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# FERPA

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**F**amily **E**ducational **R**ights &  
**P**rivacy **A**ct

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# What is FERPA?

- FERPA is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.
  - The law was designed to protect the privacy of a student's education records.
  - The law applies to all schools which receive funds from the Department of Education (Federal Financial Aid).
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# Who has rights under FERPA?

- Eligible students who have matriculated.
  - Parents of dependent students have the right to access their children's education records.
  - Eligible students and parents have the right to inspect, review and request corrections to educational records.
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# What are Educational Records?

- Educational Records are records maintained by the University which directly relate to a student.
  - This means that almost any student-related piece of paper or computer-student-related information.
  - Exceptions: primarily relate to employment, security, and health records.
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# What can we release ?

- Directory information can be released without written consent of the student. At IIT directory information is defined as:
    - student's name, local and permanent address, telephone and email, dates of attendance at IIT, positions held at IIT, year and academic major field of study, degrees earned and special awards, and photograph
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## When can students request us not to release?

- Students at IIT can request that not even this directory information be released by completing the Directory Information Restriction Form in the Student Services Center MB 104.
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# When can we release non-directory information?

- Permission of students must be obtained before releasing non-directory information.
  - Exceptions:
    - officials or faculty of the University who have legitimate educational interest
    - officials of other schools or school systems in which the students seek to enroll
- (Continued)
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# Release of non-directory information (continued)

- ❑ certain federal and state educational authorities
  - ❑ accrediting and University-approved testing agencies
  - ❑ parents of dependent students (requires signed statement from parent claiming that student is dependent per Internal Revenue Code of 1954);
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# Release of non-directory information (continued)

- ❑ appropriate parties in connection with an emergency when the immediate health or safety of the student is threatened
  - ❑ persons presenting an officially-related judicial order or lawfully-issued subpoena
  - ❑ institutions from which the student has received, or applied to for, financial aid.
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# Release of non-directory information (continued)

- To victim of crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense. The disclosure is only of the final results of the disciplinary proceedings against assailant.
  - To parents of a student who is under 21 and has committed a disciplinary violation relating to the use or possession of alcohol or controlled substance.
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# Student Notification of FERPA

- Students must be notified of FERPA annually.
  - IIT publishes this information in the Student Handbook annually.
  - Students may file a complaint with the FERPA Office in Washington, D.C.
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# SIS+ Security Screen

- In the event that a student does not want even directory information to be released, users of the SIS+ database will see a screen that looks like the one displayed that follows. In the event that a student has requested Directory Information restriction the directive of the student must be followed.

The best response is to say, “I am sorry, that student has requested that we don’t release any information.”

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# SIS+ Directory Information Restriction

## Screen 011

Information Release Restrictions (STUDENT'S NAME)

The information categories marked with a 'Y' are restricted.  
Such information may not be released outside the University.

|                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Y NAME                     | Y DATES OF ATTENDANCE           |
| Y LOCAL ADDRESS            | Y MAJOR                         |
| Y PERMANENT ADDRESS        | Y CLASSIFICATION                |
| Y ADDRESSES FOR MAIL LISTS | Y DEGREES AWARDED               |
| Y TELEPHONE NUMBER         | Y HONORS                        |
| Y SEX                      | Y AWARDS                        |
| Y RACE                     | Y CLASS STANDING                |
| Y NATIONALITY              | Y PREVIOUS INSTITUTION ATTENDED |
| Y DATE OF BIRTH            | Y PHOTOGRAPH                    |
| Y PLACE OF BIRTH           | Y WEIGHT/HEIGHT OF ATHLETE      |
| Y PARENTS' NAME            | Y SPORTS PARTICIPATION          |
| Y PARENTS' ADDRESS         | Y PARKING PERMIT INFORMATION    |
| Y CLASS SCHEDULE           | Y JUDICIAL INFORMATION          |

INFORMATION RELEASE IS RESTRICTED BY STUDENT REQUEST

Press the 'ENTER' key to resume processing\_

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# Common Question

- Question: Can I include non-directory information in a letter of recommendation for a student?



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# Answer

- Answer: ONLY if the student provides written permission for the individual writing the letter of recommendation to release such information.
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# Common Question

- Question: Can student grades be posted by Social Security Number or Name?





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# Answer

- Answer: No. This can ONLY be done if each student provides written permission for the instructor to do so. Even with permission from the student, this is not recommended. A unique number assigned to each student would be a preferred method.
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# A Few Highlights

- Check a student's directory restriction before you answer any questions.
  - Students may release any information by providing a signed release.
  - Information viewed on a computer screen should be treated with the same confidentiality as paper records. Be sure to clear your computer screen when it will be unattended.
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# Hypothetical

- Jay Baker wants to see the transcript of his deceased father. Can he?



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# Hypothetical

- The Athletic Director asks to see the transcript of a sophomore whom he wants to recruit for the volleyball team. Can you give it to him?
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# Hypothetical

- Brian is a senior working part-time in the Admissions Office. His duties permit him access to SIS. He wants to find out what is the GPA of his pal, David. Can he?
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# Hypothetical

- The Campus Judicial Officer has just imposed discipline against a student for drunken and rowdy behavior at the HUB on the student's 21st birthday. Can the Judicial Officer notify the student's parents of this disciplinary action.
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# Hypothetical

- You work in the Registrar's Office and you just received a subpoena for a student's records. He's a murder defendant and is still in custody at the Cook County jail. Do you have to notify him of the subpoena before complying with it?
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# Hypothetical

- Two FBI agents enter the Registrar's Office anxious and out of breath. They're looking for a graduate student who did not register this semester. They insist on receiving the information stated below but do not have a subpoena. What can you give them right now?
    - ❑ Last known local address
    - ❑ E-mail address
    - ❑ Social security number
    - ❑ Photo
    - ❑ On-campus work records
    - ❑ The student's transcript
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# FERPA Summary

- As you can see, educational records are all around us. Each of us needs to do our part to keep this information secure, and protect students' rights.
  - If there is any question in your mind regarding any request for education record information, it is always better to err on the conservative side and call the office that maintains that portion of the education record and ask for guidance.
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# Questions

