FERPA

WHAT IS FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA, or the Buckley Amendment) is a law that governs the disclosure of educational records maintained by an education institution, and the access to those records. The law applies to all education institutions, but is applied differently at the postsecondary level. Though FERPA is a complex and nuanced law, this page will focus on student and parental rights in postsecondary education.

HOW IS FERPA DIFFERENT AT THE POSTSECONDARY LEVEL AS COMPARED TO K-12?

At the K-12 level, parents/guardians have the right to the student's academic records. This typically included accessing current and past grades, in addition to the ability to speak with teachers, counselors, and administrators regarding the student's educational interests. At the postsecondary level, the disclosure of *personally identifiable information* is prohibited by law without the express consent of the student. This means parents/guardians cannot access or discuss a student's academic interests or financial information unless the student provides FERPA Proxy Access.

FERPA PROXY ACCESS:

At Southwestern, students have the ability to grant proxy access to individuals (parents, guardians, or other designees) through Self Service. Students have the ability to provide proxy access for billing/financial aid information and/or final grades. If providing proxy access for billing/financial aid, the selected individuals will have the ability to view billing/financial aid information, as well as speak with students accounts professionals and/or financial aid counselors. If providing academic proxy access, the selected individuals will have access to final grades and GPA information. The academic proxy does not provide access to grades for in-progress courses, nor does it provide open access to discuss the student with faculty, staff, or academic advisors. If the individual wishes to speak with faculty, staff, or academic advisors regarding personal academic information, it will be necessary for the student to complete a separate and specific FERPA form that specifies information that can be disclosed.

HOW TO PROVIDE FERPA PROXY ACCESS:

The student will visit **https://selfservice.southwestern.edu/Student/PersonProxy** to assign Proxy Access through Self Service. After the login process is completed, the student will "Select a Proxy" at the bottom of the page. The menu will list all "relations" the student added when applying to the University. The student will select one of the listed relations, then check the boxes for which they are providing Proxy Access. Once access is provided, the "relation" will receive an email with instructions on how to create an account in Self-Service.