Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Definitions

- **Student:**
  - age 18 or attending an institution of postsecondary education

- **Education Records are any records:**
  - related to the student and
  - maintained by the institution.

- **NOT Education Records:**
  - personal notes by faculty/staff which are **NOT** shared with others;
  - law enforcement/public safety records maintained **solely** for law enforcement purposes;
  - employment records where employment is **not** connected to student status (ex: Work Study student employee records would be covered by FERPA);
  - records related to the **treatment** by a health care professional and used only for the medical/health treatment of the student.
Federal Law protecting the privacy rights of students.

Students have the right to:
- inspect and review education records;
- seek amendment of education records;
- consent to the disclosure of education records;
- obtain a copy of the school’s FERPA policy and
- file a complaint with the FERPA office in Washington, D.C.
Disclosure of Education Records

- Generally, the College must have written permission from the student before releasing information from a student’s record.

- Exceptions include, but are not limited to:
  - subpoena which specifically states not to notify the student,
  - directory information (public information), and
  - school official with legitimate educational interest.
Directory Information

- Directory information is “information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed.” (1988 Final Regulations)

- Directory Information at CBS:
  - Name
  - Local Address
  - Permanent Address
  - Telephone Number
  - Place of Birth
  - Date of Birth
  - E-mail Address
  - Dates of Attendance
  - Previous Schools Attended
  - Degrees Awarded
  - Major
  - Honors
Non-Directory (confidential) education records can be released without the student’s prior consent to a school official with legitimate educational interest, which is defined as:

- performing a task that is specified in his/her position description or contract;
- performing a task related to a student’s education or a student’s discipline;
- providing a service or benefit to the student; or
- maintaining safety and security on campus.
Technology

- **Password protect** files that contain student data (excel lists, word documents, etc).

- **Delete** files that you do not need to maintain.

- Insure that your **databases or systems are secure** (fire walled, hacker resistant, etc)

- **Email**
  - Do not include a SID/SSN in the subject line of an e-mail
Important Points

- Non-directory information may be released with a signed and dated written consent from the student. The consent MUST specify:
  - what education records are to be disclosed;
  - the purpose of the disclosure; and
  - identify the party or class of parties to whom disclosure may be made.

- Information viewed in any medium (paper, computer, etc) must be treated with the same confidentiality.
Consequences

- The consequences of how we handle or mishandle a student’s information are significant.
  - Access to Sonisweb does **NOT** authorize unrestricted use of student data.
  - Records should only be used in the context of **official business** in conjunction with the educational success of the student.
  - **Curiosity does not** qualify as a legal right to know.
  - Information should **NEVER** be released to a third party that does not have a legitimate right to know.
REMEMBER…

...your job is to **protect the student**...so when in doubt...don’t give it out!

- **Contacts:**
  - Your immediate supervisor
  - Registrar’s Office (832-252 - 4631)

**Other Resources:**

- College of Biblical Studies - [http://cbshouston.edu/ferpa](http://cbshouston.edu/ferpa)
Thank you for completing the FERPA training for the Student Information System!