



TTIC FERPA Overview: Records and Training Procedures

Purpose

To keep the TTIC community actively aware of FERPA regulations and processes, and have a community capable of protecting and maintaining student records following best practices.

Participants

Registrar shall oversee the training tutorial and quiz, ongoing training efforts, and this procedure. Identified TTIC participants named below shall maintain ongoing training and adhere to best practices. Student Services may assist in keeping training records.

Procedure Updates:

Nov 2018. Originally just training; updated to include applications

What is FERPA?

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal statute aimed at ensuring student privacy by defining what constitutes a student “educational record” and identifies who can access student records. Any educational institution that receives funds under any program administered by the U.S. Secretary of Education is bound by FERPA requirements. Institutions that fail to comply with FERPA may have funds administered by the Secretary of Education withheld.

Students are sent an annual notice from the Office of the Registrar regarding FERPA and TTIC’s protection and disclosure obligations of student records.

Student Record Maintenance

As the stewards of the data, the Registrar’s Office is committed to ensuring the privacy of student educational records and adhering to FERPA guidelines. In this role, we educate our faculty, students and staff in their obligations in regards to confidentiality and inform students of their rights in regards to their own educational records.

A student’s education records are defined under FERPA as including, subject to the limitations described in the Act, “records, files, documents, and other materials which (1) contain information directly related to a student; and (2) are maintained by an institution or by a party acting for such institution.” At TTIC, a student’s education records are maintained by the TTIC Registrar and Student Services, and they coordinate with the University of Chicago Office of the Registrar and individual student departments/Colleges in order for both institutions’ students to enjoy access to full student, campus and academic privileges.

A student’s official academic record is maintained indefinitely by the TTIC Office of the Registrar.

Student Record Management

TTIC students use [Populi](#) to view and update their personal information including address, phone number, class schedule, and other items on record in the Office of the University Registrar. This online service shall reflect if a student has requested ([via online form](#)) that TTIC withhold the release of directory information to third parties under the provisions of FERPA. Students must use their Populi login and password to access their Populi account.

Student Record Management at University of Chicago

TTIC students also use [my.UChicago](#) to view and update their personal information including address, phone number, class schedule, student medical insurance, and other items on record in the University of Chicago Office of the University Registrar. This online service also explains and interacts with students concerning other official matters, such as administrative restrictions and their rights to withhold the release of directory information to third parties under the provisions of FERPA. To access [my.UChicago](#), students must use their [CNetID and Password](#).

FERPA TRAINING PROCEDURE

FERPA Training at TTIC

TTIC personnel with access to student records or admission data are required to complete FERPA training and successfully pass a quiz before gaining access to student data. Re-training and passing the quiz is required every three years for continued access.

The FERPA tutorial is designed to give participants a base-level knowledge of the rules governing protection and release of student information, and the quiz is to gauge their understanding. The tutorial and quiz take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, total.

For Faculty (including instructing Research Assistant Professors)

FERPA training and successfully passing a quiz every 3 years.

Training and quiz is completed online.

To be completed within 30 days of initial start date.

Record of passed training + date: on main info tab of Populi profile (under other info).

For Teaching Assistants + Graders

FERPA training and successfully passing a quiz every 3 years.

Training and quiz is completed online.

To be completed before the end of week 2 of the quarter in which they will be performing TA or grading duties.

Record of passed training + date: on student transcript page of Populi profile.

For Admissions Application Access

FERPA training and successfully passing a quiz every 3 years.

Training and quiz is completed online.

To be completed prior to accessing admission data (in winter qtr.)

Record of passed training + date: on student transcript page of Populi profile.

For Administrators Accessing Academic Records

FERPA training and successfully passing a quiz every 3 years.

Training and quiz is completed online.

To be completed within 30 days of initial start date.

Record of passed training + date: on main info tab of Populi profile (under other info).

FERPA Training Records

Training and training records shall be maintained by the Office of the Registrar. Successful training completion shall be good for a period of 3 years. Anyone with expiring FERPA credentials will be notified 1 month prior to expiration and given notice that new training is required, and instructions for completing the training.

