



# Sam Houston State University

*A Member of The Texas State University System*

## INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

### **SHSU IRB Guidance RE: FERPA**

In accordance with FERPA, an educational institution has the authority to determine what information may be accessed from an education record. If an institution denies an investigator access to information in an education record, the IRB cannot overrule the decision.

If a student has requested privacy over their education records, no information, including directory information, may be released without the student's specific written consent. They should work with the Registrar's Office to determine if students have requested their information as private.

If researchers will obtain data from education records beyond directory information for the purpose of research, they are generally limited to two options:

Researchers may contact and obtain written consent from each student to participate in the study and authorize the release of his/her education records for research purposes.

School officials other than the researcher (such as Institutional Assessment) with legitimate access to the data or information may strip the records of any identifying information and provide the data to the researcher. Under 34 CFR 99.31, education records may be released without consent if all personally identifiable information has been removed. Officials must work with the Registrar's Office to determine if students have requested their information as private.

### **Directory Information**

The following are considered directory information and may be released without consent:

- o Email address
- o Date of birth
- o Dates of attendance
- o Full-time/Part-time status (based on 12 credit hours)
- o Mailing address and telephone number
- o Class standing (freshman, sophomore, etc.)

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- o Major and minor plans
- o Degree(s) earned, and date degree was earned

### **Can a teacher ever conduct research with their own students?**

Yes, they can, but the research has to be for the purpose of improving instruction, developing an assessment, or supporting the students with data. Teachers might also be asked to be part of a state or federal study that has been approved by an IRB. Teachers cannot just conduct their own research.