

# Southwestern University

## Office of Academic Services

### Confidentiality Practices

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Southwestern University Office of Academic Services follows the “Best Practices for Confidentiality” as espoused by NASPA Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education and the Association of Higher Education and Disability. Specifically, this means:

1. Information shared about a student’s academic progress, general University standing, and physical/emotional well being will be considered confidential. As confidential information, this information will not be shared with anyone outside of the Office of Academic Services without a release form from the student or other written documentation that discloses the information (such as a written appeal from a student).
2. Within the Office of Academic Services, information may be shared among staff members on a selective need-to-know basis.
3. All information related to a student’s interaction with the Office of Academic Services is maintained by Academic Services staff members. These files are separate from a student’s academic advising, disciplinary or official Southwestern University files.
4. As mandated by the U.S. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Staff will not share confidential information about a student with anyone outside of Academic Services. This includes parents, guardians, spouses, family members, friends and university employees. Students must sign a release authorizing Academic Services staff to share information with an outside party.
5. In the event that a student is either in danger or is endangering another individual, the Academic Services staff, after consultation with the Director of Academic Services or the Provost, may release necessary information to a law enforcement or medical professional.
6. If a student discloses information about a disability (as defined by Section 504 and the ADA), then the following guidelines also apply:
  - a. Information related to a student and any disability will be treated as medical documentation.
  - b. No mention of a student’s disability or of specific accommodations will be made on a student’s transcript.
  - c. All information about a student’s disability is provided by that student or with authorization from that student on a voluntary basis. All documentation must conform to the documentation standards set by the Office of Academic Services.
  - d. It is the responsibility of the student to share detailed information about a disability or an accommodation with any faculty or University staff member who may need to know. The Academic Service Coordinator will help a student facilitate these conversations.