Top 10 List of Most Important FERPA items

10. The Essence of FERPA:
   - Federal law is designed to protect the privacy of education records. It also provides
guidelines for appropriately using and releasing student education records.
   - Consider the student as the “owner” of the information in his or her education record, and the
institution as the “custodian” of that record.

9. Education Record
   - Most records from which a student can be personally identified and which is maintained by
the institution regardless of its form.
   - Handwritten, print, database, email, files, graded materials, class lists, individual student
class schedules, financial aid records, etc.
   - College students must be permitted to inspect their own educational records.

8. Directory Information
   - Directory information is information contained in an educational record of a student that
generally would not be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.
   - NOT Directory Information:
     - Directory Information can NEVER include a student’s race
     - Gender
     - Social Security Number
     - Grades
     - GPA
     - Country of Citizenship
     - Religion
     - Scenario: If we were to be asked by the hospital for a list of the top 25% of all of our
graduating students, we could not comply because the list would infer the GPA of the
students.

7. Inspect and Review
   - Students have the right to see everything in their “education record,” except:
     - Information about other students;
     - Financial records of parents;
     - Confidential letters of recommendation, if they waived their right of access
   - Please consult with your Associate Dean or Registrar concerning the College’s Records
Retention Policy before destroying records.
   - School officials may inspect student records as long as their intent is academically or
administratively related or they have a legitimate education interest.
     - Only access what you need to know to do your job
     - Curiosity≠ Legitimate need to know
6. Posting Grades
   • It is inappropriate to post grades in a public setting.
   • Grades should NEVER be posted by any portion of the SSN or student ID number.
   • It is inappropriate to have graded papers accessible in a public area.

5. Letter of Recommendation
   • You must obtain the student’s written permission before including the student’s grades and/or GPA prior to writing a letter of recommendation.
   • Written permission must specifically state that the student give you permission to include their grades, GPA, etc in their letter of recommendation along with their signature.

4. Student in Crisis
   • The health or safety emergency exception allows the release of private student data to any party determined to be able to assist the student
   • Must document in the student’s record what was released, to whom, and for what reason
   • Consult with your supervisor before determining the release of information

3. Parents/Spouses
   • Parents/Spouses are considered a “third-party,” and do not have a right to student information
   • You can talk about general public information, but not specifics concerning a particular student

2. Safety
   • For the safety of our students, you cannot offer any information concerning the whereabouts of a student to anyone over the phone or in person.

1. Do Your Part
   • Do not leave student information on your screen… “Minimize it!”
   • Do not leave student information on your desk in plain view… “Flip it, and hide it!”
   • “When in doubt, don’t give it out!”

For questions, please contact either:

Heather Hoppe, Registrar at heather.hoppe@mercycollege.edu or 419-251-8989, or

Family Policy Compliance Office at ferpa@ed.gov or www.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpc/