

Student Access to Educational Records

Definitions

Educational Records are those records, files, documents, and other materials which (1) contain information directly related to a student; and (2) are maintained by Middle Tennessee State University or by a person acting for the University. "Records" means information recorded in any medium, including, but not limited to, the following: handwriting, print, tapes, film, microfilm, and microfiche. Educational records do not include (1) personal notes, (2) records available only to law enforcement personnel, (3) employment records, (4) medical and psychiatric records (these are accessible by the student's physician).

A student is any person who is or has been enrolled at Middle Tennessee State University. An applicant who does not enroll or who is declared ineligible has no inherent right to inspect his or her file. Wherever "student" is used in reference to personal rights, an eligible parent of a dependent student has similar rights. This "eligible" parent is one who has satisfied Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 and who presents such proof to the custodian of the educational records. Normally this proof will be a certified copy of the parent's most recent Federal Income Tax Form.

Directory information includes the student's name, address (including e-mail), telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, enrolled hours, student level (freshman, sophomore, etc.) participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student. A student may request that such directory information not be released to anyone other than those persons defined as school officials. To do so, a Request for Non-Release of Directory Information must be signed in the Records Office, Cope Administration 106.

The request is valid until the student completes a Cancellation of Request for Nonrelease of Directory Information form at the Records Office or until enrollment ceases at MTSU. If the student re-enrolls and does not want directory information released, another Request for Nonrelease of Directory Information form must be completed.

A school official is a person employed by the university as an administrator, instructor, supervisor, or support staff member.

A legitimate educational interest exists if the official needs to review an educational record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Having access to an educational record means being allowed to see the original record.

Release of Personally Identifiable Student Educational Records

Middle Tennessee State University shall not permit access to, or the release of, any information in the educational records

of any student that is personally identifiable, other than directory information, without the written consent of the student, to any party other than the following:

1. MTSU officials and staff who have legitimate educational interests;
2. officials of other schools in which the student seeks admission;
3. appropriate persons in connection with a student's application for, or receipt of, financial aid;
4. federal or state officials as defined in paragraph 99.37 of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974;
5. state and local officials authorized by state statute;
6. organizations conducting studies for, or on the behalf of, MTSU for the purpose of assisting in accomplishing the University's stated goals, when such information will be used only by such organizations and subsequently destroyed when no longer needed for the intended purpose;
7. accrediting organizations, to carry out their functions;
8. parents of a dependent student as defined in section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (Written consent may be allowed from either of these separated or divorced parents subject to any agreement between the parents or court order. In the case of a student whose legal guardian is an institution, a party independent of the institution, appointed under state and local law to give parental consent, may be allowed to do so.);
9. in compliance with judicial order or subpoena, provided that the student is notified in advance of the compliance unless the issuing court or agency has ordered that the existence or the contents of the subpoena or the information furnished not be disclosed; or
10. appropriate persons in connection with an emergency if such knowledge is necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other persons.

NOTE: With the exception of MTSU officials and staff who have been determined by the University to have legitimate educational interests, all individuals and agencies who have requested or obtained access to a student's record (other than directory information) will be noted in a record which is kept with each student's Educational Record. A request must be in writing stating the purpose of the request. This record will also indicate specifically the legitimate interest that the persons or agency had in obtaining the information.

Procedures for Accessing Educational Records

Eligible students have a right to inspect and review their educational records. To do so the student must request the custodian make the records available. The student may ask for an explanation and/or a copy of the record. (The price of the copies shall not exceed the cost of duplicating the record.) The records shall be made available within 45 days from the request. After consultation with the custodian the student may seek amendment of the records the student believes to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. If there is a disagreement between the student and the custodian as to the correctness of the data contained in the record, the student may submit a request for a formal hearing. The request and the formal challenge to the content of the records must be presented in writing to the chair of the Student Appeals Committee. The chair shall call a meeting no later than 45 days after receipt of the written appeal and challenge. The committee will allow the student to present evidence to substantiate appeal and shall render a written decision to the student within 45 days after the meeting.

