

USU Academic Policies

Academic Honesty

The University expects that students and faculty alike maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. For the benefit of students who may not be aware of specific standards of the University concerning academic honesty, the following information is quoted from *The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University* (revised September 2009), Article VI, Section 1:

Section 1. University Standard: Academic Integrity

Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the University by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty and by reporting all violations or suspected violations of the Academic Integrity Standard to their instructors.

The Honor Pledge—To enhance the learning environment at Utah State University and to develop student academic integrity, each student agrees to the following Honor Pledge: "I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity."

Violations of the Academic Integrity Standard (academic violations) include, but are not limited to:

1. **Cheating:** (1) using or attempting to use or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity, including working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done "individually"; (2) depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work; (4) acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission; (5) continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity; (6) submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or (7) engaging in any form of research fraud.
2. **Falsification:** altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
3. **Plagiarism:** representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

Section 2. Reporting Violations of Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity Violation Form (AIVF) provides guidance to instructors and students, ensures minimum due process requirements are met, and allows tracking of repeat offenders at the University level. The AIVF is available through the Office of the Vice President for Student Services.

Once an instructor has determined that an academic violation has occurred and that a sanction is appropriate, an AIVF must be submitted prior to application of the sanction. The student may appeal the determination that an academic violation occurred if the AIVF is not filed.

All submitted AIVF forms are kept in the Vice President for Student Services Office for the duration of the student's academic career at Utah State University. When resolution has been reached between the student and instructor, a Resolution Report detailing the action taken and agreement of both parties on that action shall be submitted to the Office of the Vice President for Student Services. If no Resolution Report has been filed for a submitted AIVF within the semester, the Campus Judicial Officer will investigate to determine if resolution was reached and why no Resolution Report was filed.

Section 3. Discipline Regarding Academic Integrity Violations

An instructor has full autonomy to evaluate a student's academic performance in a course. If a student commits an academic violation, the instructor may sanction the student. Such sanctions may include: (1) requiring the student to rewrite a paper/assignment or to retake a test/examination; (2) adjusting the student's grade—for either an assignment/test or the course; (3) giving the student a failing grade for the course; or (4) taking actions as appropriate. Additional disciplinary action beyond instructor sanction shall be determined by the Judicial Officer and the University.

The penalty that the University will impose on a student for the first Academic Integrity violation is placement on academic integrity probation after the first offense.

The penalties that the University may impose on a student for multiple or egregious academic integrity violations are:

1. **Probation:** continued participation in an academic program predicated upon the student satisfying certain requirements as specified in a written notice of probation. Probation is for a designated period of time and includes the probability of more severe disciplinary penalties if the student does not comply with the specified requirements or is found to be committing academic integrity violations during the probationary period. The student must request termination of the probation in writing.

2. Performance of community service.
3. **Suspension:** temporary dismissal from an academic program or from the University for a specified time, after which the student is eligible to continue the program or return to the University. Conditions for continuance or readmission may be specified.
4. **Expulsion:** permanent dismissal either from an academic program or from the University.
5. Assigning a designation with a course grade indicating an academic integrity violation involving academic integrity. Conditions for removal may be specified, but the designation remains on the student's transcript for a minimum of one year; provided however, that once the student's degree is posted to the transcript, the designation may not be removed thereafter.
6. Denial or revocation of degrees.

The complete *Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University* can be viewed at:

<http://www.usu.edu/student-services/studentcode/>

Assumption of Risk

All classes, programs, and extracurricular activities within the University involve some risk, and certain ones involve travel. The University provides opportunities to participate in these programs on a voluntary basis. Therefore, students should not participate in them if they do not care to assume the risks. Students can ask the respective program leaders/sponsors about the possible risks a program may generate, and if students are not willing to assume the risks, they should not select that program. By voluntarily participating in classes, programs, and extracurricular activities, a student does so at his or her own risk. General information about University Risk Management policies, insurance coverage, vehicle use policies, and risk management forms can be found at: <http://www.usu.edu/riskmg/>

E-mail Communication Policy

All students enrolled at USU must specify a preferred e-mail address in the central system of record. A University-provided account or a commercial service provider e-mail account may be specified. Preferred e-mail addresses may be specified or changed at: <https://id.usu.edu/>

University officials, including advisors, professors, administrators, and various office personnel, may use a student's preferred e-mail account as an official means of communication.

It is the responsibility of *all* students to check their e-mail accounts on a *regular basis*. Students will be held accountable as being *officially notified* when any correspondence is sent by University representatives to their preferred e-mail accounts.

Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action

Utah State University is an affirmative action employer and is committed to providing equal educational and employment opportunity regardless of race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), national origin, age, disability, or veteran status. In addition, discrimination based on sexual orientation is prohibited in the hiring of employees or in evaluating employee or student performance. Equal opportunity applies to all aspects of employment, such as recruitment, hiring, promotion, training, benefits, and salary. Equal educational opportunities include, but are not limited to, admissions, access to course offerings, financial assistance, housing, and extracurricular activities. The AA/EO Director serves as the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator for the University. For additional AA/EO-related information and specific contact information, see: <http://www.usu.edu/aaeo>

Notification of Rights Under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Student records at Utah State University are governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The following is a description of the rights of students under these regulations.

