

What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment of 1974, is a federal law that describes how schools and colleges keep and/or distribute student information and records. Part of the law covers students under 18 and enrolled in public schools; the other part covers students enrolled in colleges and universities. The act was created to safeguard student privacy.

What Rights Does FERPA Provide?

FERPA provides four rights to students:

- The right to inspect or review their education records.
- The right to request the amendment of the record to ensure that they are accurate.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The right to file with the U.S. Department of Education a complaint concerning alleged failures by WVU Parkersburg to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

What is a Student Record?

A student record is any record related to a student and directly maintained by WVU Parkersburg or an agent of the college.

What Information is Made Public?

WVU Parkersburg has classified the following as Directory Information which may be released without prior consent: name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, classification of student level (freshman, sophomore, etc.), enrollment status (full, part-time or not enrolled), degrees and awards received, including Dean's List and President's Scholar List, the listing of previous educational institutions attended, and participation in officially recognized activities.

Can a student prevent the disclosure of Directory Information?

Yes, a student has the right to withhold the disclosure of the Directory Information. The student must sign a "Request to Prevent Disclosure of Directory Information" form (available in the WVU Parkersburg Center for Student Services). WVU Parkersburg will honor the student's request to withhold the information and will not contact them for subsequent permission to release it. The form is valid until revoked by the student, in writing. Regardless of the circumstance or effect, WVU Parkersburg assumes no liability for honoring the student's instructions that such information be withheld.

What Does FERPA Mean to Parents?

FERPA rights belong to WVU Parkersburg students when they enroll as a college student (regardless of age). Because the student controls these rights, WVU Parkersburg will release a student's educational records only with the consent of the student. Some examples of educational records include grade reports, transcripts and judicial reports. This means that, unlike in high school, parents will not have direct access to the above records without the student's consent. Parents who wish to know their student's grades are encouraged to ask the student for that information.

For more information on FERPA at WVU Parkersburg, consult the Notification of Rights under FERPA section of the WVU Parkersburg Catalog. You may also call the Center for Student Services at 304-424-8310.