

# FERPA Explained for Parents

## **1. Do I have a right to access my child's records?**

Unless granted access by the student, at the post-secondary level parents have no inherent right to access or inspect their son's or daughter's education records. The right of access is limited solely to the student. However, TAMUK understands that many undergraduate students want to allow their parents access to their education records and now students have the ability to provide their consent for access to their records by completing the FERPA Waiver form and returning to the Office of the Registrar.

## **2. Why is it that I had access to my child's high school records, but now I do not have the same access to records maintained by the university?**

Under FERPA, the access rights that parents and legal guardians had in the elementary and secondary school settings are transferred to the student once a student starts attending any postsecondary educational institution (regardless of the student's age and regardless of who is paying for the student's education).

## **3. Can I see my student's account and invoice?**

Account and invoice are confidential information part of student's education records which is protected under FERPA and cannot be released to third-party. Students have the ability to provide their consent for access to their records by completing the FERPA Waiver form and returning to the Office of the Registrar.

## **4. Can you send me a letter certifying that my child is enrolled as a full-time student at your institution?**

Since current enrollment status is considered directory information the university can release enrollment verification to parents, unless the student has specifically requested to restrict the release of his/her directory information. Such requests should be made in writing and sent to the Office of the Registrar.

## **5. Can I request to receive grades and progress reports?**

Progress in a course, deficiencies in a subject area, final grades, grades on exams, and other information about academic progress are examples of the confidential information that makes up part of a student's education record. This information is protected under FERPA and parents do not have access to it unless the student has provided consent to the release of this information.

**6. Does TAMUK notify parents if a student is put on academic probation or is subject to academic dismissal?**

No. Information about grades and academic standing is sent directly to students. However, a letter of probation or dismissal to a student may direct the student to a FERPA release form and request that he or she complete it to allow the appropriate University representative to speak with a parent. Under some circumstances, a parent will be notified of a change in a student's enrollment status, but in such event, no explanation will be provided.

**7. How can my student grant me access to his/her education records?**

Students have the ability to provide their consent by completing the FERPA Waiver form and returning to the Office of the Registrar.

**8. What about crisis situations or emergencies?**

If non-directory information is needed to resolve a crisis or emergency situation, TAMUK may release that information if it determines it necessary to protect the health and safety of a student. However, if personally identifiable information about a student is needed, then the inquiring party should be referred to the Office of the Registrar. Efforts will be made to get word to the student of the emergency.

**9. Whom do I contact with questions or concerns?**

General questions may be directed to the Office of the Registrar.

- Email: registrar@tamuk.edu
- Call: (361) 593-2811

**10. Where can I find out more information about FERPA?**

- U.S. Department of Education (Office of Compliance)
- AACRAO