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## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT FERPA

(The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act)

### As a Student and Parent of Wayland Baptist University

#### Policy 8.1.1



#### WHAT IS FERPA?

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, is a federal law which provides that colleges and universities will maintain the confidentiality of student education records. The law basically says that no one outside the institute shall have access to students' records nor will the institute disclose any information from those records without the written consent of the student. There are exceptions, of course, so that certain personnel from the institute may see the records, including persons in an emergency in order to protect the health and safety of students or other persons.

#### WHAT IS DIRECTORY INFORMATION?

Under the terms of FERPA, Wayland Baptist University has established the following as directory information:

- (1) Student's Name
- (2) Local Address/Phone Number
- (3) Permanent Address/Phone Number
- (4) E-mail address
- (5) Date and Place of Birth
- (6) Hometown
- (7) Degrees and Awards Received and Dates
- (8) Dates of Attendance (Current and Past)
- (9) Full or Part-time Enrollment Status
- (10) Participation in Officially Recognized Activities
- (11) Participation in Officially Recognized Sports
- (12) Weight/Height of Members of Athletic Teams
- (13) Most Recently Attended Educational Institute
- (14) Major Field of Study
- (15) Academic Level
- (16) Residency Status
- (17) Photographs

The above directory information will be available for release to the general public. However, the Act states that each student has the right to inform Wayland Baptist University that the information above is not to be released. Wayland Baptist University will honor the students request to restrict the release of "directory information" as listed above.

A student may restrict the release of directory information by either using the approved limited release form or submitting written notification to the Office of the University Registrar. Notification must be given prior to the census day of term. Also, the restriction of information is good for only one academic year and must be done each academic year by the student. If the student restricts the release of directory information, a notation is placed on the name screen at the bottom left corner in the *Release Information* box and no information can be released on that student without written permission of that student. Release of information on student's academic transcript without the written consent of the person identified on the document is in violation of FERPA.

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### **PARENTAL ACCESS TO CHILDREN'S EDUCATIONAL RECORDS**

At the postsecondary level, parents have no inherent right to inspect a student's education records, regardless of age. The right to inspect is limited solely to the student. Records may be released to parents only under the following circumstances: (1) through the written consent of the student, (2) in compliance with subpoena, or (3) by submission of evidence that the parents declare the student as a dependant on their most recent Federal Income Tax form. An institution is not required to disclose information from the student's educational records to the parents of a dependant student. It may, however, exercise its discretion to do so.

Educational records exist in the admissions office, registrar's office, financial aid, business office, faculty records, and student services offices. Health records and Wayland police records are not covered under FERPA. Therefore, request to review grades, attendance, schedule of classes, financial aid awards, and financial balances or charges are educational records and require the student to grant the institution permission to release the information to the parents.

Students may obtain the *Student Dependent Status/Consent to Disclose to Parents* form from the university registrar's office. The form is active for one academic year (August 1 – July 31) and must be renewed annually.

Federal tax forms may be obtained for verification in the financial aid process. However, students not tagged for verification may submit their parent's tax form as proof. Income fields may be redacted/removed in order to maintain financial privacy of the family. The first page of the federal return indicating that the student was claimed as a dependent is all that would be required for verification.

For more information on FERPA and student and parent's rights:

Wayland Baptist University  
Office of the University Registrar  
Gates Hall - 004  
1900 W. 7<sup>th</sup> St. CMB 735  
Plainview, TX 79072  
(806) 291-3470 [registrar@wbu.edu](mailto:registrar@wbu.edu)

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