



Understanding FERPA:

Your rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The University of Bridgeport takes the privacy of student information seriously. The following information relates to the rights students enjoy regarding their educational records. For more detailed information regarding FERPA, please see the University Catalog and the Key to UB: Student Handbook.

The basics...

FERPA provides students with the following rights:

- 1) The right to inspect and review the educational records within 45 days of the day the University receives the request for access. Students should submit to the Registrar a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The University Registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where records may be inspected. If the Registrar does not maintain the records requested, the Registrar will advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
- 2) The right to request the amendment of the educational record that he/she believes is inaccurate or misleading. Students should ask the University to amend the record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the Registrar, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested by the student, the University will notify the student of the decision and advise the student of his/her right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- 3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is:
 - A person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position, including health or medical staff.
 - A person elected to the Board of Trustees.
 - A person or entity employed by or under contract to the University to perform a special task, such as security, building and grounds, information technology, food service, an attorney, auditor, collection agency or other outside vendor.

What is a "legitimate educational interest"?

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:

- Performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or contract agreement, or is customarily performed by such person at the University.
- Performing a task related to a student's education.
- Performing a task related to the discipline of a student.
- Providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement or financial aid.
- Maintaining the safety and security of the campus.

What is Directory Information?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that the University of Bridgeport, with certain exceptions, obtain your written request prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's educational records. However, the University may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent. Examples include:

- The annual yearbook;
- News releases;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activities sheets, such as weight and height of team members
- Images produced by exterior and interior security cameras

Directory information which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released can also be disclosed to outside organizations. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. The University of Bridgeport has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Address
- University electronic mail address
- Telephone listing
- Date and place of birth
- Hometown
- Student's image
- Citizenship
- Family relations
- Marital status
- Previous schools or training
- Academic year
- Dates of attendance and/or graduation
- Major field of study or academic specialty
- Instructors and courses
- Participation in sports and other officially recognized activities (including position, role, or function)
- Membership in officially recognized honorary, professional, academic, or social organizations
- Academic honors or achievements
- Special awards or recognitions received, scholarships, fellowships, assistantships
- Offices or honorary positions to which elected or appointed
- Eligibility for and performance records in athletics or other recognized forms of competition
- Height and weight of members of athletic teams
- Place and nature of employment
- Post-graduation plans
- Positions or achievements

What if I don't want the University to disclose this information?

If you do not wish the University to disclose directory information without prior written consent you must notify the University by the tenth day of class in a semester. The student must contact the Registrar's Office, located on the Garden Level of Wahlstrom Library, and fill out the appropriate paperwork. If a student makes such a request, the University has the option for either (1) withholding all information of the types specified or omitting the student's name from any published list involving such information or (2) seeking the student's written permission to release the information.

Will information is released without my consent?

The Dean of Students or designee has the authority to notify parents or guardians when dependent students under the age of 21 are found to be in violation of the University alcohol and/or drug policies for: 1) possession of a keg or large volume; 2) dispensing alcohol to a minor; 3) possession or distribution of controlled substances; 4) under age possession or open container in a public space for a second time; or in cases where a student is subject to residence hall separation, suspension, expulsion or required emergency medical care because the student became ill from the consumption of alcohol and/or drugs. The notification is permissive and at the discretion of the University. The notification of parents or guardians is indicated when: 1) the violation involved harm or threat of harm to persons or property, or 2) the violation involved an arrest in which the student was taken into custody.

Whenever possible, students will be informed that parental notification is planned in advance of their parents receiving the notice. The notification of parents is simply an act of notice and is not subject to appeal.

The Dean of Students or designee may disclose the name and a summary of the information regarding the final outcome of a hearing if the student is found to have committed an act of violence.

Students may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office
US Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202-4605

Parental/Legal Guardian Notification Information

One of the most significant changes a parent/legal guardian experiences in sending his/her son, daughter off to college. College has a higher privacy standard for educational records than at the secondary school level. The University recognizes students' interests and rights in privacy. FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, is a Federal Law that regulates disclosure of, and access to, educational records of students.

