



The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) and UT Austin

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, or FERPA, is a federal law that restricts access to educational records and information that make the student's identity easily traceable. Access to this information is restricted to appropriate university personnel who require this information in order to perform their legitimate educational duties.

At UT Austin, many parents are surprised to learn that they do not have access to their student's educational records, including grades and class schedules, because this information is protected by FERPA. Universities can interpret FERPA differently, so it is possible that you had access to this information at another institution with another child.

We encourage parents and students to create open lines of communication so that you are able to get information such as grades from the best source: your students. As you and your student build the framework for these conversations, we encourage you to explain to your student why you want this information and how, with it in hand, you are better equipped to help your student.

Keep in mind, professors do not always post grades immediately as high school teachers did. Once your student has his or her class syllabi, you will both have a better understanding of how his or her professors grade and can come to a mutual agreement of how he or she will communicate the information you seek.

While UT Austin does not offer a FERPA release for grades and class schedules, your student can complete a FERPA Release Authorization form online that allows the Office of Financial Aid to discuss his or her financial aid with you. If your student would like your assistance with the financial aid process, it is important that he or she complete one form per parent/guardian as soon as possible. Learn more at bit.ly/FERPARelease.