What is FERPA?

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act affords students certain rights concerning their student educational records. The law is also known as FERPA and failure to follow it can result in loss of all federal funding.
Student Records and FERPA

- UA complies fully with the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) which governs access to, and confidentiality of, student records.

As a means of complying with this act, the University has developed detailed UA Policy on Confidentiality of Records, available on the web @ http://registrar.ua.edu.
What are the Basic Rules?

- As a faculty or staff member you have access to information only for legitimate use in the completion of your responsibilities as a university employee. Need-to-know is the basic principle.

- Student educational records are confidential and may generally not be released without written consent of the student.

- You have a responsibility to protect educational records in your possession.

- Student information should only be kept as long as it is valid and useful – otherwise destroy responsibly.
Student Rights Relating to Educational Records

Students have a right to expect that information in their educational records (including computerized records) will be kept confidential and disclosed only with their permission or as allowed by law.

For example:

- Grades
- Enrollment records
- Schedules
- Class Lists
- CWID (Campus wide identification number)
- SSN (social security number)
- Student employment and payroll information
Directory Information

FERPA identifies a category of information as “directory information,” which institutions may usually release without student permission.

For example:

- Student’s name, addresses, and telephone numbers
- Current enrollment status or dates of attendance
- Class/level, school/college, major/degree program
- Academic awards and honors
- Athletic preparation
A student wishing to restrict release of any or all “directory information” must complete a General Student Release Form in Room 206 Student Services Center or @ http://registrar.ua.edu under Privacy Guidelines.

Users who are authorized to access the Student Information System (SIS) can identify students who have restricted their directory information “confidential” will appear on every Banner INB in the upper left corner. On self-serve a warning diamond followed by “Confidential Information…” will appear in the upper left margin.”
Disclosures Without Consent

FERPA permits the release of some information without student permission. For example:

- To school officials with legitimate educational interests – must have a need-to-know
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena (after appropriate notice to the student)
- To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency, such as parents, University Police, Student Health Center
- To officials of another school, in which a student seeks or intends to enroll (UA’s practice is to release transcripts based on student request.)
Disclosures Without Consent
(continued)

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or received if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for aid, the amount of the aid, the conditions for the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid
- To certain government officials in connection with state or federally-supported education programs
- To accrediting organizations
- To attorneys representing UA
- To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the University (with certain conditions)
Some Guidelines for Faculty and Staff

DO:

- Use randomly assigned numbers or codes to display scores or grades.
- Keep any personal notes relating to individual students separate from educational records.
- Keep only those individual student records necessary for fulfillment of your responsibilities.
- Refer information requests to the proper educational record custodian. When in doubt, contact the Office of Academic Records & University Registrar or the Office of Counsel.
Some Guidelines for Faculty and Staff
(continued)

DO NOT:

- Display student scores, grades, Social Security Numbers, or CWIDs (campus wide identification number) publicly
- Put papers, projects, graded exams, or reports in publicly accessible places
Some Guidelines for Faculty and Staff
(continued)

DO NOT:

- Share student information, including grades or GPA’s, with other faculty or staff unless their responsibilities warrant a need-to-know.
- Discuss a student’s progress with anyone (including parents) without written consent of the student.
- Provide anyone with lists of students enrolled in your classes for any commercial purpose.
When In Doubt

Err on the side of caution and do not release student educational information. Contact the Office of Academic Records & University Registrar or the Office of Counsel for guidance or see UA’s web site @:

http://registrar.ua.edu

and click on “Privacy.”
**Important note:** This presentation is intended to give viewers general information about FERPA and to acquaint faculty and staff with some of the privacy issues surrounding students' educational records. It is not intended as nor is it a substitute for legal advice on any particular issue.
For additional information on FERPA, see the Office of Academic Records & University Registrar’s website @:

http://registrar.ua.edu