What are some tips for faculty members like me, who want to do the best for students yet not violate their privacy?

- When in doubt, contact the Office of the University Registrar or the Privacy Officer or refer to the following Web sites for more information:
  - University Registrar’s Confidentiality/FERPA site www.registrar.psu.edu/confidentiality/
    confidentiality_index.cfm
  - University Policy on Confidentiality of Student Records guru.psu.edu/policies/AD11.html

- Request information from a student’s education record only when you have a legitimate educational need to know and the appropriate authority to do so.

- Do not share student education record information, including grades or grade-point averages, with other faculty or staff members of the University unless their official responsibilities require you to do so, or with parents or others outside the University, including within letters of recommendation, without written permission of the student.

- Keep only individual student records necessary for the fulfillment of your teaching, advising, or administrative responsibilities. Private notes concerning a student and intended for your own use are not part of the student’s education record, although they may be subject to subpoena.

- If a student questions the accuracy of a recorded grade or evaluation comment, find out if the student has valid documentation to back up the complaint. If so, make the record accurate. However, if a complaint is about your judgment on academic performance and your grading material backs you, such a challenge from a student is not a FERPA-protected right.

- If you get a question about something unrelated to teaching or advising regarding the education record of a student, refer the questioner to the appropriate University office.

- Do not display or post student scores or grades, publicly in association with names, Social Security numbers, Penn State ID numbers, or other personal identifiers. Use ANGEL to securely report grades to students.

- Assignments, exams, papers or lab reports containing names or Penn State ID numbers should not be left out in a public space for students to pick up where grades and comments may be seen by other students.

- Do not circulate printed class lists that include Penn State ID numbers, or other non-directory information for purposes of taking attendance. Instead, use a blank “sign in” sheet.

- Peer grading is permitted since the grade is not considered to be part of the education record until it has been recorded in the instructor’s grade book.

- Always use blind copies when emailing groups of students. Do not include grades in emails.

- A student request for confidentiality does not permit the student to be anonymous in the classroom nor to impede or be excluded from classroom communication.

- In a situation of potential danger involving a student, contact emergency personnel immediately. Be on the side of caution rather than assuming that you are overreacting.

- Never upload a class list or any information about a student to a vendor’s web site without first checking with Purchasing Services (purchasesoftware@psu.edu) to see if Penn State has a FERPA-compliant contract with the vendor.

- Before conducting research using student information, you must first receive approval from the Office for Research Protection Institutional Review Board (ORPprotections@psu.edu) or http://www.research.psu.edu/orp/humans) and ensure compliance with FERPA requirements.

- For more information, review the on-line FERPA tutorial and quiz. Instructions for access are found at http://www.registrar.psu.edu/staff/ferpa_tutorial/ferpa_tutorial.cfm