

FERPA FAQs

1. What is FERPA?
FERPA stands for *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974*. It is the legislation that governs student records privacy, including the release of and access to education records. Any school that receives federal monies must abide by FERPA.
2. What are education records?
All records that directly relate to a student that are maintained by the institution in any media form.
3. What is protected information?
Any information not specifically identified by the university as directory information.
4. What is directory information?
Information that **may** be released without the student's written consent, **unless** the student has requested a confidentiality block. At Regent, directory information includes: name, address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, photograph and participation in officially recognized activities. Only the Registrar's Office should disseminate this information.
5. How can I avoid violating FERPA when communicating with a student?
First, determine whether you will be discussing protected information. General questions, for example, "When will final grades be turned in?" or "How can I find out how much I owe?" don't require identity verification. However, if you'll be discussing anything *directly related to the student* you need to make sure it's actually the student who's calling. Do you recognize the caller's voice because you've talked with him so many times, or perhaps you have her in class? If so, you're all set – you're reasonably sure you're speaking with the student. No further authentication is necessary.

If the student can provide his/her student ID #, you can authenticate identity by checking one additional piece of identifying information, such as address, date of birth, etc. Never ask for a social security number! Absent the student ID#, you'll need to go further. Verify name, address, date of birth, and 2 courses recently (or currently) taken, including course title and instructor. On campus staff can find address & date of birth in Banner on SPAIDEN, and course information can be found on SFAREGQ. Faculty using Genisys can verify address, phone number & current schedule under the Student Menu (detailed instructions available separately).

For email communication, it's important to send protected information only to the official regent.edu address. When replying to an email sent from a non-Regent address, send a message letting the student know that further information will be sent to the regent.edu address. Again, the information is readily available either in Banner (GOAEMAL) or in Genisys Faculty Services on the Student Menu.
6. What if it's a parent requesting information about a son or daughter's education record?
No information may be released unless the student has signed a FERPA waiver. Look in SPACMNT for a comment coded "FW" – details of the waiver will be noted there. This information isn't available on Genisys, so faculty should contact the Registrar's Office, X4047 or 4048, for confirmation before releasing protected information to anyone other than the student.
7. How can I learn more about FERPA and how it applies to me?
Take the FERPA tutorial and watch the training video on the Registrar's website (<http://www.regent.edu/admin/registrar/confidentiality.cfm>). And call the Registrar's Office if you have any questions!

"When in doubt, don't give it out."