

TO: New Students and their Parents

FROM: Carrie D. Widdowson, Registrar

DATE: Fall 2021

RE: [Federal Regulations Involving Release of Information \(FERPA\)](#)
(Student Handbook, pages 84-88)

Release of Education Records: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) provides students who are or have been in attendance at Messiah University certain rights with respect to their education records. A student is deemed to be in attendance at the University if he/she is enrolled and is either physically present for classes or receives instruction through distance learning. Education records may be paper or electronic and are defined generally as records, files, documents, and other materials maintained by the University which contain information directly related to the student and from which the student can be personally identified. FERPA limits the authority of Messiah University to release information pertaining to a student's education record. While we are allowed to contact the parent or guardian of a student under age 21 who commits a disciplinary violation related to use or possession of alcohol or a controlled substance, our ability to disclose other personal information is restricted. A student "owns" their education record when they are deemed in attendance at the University and has the right to control the release of certain personal information maintained by Messiah University. For that reason, we **may not** release student education records (e.g., class schedules, academic and disciplinary records, grades, etc.) to parents or guardians **unless** the son or daughter 1) completes a written consent form **or** 2) the parent/guardian provides us with written certification that the student was declared a dependent on their most recent tax return. The consent form (FERPA Form PDF) to authorize release of education records to parents or guardians can be found [here](#). You may also grant access to your education record via the online FERPA release by following the instructions listed [here](#).

We will not release academic information unless the form is completed and returned to the Registrar's Office, Messiah University Suite 3007, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 and you have set-up a privacy word in the Challenge Response System (<http://www.messiah.edu/crs>) and shared that word with the individual/s noted on the FERPA release.

Release of Directory Information: Federal law permits Messiah University to release directory information without student consent to anyone requesting that information unless a student instructs the University **not** to release it. Directory information at Messiah University includes a student's name, home address, campus address, all telephone numbers on record, high school attended, campus email address, photograph (available on the University's internal, secure, online system), dates of attendance, degree for which a student is a candidate, academic major, academic advisor, academic awards or honors, class year, full-time/part-time status, and weight and height for members of athletic teams. Additionally, Messiah University may provide lists of students' names by religious preference (if known) once each year in response to inquiries by local churches. Messiah University **does not**, however, release directory information to outside organizations for commercial solicitation. **If you do not wish to have directory information released, indicate as such on the Directory Profile, located on the Personal Information tab in Self-Service Banner.** You can complete this information anytime.

The University is constrained by federal law to clarify these matters, and we suggest that parents and students discuss them. Thank you for your understanding and attention to these issues.

Education Records Release Authorization
(Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act - FERPA)

At Messiah University, educational records include cumulative academic records, grades, course schedules, most student disciplinary records, and most student account and financial aid records. Education records do not include records of administrative or instructional personnel which are personal in nature, in the sole possession of the maker, and not accessible to any other person; records which are maintained by physicians, psychiatrists, psychologists, or other recognized professionals or para-professionals, and made in connection with treatment of the student; financial records of parents; or records maintained by the Department of Safety created for the purpose of law enforcement.

In order for Messiah University to release a student's education records to parents or guardians, **either** the student must give his or her written consent **or** the parent must certify that the student is claimed as a dependent for income tax purposes. Please complete **one** of the sections below if you wish to authorize Messiah University to release education records to parents/legal guardian/other.

STUDENTS:

- I authorize Messiah University to release information from my education records to my parents/guardians whose name(s) and address(es) are as follows:**

Student Signature

Messiah Student ID or last 4 digits of social security #

Print Student Name

Date

Parent/Guardian 1 Name

Parent/Guardian 2 Name

Parent/Guardian 1 Street Address

Parent/Guardian 2 Street Address (if different)

Parent/Guardian 1 Email

Parent/Guardian 2 Email (if different)

This instruction will remain in effect until revoked in writing by the student (the parent(s) or guardian will be notified by the Registrar of a revocation).

PARENTS:

- I certify that _____ (student's name) was claimed as a dependent on my most recent income tax return.

Messiah Student ID or Last 4 digits of social security #

Parent 1 Signature

Date

Print Parent 1 Name

Parent 1 Email

Parent 2 Signature

Date

Print Parent 2 Name

Parent 2 Email

This instruction may only be revoked by the student if he/she successfully demonstrates independence for federal financial aid purposes or by the parent(s) who authorized the release.