FERPA Compliance Procedures

Purpose
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records and is applicable to all institutions in the UNT System. This document gives an overview of FERPA and the procedures required to protect student education records.

Scope
These procedures apply to all personnel who have access to any student educational records.

Procedure

Overview of the Law
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a law that allows parents the rights of access to their child's education records, to have records corrected if necessary, and to have some control over what personally identifiable information is disclosed from those records. The rights transfer to the student once the student reaches the age of 18, or attends a postsecondary institution. Parents can have access to the information, if the student is claimed as a dependent by either parent for federal tax purposes.

Permission must be granted by the student before school records can be shared. Disclosure without consent of the student is allowed in specific circumstances, such as to school employees who have a legitimate educational interest, other schools where the student intends to enroll, accrediting organizations, certain government officials, for legal matters, among others.

Directory information is information that is considered to be harmless if disclosed and can be disclosed without consent. Directory information includes the student's name, address, university assigned e-mail, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of athletic team members, dates of attendance, enrollment status, degrees and awards received, expected graduation date, dissertation and thesis titles, most recent previous school attended and photograph.

Students can request that their directory information be withheld from public disclosure. The lists of students who have made such a request are identified within the Enterprise Information System (EIS).

More information about the law can be found in the links in the "Reference" section below.

If a student believes that their rights have been violated under FERPA regulations, they can file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education. The Department of Education will investigate timely complaints with reasonable cause and inform the school of any steps it must take to come into compliance with the law.

Obligation of UNT Institutions
Under the UNT System Information Security Standards and Practices Guide, educational records are classified as Category I information requiring a high level of security controls. Custodians and

owners of educational records must follow these security controls concerning backups, change management, malware protection, physical security, system hardening, security monitoring and audit as a part of their overall information security plan. More information about these controls can be found in the UNT System Information Security Standards and Practices Guide at https://itss.untsystem.edu/sites/default/files/2012/12/Information%20Security%20Standards%20and%20Practices.pdf.

Additional obligations are that students must be informed about their rights under FERPA.

All employees of a UNT institution who regularly deal with student information should attend FERPA training, which is available through the Registrar's Office. Please contact the Registrar's Office for additional information or see the following websites:

> UNT Dallas http://www.untdallas.edu/admissions-aid/financial-aid-scholarships/student-financial-aid-scholarships/policies-consumer-information/family-educational-ri
> UNT Denton http://www.unt.edu/ferpa/index.html
> UNT HSC http://www.hsc.unt.edu/departments/registrar/FERPA.cfm
> http://www.untdallas.edu/admissions-aid/financial-aid-scholarships/student-financial-aid-scholarships/policies-consumer-information/family-educational-ri

References
http://www.unt.edu/ferpa/
http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html
http://policy.unt.edu/policydesc/ferpa-policy-18-1-9
https://itss.untsystem.edu/sites/default/files/2012/12/Information%20Security%20Standards%20and%20Practices.pdf

Contact Information

UNT Dallas: http://www.untdallas.edu/registrars-office

UNT Denton: http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/

UNT HSC: http://web.unthsc.edu/info/200312/registrar