

McKendree University – Office of Academic Records

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FERPA Guidelines for Parents, Guardians and Spouses

❖ What is FERPA?

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*, also known as the *Buckley Amendment*, was passed by Congress in 1974 and gives students 3 basic rights:

- The right to **inspect** and **review** education records.
- The right to seek to **amend** education records.
- **The right to have some control over the disclosure of information from education records.**

All educational institutions (elementary, secondary and post-secondary) that receive federal funds must comply with FERPA. This includes McKendree University.

❖ Who is protected under FERPA?

Students who are currently enrolled or formerly enrolled, regardless of their age or parental dependency status, are protected under FERPA. FERPA does not apply to deceased students or persons who have applied but have not attended (attendance begins the first day of New Student Orientation).

❖ What are Education Records?

Education records are all records that:

- Contain information directly related to a student (including grades and other information related to a student's academic standing); and
- Are maintained by McKendree University or an authorized party.

❖ What about Parents, Guardians and Spouses?

Once a student enrolls in a post-secondary educational institution, the rights under FERPA *transfer from the parent to the student regardless of the student's age*. **If anyone other than the student wishes to view and inspect, or even discuss, a McKendree University student's education record (including grades), the following must occur and be documented:**

- The student must provide **written consent** to allow the parent, guardian or spouse to view and inspect their education record. (Students must submit a FERPA Release eform, which can be found on our web page: <http://www.mckendree.edu/offices/academic-records/forms/index.php>).

The above will be maintained in the student's file in the Academic Records Office.

❖ What can I expect if my student signs the release form?

- If a FERPA release form has been submitted, parents or other individuals granted access may:
 - Make a request to discuss the grades of the student after mid-term and final grades have been posted;
 - Make a request to speak to the instructors of the student regarding attendance, class participation, and grades the student has earned in the class;
 - Make a request to have a meeting with the student and the student's academic advisor, instructors, the Registrar or another member of the Academic Records Office, or the Provost.

Please note: The only disclosure requirement that is a “must” under FERPA is to the student. All other disclosures, even with a student’s release form, are a “may.” The decision to engage in dialogue with a parent is up to the discretion of the faculty member or department personnel to whom the request is made.

➤ A FERPA release form does not grant the right to:

- Receive written information about the student’s academic records, such as grade cards or transcripts;
- Speak for the student in regard to academic decisions;
- Enroll or withdraw the student from classes;
- Order a transcript on behalf of the student;
- Have a meeting with University personnel without the knowledge and presence of the student.