**Parent Questions:**

1. Why can’t I get my son/daughter’s grades/schedule? I’m paying the bills!
2. What if my son or daughter is still a minor?
3. What rights do I have under FERPA?
4. How can I learn how my student is doing?

**Student/Staff Questions:**

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5. How can a student request non-disclosure of directory information?
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11. How may parents gain access to their child's records?
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14. Does FERPA apply to students who are deceased?
15. Can student workers have access to student records?
16. Can student clubs and student organizations have access to student records?
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21. If a school official receives a report containing personally identifiable student information, is he/she free to share the information with others?
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**Faculty Questions:**

1. Can parents receive grades and progress reports?
2. Can faculty publicly post class grades?
3. Are there restrictions on returning student assignments and examinations?
4. Are instructors permitted to email final grades to students?
5. Are there restrictions on writing letters of recommendation?
6. Does an instructor have the right to access student records?
7. Are course outlines, class syllabi considered to be education records?
8. Are grades on peer-graded papers considered part of an education record?
9. Does FERPA give students the right to be anonymous in the classroom?
10. Is it permissible to announce the names of students who scored 100% or otherwise excelled on an assignment?

**Parent Answers:**

1. Why can't I get my son/daughter's grades/schedule? I'm paying the bills! FERPA does not permit Anderson University to release non-directory information without the signed consent of your child.

2. What if my son or daughter is still a minor? When a student reaches the age of 18 or begins attending a post-secondary institution regardless of age, FERPA rights transfer to the student.

3. What rights do I have under FERPA? FERPA covers the rights of the student to privacy.
4. **How can I learn how my student is doing?**
   The best approach is to ask your son or daughter directly. Communicating with young adults isn't easy. They're not always as forthcoming as we would like. The college years, however, are a period of remarkable growth and maturation. The ability and willingness of students to share information and insights usually grows, especially as they acquire the confidence that comes with assuming greater responsibility for their own lives.

**Student/Staff Answers:**

1. **What is FERPA?**
   FERPA is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which gives students the right to: 1) inspect and review their records; 2) seek to amend inaccurate records; 3) have some control over disclosures from their education records; and 4) file a complaint if their FERPA rights have been violated.

2. **What information is protected by FERPA?**
   FERPA protects personally identifiable information in student education records. Education records may take various forms, including but not limited to printed documents, handwriting, email, video/audio tape, or microfilm.

3. **What information can be released without written consent?**
   Directory information can be released without written consent unless the student has submitted a request to restrict the release of such information with the appropriate department on campus. Non-directory information includes all education records and cannot be disclosed without written consent except where specifically permitted under FERPA (e.g. to school officials with a legitimate educational interest).

4. **May student information be released in response to telephone inquiries?**
   Telephone inquiries should be referred to the campus Student Development Office, which will make the determination whether or not student information can be released.

5. **How can a student request non-disclosure of directory information?**
   Students may request to block release of directory information in several ways. They may submit a signed and dated written request to the Student Development Office. The
block will remain in place until the student submits a signed and dated request to have it lifted.

6. **Are there negative consequences to placing a block on release of directory information?**
   If a student has placed a block on release of directory information, the institution will not be able to confirm any information from the student's academic record, including degrees earned to prospective employers, except upon receipt of a signed release from the student.

7. **Does FERPA specify how long education records must be maintained?**
   No, FERPA does not stipulate how long education records must be maintained. However, it does mandate that education records may not be destroyed while there is a pending request from a student to inspect/review or amend the records.

8. **Is the institution obligated to release directory information if the student has not requested non-disclosure?**
   No, the institution may release directory information at its discretion as long as the student has not requested non-disclosure, however the institution is not required to release the information.

9. **Does a student have the right to review all records maintained by the institution about him or her?**
   No. While FERPA gives students the right to inspect and review their education records, the statute allows for specific exceptions to the definition of an education record: sole possession records, law enforcement records, employment records, medical records, and alumni records.

10. **Do parents have the right to access their child’s education record? What if they “pay the bills”?**
    At the university level, FERPA rights transfer from parents to students, so the parents no longer have any inherent rights to access or inspect their children's education records, even if they pay the bills. However, FERPA does state that although it is not required, institutions are permitted to allow parents access to the records if they can prove the child is a dependent as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code. If the student is not a dependent, records may be released to parents only if they have been given a written release by the student or in compliance with a subpoena.
11. **How may parents gain access to their child's records?**  
Students may grant their parents (or others) permission to access their educational records by filling out a FERPA Waiver with Student Development.

12. **Does a student’s spouses have the right to access or inspect the student’s education record?**  
No, a spouse has no right to access student records under FERPA without written consent from the student.

13. **Is it ok to speak to a student about his/her education record in the presence of a third party?**  
No, if the student brings a third party (friend, spouse, parent) to a meeting to discuss information in the student’s record, the third party should be excluded from the meeting. If the student insists that the third party be present, the student must execute a written consent to allow full disclosure to the third party.

14. **Does FERPA apply to students who are deceased?**  
The privacy rights of an individual do not survive that individual’s death. Records held by an institution for a deceased person is not a FERPA issue but a matter of institutional policy. Anderson University will exercise its own discretion in deciding whether, and under what conditions, information should be disclosed to survivors or third parties.

15. **Can student workers have access to student records?**  
FERPA does not preclude an institution from identifying students as "school officials" with a "legitimate educational interest" for specific purposes. The same requirements and responsibilities for a full time school official exist for student workers. The student workers should be trained on FERPA just as if they were faculty or staff.

