

FERPA for Faculty

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and MITCHELL policy restrict the disclosure of information from student records.

As a rule of thumb, presume that all student information is confidential, and do not disclose information without a student's consent except to College officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. Consult with the Registrar's Office to understand which information the College can properly disclose.

Avoid inadvertently disclosing information from student records by following these examples.

- Obtain consent from students before sharing any of their personal information, biographical or academic, with other students, faculty, or others.
- In letters of recommendation, faculty, staff, and tutors can discuss their personal observations, but they should not disclose information from student records, such as grades, without the student's consent.
- Do not circulate or post a class roster of student names or one that includes photographs or student ID numbers.
- The cloud computing environment offers many handy and inexpensive applications. However, placing any information about students at a website not under contract with the College may raise FERPA issues. Make the use of these sites optional, or allow students concerned about privacy to provide their information to you in a secure manner.
- Avoid requiring students to post identifiable homework assignments or projects in a publicly accessible online forum (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, and other social media spaces).
- Do not place graded, identifiable student work in the hallway or an unmonitored area for students to pick up.
- Do not post or display grades either publicly or to other students, in print or electronic form, if grades are linked to a student ID number, name, or other identifier.
- If Doodle or a similar system is used to solicit or share calendar or schedule information, create a private poll so student information is not disclosed to other students.

Student Consent

Students who wish to consent to disclosure of information from student records must state in writing which records may be disclosed, identify the party or class of parties to whom the records may be disclosed, indicate the purpose of the disclosure, and sign and date their consent statement.

Faculty Access to Student Information

Students who wish to consent to disclosure of information from student records must state in writing which records may be disclosed, identify the party or class of parties to whom the records may be disclosed, indicate the purpose of the disclosure, and sign and date their consent statement.

Health or Safety Emergency Disclosure

Faculty, staff, and tutors can share information about distressed or disruptive students with College officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. In addition, if a health or safety emergency exists, faculty, staff, and tutors can share information with other people, within and outside the College, to protect the health or safety of the student or others.

Student's Right to Access Information

Students have a right to access most information in the records that the College maintains about them, including e-mail messages between faculty or staff that refer or relate to them. Knowing that a student might read your e-mail message later, keep your e-mail messages focused on facts and try to avoid communicating subjective judgments. Notwithstanding their general right of access, students do not have a right to access records that are kept in the sole possession of the person who created the record, are used only as a personal memory aid, and are not accessible by or revealed to any other person except a temporary substitute for the person who created the record.

Student's Right to Restrict Information

Some students exercise their right under FERPA to restrict the College from disclosing any information about them, not even their name or existence at the College, because serious threats to their personal safety exist or for other reasons. The College must ensure that no information about students who exercise this right is disclosed except to College officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information.

Parental Access to Student Information

Parents of Mitchell students do not have a right to obtain information from student records, including grades and faculty records about a student's performance in class. However, a student may consent to disclosure of information to his/her parents. Students must obtain these consent and submit these forms in the Registrar's office in Mooresville and Statesville.

Employer / Sponsor Access to Student Information

Employers and Sponsors who are financially responsible for a students' tuition do not have a right to obtain information from student records, including grades and faculty records about a student's performance in class. However, a student may consent to disclosure of information to his/her employer/sponsor. Students must obtain these consent and submit these forms in the Registrar's office in Mooresville and Statesville.