

FERPA for Staff
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:
How This Law Affects the Way We Are to Handle Student Records as Employees of
Southern Adventist University

What is FERPA?

FERPA is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, passed by Congress in 1974. It protects the confidentiality of student records against disclosure to third parties and guarantees access to those records by the student.

Maintaining confidentiality of student records is everyone's responsibility, whether you are faculty, staff, administration, or student.

Directory Information:

Directory information, as defined in FERPA, is that information designated by an educational institution as the portion of student records that can be revealed to the public or third parties. Southern Adventist University designates the following items as directory information: student name, address, telephone number, email address; parents' name, address, telephone number; date and place of birth; major and minor fields of study, part-time or full-time status, degrees and awards received, previous schools attended and photograph. Southern Adventist University may disclose any of these items without prior written consent, unless notified in writing to the contrary. Such notification must be received within three school days of the official date of registration in order to ensure that directory information will not be included in university publications. The year of birth to be used for identification purposes only.

Penalties for Violating FERPA Regulations:

The Federal Family Policy Compliance Office reviews and investigates complaints of violations of FERPA. If it finds that there has been a failure to comply with FERPA, it will notify the institution about the corrections that need to be made to bring the institution into compliance. The Federal Family Policy Compliance Office will establish a reasonable period of time for the institution to voluntarily accomplish the specified changes. If it finds that an institution has failed to comply with FERPA and determines that compliance cannot be secured by any means, **FEDERAL FUNDS CAN BE WITHDRAWN FROM THE INSTITUTION.**

Parental Access to Student's Educational Records

When a student reaches the age of 18 or begins attending a postsecondary institution, regardless of age, FERPA rights transfer from the parent to the student. The only way in which parents may obtain protected information on their child is for them to obtain a signed consent from their child.

What is an Educational Record?

Any information, provided by a student to the university, for use in the educational process is considered a student educational record. That includes personal information, enrollment records, grades, schedules, and medical records. Examples include: a document in the student's application file, a computer printout with the student's name in your office, a class list on your desktop, a computer screen with the student's name on it, notes you have taken during an advising session.

Promise to Protect the Security of Records

All individuals who work with student records have a legal obligation to protect the security of student records. If you intend to continue working with student records, you must indicate your willingness to agree to the terms of the agreement below.

I have read the information above and agree to abide by these guidelines: to never reveal to a third party the confidential information contained in student records and to never alter or falsify a record.

Printed Name: _____ Signature: _____