16. **Can student clubs and student organizations have access to student records?**  
Many student organizations maintain scholarship committees, academic excellence awards and related types of activities that are based upon personally identifiable information. However, the students in charge of these activities are not "university
officials" and may not have access to student record information unless the student has provided written authorization.

17. **Do students with a financial hold have the right to receive transcripts under FERPA?**
   Students have the right to inspect the contents of their education record, regardless of their financial status with the institution. However, an institution is **not** required to release transcripts if the student has a past due account.

18. **Does FERPA apply to admissions records?**
    FERPA only applies to the education records of students who are or have been in attendance at the institution. Attendance includes not just physical presence in a classroom, but also participation via correspondence, telecommunication, internet, etc. If a student applies for admission but is not accepted, or is accepted but chooses not to attend, their admission records need not be maintained and are **not** subject to the FERPA requirements.

19. **Are students ever permitted to access other students’ records?**
    Yes, if the student is designated a school official and has a legitimate educational interest. Two typical situations where this applies is when the student is employed by the institution to assist another employee who is a school official, or when they are serving on an official disciplinary or grievance committee. However, they are only permitted to access those records pertinent to their assigned responsibility.

20. **Does FERPA give students the right to make copies of the contents of their education record?**
    No, FERPA gives students the right to inspect their records, but does not require institutions to allow students to make copies of the contents of their education record unless doing so would effectively prevent them from inspecting their records (for example, when geographic distance prevents a student or alumnus from inspecting the records in person).

21. **If a school official receives a report containing personally identifiable student information, is he/she free to share the information with others?**
    If a school official receives a report containing personally identifiable student information, this information should not be shared with another party, except under
certain conditions (e.g. when the other person is a school official with legitimate educational interest).

22. **Do all education records need to be maintained in one place?**
   No, FERPA does not require education records to be maintained in one place. This would not be practical in that many institutions have a distributed structure in which education records are created and need to be accessed within various units of the institution. However, regardless of where the records are maintained, the appropriate policies and safeguards must be in place to ensure the privacy and integrity of the records.

23. **Can student information be released without consent in crisis situations or emergencies?**
   If release of non-directory information is needed to appropriately respond to a crisis or emergency situation, an education institution may release that information if the institution determines that the information is "necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals." Factors to be considered or questions to be asked in making a decision to release such information in these situations are: (1) the severity of the threat to the health or safety of those involved; (2) the need for the information; (3) the time required to deal with the emergency; (4) the ability of the parties to whom the information is to be given to deal with the emergency.

**Faculty Answers:**

1. **Can parents receive grades and progress reports?**
   Such things as progress in a course, deficiencies in a subject area, scores and grades on papers, exams, etc. are all examples of personally identifiable information that make up part of the student's education record. This information is protected by FERPA. Students may grant their parents (or others) permission to access their educational records by filing a written consent with the Student Development Office.

2. **Can faculty publicly post class grades?**
   The public posting of grades, either by the student's name, institutional student identification number or social security number, without the student's written
Permission, is a violation of FERPA. Even with names obscured, numeric student identifiers can be considered personally identifiable information and therefore violate FERPA. Instructors are permitted to assign students unique numbers or codes that can be used to post grades. However, the codes cannot be derived from information in the student record, and the order of the posting must not be alphabetic. Posting of aggregate data that does not specifically identify any students, such as a grade distribution chart for a class, is permissible.

3. **Are there restrictions on returning student assignments and examinations?**
   Leaving personally identifiable, graded papers or examinations unattended for students to view is no different from posting grades in the hallway. If these papers contain personally identifiable information, then leaving them unattended for anyone to see is a violation of FERPA if the instructor has not obtained the written permission of each student to do so. Possible solutions would be either to leave the graded papers (exams, quizzes, and homework) with an assistant or secretary who would ask students for proper identification prior to distributing them or to leave them in a sealed envelope with only the student's name on it, to be released to the student with proper identification.

4. **Are instructors permitted to email final grades to students?**
   Sending final grades to students' AU email account is not a violation of FERPA, however it is generally not recommended as emails are not the most secure means of communication. Once grades are posted in university's student database system (Power Campus/Self Service), students can view their grades securely online by logging into Self Service after the grade submission deadline.

5. **Are there restrictions on writing letters of recommendation?**
   Written permission of the student is required for a letter of recommendation if any information included in the recommendation is part of the "education records" (grades, GPA and other non-directory information). The instructor should maintain the authorization in their permanent records.
6. **Does an instructor have the right to access student records?**
   Faculty members are normally considered "school officials" but the faculty member will have to demonstrate "a legitimate educational interest" in their request to access student records, e.g. advising students, retention study, etc. Faculty do not have right of access to student academic records unless their normal job duties specifically require access.

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7. **Are course outlines, or class syllabi considered to be education records according to FERPA?**
   No, course outlines and syllabi contain no personally identifiable student information so would not be considered an education record as defined by FERPA.

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8. **Are grades on peer-graded papers considered part of an education record?**
   No, grades on peer-grade papers are not considered part of an education record until they are collected and recorded by the instructor.

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9. **Does FERPA give students the right to be anonymous in the classroom?**
   No, although FERPA grants students the right to request non-disclosure of directory information (which includes student names), this does not allow students to be anonymous in the classroom, as this would be disruptive to the normal course of instruction. Therefore, instructors may continue to refer to students by name in the classroom or in an online forum.

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10. **Is it permissible to announce the names of students who scored 100% or otherwise excelled on an assignment?**
    Although students aren't likely to object to such recognition, individual results of exams or assignments are protected and should not be shared with the whole class.

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