

FERPA, Student Records, and the Law of the Florida Classroom

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Who I Am and What This Office Does

My role

Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel. Before FAU: civil litigation, election law, and General Counsel of the Florida Department of State. I also teach here, so I sit on both sides of this podium.

Who the client is

The Office of the General Counsel represents Florida Atlantic University. We do not represent students, employees, faculty, or trustees in personal matters. That distinction matters when you call us.

What we handle

Contracts, public records, student and employment matters, litigation, subpoenas, service of process, regulations, research and compliance, real property, and intellectual property.

When to call

Immediately if you are asked to accept service of process, receive a subpoena or court order, get a letter from an attorney, or are contacted by anyone outside FAU seeking student records. Sooner is always cheaper than later.

Where Are You Coming From?

Show of hands, or use the poll link on the screen. I am asking because Florida is genuinely different, and I want to know how much of this will be new.

- Who has taught at a public institution before, anywhere?
- Who is coming to Florida from another state?
- Who has taught at a private institution, where none of the open-records rules applied?
- Who is new to teaching altogether, or coming in from practice or industry?
- Who has ever received a public records request, a subpoena, or a FERPA question about their own students?

If you came from a private institution or a state without a strong open-records law, assume your instincts about privacy and confidentiality are calibrated wrong for Florida. That is the single most common problem I see in a new faculty member's first year.

Four Quick Questions. True or False?

Vote before I say anything. No one gets graded, and I promise the answers are not obvious.

- 1. A student's class schedule is directory information at FAU, so I may confirm it to a caller.
- 2. A parent who pays the tuition is entitled to see an adult student's grades.
- 3. A student may audio record my lecture without asking me first.
- 4. If I suspect a sixteen-year-old dual-enrollment student is being abused at home, the right move is to tell my chair and let the chair handle it.

Hold your answers. We will come back to every one of these before the hour is out.

The Answers, and Why They Matter

1. False

FAU Regulation 4.008 lists what is directory information. A class schedule is not on the list, and neither is enrollment in your particular course. Confirming that a student is in your 9:00 a.m. section is a disclosure.

2. False

Paying tuition creates no right of access. There is a narrow exception for parents of students who are IRS dependents, but it is permissive, not mandatory, and at FAU it runs through the Registrar. Not through you.

3. True

Section 1004.097, Florida Statutes, lets an enrolled student record a class lecture without prior notice for three specified purposes. Publication is a different question, and it is where the liability lives.

4. False

Section 39.201 places the duty on you personally, and it runs to the Florida Abuse Hotline, not to your chair. Section 39.205(1) makes a knowing failure to report a third-degree felony.

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

PART 01

Florida's Inverted Default

Why the Sunshine State changes the questions you should be asking

In Florida, Openness Is the Default

Article I, Section 24 of the Florida Constitution and Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, give the public a right of access to the records of every state agency. FAU is a state agency.

- A "public record" is any document, paper, letter, map, photograph, film, recording, data, or other material made or received in connection with official University business, in any form and by any means of transmission.
- Your FAU email is a public record. So are your Canvas announcements, your meeting notes, your calendar, and your text messages about University business, even on a personal phone.
- The medium does not matter. A sticky note and a Slack message stand on the same footing as a signed memorandum.
- A record is public unless a statute makes it exempt or confidential. There is no general privacy exception, and there is no "draft" exception.

Working assumption for your whole career here: anything you write about University business may end up in a reporter's hands, in a lawsuit, or on a legislator's desk. Write accordingly.

FERPA Is the Exception That Flips the Default

Public records law

- Everything is open.
- Confidentiality requires an express statutory exemption.
- The burden is on the University to justify withholding.
- When in doubt, it gets produced.

FERPA and student records

- Everything is closed.
- Disclosure requires written consent or a specific statutory exception.
- The burden is on you to justify releasing.
- When in doubt, it does not go out.

Applicant records are confidential too. Under Section 1006.52, Florida Statutes, records of people who applied but never enrolled are exempt from disclosure right alongside enrolled students' records.

The Law That Actually Governs You

FERPA, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g

The Buckley Amendment, implemented at 34 C.F.R. Part 99. It conditions federal funding on protecting the privacy of education records. Enforcement runs through the Department of Education's Student Privacy Policy Office.

§ 1002.225, Fla. Stat.

Requires every public postsecondary institution in Florida to comply with FERPA, and gives an aggrieved student an immediate right to sue in circuit court for an injunction.

§ 1006.52, Fla. Stat.

Makes education records and applicant records confidential and exempt from Section 119.07(1) and Article I, Section 24 of the Florida Constitution. This is the exemption that makes FERPA work here.

FAU Regulation 4.008

Access to Student Records. Defines FAU's directory information and the process for a student to restrict it. Read it once. It is two pages and it answers most of the questions you will actually have.

Four Duties, in the Order They Will Come Up

1. Protect

Maintain student education records securely. Locked drawers, University-managed systems, no student data on personal cloud storage, no rosters left on a printer.

2. Limit

Share within FAU only with people who have a legitimate educational interest. Curiosity, seniority, and friendship are not legitimate educational interests.

3. Do not disclose outside

No sharing with anyone outside FAU without the student's written consent, unless a specific exception applies and someone with authority has confirmed it.

4. Route

Send requests to the office that owns them. Registrar for FERPA questions, Public Records Custodian for public records requests, General Counsel for anything with a lawyer, a court, or a legal demand attached.

What Is, and What Is Not, an Education Record

Education records

- Different records directly relate to a student and maintained by FAU or by someone acting for FAU, for example:
 - Grades, GPA, and your Canvas gradebook.
 - Z number and any student identifier.
 - Class schedule, enrollment, and registration.
 - Transcripts and degree progress.
 - Advising notes kept in official systems.
 - Student conduct and academic integrity records.
 - Your email to a colleague discussing a named student's performance.

Not education records

- Sole possession notes: your private memory aid, kept to yourself, shown to no one.
- Personal knowledge from direct observation.
- Employment records, unless the job depends on student status.
- Treatment records of Student Health and Counseling.
- Records of FAU's law enforcement unit, created for a law enforcement purpose.
- Alumni records created after the person is no longer a student.

The moment you show a sole possession note to anyone, even a temporary substitute, it stops being a sole possession note and becomes an education record. Write your notes as though they will be read.

Directory Information at FAU

This is the complete list. FAU may release these items on request unless a student has restricted them.

- Student name; address; telephone number, if listed; date and place of birth
- Class and college of enrollment; major field of study; dates of attendance
- Degrees and awards received
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Most recent previous educational agency or institution attended

If it is not on that list, it is not directory information. Grades, GPA, class schedule, enrollment in your section, disciplinary history, and financial information are all confidential.

The FERPA Hold, and Its Limits

How students opt out

A student files a Request for Non-Release of Directory Information with the Registrar. Once filed, FAU treats even the directory items as confidential.

What a hold means for you

If a hold is in place, you cannot confirm that the person is a student at all. The safe answer to any caller is that you cannot confirm or deny, and here is the Registrar's number.

What a hold does not do

It does not make a student anonymous in the classroom. Classmates will see their name in Canvas, in group work, and in discussion. A hold is about the outside world, not the seminar table.

Where requests go

FERPA requests to to the Registrar. Public records requests go to FAU's Public Records Custodian: publicrecords@fau.edu, 561-297-2452, or the online portal. Media inquiries go to University Communications. Neither goes to you.

The Parent Who Pays the Bills

THE FACTS

It is week six. A parent calls your office. She is warm, worried, and specific: "I pay her tuition. She has stopped answering my texts. Is she coming to class? What did she get on the midterm? I just need to know if I should drive down."

The instinct

Answer. She is frightened, she is paying, and the information seems harmless. Faculty who are parents feel this pull hardest.

The rule

Attendance and grades are education records. Payment creates no access right. The IRS-dependent exception exists but is permissive and administered by the Registrar, not by you.

The move

"I understand why you are worried. I am not able to discuss a student's record, but I can give you the Registrar's number and the Dean of Students, who handles welfare concerns." Then call the Dean of Students yourself.

The Letter of Recommendation

THE FACTS

A strong former student asks you for a letter for a graduate program. You want to write that she earned the highest grade in a class of ninety, and that she rebounded after a semester on academic probation. She never signed anything.

The instinct

It is all favorable, she asked for the letter, and everyone does this. Consent is implied, surely.

The rule

Her grade and her probation status are education records. Asking for a letter is not consent to disclose them, and neither is the waiver box she checked on the application. That waiver only keeps the letter confidential from her.

The move

Get a signed FERPA release before you write, or write only from personal observation: how she reasoned, how she argued, how she handled criticism. That letter is usually better anyway.

Grades, Bins, and the Hallway

THE FACTS

You want to post midterm scores outside your office door using the last four digits of each Z number. You also plan to leave graded papers in a bin by your door so students can pick them up over break, and to have students swap and grade each other's quizzes in class.

The instinct

It is anonymized, it is efficient, and it is how your graduate program did it.

The rule

A partial identifier that a classmate can decode is still personally identifiable. A public bin is a disclosure to everyone who walks past. Peer grading in class is permitted under *Owasso v. Falvo*, but returning work publicly is not the same thing.

The move

Post grades only in Canvas. Return work hand to hand or through the University system. If you use peer grading, collect the scores yourself before anything is recorded.

"Legitimate Educational Interest"

Who has one

- A school official who needs the record to do their job.
- Your chair reviewing a grade appeal.
- An advisor helping the student plan a schedule.
- The Registrar, financial aid, and student conduct staff acting within their functions.
- A committee evaluating an application the student submitted.

Who does not

- Parents, spouses, siblings, partners, roommates.
- A colleague who is curious, or who taught the student last year.
- A donor, a legislator, a trustee, or a reporter.
- A prospective employer
- You, about a student who is not yours, for any reason other than a job duty.

The test is function, not rank. A vice president without a job-related need has less right to that record than a graduate assistant with one.

Disclosure Without Consent: The Real List

FERPA permits, but does not require, disclosure without consent in defined circumstances. Almost none of them should be executed by you personally.

- School officials with a legitimate educational interest.
- Another institution where the student seeks or intends to enroll.
- In connection with financial aid the student has applied for or received.
- Accrediting organizations, and auditors or evaluators acting for state or federal education authorities.
- Parents of a student who is an IRS dependent. Permissive, and handled by the Registrar.
- To comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena, usually with prior notice to the student.
- A health or safety emergency.
- Directory information, where no restriction is on file.

Every one of these is a decision the University makes, not a decision you make at your desk. Your job is to recognize that one may apply and to make the phone call.

The Health or Safety Emergency

The standard

There must be an articulable and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or others, and the disclosure must go to people who can actually protect someone.

The deference

The Department of Education gives substantial deference to a good-faith determination made on the totality of the circumstances at the time. You are not judged with hindsight.

The limit

It is a narrow exception for the duration of the emergency. It does not authorize a general briefing of the department afterward, and it does not last past the crisis.

The record

The University must record the threat and the recipients. One more reason to route through the Dean of Students or FAUPD rather than handling it alone.

The Two A.M. Discussion Post

THE FACTS

At 2:14 a.m. a student posts in your Canvas discussion board. Buried in an otherwise ordinary response is a line about how none of this will matter soon and how everyone would be better off. You read it at 7:00 a.m. before your first class.

The instinct

Either ignore it as melodrama, or reply privately and try to counsel the student yourself before class.

The rule

FERPA does not prevent you from acting. Your personal observation of what you read is yours to report, and the health or safety exception exists for exactly this.

The move

Report it now through fau.edu/report and to the Dean of Students. If you believe the danger is immediate, call FAUPD at 561-297-3500. Then follow up with the student warmly and without diagnosing.

Subpoenas, Court Orders, and Legal Demands

Judicial order or subpoena

FERPA permits disclosure to comply with a court order or a lawfully issued subpoena, and generally requires that the student be notified first so they can seek to quash. The University makes that call, not you.

Not every document is a court order

In Florida civil practice, subpoenas are routinely issued by attorneys without any judge reviewing them. A document titled subpoena may still be objectionable, and it may be directed to the wrong custodian entirely.

Service of process

Suits against the University are served on the Board of Trustees through its designated officers. If anyone asks you to accept service on behalf of FAU or an FAU employee, contact the General Counsel immediately.

What you do

Be courteous. Do not accept service. Do not produce anything. Take a card, say the Office of the General Counsel handles these, and call us the same day.

The Investigator at Your Office Door

THE FACTS

A woman appears at your office during office hours. She is an investigator retained by a law firm in a custody case and needs a student's attendance record and home address. She hands you a document titled Subpoena Duces Tecum and says it will take two minutes and she would rather not bother your dean.

The instinct

Comply. The document says subpoena, she is professional and specific, and refusing feels like defying a court.

The rule

An attorney-issued subpoena is not a court order, and it is not directed to you. FERPA generally requires that the student receive notice and a chance to move to quash before anything is released.

The move

"I am not able to accept that or to release student records. Our Office of the General Counsel handles these requests. May I have your card?" Then call OGC before you do anything else.

Vendors, EdTech, and Artificial Intelligence

The school official exception

Under 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B), a contractor can be treated as a school official only if it performs an institutional function, is under FAU's direct control, and uses the data only for authorized purposes.

What that means in practice

Only tools FAU has contracted for qualify. A free app you found last night has no contract, no direct control, and no restriction on what it does with the data you feed it.

Generative AI

Pasting an identifiable student's paper, draft, or accommodation letter into a consumer chatbot is a disclosure to a third party. Use FAU-approved tools, or de-identify completely before you paste anything.

What is coming

The Department of Education's July 2026 regulatory agenda contemplates FERPA negotiated rulemaking in September 2026 on education records, third-party vendors, law enforcement requests, and enforcement. Expect this to tighten.

The Grading Assistant That Saves You a Weekend

THE FACTS

A colleague shares a free web tool that grades short essays and drafts feedback. You upload the class's submissions as a batch. The files include student names in the headers. The tool is excellent and you save eleven hours.

The instinct

It is a grading tool, used for a teaching purpose, and nobody outside the class will ever see it.

The rule

The school official exception requires a contract and direct institutional control. A free tool has neither. The upload was a disclosure of education records to an unvetted third party.

The move

Use only FAU-contracted tools. If you want to pilot something, route it through OIT and Procurement first. If you have already done this, tell us; remediation is far easier than discovery.

PART 02

Due Process and Student Discipline

What the Constitution requires of you, and what it leaves to your judgment

What Process Is Due

The process that is due depends on the interest being taken away. The greater the interest, the more procedure the Constitution requires.

- At the top of the scale: criminal prosecution, involuntary civil commitment, termination of subsistence benefits.
- In the middle: suspension or expulsion from a public university, which affects a recognized property and liberty interest.
- At the bottom: admissions decisions, which afford no due process at all, because there is no protected interest in being admitted.
- The two irreducible elements at every level: notice of what is alleged, and a meaningful opportunity to respond.

In practice this is simpler than it sounds, and it is something good teachers already do. Tell the student plainly what the concern is, and let them respond before you decide anything. Students who feel heard rarely appeal.

Academic Judgment Versus Rule Violation

Academic decisions

- Grades, comprehensive exams, clinical evaluations, dismissal for failure to meet academic standards.
- Horowitz, 435 U.S. 78 (1978): academic dismissals call for far less stringent procedure than disciplinary ones.
- Ewing, 474 U.S. 214 (1985): courts must respect faculty professional judgment absent a substantial departure from accepted academic norms.
- Your evaluative judgment is broadly protected.

Disciplinary decisions

- Cheating, plagiarism, harassment, threats, disruption, violations of the Student Code of Conduct.
- These are accusations of misconduct, not evaluations of performance.
- They carry a much higher procedural burden: written notice of charges, a hearing, an appeal.
- They belong to Student Conduct and to the academic integrity process, not to your gradebook.

The most common faculty error is converting a discipline problem into a grade. Failing a student for cheating without going through the integrity process gives up the deference you would otherwise enjoy.

How It Actually Works at FAU

Student Code of Conduct — Reg. 4.007

Administered by Student Affairs, Office of Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution.

- 1. Receipt of report of potential code violation.
- 2. Primary investigation/evaluation of information received.
- 3. Notice of charges issued to student.
- 4. Student conduct conference, at least seven business days after the notice.
- 5. Option for hearing, at least seven business days after student conduct conference.
- Finding/recommendations/decision & outcome.
- 6. Appeal to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Academic Integrity — Reg. 4.001

Administered by the Instructor & College.

- 1. Perceived act of dishonesty: cheating, plagiarism, or other dishonesty.
- 2. Instructor meets with the student and gives notice.
- 3. Written notice of the charges and the proposed penalty.
- 4. Opportunity to be heard by the chair and the instructor.
- 5. Appeal to the Dean and convening of a Council.
- 6. Appeal to the Provost.

Read both regulations at fau.edu/regulations. Confirm the current step sequence, because these are amended more often than you would expect.

The Paper That Reads Like a Machine Wrote It

THE FACTS

A final paper is fluent, generic, and cites two cases that do not exist. Your detection tool returns a ninety-two percent AI score. The student is a graduating senior with a job offer contingent on the degree. You have four days until grades are due.

The instinct

Assign a zero, note "AI-generated" in the comments, submit grades, and move on. The tool said ninety-two percent.

The rule

Detection scores are probabilistic, and they carry documented false-positive rates for non-native English writers. The fabricated citations are the real evidence. Either way this is an integrity charge under Regulation 4.001: notice, a meeting, an appeal path.

The move

Meet with the student. Put the specific evidence in writing. Follow 4.001 even under deadline pressure. If the timeline does not fit, assign an incomplete rather than a punitive grade.

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PART 03

The Classroom and the Campus

Recording, expression, and the boundaries of your podium

Students May Record Your Lectures

Since 2021, a student enrolled in your course may audio or video record a class lecture without prior notice, for three purposes and three only.

- For the student's own personal educational use.
- In connection with a complaint to the university where the recording is made.
- As evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding.

You may not prohibit recording, and you may not require advance permission. You may, and should, state the publication rule in your syllabus so students know where the line is.

What Is a "Class Lecture," and What Is "Publication"?

A class lecture is

A formal or methodical oral presentation, as part of a university course, intended to present information or teach students about a subject.

- It does not include student presentations, individual or group.
- It does not include class discussion, except where incidental to and incorporated within a lecture.
- It does not include labs, clinical presentations, academic exercises involving student participation, tests, or field trips.
- It does not include private conversations between students, or between a student and you.

Publication is

To share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or otherwise provide access to the recording, in any format, to another person.

- That includes sending it to one other student in the class.
- It includes posting to any media platform: social media, a book, a magazine, a newspaper, a leaflet, a picket sign, or any mode of print.
- Publication requires the lecturer's consent, except to share with university officials in connection with a complaint or as evidence in a proceeding.

A person injured by unlawful publication may seek declaratory and injunctive relief and may recover damages plus costs and reasonable attorney fees, with total recovery capped at \$200,000.

Twenty Seconds, Out of Context, With 40,000 Views

THE FACTS

You spend ten minutes steelmanning a position you do not hold. A student clips twenty seconds, posts it without context, and it circulates. By Monday you have hostile email, a reporter's call, and a request from your dean for an explanation.

The instinct

Email the student demanding removal, post your own response thread, and reply to the reporter to set the record straight.

The rule

Recording was lawful. Publication without your consent generally was not, and Section 1004.097 provides a civil remedy.

The move

Preserve everything. Do not contact the student about it yourself. Route the reporter to University Communications and call OGC the same day. Let the University respond.

Academic Freedom and Classroom Speech in Florida

The Campus Free Expression Act

Section 1004.097 expressly lists faculty research, lectures, writings, and commentary, published or unpublished, among protected expressive activities. Defamatory and commercial speech are excluded.

Pernell, decided July 7, 2026

A divided panel of the Eleventh Circuit held that the higher education provisions of Florida's Individual Freedom Act, the 2022 law often called the Stop WOKE Act, violate the First Amendment as applied to university classrooms.

What the court said

The panel rejected the State's argument that professors speak only for the government when they teach, and treated the statute's ban on endorsing specified viewpoints as viewpoint discrimination rather than protection against compelled belief.

What has not changed

The State still sets curriculum. Conduct rules still apply. Harassment, targeting a student, and discriminatory grading are not protected by anything. And the litigation may not be over.

PART 04

Your Mandatory Reporting Duties

The obligations that attach to you personally, not to the institution

Child Abuse: Everyone Reports, Directly

Florida law requires every person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected to report it to the Florida Abuse Hotline.

- Call 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873), or report online through the Department of Children and Families.
- The duty is personal. Telling your chair, your dean, or your colleague is not reporting.
- The law prohibits anyone from preventing another person from making a report.
- A knowing and willful failure to report is a felony of the third degree under Section 39.205(1).
- A state university whose administrators knowingly and willfully fail to report information received from faculty or staff faces a fine of \$1 million for each failure.
- DCF handles abuse by a parent or caregiver. Abuse by anyone else goes to law enforcement. When you are unsure, call the hotline and let them route it.

You will encounter minors here more often than you expect: dual enrollment, FAU High School and A.D. Henderson on the Boca campus, summer camps, clinics, athletics, and research with minor subjects.

The Sixteen-Year-Old in Your Seminar

THE FACTS

A dual-enrollment student, sixteen, stays after class. She explains that her late work is because of what is happening at home, and describes conduct by a stepparent that alarms you. She asks you not to tell anyone. You have office hours in ten minutes.

The instinct

Honor the confidence, encourage her to tell a counselor, and tell your chair so someone senior can decide what to do.

The rule

Section 39.201 gives you a personal, non-delegable duty to report to the hotline. A promise of confidentiality cannot override it, and routing it to your chair does not discharge it.

The move

Tell her gently that you have to make a call because you are required to and because you want her safe. Call 1-800-96-ABUSE today. Then notify the Dean of Students so support follows.

Title IX: Where the Law Stands Right Now

The operative rule

The 2020 regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 govern. The 2024 rule took effect briefly and was vacated nationwide on January 9, 2025 in *Tennessee v. Cardona*, No. 2:24-072-DCR (E.D. Ky.). The Department has returned to enforcing the 2020 framework.

The Supreme Court

On June 30, 2026, in *West Virginia v. B.P.J.*, the Court upheld Idaho and West Virginia laws restricting participation on women's athletic teams, holding they violate neither Title IX nor the Equal Protection Clause.

What is coming

The Department of Education's July 2026 regulatory agenda contemplates a rule defining sex as biological sex, and amended OCR investigation procedures. Expect movement during this academic year.

What does not change

Your obligation. Regardless of which regulations are in force, if you learn of sexual harassment, assault, or sex discrimination affecting the FAU community, you report it.

Title IX at FAU: What You Do

You are not confidential

Faculty are responsible employees. If a student begins to disclose, interrupt kindly and tell them you will have to share it with the Title IX office, so they can choose what to say next.

Where it goes

Office of Civil Rights and Title IX (OCR9), Kenneth R. Williams Administration Building, Room 265, 777 Glades Road. 561-297-3004. fau.edu/ocr9, or report at fau.edu/report.

Supportive measures

You may be asked to extend a deadline, allow a proctored exam elsewhere, or adjust attendance. Implement them. Do not ask the student to justify the request or explain the underlying facts.

Confidential options for students

Point students who want confidentiality to Victim Services and to Counseling and Psychological Services. Those are the right doors, and they are not your doors.

Clery, Campus Security Authorities, and Hazing

You may be a CSA

A Campus Security Authority is someone with significant responsibility for student activities. Faculty advisors to student organizations, trip and field-study leaders, and coaches frequently qualify.

What a CSA must do

Report Clery-covered crimes that occur in Clery geography to the University's designated official, so they can be counted in the Annual Security Report and trigger timely warnings.

The Stop Campus Hazing Act

Federal law now requires hazing statistics in the Annual Security Report, due October 1, plus a public Campus Hazing Transparency Report. Negotiated rulemaking on implementation is anticipated in November 2026.

Your action item

If you advise a student organization or lead students off campus, ask FAUPD or the Clery Compliance office whether you are a CSA. Do not guess, and do not assume you are not.

Students in Distress

Kognito

Free interactive training that simulates the conversation with a student in distress. Roughly forty-five minutes and worth every one of them. fau.edu/training/kognito

Students in Distress Guide

A decision tree for recognizing warning signs and knowing which office to involve. Bookmark it before the semester starts. fau.edu/studentsindistress

Report a Concern

One intake point for behavioral concerns, Title IX matters, discrimination, and conduct issues. When you are unsure who owns it, this form routes it. fau.edu/report

Emergency

FAU Police, 561-297-3500, or 911. If you believe someone is in immediate danger, call first and document second. No one has ever been criticized here for calling too early.

The Sixty-Second Rule

You will not remember the citations. Remember the reflex. When a request about a student lands on your desk and something feels heavy, spend sixty seconds doing this.

- Stop. Do not answer in the moment. Nothing legitimate requires you to decide instantly.
- Do not confirm. Even acknowledging that someone is your student can be a disclosure.
- Write it down. Who asked, what they wanted, when, and what document they showed you.
- Ask one question: is this about a student record, a safety concern, or a legal demand?
- Call the office that owns it. Registrar, OCR9, Dean of Students, FAUPD, or General Counsel.
- Follow up in writing, so there is a record of what you did and when you did it.

Calling early is never the wrong call. We would much rather think something through with you while it is still a question than sort it out once it has become a problem, and no question is too small to bring us.

Who to Call

Student records and process

- University Registrar — FERPA questions, directory holds, consent forms, parent inquiries, student record requests.
- Dean of Students — student welfare, distress, family contact.
- Office of Student Conduct — Code of Conduct matters under Regulation 4.007.
- College Dean's office — academic integrity under Regulation 4.001.
- Public Records Custodian — publicrecords@fau.edu, 561-297-2452.
- University Communications — all media inquiries.
- Office of the General Counsel — generalcounsel@fau.edu. 561-297-3700 Subpoenas, court orders, attorney letters, service of process, and any outside request for student records.

Civil rights, safety, and legal

- Office of Civil Rights and Title IX — 561-297-3004, ADM 265, fau.edu/ocr9.
- FAU Police — 561-297-3500, or 911 in an emergency.
- Florida Abuse Hotline — 1-800-96-ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).

Put the General Counsel and FAU Police numbers in your phone today. You will not want to be searching a website in the moment you need them.

Questions

And the ones you think are too small to ask are usually the ones worth asking.

Joseph S. Van de Bogart, Esq.

Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel

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