



# FERPA <sup>T</sup>and<sup>D</sup>

## USEFUL FACTS FOR STAFF

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### What Is FERPA?

Bethel University is subject to the provisions of federal law known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (also referred to as the Buckley Amendment or FERPA). This act affords students protection of their privacy and certain rights with respect to their educational records.

*Note: This document should be used as an introduction to FERPA information. By no means, however, does this document address all issues you may confront nor does it address all FERPA "exceptions." For a more comprehensive overview please visit: [www.bethelu.edu/about/consumer-information/student-privacy-ferpa](http://www.bethelu.edu/about/consumer-information/student-privacy-ferpa)*

### What Is An Educational Record?

Educational records include records directly related to a student and maintained by Bethel, or by a "school official," such as admissions records, registration files, exams, papers, grades, advising notes, financial aid materials (excluding financial information submitted by their parents), housing files, discipline records and any athletic records.

Personal notes maintained by and for a sole individual as a memory aid and not made available to any other faculty or staff members are exempted from this requirement under FERPA. However, notes and information maintained by the faculty or department for use by more than a sole individual **ARE** considered an educational record, and students therefore have a right to review those records.

#### WHAT'S INCLUDED:

- What is FERPA - 1
- What is an Educational Record - 1
- What is PII - 2
- What is Directory Information - 2
- Do's & Don'ts - 3
- Resources - 3

"It is the responsibility of all staff to be knowledgeable about FERPA."



## What is PII (Personally Identifiable Information)?

The term "PII" refers to information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. The definition of PII is not anchored to any single category of information or technology. Rather, it requires a case-by-case assessment of the specific risk that an individual can be identified. In performing this assessment, it is important for an agency to recognize that non-PII can become PII whenever additional information is made publicly available – in any medium and from any source – that, when combined with other available information, could be used to identify an individual.

## What is Directory Information?

FERPA provides the University the ability to designate certain student information as "directory information." Directory information may be made available to any person without the student's consent unless the student gives notice as provided for below.

Bethel University has designated the following as directory information:

- Student's name
- Addresses
- Telephone number
- E-mail address
- Student ID Photos
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- School
- Classification
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weights and heights of members of the athletic teams
- Dates of attendance
- Degrees and awards received
- Most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student
- Other similar information

Please note there are other regulations that protect student data such as: **HIPAA** ( Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act), **HEOA** ( Higher Education Opportunity Act) - formerly the HEA, and others. For additional questions, talk with your supervisor or internal support listed under "Resources."

# DO'S & DON'TS



- **DO** use the University's LMS to post grades
- **DO** use a sealed envelope if you need to send out student information
- **DON'T** post grades by SSN or student ID number either physically (e.g., printed sheet on office door) or electronically (e.g. website that you maintain)
- **DO** obtain a signed release form from a student before releasing records to someone who's requested that student's records
- **DON'T** release information about a student by phone or email without first confirming the identity of the recipient
- **DO** verify the person on a phone call is who the person claims to be (i.e., the student, or someone the student has authorized to have access to such information)
- **DO** use a student's *bethelu.edu* email address for correspondence you need to send to that student
- **DON'T** discuss a student's information in such a way that others might overhear
- **DON'T** leave student information where it could be seen or accessed by others
- **DON'T** dispose of student records in ordinary trash
- **DON'T** leave your computer or handheld device unlocked when you're away from them

## RESOURCES

### *Internal Support*

**Registrars:** Becky Hames, University Registrar  
Kayla Martinez, CPS Registrar  
Deborah Noble, CAS Registrar  
Karen Saldana, CHS Registrar

**Chief Academic & Compliance Officer:** Phyllis Campbell

**Bethel University:** [www.bethelu.edu/about/consumer-information/student-privacy-ferpa](http://www.bethelu.edu/about/consumer-information/student-privacy-ferpa)

### *External Support*

**U.S. Department of Education:** <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

**Protecting Student Privacy:** <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/>