RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, is a federal law which sets forth requirements aimed at protecting the privacy of educational records. Education records are defined as those records which directly relate to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting on behalf of that institution. Any educational institution that receives funds under any program administered by the U.S. Secretary of Education is bound by FERPA requirements.

Students have the following inherent rights under FERPA –

1. Control the disclosure of their "education records" to others.
2. Inspect and review their "education records".
3. Seek amendment to their "education records".
4. File a complaint with the Department of Education.

Once students are enrolled at MWSU, FERPA rights transfer to the student, regardless of the student's age.

In the absence of an official request, information contained in a student's records remains confidential between the student and MWSU and will not be released to third parties without the consent of the student, with the following exceptions:

- as directory information;
- to school officials with legitimate education interest;
- to schools which the student is seeking admission;
- to organizations conducting studies of or on behalf of educational institutions;
- to federal, state or local education authorities;
- in connection with the receipt of financial aid;
- to accrediting agencies;
- to comply with a judicial order or subpoena;
- in health or safety emergencies;
- results of a disciplinary hearing to an alleged victim of a crime of violence;
- to parents of students under the legal drinking age if caught possessing or using alcohol or drugs.

Missouri Western State University defines directory information as:

- name;
- mailing address;
- phone numbers;
- campus e-mail address;
- date of birth (month/day);
- major or field of study;
- dates of attendance;
- enrollment status;
- anticipated graduation date;
- classification;
- degrees awarded;
- honors awarded;
- previous institutions attended;
- participation in activities/sports;
- weight/height of athletes.

Currently enrolled students may withhold disclosure of information under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended. To withhold disclosure, written notification must be received in the Registrar's Office (Eder Hall 102). A hold will not apply retroactively and will remain valid until the student submits notification in writing, stating otherwise. Missouri Western assumes that failure on the part of any student to specifically request the withholding of "Directory Information" indicates individual approval for disclosure.

Request for records inspection should be directed to the official in charge of maintaining the record. The personally identifiable educational records of each student and former student maintained by the university are open for inspection by the student, except in limited cases where privacy, confidentiality, or professional privileges of another person is involved.

The student may challenge an inaccurate record and request a hearing concerning any alleged inaccuracy contained therein. Any challenge must establish by a preponderance that the record is inaccurate. If desired, the student may submit a written explanation of a record's content, which then becomes a part of the record. Additional information regarding FERPA may be obtained from the Registrar's Office, Eder 102.

University E-Mail/Portal Use Policy

Missouri Western State University has designated the MWSU e-mail system and the Missouri Western Goldlink electronic portal (goldlink.missouriwestern.edu (https://goldlink.missouriwestern.edu/)) as official methods of communication to students, faculty, and staff. Each student, faculty, and staff member receives a MWSU hosted e-mail account and network login/password. This e-mail account is the primary resource used for MWSU communications between students, faculty, and staff. Official notices and information regarding the University will be sent through the MWSU e-mail system and/or posted on the Missouri Western Goldlink electronic portal.

The University has determined that use of the MWSU e-mail system and the Goldlink portal is critical to the success of students and employees in daily routines or job performance. Students are expected to check their e-mail accounts and access Goldlink at least once per week. Faculty and staff are expected to check their e-mail accounts and access Goldlink every 1–2 business days during active work periods.

Typical e-mail communications sent by MWSU include information regarding enrollment, grades, billing, payments, financial aid, and campus activities. Typical information provided by the Missouri Western Goldlink portal includes personal announcements, campus announcements, messages for targeted audiences, and access to the Banner Self-Service system. It is the responsibility of students, faculty, and staff to stay informed. Therefore, it is expected that students, faculty, and staff access these electronic communication mediums to stay informed of the activities of MWSU and to communicate in a timely manner.

University provided email accounts should only be used for university related manners, and are closed after students, faculty, and staff no longer attend the institution, graduate, separate from employment, or retire. It is the University's policy to specifically prohibit use of University systems, including e-mail accounts, to send unauthorized mass mailings and unsolicited advertising.

Preferred Name Policy

The Preferred Name Policy at Missouri Western State University allows students to change their first names in most university information systems without pursuing a legal name change. The complete policy and procedures on how to make a name change can be found at intranet.missouriwestern.edu/registrar/name-changes (https://intranet.missouriwestern.edu/registrar/name-changes/).

Access to Personal Information

Students may access university and personal information by logging into their Goldlink account at goldlink.missouriwestern.edu (https://goldlink.missouriwestern.edu/). A unique username and password will provide secure entry to view grades, schedule of classes, unofficial transcript, financial statements, address, and other personal and confidential information. Students who lose their password may visit the Goldlink login page for instructions to reset their password.