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Family Education Rights and Privacy Act / FERPA for Students

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FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) was enacted in 1974. It is a set of regulations that applies to institutions that receive funding from the Department of Education. FERPA was written specifically to protect the interests of students and guarantees them the right to inspect and review their education records, the right to seek to amend education records, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of information from those education records.

Mansfield University regards all of its students, regardless of age, as emancipated. This means that the regulations apply to all of our students regardless of age.

An **education record** is defined as any record that directly identifies a student and is maintained by the institution or educational agency or by a party acting for the institution or educational agency. A key characteristic of education records is that they are shared by university employees who have a legitimate need to advise students, enter information into the record, or work with the data contained in the records. Education records can exist in any medium including the following: handwritten, typed, computer generated, videotape, audiotape, film, microfilm, microfiche, e-mail, and so on.

The following information is considered public information and may be made available without prior consent. It is considered part of the public record of a student's attendance: name, address, phone number, email address, date/place of birth, major, participation in activities/sports, weight/height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees/awards received and most recent educational institution attended. Any student wishing to prevent the public disclosure of this information may request so by contacting the Office of the Registrar, 224 South Hall prior to the close of the first week of classes of any given academic semester.

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the university receives a request for access. Students should submit to the Registrar, Dean, Department Chairperson, or other appropriate official, written requests that identify the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time

and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading. Students may ask the University to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the University will notify the student of the decision.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position (including law enforcement unit personnel and health staff); a person or company with whom the university has contracted (such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent); a person serving on the Council of Trustees; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the University may disclose education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Mansfield University of Pennsylvania to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605
<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/index.html>

Copies of the University's policy governing the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and Student Release of Information Forms are available at the Office of Enrollment Services, Room 224, South Hall. Questions concerning FERPA should be referred to the Registrar.

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About Mansfield University

Mansfield University is a community in the best sense of the word. We look out for each other. We push ourselves to dream big. We work hard to achieve success. We care. Mansfield welcomed its first student in 1857 – and to this day, the University continues to seek and serve students with big dreams for their futures.

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 Education

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