

# FERPA for Students

*What Every MSU Student Should Know*

*Prepared by the Office of the Registrar*



# *What is FERPA?*

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights concerning their student educational records.
- The law governs access to and confidentiality of, student records.



## *Student Records and FERPA*

- MSU complies fully with the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. (FERPA)

As a means of complying with this act, the University has developed detailed guidelines titled Michigan State University Access to Student Information, available at:

[www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.asp](http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.asp)



# *Student Rights Relating to Educational Records*

As a student, you have the right to expect that information in your educational records will be kept confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as allowed by law.

- For example:
  - Grades
  - Enrollment records
  - Schedules
  - Class Lists
  - Ethnicity
  - SSN (social security number)



## *Student Rights Relating to Educational Records (continued)*

- When you reach the age of 18 or begin attending a post-secondary institution regardless of age, FERPA rights transfer to you--the student. This limits the student educational record information that may be released to third parties without your written permission unless it is identified as “directory information.”



## *Student Rights Relating to Educational Records (continued)*

- You have the right to inspect and review your educational records; seek amendment of the records you believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of your privacy rights; consent to disclosures of confidential information except to the extent that the law permits disclosure without your consent; and file a complaint concerning alleged failures of the University to comply with the law.



# *Directory Information*

FERPA identifies a category of information as “directory information,” which institutions may release without student permission. MSU has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student’s name;
- Student’s local address;
- Student’s local phone number;
- MSU NetID e-mail address;
- Student’s permanent address;



## *Directory Information* (continued)

- Student's permanent telephone number;
- Current enrollment status or dates of attendance;
- Program level (undergraduate, graduate, professional);
- Class (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, etc.);
- Major field of study;
- Current term candidacy for degree and/or teacher certification;
- Employment status as a graduate teaching or research assistant, office address and office phone number





## *Directory Information (continued)*

- Information pertaining to awards and honors achievements;
- Degree(s) earned from Michigan State University and effective date(s);
- Participation in officially recognized University activities and sports, including weight and height of athletic team members;
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended;
- The registration documents of student organizations.



## *Directory Information* (continued)

- If you wish to restrict release of any or all “directory information,” complete a Directory Information Restriction Request:

[www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/DirRestrict/DirRestrict.asp](http://www.reg.msu.edu/StuForms/DirRestrict/DirRestrict.asp)



## *Disclosures Without Consent*

FERPA permits the release of some information without student permission. For example:

- To school officials with legitimate educational interests – must have a need-to-know
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena (after appropriate notice to the student)
- To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency, such as parents, Department of Police and Public Safety (DPPS), Olin Health Center
- To officials of another school, in which a student seeks or intends to enroll or is already enrolled (MSU's practice is to release transcripts based on student request.)



## *Disclosures Without Consent (continued)*

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for aid, the amount of the aid, the conditions for the aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid
- To certain government officials in connection with state or federally supported education programs
- To accrediting organizations
- To attorneys representing MSU
- To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the University (with certain conditions)



## Important Note:

This presentation is intended to raise awareness and give general information about FERPA and to acquaint you with some of the privacy issues surrounding students' educational records. It is not intended as nor is it a substitute for legal advice on any particular issue.



For additional information on FERPA and MSU's privacy guidelines, visit the Office of the Registrar's website at:

[www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.asp](http://www.reg.msu.edu/ROInfo/Notices/PrivacyGuidelines.asp)

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