

Understanding FERPA

A brief tutorial

What is FERPA?

- From NC State's PRR site: "The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, and its corresponding regulations give students certain rights to privacy of their education records and rights of access to their education records."
- The provisions of this act include:
 - Students' access to, and ability to obtain copies of, most academic records.
 - University may publish directory information *without* student consent **unless** a student chooses to block their information.
 - Student records are private, and may only be disclosed to school officials and other authorized personnel.

What is “directory information”?

- Directory information, as defined on the NC State PRR site, consists of:
 - ▣ a student's name,
 - ▣ preferred email address,
 - ▣ campus and home mailing address(es) on file with the Registrar,
 - ▣ enrollment status (e.g., full-time or part-time),
 - ▣ grade level (freshman, sophomore, etc),
 - ▣ preferred telephone number,
 - ▣ major field of study,
 - ▣ dates of attendance,
 - ▣ and honors, degrees and awards received.

Checking FERPA settings

- You can check a student's privacy settings by clicking on the FERPA icon wherever you see it in SIS: 
- When you click the icon, you'll be able to see what information, in particular, the student has restricted.
- For instance, this example shows a full privacy block. This means that **all** directory information is restricted.

Restriction Categories	
Full Privacy Block	
Restrict	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Full Privacy Block Release to Publication
Preferred Email	
Restrict	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preferred Email
Address	
Restrict	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Campus Housing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Home/Mailing
Preferred Phone	
Restrict	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preferred Phone

What-Ifs and FAQs

Q: What information can I release if a student **does** have a full privacy block?

A: In person – We must verify a student's ID before we can discuss records with a student who has a full privacy block on their account. We cannot release **any** information about a student to third parties without express, written consent .

Via phone or email – We cannot release **any** information about a student without express, written consent if the student has a full privacy block in place. This applies to everyone, even the student him/herself.

Q: What information can I release if a student **does not** have a privacy block?

A: You **may** release directory information, which includes:

- ❑ a student's name,
- ❑ enrollment status (e.g., full-time or part-time),
- ❑ grade level (freshman, sophomore, etc),
- ❑ major field of study,
- ❑ dates of attendance,
- ❑ and honors, degrees and awards received.

Note: You **may not** release information about GPA or grades even if the student does not have a privacy block.



Q: I'm a faculty member, and I want to distribute student contact information among my class. How does FERPA impact my ability to do this?



A: It's best to ask your students to share this information with each other, if they choose to. Some may have elected to restrict their address, email, and phone number.

Q: What can I tell parents who call asking about their child's records?


A: Even if a student does **not** have a full privacy block, they must complete the web-based consent form available via MyPack Portal before administrators can discuss student records with parents or guardians.

You can see if a student has granted access, and to whom, in SIS:
Main Menu > Admin Services > Services > Parent/Guardian Access.

EmpID 123456789 Wendy Wolfpack

Parent/Guardian Account Information		Find View All
Operator ID	APARENT	
First Name	Joe	
Middle Name	A	
Last Name	Parent	
Email Address		
Relationship	Father	
Parent Status	Confirmed	
Authorized Access		Phone Access
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student Account / Billing / Payment		Pin Number:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tax Information		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic Information		Hint Question:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Directory Information		
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Aid		

So remember...

- ❑ You can see whether a student has a full or partial privacy block by clicking the FERPA icon when you see it in SIS: 
- ❑ Student records are private, and may only be disclosed to school officials and other authorized personnel.
- ❑ If a student **does** have a full block, you cannot release any information about the student without express, written consent.
- ❑ Even if a student **does not** have a privacy block, you may not discuss student records with parents unless the student has granted them access in MyPack Portal.