive or restricted data

~ A BREACH OF SECURITY IS BREAKING THE LAW ~

Registrar Office
Roger Williams University
<http://www.rwu.edu/about/university-offices/registrar>

Revised 5/15/15

Roger Williams University

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

A quick-reference guide to understanding and
applying FERPA

What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment, is designed to protect the privacy of students' education records and personally identifiable information. This federal law spells out the rights of students and the responsibilities of educational institutions.

Access to sensitive data about students is a professional privilege that we all need to complete our daily job duties, but we must remember that the privilege carries with it a legal and ethical responsibility. We must understand and agree to comply with the law's provisions about confidentiality and student data.

RWU is personally responsible for the security and the confidentiality of these records.

It doesn't matter how the data is communicated, whether we::

- Speak it over the phone
- Leave a report lying on a desk
- Leave a gradebook open where students can view it
- Walk away from a computer that displays student records

Restricted records cannot be released without the written permission of the student. This permission must be signed and dated, specify the records to be disclosed, state the purpose of the disclosure, and identify the party or parties to whom the disclosure may be made.

When is the student's consent not required to disclose information?

The exceptions to:

- School officials with a legitimate educational interest
- Officials of another school in which the student seeks to enroll
- Certain federal, state, and local authorities in connection with an audit or evaluation of state or federally supported educational programs

- Agents acting on behalf of RWU (clearinghouses, degree/enrollment verifiers)
- Organizations conducting studies on behalf of RWU
- Accrediting organizations
- Parents if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes
- Parents/legal guardians when their children under age 21 have violated the alcohol or drug policies of RWU

- Comply with a judicial order or subpoena
- Appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency
- Results of disciplinary hearings to an alleged victim of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense
- Immigration and Naturalization Service for purposes of the Student Exchange Visitor Information System
- Military recruiters who request "Student Recruiting Information." Student recruiting information is defined as name, address, telephone listing, age, level of education, and major.
- Internal Revenue Service in compliance with the Taxpayer Relief Act
- Department of Veterans Affairs

FERPA allows four principal rights to students relating to their education records:

The right to:

- Inspect and review their education records, maintained by the school;
- Request an amendment to the education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading;

What is directory information?

Institutions may disclose the following data on a student without violating FERPA if the student has not restricted their data.

- name
- grades on peer-graded papers that have not been collected and recorded.
- e-mail address
- address (local & home)
- telephone number (local & home)
- college/school and curriculum
- enrollment status and credit hour load
- dates of attendance
- classification
- Receipt or non-receipt of a degree academic awards received (dean's list, honors students)
- Participation in officially recognized activities sports photograph
- Position, weight, and height of athletes

What is a restricted directory and what does it mean?

Students have the right to restrict disclosure of personally identifiable information the University has designated as directory information that may be released without the written consent of the student.

What is a school official

A school official is a person:

- Employed by RWU in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position
- Elected to the Board of Trustees
- Employed by or under contract to RWU to perform a special task, such as an attorney or auditor

What is "legitimate educational interest?"

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:

- Performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or by a contract agreement
- Performing a task related to a student's education
- Performing a task related to the discipline of a student
- Providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as advising, job placement, financial aid, or housing assistance

What aren't education records?

- Sole possession records or private notes held by school officials that are not accessible or released to other personnel,
- Law enforcement or campus security records that are solely for law enforcement purposes and maintained solely by the law enforcement unit,
- Records relating solely to an individual's employment by the institution that are not available for any other purpose,
- Records relating to treatment provided by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or other recognized professional providing treatment, closed only to individuals providing treatment,
- Records of an institution that contain only data about an individual obtained after that person is no longer a student, i.e., alumni records,