

## Appendix B - FERPA

A student's educational record is protected by FERPA, the FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT. With the exception of "directory information" student records are not to be released to a third party (including parent or spouse) without the express written permission of the student. Failure to comply with FERPA could result in the loss of all federal financial aid funds. Two types of records exist:

### **Directory Information**

Student's name

Maiden name

Address

Telephone number

Date and place of birth

Major field of study

Courses Taken

Participation in officially recognized activities and sports

Weight and height of members of athletic teams

Dates of attendance

Degrees and awards received

All previous educational agencies or institutions attended

Current class schedule

Employer

Church membership

Photographs

Parents' names

Parents' addresses and telephone numbers

### **Educational Records**

All other information about a student not specified in the list above contained in a paper folder or in computer data file may not be released to a third party without the permission of the student.

### **Assuring we Comply with FERPA**

Never give out grades over the telephone. Even if you think you recognize the voice of a familiar student, you must tell the individual this is against federal regulations.

Never give out ANY negative information about a student. (Example: "her degree is not posted because she has not completed all requirements.")

Never release information about a student's finances to a third party. Questions regarding financial information should be forwarded to the appropriate Financial Services office.

You may release basic directory information at your discretion, however, when in doubt always err on the side of maintaining a student's privacy. Establish that the

“requestor” has a legitimate business or professional reason for receiving the information.

Refer requests for enrollment or degree verification to the appropriate Registrar’s office.

Refer students who wish a copy of their grades to the appropriate Registrar’s office.

Leaving graded student papers where others can have access (e.g. a box in the hall) or posting student grades with their names, social security numbers, APU ID#s, or a random instructor-assigned numbers is a violation of FERPA.

Every student has the right to ask that ALL information about them, including directory information, be released only with their express written permission. When you encounter the message, “DO NOT RELEASE INFO: FEDERAL PRIVACY CODE, APU STAFF ONLY” in APU Look, it means that the student invoked this right. Each request to receive information must be accompanied by written permission from the student. If we receive an inquiry about a student with this hold, the university is not even permitted to confirm or deny that the individual is a student.

Incorrect response: “I cannot release information about that student.”

Correct response: “I cannot release any information without the permission of the individual.”

To view the student’s record for internal use only, press “Y” at the prompt when the above message appears.

Particular care should be taken with ALL documents generated from our student information system, IFAS. All documents should be disposed of appropriately.

**FERPA** policies, by law must be published in the official catalog. We also publish **FERPA** information in the policies section of the class schedule. For more information about other rights and requirements of **FERPA**, please contact your Registrar’s office.

### **A Word about Student Workers**

All student workers are required to sign the following when they are hired:

"As a student employee I understand that as part of my campus employment, I may have access to or become aware of confidential information that relates to students and their parents/guardians or members of the University community. As a condition of my student employment, a violation of which will be grounds for termination, I agree to keep in confidence any information that I may become aware of as a result of my student employment that should be kept in confidence. In any case where I am not sure whether the information is confidential, I will check with my supervisor before divulging the information to anyone."

It is, of course, important if you supervise students to stress the importance of confidentiality. As a supervisor you may decide to keep that procedure (accessing those with security hold) for staff members only.

**If you have any questions not covered in this document, please contact the appropriate Registrar’s office**

