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*College of Science Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)  
Policy Reminders*

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## REASON FOR THIS DOCUMENT

This document is a reminder how we should treat student information within the FERPA boundaries. Violations of FERPA can have severe consequences, both for you as a faculty member and for your department, so we should all pay attention.

## POLICY CONTENT

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a U.S. Congressional Act passed in 1974 to afford students particular rights concerning their educational records.

Examples of student records are given on the Registrar's webpages referenced here: <http://registrar.oregonstate.edu/examples-student-education-records> .

A quick over view of FERPA is found here, also on the Registrar's webpages: [http://registrar.oregonstate.edu/sites/registrar.oregonstate.edu/files/ferpa\\_dosl.pdf](http://registrar.oregonstate.edu/sites/registrar.oregonstate.edu/files/ferpa_dosl.pdf) .

Guidelines for release of information are located at this page on the Registrar's site: <http://registrar.oregonstate.edu/guidelines-release-information> .

Here are a few tips from that resource above:

- Keep student ID number, Social Security Number, and student names from being displayed publicly.
- If you leave graded assignments for student pick up, have a system in place to protect students from seeing each other's work (e.g. have an office staff check a student's ID card before giving back the assignment).
- Make sure attendance rosters do not list anything other than students' names and be sure these rosters are kept in a safe, secure place after each class. Keep your class roster private.
- Discuss student progress only with the student or another OSU employee with a legitimate educational interest unless you have written consent from the student.
- Refrain from helping anyone other than an OSU employee in helping find a student on campus.

- Email using only OSU-issued email addresses, as they verify identity and have been vetted by OSU information security.

There is tension between FERPA and the need to return work fast and easy to all students. In general, the more complex the return of graded work, the smaller the amount of graded work that is picked up by students. Nevertheless, FERPA is the guiding law and has to be followed.

Following is some advice based on previous experience. This is not a complete list, and if you have questions that are not covered, always ask.

- Some students have protected all of their information by adding a confidentiality flag to their record. We are required to protect these students. We are not allowed to identify publicly that these students attend OSU. This is why CANVAS is really helpful. For example, all class material that relates to students, like lists of assigned projects, should be behind CANVAS.
- When you discard class material that would allow to connect a student name and a course, shred it. Shredding can be done by using the confidential recycling bins. Recycle general handouts that were given to all students and are unmarked, only.
- Good practice for exams is to organize the material in such a manner that after all grading is done and recorded, and scantrons and so on are removed, the cover sheet shows the name of the student only and no other course information.
- Never leave students' work, graded or not, unattended in a public space.
- When grading in a public place, try to ensure that student information is not readily visible by others.
- If you store student grades on your computer, be sure to lock your computer when not in use.
- Do not send a photo roster to the whole class so students can identify each other.
- Do not talk in class about the performance of an individual by name or in a manner that would make the student recognizable, unless the student has given permission.
- If you use a list of student names to collect signatures after exams, do not put any other information on that list, even in the header (things like course identifier.)
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As always, it is better to be safe than sorry. If you are not sure what is correct, please ask!

## POLICY HISTORY

Revision Date	Description
01.16.2019	Initial version by Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs Henri Jensen
08.20.2019	Initial posting to CoS Policy and Processes website