FERPA - the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 - is a federal law that governs the privacy of student educational records, access to those records, and disclosure of information from them.

You can refer to the article on Your Rights as a Student for information on your rights as a student concerning confidentiality and access of your education records maintained at UW-Eau Claire.

FERPA and the Privacy of Student Records

We annually inform you of FERPA through an email notification. This federal law and the regulations communicated by the Department of Education protects the privacy of your educational records, establishes your rights to inspect and review your educational records, and provides guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through informal and formal hearings.

Education Records Defined

Education Records are defined as records, files, communications and other materials in any recorded medium that relate directly to you and are maintained by the university. These records include but are not limited to academic records, financial records, disabilities information, counseling documentation, and instructional progress. Health records that are shared with counselors or staff of the university for instructional or counseling purposes are classified as student records by FERPA.

Access to Student Education Records - Designated University Officials/Legitimate Educational Need Defined

Designated university officials who have a legitimate educational need to access your education records if that information is required for that person in order to perform a job or service for the university.

Professors, advisors, administrative staff of the university, contractors; consultants, volunteers, those providing services, state education authorities, or those acting for the university frequently need to view student records in order to perform their jobs professionally. These individuals have access to certain student information without written consent from you.
University officials are expected to use your information responsibly and safeguard it against exposure to non-officials. All third party vendors sign agreements with the university to protect any private information that they have access to.

**Directory Information (Public Records) Defined**

FERPA allows for the release of specified items of information to be considered not harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. UW-Eau Claire, in accordance with FERPA, has designated the following categories of information about individual students as directory (public) information:

- Name
- Address(es)
- Phone numbers
- Campus email address (username)
- Major and minors
- Dates of attendance
- Classification (e.g., sophomore, senior, graduate student)
- Enrollment status (full/part-time)
- Degrees
- Dates of graduation, including anticipated graduation dates
- Awards and academic honors
- Most recent previous institution attended
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Athletes' weight/height

All data requests for directory information for internal and external organizations are required to be processed by the registrar unit per the Wisconsin's public records law. This information will be released to any inquirer unless the student specifically submits a Student Directory Information Restriction Request eForm.

Non-directory information (private records) are items which are considered private, or protected, and cannot be identified as directory information. Such information includes your social security number, race, religion, national origin, gender, grades, and GPA.

**Circumstances Where Personally Identifiable Information May Be Released Without Prior Written Consent**
These include the following:

- To authorized representatives of federal, state, and local educational authorities.
- In connection with financial aid for which you have applied or which you have received.
- To a victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense. 
  
  **NOTE:** This applies only to the final results of the disciplinary proceeding, regardless of whether the postsecondary institution concluded that a violation was committed.

- To anyone if the disclosure is in connection with a disciplinary proceeding at a postsecondary institution if it determines that you are an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or non-forcible sex offense and with respect to the allegation against him or her the student has committed a violation of the institution's rules or policies.
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the institution.
- To accrediting organizations.
- To parents of a dependent student.
- To comply with a lawful subpoena or court order, including ex parte orders under the USA Patriot Act (reasonable effort to notify).
- In connection with a health or safety emergency.
- To schools in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

## Release of Personally Identifiable Information to Other Colleges and Universities

Should you seek to enroll in another college or university to complete a course or degree, UW-Eau Claire may share personally identifiable data with that college or university's education officials without your prior approval. UW-Eau Claire maintains a record of all releases of student records. You may request to view a copy of what was shared with the other college/university by contacting Blugold Central.