It is the policy of the University in general to notify (without prior consent of the student) parents or legal guardians of students under the age of 21 that the student has been found responsible for an alcohol or drug violation. The purpose of University of Bridgeport's parental/legal guardian notification policy is to promote the holistic development of students and to foster a safe educational environment where alcohol is consumed legally and responsibly, if at all, and where illegal drug usage or possession is not tolerated, nor legal drugs abused. The University believes that parents and legal guardians can assist the University in carrying out this aspect of its educational and developmental mission.

Guidelines and Principles for Parental/Legal Guardian Notification

The University may notify a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of students under the age of 21 who are found responsible for any incident associated with the use of alcohol, illegal drugs or the abuse of legal drugs. Furthermore, the University may also notify a student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) that the student has been found responsible for violating the University's Student Code of Community Standards alcohol and/or drug policies.

Prior to parent or legal guardian notification, the University will attempt to consult with the student and, consistent with promotion of personal accountability, encourage the student to advise his/ her parent or legal guardian. The University may decide not to notify the student's parent or legal guardian, particularly where the University determines that notifying a student's parent or legal guardian might be harmful to the student or not in the best interests of the student or University.

The University will keep a record of the parental/legal guardian notification in the student's discipline file and provide the student with a copy, upon request.

More info on Parental/Legal Guardian Notifications

First violation:

Unless there are aggravating circumstances, the University will generally not notify parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of students under age of 21 of first time violations.

A parent/legal guardian (as provided by the student to the University Registrar and/or respective Residence Hall director) may be notified if the University administration has knowledge of any of the items listed below (an “incident”) as a first violation associated with alcohol or drug abuse:

- The student demonstrates a reckless disregard for his or her personal safety or the safety of others while under the influence of alcohol; student requires transport to a hospital to receive medical attention;
- The student causes significant property damage;
- The student operates a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol;
- The violation involves another serious incident;
- The student is arrested or taken into custody by Campus Security or law enforcement officers while under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or abusive use of legal drugs, or is charged with violating a federal, state, or local law related to the consumption, possession, sale, dispensation, and/or use of or distribution of alcohol, illegal drugs or the abusive use of legal drugs;
- The student’s violation results in a temporary or permanent separation from the Residence Halls and/or a temporary or permanent separation from the University (e.g. suspension, dismissal or expulsion).

Second and subsequent violation(s):

The University may notify a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of all second and subsequent incidents. For purposes of determining what constitutes a second or subsequent incident, multiple and related violations during a single incident will be treated as one violation.

Discipline Files

Discipline File Record-Keeping

The Assistant Dean of Students is the University Student Conduct Officer and maintains disciplinary files on all cases.

Removal of Discipline Files

Upon awarding of a degree, the student’s disciplinary record may be expunged of disciplinary actions other than residence hall separation, suspension, expulsion or revocation or withholding of a degree, upon application to the Dean of Students. Cases involving the imposition of sanctions other than residence hall separation, suspension, expulsion or revocation or withholding of a degree may be expunged from the student’s confidential record seven years after final disposition of the case. The Dean of Students reserves the right to refuse such a request depending on the seriousness of the violations. Suspension and dismissal records shall be permanently retained as official records unless the student is readmitted and successfully completes a degree, at which point, the record may be removed seven years beyond the date of readmission. Expulsion records shall not be removed from the official files under any circumstances. Any records kept beyond these limits for statistical purposes will not be considered or released as official disciplinary records.

Persons wishing to have their disciplinary records removed should write to: The Dean of Students, 244 University Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06604.

For more information on FERPA

Office	Contact Email	Office	Contact Email
<i>Dean of Students</i>	deanofstudents@bridgeport.edu	<i>Housing and Residential Life</i>	reslife@bridgeport.edu
<i>Registrar</i>	registrar@bridgeport.edu	<i>Student Financial Services</i>	sfs@bridgeport.edu