



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA®
THE CAPSTONE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Updated 5/15

Student Records: Institutional Responsibility and Student Rights

THE CAPSTONE OF HIGHER EDUCATION



Guide for Administrators and Support Staff

Administrators or staff members who are responsible for providing assistance to, or authorization for, other staff to access student information should be aware of existing laws and regulations regarding release of such information.



Guide for Administrators and Support Staff

- UA recognizes the importance of protecting the confidentiality of student information while complying fully with [FERPA](#) and [UA's Guidelines](#) Governing Privacy and Release of Student Records





Guide for Administrators and Support Staff

- Before viewing this presentation, please review the presentation “*What Every University Employee Should Know*”
- Employees in units with their own student information databases or systems must follow FERPA and all UA guidelines concerning confidential student information



Guide for Administrators and Support Staff

- Access to confidential information for **any** UA employee is based on the need to know
- This is determined by the head administrator of the unit retaining the information



Guide for Administrators and Support Staff

- Organizations recognized by the University may have access to student information to offer membership or to recognize student accomplishment through awards
- Personal use of any confidential student information to which you have access is inappropriate and unlawful



Guide for Administrators and Support Staff

- Student information includes paper records and electronic information
- Confidential student information should be released only by the office that has primary responsibility for maintaining the information.



DO KNOW THAT...

- Confidential student information should be released to faculty or staff in your administrative unit based only on their **need-to-know** and should be used only as intended
- Student information should only be kept as long as it valid and useful – otherwise destroy responsibly



DO KNOW THAT...

- Recommended retention time periods are:
 - Undergraduate files – 5 years
 - Graduate files – 10 years
- Shorter retention time periods are listed in the documents below, but the 5 and 10 year model is best practice
 - [Academic Records Policies](#)
 - [UA Archives & Historical Collections - General Schedules](#)



DO:

- Review FERPA 101 What Every University Employee Should Know to provide helpful support for those with whom you work
- Authorize access to systems only if the job responsibilities require the **need-to-know** and the access has appropriate approvals



DO:

- Dispose of confidential student information in a secure manner that will maintain confidentiality
 - Shredding
 - Send to UA Office of Recycling and Waste Management for shredding



DO NOT:

- Release confidential information/data to anyone outside of your unit
 - Especially outside of UA
 - Unless the information is in a form that would not permit the personal identification of the student(s)
 - Unless you have written permission from the student(s)



DO NOT:

- Leave confidential student information visible on your computer or in any printed format that others can see
- Release lists of students' names and addresses for commercial purposes



DO NOT:

- Release confidential student information to:
 - parents unless it is determined that a health or safety emergency exists
 - a third party who intends to use it for a purpose other than for which it was originally intended



When in Doubt...

- Err on the side of caution and do not release student educational information.

Contact the Office of the University Registrar or the Office of General Counsel for guidance. Visit [UA Registrar's webpage](#) for more information.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA