FERPA Guidelines for Parents, Guardians and Spouses

**What is FERPA?**
The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*, also known as the *Buckley Amendment*, was passed by Congress in 1974 and gives students 3 basic rights:

- The right to inspect and review education records.
- The right to seek to amend education records.
- The right to have some control over the disclosure of information from education records.

All educational institutions (elementary, secondary and post-secondary) that receive federal funds must comply with FERPA. This includes McKendree University.

**Who is protected under FERPA?**
Students who are currently enrolled or formerly enrolled, regardless of their age or parental dependency status, are protected under FERPA. FERPA does not apply to deceased students or persons who have applied but have not attended (attendance begins the first day of New Student Orientation).

**What are Education Records?**
Education records are all records that:

- Contain information directly related to a student (including grades and other information related to a student’s academic standing); and
- Are maintained by McKendree University or an authorized party.

**What about Parents, Guardians and Spouses?**
Once a student enrolls in a post-secondary educational institution, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parent to the student regardless of the student’s age. If anyone other than the student wishes to view and inspect, or even discuss, a McKendree University student’s education record (including grades), the following must occur and be documented:

- The student must provide written consent to allow the parent, guardian or spouse to view and inspect their education record. (*Students* must obtain Permission to Release Academic Information forms from the Office of Academic Records.)

The above must be maintained in the student’s file in the Office of Academic Records.

If your student refuses to sign a release form, there is one other option provided in the FERPA regulations for parents who claim their student as a dependent on their federal tax returns. In order to exercise this option, parents must:

- Make an appointment to meet with the Registrar;
- Bring a copy of your latest tax return showing you have claimed the student as a dependent (you may redact the dollar amounts on the tax form, we don’t need to see those).