



# Student Guide to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and the Confidentiality of IIT Student Education Records

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## FERPA

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) as amended is a United States federal law that governs the privacy of student education records and access to those records, as well as disclosure of information from them. FERPA applies to all schools that receive funds under any applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. It is sometimes referred to as the Buckley Amendment.

This guide is intended for informational purposes only and is not intended to create any rights or responsibilities.

# FERPA

Illinois Institute of Technology, in compliance with FERPA, respects the rights of privacy of its students and acknowledges the responsibility to maintain confidentiality of personally identifiable education records. Students have explicit, protected rights regarding the release of such records.



## Who has FERPA rights at the postsecondary level?

All students in attendance, regardless of age, and all former students are protected. IIT defines in attendance as the day that the student first attends a class.

## What are my rights under FERPA?

You have the right to:

- Inspect and review your education records
- Generally control the disclosure of information from your education records
- Seek the amendment of any of your education records that you believe are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of privacy rights
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Family Policy Compliance Office

## What are my educational records?

As defined by FERPA, education records, in whatever format or medium, are directly related to a student and maintained by an educational agency or institution, or by a party acting for the agency or institution.

Examples include, but are not limited to, transcripts, financial records, and conduct records.

Some types of information are not considered education records and are not protected by FERPA.

These include:

- Records in the "sole possession of the maker" (e.g., private advising notes)
- Campus law-enforcement unit records
- Employment records, except for those whose employment at IIT is tied to their status as a student
- Medical/psychological treatment records
- Alumni records created after graduation

Illinois Institute of Technology's FERPA policy is published every year in the IIT Student Handbook.

The handbook is available from the Office of Student Affairs located in the McCormick Tribune Campus Center in Room 209 and on the Office of Student Affairs website:

**[web.iit.edu/student-affairs](http://web.iit.edu/student-affairs)**

## Release of Directory Information

IIT reserves the right to release, at its own discretion, directory information about any student registered for at least one credit hour during the academic year in which such directory information is provided.

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## So what is directory information?

Directory information is considered as information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes:

- Name of student
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance at IIT
- Local address, phone number, and email address of student
- Home address and phone number of student
- Positions held, place of employment, and extension number of students employed by IIT
- Department of specialization and educational level (undergraduate, non-degree-seeking student, graduate student in master's or Ph.D. program)
- Membership in officially recognized campus organizations and on teams; offices held in such organizations
- Degrees earned, special awards and recognition given (including Dean's List), and scholarships awarded based on academic or other achievement (as opposed to those awarded based on need)
- Photograph of student

Such directory information available from education records kept by IIT may also be released concerning former students at IIT for the time during which they were registered as students at IIT.

IIT will not release Social Security numbers, race, gender, grades, GPA, citizenship, or religious preference as directory information to third parties.

## What information can I control?

You have control over the release of directory information from your file. To prevent this information from being released to third parties, you must complete a Non-Disclosure of Directory Information FERPA Form, available from the Office of the Registrar, within three weeks after the close of registration. This form will state your request for the withholding of each specific item of directory information that you do not wish to have released.

Please know that by withholding your directory information you will be excluded from receiving any materials distributed as a result of directory information requests. This includes, but is not limited to, information from prospective employers, honor societies, and other institutions of higher education.

## How can I access my education records?

You may make an appointment to inspect individual education records during regular office hours. Contact the Office of the Registrar at 312.567.3100 or [registrar@iit.edu](mailto:registrar@iit.edu), located at 10 West 35th Street, 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60616.

Access will be granted as soon as possible, but no later than 45 days after IIT has received your request.

## How do I correct inaccurate information?

You have the right to petition to amend education records and, if this petition is denied, you have the right to request a hearing. Instructions about how to request a hearing can be found in the Student Handbook and on the Office of the Registrar website, [web.iit.edu/registrar](http://web.iit.edu/registrar).

The right to challenge education records does not include the right to challenge a numerical or letter grade assigned to you by your instructor. To see IIT's policy on academic complaints, please refer to the Student Handbook.

## Who can access my education records without my approval?

FERPA grants IIT the right to disclose information from your education records without your consent to the following:

- University officials with a legitimate educational interest
- Federal or state agencies, or organizations performing audits or official studies
- Financial aid officers
- Accrediting agencies
- Officials of other institutions in which you seek or intend to enroll or are already enrolled
- Parents or legal guardians, if you are listed as their dependent according to the IRS tax code
- Appropriate authorities in an emergency situation
- Parties to legal actions through subpoenas and/or court orders

Legitimate educational interest means that a university official has a justifiable need to view an education record in order to complete his or her job responsibilities, as defined by Illinois Institute of Technology.

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## How do I release information to others?

You may authorize IIT to release information from your education records by filling out the FERPA Release of Educational Records Form, specifying which records are to be released, to whom the release is to be made, and the purpose of the disclosure.

## Can my parents access my records?

You may give your parent or guardian permission to access your records or grades by filling out the FERPA Release of Educational Records Form with the Office of the Registrar.

FERPA provides for parents to receive specific information regarding students without consent in the following circumstances:

- Your parent or guardian claims you as a dependent according to the IRS tax code. In this case, your parent or guardian must submit a request via email to [registrar@iit.edu](mailto:registrar@iit.edu) and provide a copy of the first page of the most recent IRS Federal Tax Return, showing that you were indeed claimed as a dependent.
- You are under age 21 and have violated any law or IIT policy concerning the use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance.

## What if there is an emergency?

In case of an emergency, FERPA allows the release of information without student consent, including personally identifiable information, to protect the health and safety of students or other individuals. These records may be released to the appropriate parties, including parents, in an emergency.



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