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TO: Provosts, Deans, Directors

FROM: Philip Furmanski   
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RE: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey – Grade Posting Policy

It is University policy to respect the confidentiality of student grades and personally identifiable information, in accordance with state statutes and the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). The University recognizes the necessity of posting grades, but requires that it be done in a manner consistent with this policy and that protects the privacy of student information.

In this regard and especially in view of the increasing frequency of identity theft, the University has determined that grades may not be posted in a manner that includes the public display of student identification numbers or numbers derived from them, including parts of student identification numbers. For several years faculty members have been encouraged to avoid linking grades with student numbers. Over time, the dramatic increase in the use of the Internet and University websites has facilitated this process, but computer usage has also facilitated the ease with which individual information may be discovered and used in a manner contrary to that individual's wishes. Accordingly, we now must adopt grade-posting practices that respect these concerns. With this in mind, I am writing to advise all faculty as to acceptable grade posting practices.

#### **Acceptable Grade Posting Methods**

1. The FAS Gradebook program is a secure grade posting system available to all Rutgers University Faculty, Staff and Students. (<http://gradebook.rutgers.edu>). Instructors can use the system to securely post grades for instant retrieval by students. The system may also be used to post attendance records and other class notices. After the student logs in using his or her NetID, the system queries its database for all grades associated with the student's ID number and displays them on the screen

2. Student grades can be posted to a secure website other than FAS Gradebook provided that students may only view their own grades and not those of other students in the class.
3. Students may be asked to provide a self-addressed stamped envelope in which the student's grade may be enclosed and mailed to them.

### **Unacceptable Grade Posting Methods**

1. Grades should not be physically posted on a bulletin board, door or other area, when those grades are linked to the student by name, partial or entire social security number or any identifier that is ascertainable by parties other than the instructor and the student to whom the grade pertains.
2. Grades should not be posted via unsecured websites when those grades are linked to the student by name, partial or entire student identification number or any identifier that is ascertainable by parties other than the instructor and the student to whom the grade pertains.
3. The use of e-mail to inform students of their grades is not recommended because confidentiality of grades reported via e-mail cannot be assured.

Note that course web pages from previous semesters containing personally identifiable information are easily located through widely accessible search engines and should be deleted immediately.

Please forward this policy to all those in your unit(s) responsible for posting student grades.

Thank you for your cooperation and attention to this matter.