

University of St. Thomas Policies

**FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND
PRIVACY ACT OF 1974 (FERPA)**

Policy Number: A.03.02

SCOPE

All Students (undergraduate, graduate, off-campus and distance learners)

PURPOSE

To describe FERPA responsibilities and requirements.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

Under the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974](#), the University is free to release information about students categorized as “directory-type information.” Students have the right to restrict the disclosure of this information by completing and submitting a Request to Prevent Disclosure of Directory Information form to the Registrar’s Office. Once this request has been submitted to the Registrar’s office, the restriction to disclose directory information will remain in effect until the student submits a request to the Registrar’s office to revoke the original request. Copies of the policies and procedures governed by this Act are also available for review in the Registrar’s Office.

The following is a brief summary of the policy that relates directly to student records held by individual faculty members:

1. All students and former students of the University have access to their own individual records for the purpose of inspection and review, with certain specified exceptions. The exceptions pertaining to records in the possession of faculty are the following: personal and educational notes and records in the sole possession of the faculty author and not revealed to any person other than a substitute agent of the faculty member (for example, notes of conferences with students kept by faculty members for their own use); records authorized by the student to be written confidentially (for example, letters of recommendations; see item 5. below).
2. In general, a student’s grades or other records may not be released to a third party without the student’s specific written authorization. Exceptions to this rule include officials, faculty and staff employed by the University who have a “legitimate educational interest,” parents or guardians who certify that a student is carried as a dependent for federal income tax purposes, and other appropriate persons if their knowledge of such information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other persons.
3. Students may not remove items from their records, nor may they obtain copies of records that can be obtained from the original source of the record.
4. Students may challenge the release of any information directly relating to them. The challenge is restricted to inaccurate, misleading or otherwise inappropriate records and information. Regulations specify an initial informal hearing and, if requested by a

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participant, a subsequent formal hearing to determine the accuracy and pertinence of the challenged information.

5. All recommendations placed in educational records after January 1, 1975, are available to the student except in cases in which the student waives, in writing, the privilege of examination.

APPROVED: Dr. Robert Ivany

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