A FERPA tutorial and quiz is conducted by the TTIC Office of the Registrar. This training: the FERPA Tutorial is designed to give participants a base-level knowledge of the rules governing protection and release of student information, and the quiz is to gauge their understanding. Watching the tutorial and achieving minimum score on the quiz must be completed before access to student records is granted. The tutorial and quiz take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete, total.

To see if an institute employee or student has completed TTIC FERPA training, their Populi profile view's "info" tab should show their last training completion date- as recorded by the Registrar.

FERPA APPLICATION

Admissions

Records of applicants to the PhD program do not become TTIC student records unless the student is admitted and enrolls. The admission application notifies students of FERPA, and asks them if they are willing to waive their FERPA rights in regard to recommendation letters. Some recommenders may not be comfortable writing letters for the student if the student will be scrutinizing the letter later. The TTIC application asks:

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides students with certain rights in respect to their education records. This includes the right to review recommendation letters written on the students' behalf. You may choose to waive the right to review recommendation letters written on your behalf. By checking a box below and upon submittal of this application, your decision shall be noted.:

- I waive my right under FERPA to review recommendation letters associated with this application.
- I Do Not waive my right under FERPA to review recommendation letters associated with this application.

The admissions administrator shall notify the admissions committee if a student receiving an admit offer has not waived FERPA. (The applicant answer is also reviewable in the applicant database.)

Anyone with access to application database shall receive FERPA training.

Student Records

TTIC is committed to the protection and confidentiality of student educational records, adhering closely to the guidelines established by FERPA.

Education Records are directly related to a student and maintained by an institution or its agent, for example:

- Electronic academic record accessible in Populi
- Graded student work
- Documents in a student's file (evaluation letters, thesis committee forms, etc.)
- Documents stored that pertain to a conversation with the student

Education Records are NOT:

- law enforcement records
- employment records (unless employment is based on student status)
- medical records

Students are notified annually of their FERPA rights, via the Registrar's office, and FERPA policy is posted on the Intranet.

Those working in the Registrar's Office and in Student Services sign a hard copy FERPA agreement kept on file, and receive FERPA training. The Office of the Registrar and Student Services participate in ongoing FERPA training and oversee institute FERPA training.

Transcript requests

Transcripts may only be requested and approved for release to third parties by the student themselves, after using their individual log-in from TTIC's Populi platform. The Office of the Registrar is the only office to field and complete requests.

Populi

Populi is where the bulk of a student's academic record is stored. Students have access to their academic record using their individual logins and secondary security verification codes. Students may access their record and contact the Registrar to inquire or question records. Students may also initiate further record restriction (including directory info) inside their Populi account by activating the "padlock indicator". The Director of Graduate Studies and a student's advisor may additionally view the student academic record.

Anyone with access to student records shall receive FERPA training.

Teaching Assistant (TA) work

The Office of the Registrar may give course overview and access inside the Populi platform to a student fulfilling TA duties if approved by the course instructor, and required to fulfill TA duties.

TAs allowed access to course/student records shall receive FERPA training.

Recommendation Letters

Alumni and students who were enrolled in TTIC's PhD program requesting recommendations letters may consent to waiving their FERPA rights for this purpose: meaning that they consent to the release of their academic/ student performance information from a faculty member to a third party(s).

Statements made from personal observation or knowledge do not require signed release. However, specific information concerning academic performance or grades does require a release. As in admissions, a student has the right to then access the recommendation letter, unless the student additionally waived this right to view, which also must be in writing.

FERPA waivers/student consent shall be collected and kept securely as an official record. At this time, faculty may maintain their own records of consent/waiver, or with the assistance of their administrative assistants. Records of consent may be kept digitally or hard copy. Consent with specific times of expiration must be purged at time of expiration. Consent/ FERPA waiver shall be retrievable for each recommendation made for a student or alumnus.