

American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

Know Your Rights: Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law which applies to all educational institutions that receive funding under a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education. AAAOM participates in the William D. Ford Federal Direct Student Loan Program (DSL Program) and distributes subsidized and unsubsidized federal financial aid to eligible students.

Access to Education Records:

- Schools must provide students with an opportunity to inspect and review their education records within 45 days of receiving such a request from the student.
- Schools must provide copies of a student's records or otherwise make records available even if the student cannot physically visit the school to examine the records.
- Schools must redact the names and other personally identifiable information about other students that may be included in the requesting student's education records.

Amendment of Education Records:

- Schools must consider a request from a student to amend inaccurate or misleading information in the student's education record.
- Schools must offer a student a hearing on the matter if it decides not to amend the records as requested.
- Schools must offer a student the right to place a statement with his/her education records if the school decides not to amend the student's education records.
- Schools are *not* required to consider requests that seek to change a grade or disciplinary action; or requests to change or remove the opinions of school officials that may be in the education record.

Disclosure of Education Records:

- Schools must have a student's consent prior to disclosure of education records.
- Schools must ensure that the consent is signed, dated, and states the purpose of the disclosure.
- Schools *may* disclose education records without a student's consent under specific circumstances which are listed in detail on the posted "FERPA General Guidance for Students." Such circumstances include legal court orders, education department audits, and enforcement of federal programs such as financial aid. Information may be disclosed to authorized school officials, other schools if a student is seeking to enroll there, and parents who claim a student as a dependent for tax purposes.

Authorized School Officials:

In regard to the access to and use of a student's education records, the following personnel categories are considered to be "authorized school officials" for the purposes described:

The school President, Chief Operating Officer, and/or Administrative Director have access to all student education records for the purposes of administering, monitoring and enforcing school programs, including federal financial aid programs; conducting financial audits; ensuring compliance with local, state and federal regulations; conducting disciplinary investigations; ensuring school safety and security. Administrative officials may authorize limited use of education records such as students' names and telephone numbers for the purpose of issuing a school directory (students have the right to request not to be included in such a directory).

The Academic Dean, Clinic Director, Department Heads, and faculty members have access to all student education records for the purpose of instructing, evaluating, and grading students. Some or all of these school officials also use student education records to monitor academic progress, clinic performance, compliance with school program requirements, and progress toward graduation. Some or all of these officials may access records for the purpose of noting or investigating disciplinary issues or student grievances.

The Financial Aid Administrator has access to all student education and financial records required to determine eligibility, amounts, and terms for financial aid, and for monitoring and enforcing the terms and conditions of financial aid.

The Registrar has access to student education records for the purpose of maintaining and updating student transcripts, grade reports, evaluations, certifications, academic services requests, financial statements, and related matters.

The Admissions Officer has access to student education records for the purpose of determining eligibility to enroll in the school program.

Front desk personnel are authorized to accept payment for tuition and other school-related payments, to note these payments in the clinic Daily Record, and to issue receipts for such payments.

For access to your education records, you may apply to the Registrar. If you wish to amend your records, discuss your concerns with the Academic Dean.

To File a Complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office:

Students may file a complaint of an alleged violation of FERPA regulations by contacting the FPCO at the address below. Complaints must be submitted within 180 days of learning about the alleged violation. Complaints must contain specific information about the alleged violation, including names, dates, description of alleged incident, etc.

Family Policy Compliance Office
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920