

BUCKLEY AMENDMENT GUIDELINES

Confidentiality:

Regardless of the function you are performing at the University, it is extremely important to have some knowledge of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), commonly called the Buckley Amendment. A detailed description can be found in the Student Handbook and on UNHINFO, and if you have not already done so, you should read the full text as soon as possible. Basically, the law was designed to protect the privacy of a student's educational records, and to ensure the right of a student to inspect and review his/her educational records. Some information about a student is considered to be public. Unless a student files a request with the Registrar to prevent ALL disclosure, the following information is considered "directory information" and may be released to the public:

Directory Information

1. Student's name, address, telephone, and e-mail address
2. Major
3. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
4. Weight and height of athletic team members
5. Dates of attendance
6. Degrees received
7. Most recent previous educational institution attended by student
8. Class
9. Honor rolls

Non-disclosure forms are kept on file in the Registrar's Office, and the information is coded into the BANNER Student Information System. You must check BANNER or check with the Registrar's Office before releasing directory information about a student to anyone other than a University official with a legitimate educational interest.

ALL other information, not only academic but also financial, disciplinary, non-academic, or medical, is confidential and cannot be given or made available to anyone other than an appropriate University official without the student's written permission. Under certain circumstances, information on drug and/or alcohol abuse and disciplinary actions may be released without the student's consent.

It is usually best to refer outside requests for information about a student to the Registrar's Office unless you have a written release from the student in your possession.

Compliance:

Compliance with the Buckley Amendment is obviously a core issue in any office which maintains educational records. Anyone who keeps educational records has an obligation to store them in a manner which will maintain confidentiality, and to ensure that only University officials with a legitimate educational interest have access to those records. "Legitimate educational interest" means that you may only look at educational records in the context of your employment, and only when doing so is necessary to carry out your professional responsibilities. If asked, we must be able to articulate the educational interest which necessitated access to an educational record.

Documents such as class lists, grade rosters, examinations, and papers are all educational records and must not be posted or made available in a manner which would allow one student to see information about another student. It is also important to note that while we work here, we may advertently or inadvertently be exposed to confidential information about students. We must be cautious to keep such information confidential and not let it slip out through an idle comment or conversation. We should remember that being authorized to access confidential information does not authorize us to release it to others.

By following the intent of these guidelines, you will help to protect yourself and the University from possible breaches of the law. If you have any questions about these issues, please feel free to contact Kathryn Forbes, Registrar, Patti Stimpson, Assistant Registrar, the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, or the Office of the Provost.