

POLICY ON FACULTY POSTING AND DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT GRADES FAM 840.72

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires colleges and universities to maintain the confidentiality of student records. As such, FERPA effectively mandates that practices connected with posting student grades or providing grades to students via telephone, mail (postal or electronically) ensure confidentiality. In addition, FERPA prohibits parental rights to inspect a student's education records at the postsecondary level. Records may be released to parents only under the following circumstances (1) through the written consent of the student, (2) in compliance with a subpoena or (3) by producing a copy of the most recent Federal Income Tax form showing that the students was claimed as a dependent. Grades include exams, projects, activities, or other assignments that contain points or letters that reflect students' performance.

Guidelines

Some faculty members may prefer to either openly post or send grades to students upon their request. While this policy does not prohibit such practice, it sets forth guidelines that must be strictly followed in order to meet the confidentiality requirements of FERPA.

Posting of Grades in a Publicly Accessible Place

The public posting of grades by student names, identification numbers or social security numbers (or any part of these numbers) is a violation of FERPA. Similarly, the "open distribution" of graded assignment (e.g., a box outside a faculty member's office or other procedures that provide access to graded assignments by others) is a violation of FERPA. This is also applicable to providing one student's grade or graded assignment to another individual without written permission.

FERPA allows the posting of grades provided that the posting protects the confidentiality of each student's name and grade. A unique identifier other than a Social Security Number or a Student Identification Number, known only to the student and the faculty member, must be used for posting in a publicly accessible place. Do not use an ordered list such as published class roster or similar alphabetical list that can be traceable to their names for posting grades. It is recommended that a secure learning management system such as Blackboard be used for posting grades.

Mailing Grades

FERPA does not prohibit the mailing of grades to students if requested by the student. Similar to the policy for openly posting grades in a publicly accessible place, the grades may be mailed to the student (postal or electronically) provided that it is addressed only to the student. Faculty members should ensure that mailing addresses are correct by asking students for a self-addressed envelope (not post cards, which are subject to “access” by others). Faculty may only respond to student’s CSUSB assigned email address for grade distribution to ensure that no one else can have access to the grade.

Questions regarding legitimate procedures should be addressed to AVP of Academic Programs.