Definitions

A **student** is defined as any individual who is attending or has attended Utah State University.

An **educational record** is any record maintained by Utah State University which is directly related to the student. An educational record does *not* include: (1) a personal record kept by a staff member, if it is kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record and is not accessible to or revealed to any other person, except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record; (2) records created and maintained by the Utah State University Police Department for law enforcement purposes; (3) an employment record of an individual whose employment is not contingent on the fact that he or she is a student, provided the record is used only in relation to the individual's employment; (4) records made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional, if the records are used *only* for treatment of a student and made available *only* to those persons providing the treatment; or (5) alumni records which contain information about a student after he or she is no longer in attendance at the University and which do not relate to the person as a student.

Student Rights under FERPA

FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their educational records. These rights include: (1) the right to inspect and review information contained in their educational records; (2) the right to request to amend their educational records; (3) the right to consent to disclosure, with certain exceptions specified in the Act, of personally identifiable information from educational records; and (4) the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

1. The right to inspect and review information contained in their educational records.

This right should be granted within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.

Students requesting access to their records must present proper identification and a signed, formal written request to the registrar, dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official. The request should identify the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The University official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the University official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.

Students may request a copy of their educational records. The cost of each copy is \$2.00 for an official transcript and \$.50 per page for other records.

There may be occasions when a record may not be copied, especially if doing so may compromise another student's or faculty member's privacy. The University may deny access to the following records:

(a) parents' financial statements; (b) letters of recommendation, if the student has waived his or her right of access; (c) records filed before January 1, 1975; (d) records connected with denied applications to attend Utah State University; or (e) records not included in the FERPA definition of educational records.

Utah State University reserves the right to deny copies of records, including transcripts, in any of the following situations:

(a) the student has an unpaid financial obligation to the University; (b) there is an unresolved disciplinary action against the student; or (c) the educational record requested is an exam or set of standardized test questions.

2. The right to request the amendment of their educational records.

Students may exercise this right when they believe their records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

A student desiring to ask the University to amend a record should write to the University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the University decides not to amend the record as requested, the University will notify the student in writing of the decision and of the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when he or she is notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosure, with certain exceptions specified in the Act, of personally identifiable information from educational records.

Permission to Release Student Information

With the exception of directory information, Utah State University must receive written consent from students before disclosing any personally identifiable information from their educational records. Students may give the University their consent by completing a *Release of Student Information* form. This form can be found at:

<http://www.usu.edu/registrar/forms/pdf/info-release.pdf>

The written consent must: (a) specify the records to be released, (b) state the purpose of the disclosure, (c) identify the party or class of parties to whom disclosure may be made, and (d) be signed and dated by the student.

Exceptions

Utah State University may release personally identifiable information from a student's educational record without first obtaining the student's written permission when the disclosure is to:

1. University officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the records. A University official is:
 - a. a person employed by the University in an administrative, academic, research, or support staff position, whether full- or part-time.
 - b. a person appointed by the Utah State Board of Regents or the USU Board of Trustees.
 - c. a person employed by, under contract to, or assigned to the University to perform a special task for the benefit of the University, such as an attorney or auditor.

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- d. a person who is employed by the Utah State University Police Department.
- e. a person serving on an official disciplinary, grievance, or appeals committee.

A University Official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:

- a. performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or performing a task that is related to his or her contract agreement or appointment.
 - b. performing a task related to a student's education.
 - c. performing a task related to the discipline of or grievance by a student.
 - d. providing a service or benefit relating to the student or student's family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.
 - e. maintaining the safety and security of the campus and/or investigating violations of the law that affect the University.
2. certain officials of the U.S. Department of Education, the Comptroller General, the Attorney General, and state and local educational authorities, in connection with audit or evaluation of certain state or federally supported educational programs.
 3. state and local officials to whom disclosure is specifically required by state statute adopted prior to November 19, 1974.
 4. Veterans Administration Officials.
 5. officials of other institutions in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.
 6. persons (other than parents) or organizations providing financial aid to students, or determining financial aid decisions on the condition that the information is necessary to: (a) determine eligibility for the aid, (b) determine the amount of the aid, (c) determine the conditions for the aid, or (d) enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.
 7. organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions to develop, validate, and administer predictive tests, to administer student aid programs, or to improve instruction.
 8. accrediting organizations carrying out their accrediting functions.
 9. parents of a student who is claimed as a dependent on a parent's most recent tax statement, as evidenced by a notarized *Parent Declaration of Student Dependency* form, stating that the student is dependent for income tax purposes. This form is available at: <http://www.usu.edu/registrar/forms/pdf/parent.pdf>
 10. persons in compliance with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena, provided that the University makes a reasonable attempt to notify the student in advance of the compliance.
Note: The University is not required to, and should not, notify the student if a federal grand jury subpoena, or any other subpoena issued for a law enforcement purpose, orders the University not to disclose the existence or contents of the subpoena.