Complaints of alleged failure of the institution to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-4605.

NOTE: This procedure does not provide for a hearing to contest an academic grade.

Exclusions

Right of access does not include

1. financial records of parents or any information therein;
2. confidential letters and statements of recommendation which were placed in the educational record of a student prior to January 1, 1975;
3. records to which access has been waived by a student. (This applies only if a student, upon request, is notified of the names of all

persons making confidential recommendations and if such recommendations are used solely for the purpose they were intended.)

Destruction of Educational Records

Educational records may be destroyed except that a student shall be granted access prior to destruction if such is requested.

Informing Students

MTSU informs its students of the policy governing privacy rights of students' educational records by publishing the policy in the University Catalog. A listing of the types of records and related information follows.

Educational Records at MTSU

Type of Educational Record	Information in Record	Persons with Access	Custodian Who Reviews/Expunges Record
Academic Record	Courses, grades, degrees, entrance examination scores	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Locator Information	Personal address, e-mail addresses, telephone no., class schedule	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Non-release Lists	Information concerning non-release of records	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Withdrawal Records	Demographic; reason for withdrawal	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Student Folder (Undergraduate)	Application for admission, receipt for admission fee, high school transcript, previous college transcript, general correspondence, ACT and GED scores	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Student Folder (Graduate)	Application for admission receipt for admission fee, previous college transcripts, general correspondence, references, test scores (Miller's Analogy, Cooperative English, GRE, ACTSB, GMAT, TOEFL)	Faculty/staff with official need	Dean of College of Graduate Studies
Application to Upper Division Form	Name, degree, major, minor(s)	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Teacher Reports of Incomplete, Change of Grade Forms	Grades for particular courses	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Grade Sheets	Students in each class and final grade	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Drop/Add Forms	Class change data	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Change of Major Academic Program Forms	Major change, advisor's name	Faculty/staff with official need	Department/School of Major

Type of Educational Record	Information in Record	Persons with Access	Custodian Who Reviews/ Expunges Record
Veteran's Administration Files	Enrollment data, dates of attendance	Staff with official need	Director of Records
Change of Name, Address, Telephone Number Form	Name, address, telephone number changes	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Transcripts from Previous Institutions	Courses and grades	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Records
Test Scores (ACT, GED, academic assessment)	Scores on tests required for admission	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Admissions
Application for Admission	Demographic	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Admissions
Residency (undergraduate, graduate)	Residency classification and information	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of Admissions Dean of College of Graduate Studies
Financial Statement (International) Admissions Test Scores	Information concerning student's finances	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of International Programs and Services
Educational Experiences Form (International)	Student's previous schooling	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of International Programs and Services
Form I-20 (International)	Eligibility certificates for international students	Faculty/staff with official need	Director of International Programs and Services
Resumes and References	Personal data; personal recommendations	Faculty/staff with official need	Placement Officer
Discipline	Violations and penalties	Personnel in Dean of Students' Office	Dean of Student Life
Counseling Record	Demographic and counseling summary	Individual Student	Director of Counseling and Testing Center
Payroll	Payments, withholdings	Payroll clerks, officer supervisors	Business Manager
Payroll, maintenance	Number of hours worked and rate of pay	Maintenance Office personnel	Director of Facilities Services
Loans	Amount borrowed, repayments, correspondence	Loan supervisor and clerks in Loan Office	Business Manager
Student Receivables	Amounts due from students for various reasons, i.e., rents parking violations, fee errors	Business Office staff	Business Manager
Dishonored Checks	Amounts of checks, correspondence, etc.	Business Office staff	Business Manager
Student Deposits	Deposit amounts, date deposited, purpose, etc.	Business Office staff	Business Manager
Student Registration Records (Payments)	Fees paid, type, etc.	Business Office staff	Business Manager
Sun Belt Conference Eligibility List	Student's academic standing for eligibility to participate in intercollegiate athletics	Staff	Athletic Director