

# Student's Rights Under FERPA

(PL 93-380 & Right to Know Law: PA PL 390)

## What is FERPA?

FERPA (**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**), also known as the Buckley Amendment, was passed by congress in 1974. **FERPA applies to all educational agencies or institutions, including Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania, that receive funds under any program administered by the Secretary of Education. FERPA protects the privacy of student education records.**

## When does FERPA apply?

For the purposes of complying with FERPA, an applicant to Slippery Rock University becomes a "student" on the first day of the first term/semester in which the student is registered at the University.

## What is Directory Information?

FERPA has identified certain information, called directory information, which may be disclosed without the student's written permission. Slippery Rock University designates the following student information as public or "Directory Information". Such information may be disclosed without a student's previous consent by the institution for any purpose, at its discretion.

- Student Name
- Addresses (*local, permanent, and e-mail*)
- Telephone Number (*local, cell, and permanent*)
- Date and Place of Birth
- Program and Concentration
- Student Activities (*including athletics*)
- Height and Weight (*athletic teams*)
- Dates of Attendance
- Date of Graduation
- Degrees and Awards Received
- Student ID Number used to communicate in electronic systems
- All Educational Institutions Previously Attended
- Academic Awards/Scholarships
- Title of Master Thesis
- Number of Credits Registered (*full/part-time*)
- Pictures of Students
- Class Level
- Anticipated Graduation Date

# FERPA Affords Students Certain Rights with Respect to their Educational Record. They are:

## **1. The Right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.**

- a. Students should submit to the Director of Academic Records & Registration, Dean, Department Chairperson, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The university official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

## **2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading.**

- a. Students may ask the University to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.
- b. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the University will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his/her/their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

## **3. 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.**

- a. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the University has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the council of trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her/their tasks.
- b. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his/her/their professional responsibility.
- c. Upon request, the University may disclose educational records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll

## **4. As of January 3, 2012, the U.S. Department of Education's FERPA regulations expand the circumstances under which your education records and personally identifiable information (PII) contained in such records — including your Social Security Number, grades, or other private information — may be accessed without your consent.**

- a. First, the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or state and local education authorities ("Federal and State Authorities") may allow access to your records and PII without your consent to any third party designated by a Federal or State Authority to evaluate a federal – or state – supported education program. The

evaluation may relate to any program that is "principally engaged in the provision of education," such as early childhood education and job training, as well as any program that is administered by an education agency or institution.

- b. Second, Federal and State Authorities may allow access to your education records and PII without your consent to researchers performing certain types of studies, in certain cases even when we object to or do not request such research. Federal and State Authorities must obtain certain use-restriction and data security promises from the entities that they authorize to receive your PII, but the Authorities need not maintain direct control over such entities. In addition, in connection with Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems, State Authorities may collect, compile, permanently retain, and share without your consent PII from your educational records, and they may track your participation in education and other programs by linking such PII to other personal information about you that they obtain from other Federal or State data sources, including workforce development, unemployment insurance, child welfare, juvenile justice, military service, and migrant student records systems.

## **5. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Slippery Rock University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.**

### **The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:**

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **Who do I contact with questions or concerns?**

For more information, see "Students' Right Under FERPA" or "SRU's Detailed FERPA Guide," both of which are [available on the Academic Records & Registration webpage](#).

Direct general questions to:

**Office of Academic Records & Registration**  
**104 Maltby Avenue, Suite 107 Slippery**  
**Rock, PA 16057**

**(Phone) 724.738.2010**

**(Fax) 724.738.2936**

**(Email) [academic.records@sru.edu](mailto:academic.records@sru.edu)**