11. defend USU in a legal action. Utah State University is not required to obtain a subpoena to produce educational records of a student if the University is sued by the student or takes legal action against a student. The records produced must be needed by the University to proceed with legal action as plaintiff or to defend itself.

12. the Attorney General of the United States or his designee in response to an ex parte order in connection with the investigation or prosecution of terrorism crimes.

13. persons in an emergency, if the knowledge of the information is, in fact, necessary to protect the health or safety of students or other persons.

14. a victim of an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or a nonforcible sex offense, subject to the *Definition of Terms*. The disclosure may *only* include the final results of the disciplinary proceeding conducted by the University with respect to that alleged crime or offense. The University may disclose the final results of the disciplinary proceeding, regardless of whether or not the University concluded a violation was committed.

15. interested individuals (the public), subject to the requirements in Section 99.39, in connection with the final results of a University disciplinary proceeding.

The University must not disclose the final results of the disciplinary proceeding *unless* it has determined that: (a) the student is an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence or nonforcible sex offense, and (b) with respect to the allegation made against him or her, the student has committed a violation of the University's rules or policies.

The final results must include *only*: (a) the name of the student, (b) the violation committed, and (c) any sanction imposed by the University against the student.

The University may not disclose the name of any other student, including a victim or witness, without prior written consent of the other student.

16. parents regarding the student's violation of any federal, state, or local law, or of any institutional policy or rule, governing the use of alcohol or a controlled substance if: (a) the University has determined that the student has committed a disciplinary violation with respect to that use or possession, and (b) the student is under the age of 21 at the time of the disclosure to the parent. This item does not supercede any state law prohibiting the University from disclosing this information.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

**Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington DC 20202-5901**

Release of Directory (Public) Information

At its discretion, Utah State University may provide *Directory Information* in accordance with the provisions of FERPA. Types of information considered as *Directory Information* are listed below.

Directory (Public) Information at Utah State University

Name
User ID (A-Number)
Local and permanent address
Electronic mail address
Telephone number
Date of birth
Residency status
Degrees and awards received
Most recent institution attended by the student
Academic level
Major field of study
Department or college
Enrollment status (undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time)
Participation in officially recognized activities/sports
Dates of attendance and graduation
Weight/height of members of athletic teams
Photographs

Directory information is considered public information. However, the University *does not* release lists of students or name-and-address labels to businesses or agencies outside the University. Likewise, the University *does not* release information regarding applicants to outside agencies.

Privacy of Directory (Public) Information

Blocking the Release of Directory (Public) Information

By default, Utah State University may release a student's directory information. Students may prohibit (or block) the public disclosure of directory information by completing a *Privacy of Directory (Public) Information* form. This form is available at:

<http://www.usu.edu/registrar/forms/pdf/privacy.pdf>

Students should consider *very carefully* the consequences of a decision to withhold directory information. A privacy block will call for Utah State University to not release this *directory information*. Therefore, any future requests for such information from noninstitutional persons or organizations will be refused.

Although Utah State University will honor a student's request to withhold directory information, USU *cannot assume responsibility* to contact the student for subsequent permission to release this information. Regardless of the effect upon the student, Utah State University assumes no liability as a result of honoring a student's instructions to withhold such information.

Allowing the Release of Directory Information After it Has Been Previously Blocked

Although the initial request may be filed at any time, requests for a privacy block will be honored by the University until removed through another submission of the *Privacy of Directory (Public) Information* form by the student. The form provides two options for students: (1) block the release of information, and (2) allow the release after it has already been blocked.

Exceptions: One-time Release of Directory (Public) Information

A student who has his or her directory information blocked may want to make a one-time exception, while still keeping his or her directory information blocked. For example, a college may want to list all of the students who made the Honor Roll (Dean's List). The names of students who have their directory information blocked will be omitted from this listing. A student who wishes to keep his or her directory information blocked may complete a *One-time Release of Directory (Public) Information* form. This form is available at:

<http://www.usu.edu/registrar/forms/pdf/privacyexception.pdf>

Utah State University cannot assume responsibility to contact students for subsequent permission to release this information. It is the sole responsibility of the student to initiate the release of blocked information.

Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act

This act (Public Law 101-542), signed into law in November 1990 by the U.S. Department of Education, applies to institutions of higher education receiving federal financial assistance. Under this policy, current and prospective students must be informed of completion or graduation rates of students seeking certificates or degrees. The act also requires reporting of security policies and crime statistics to students, employees, and the U.S. Department of Education.

Current information, reports, and statistics are available at:

<http://www.usu.edu/righttoknow>

Additional Policies

Policies relating to registration, student records, and academic standing may be found in the *Registration, Student Records, and Academic Standing* section of this catalog on pages 56-63.

The complete *USU Academic Policies and Procedures Manual*, which includes additional policies, as well as policies shown in this catalog, is available online at: <http://www.usu.edu/policies/>