

To: Deans (*Sent via email*)

From: Steven VanderStaay, VPUE

Date: September 23, 2009

Subject: FERPA and Student Grades

We have received concerned reports that some faculty may be posting student grades by Western number or leaving graded papers and exams in public areas for students to pick up. If true, these practices would violate grading-related FERPA guidelines. Consequently, we ask that you remind all faculty that it is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act to

- Use the student ID number of a student in a public posting of grades.
- Link the name of a student with that student's ID number in any public manner.
- Leave graded exams, papers, assignments, etc. in a stack for students to pick up by sorting through the work of all students.
- Circulate a printed class roster with student names and ID numbers, or grades, as an attendance roster.
- Discuss the progress of a student with anyone other than the student (including parents) without written consent from the student.
- Provide lists of students enrolled in your courses for any commercial purposes.
- Provide student schedules or assist anyone other than authorized Western Washington University employees in locating a student on campus.

A few of the above practices, such as leaving graded exams and papers in a stack for students to pick up, were once common at Western. This points up how important it is for us to clearly communicate the guidelines and to ensure that they are followed. The situation also points up the vulnerable position our chairs are in. Because Chairs are responsible for instruction in their departments, each Chair should remind all faculty of the FERPA requirements and take steps to make sure that they are followed. We can protect our chairs by supporting these efforts. Department managers should also be reminded of the guidelines. In some cases, Chairs may wish to ask their faculty to complete the Registrar's FERPA tutorial. The tutorial can be completed in about 90 seconds and can be found at: <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/registrar/ferpa/index.html>. This information is also available via the Chairs website.

Thank you for your leadership.