



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 and Student Records Release access.

FERPA PROXY ACCESS:

At Southwestern, students have the ability to grant access to information to individuals (parents, guardians, or other designees) through Self-Service. Proxy access allows permitted individuals the ability to view billing and financial aid information, mid-semester and final grades, and GPA. Proxy access does not provide access to all assignment 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 departments or academic advisors regarding FERPA-protected information, it will be necessary for the student to complete the Student Records Release permissions.

HOW TO PROVIDE STUDENT RECORDS RELEASE ACCESS:

The student will visit <https://selfservice.southwestern.edu/Student/PersonProxy> to assign Student Records Release access through Self-Service. After the login process is completed, the student will select the "Add Person/Relationship" button before entering the individual's name, relationship (to the student), and a PIN number, which should be shared with the individual receiving permission. When an individual contacts a department to discuss FERPA-protected information with a department, the PIN number will be requested in order to confirm identity.