

**INFORMATION and GUIDELINES for
TAs and Limited-Term Lecturers in the
DEPARTMENT of MATHEMATICS at PURDUE UNIVERSITY for
HANDLING SENSITIVE or RESTRICTED DATA**

Related information on FERPA and best practices can be found at
<http://www.purdue.edu/securepurdue/bestPractices/dataClass1.cfm>
http://www.purdue.edu/registrar/FERPA/FERPA_.html

To save paper and printing, please view rather than print this information.

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Information

The use of student data such as PUIDs, grades, etc. is covered by federal law (= FERPA) and state laws as well as Purdue rules. Purdue classifies student and other data in three categories:

- **public data:** information that may or must be open to the general public and can be disclosed without violating local, national and international legal restrictions;
examples: course catalog, class meeting times
- **sensitive data:** information whose access must be guarded due to proprietary, ethical, or privacy considerations even though there may not be a civil statute requiring this protection;
examples: date of birth, ethnicity, PUIDs
- **restricted data:** information protected because of protective statutes, policies or regulations or for which the "Information Owner" (which could be the student or Purdue University) has exercised his/her right to restrict access;

examples: students' academic records, social security numbers

Data on course rosters and grade records is considered sensitive or restricted. Purdue University not only requires its employees to treat such data appropriately but also expects them to handle it so that it does not become available to others by "accident". The following are *some* examples of instances where an employee could be held responsible for the loss of sensitive or restricted data:

- theft of or other forms of access by non-authorized people to printed, faxed or electronically sent sensitive or restricted data
- theft of a home computer, laptop, flash drive, etc. on which sensitive or restricted data is stored
- theft of a home computer, laptop, flash drive, etc. which contains "ghost" or "temporary" files created by software such as web browsers and that contain sensitive or restricted data (even if you think that the actual data is not stored on the device)

The latter is hard to deal with since knowing what software does "behind the scenes" is rarely well documented. Because of this, the Department of Mathematics has guidelines in place on how instructors should handle materials that contain sensitive or restricted data and you should follow them. Please contact **Helpdesk** via <http://www.math.purdue.edu/help> if you encounter problems using departmental computer equipment, logging in to a departmental server, etc.

Whether using encryption (for example, using file vault on a Mac) is treating sensitive and/or restricted data appropriately according to Purdue policies, depends on the encryption method as well as on the strength of the password used. To avoid possible problems it is better to assume that it is not sufficient and to follow instead the guidelines listed below.

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Guidelines on what to do and not to do with sensitive or restricted data

- **Download class lists** from *myPurdue* using the terminal provided in your office or one of the terminals in a departmental computer lab while being logged on banach or hardy - see also **Store class lists** for other acceptable servers. Using a computer in a Purdue computer lab is also acceptable. In any case, do not leave the computer unattended while logged in to *myPurdue*. When done, always log out of *myPurdue*, quit the browser application and log out of your terminal or computer session, even if using the terminal in your office.

Using other computers is not considered safe unless you only use them to access the departmental sunray servers - banach and hardy. Look at **Remote access to department sunray servers** on <http://www.math.purdue.edu/resources/computing/> for information on how to do this.

- **Store electronic class lists** and **grade records** only on the departmental servers or on a Purdue server managed by ITaP or the College of Science. The Department of Mathematics cannot vouch for servers managed by any other Departments, Schools and Colleges.

Never store class lists or grade records electronically on other devices (e.g., home computers, laptops, flash drives or thumb drives, etc.).

- **Enter grade related data** only while being logged on banach or hardy. Using a computer in a Purdue computer lab is also acceptable. Do not leave the computer unattended while doing this. When done, always quit the application and log out of your terminal or computer session, even when using the terminal in your office.

Using software installed on other computers to enter grade related data might not be safe, even if the data is stored on a secure server. Some software programs create temporary or ghost files on the host computer. These files are not necessarily deleted when quitting the application or even logging out. *In particular*, do not use a web browser on your home computer, laptop, etc. to enter grades in **web-based on-line homework systems** such as *WebAssign*.

- **Sending grade records by e-mail** carries some risk. Using Purdue's *FileLocker* is the recommended way to send sensitive or restricted data to other Purdue users. ***If you are a grader or recitation instructor, please ask the instructor first whether you sending grade records using FileLocker is acceptable.*** If it is not acceptable to the instructor, send e-mail to s aerens@math.purdue.edu. Below are instructions for *FileLocker*.

To **upload** a file to *FileLocker*:

- Use the terminal in your office or in one of the departmental computer labs to log into banach or hardy or use a computer in an ITaP managed computer lab. (Using a personal computer is not allowed. We cannot guarantee the security of computers managed by other departments, etc.)
- in a web browser, type <https://filelocker.purdue.edu> - bookmark the page if used frequently
- login using your Purdue (career) login and password
- (the first time) read the terms to use *FileLocker* and, if you agree, click on "accept"
- you should get a page called "My Files" with some help links on the bottom right - you might have to scroll down to find them
- to upload a file, click on "upload"; you should get a new small window; follow the instructions
- after uploading the file, you should automatically be back in "My Files" and see the file in a scrollable pane towards the middle of the screen
- click on the arrow on the right of the file line to get a drop-down menu; click on "share this file"
- a new small pop-up window will open; towards the right is a message "search for users by ..."; click on the "name" tab and start typing the first and last name of the person in the box underneath; choose the person's name from the dropdown list that appears as you type
- click on the "share" button; make sure the "notify by email" is chosen
- if everything is OK, the small window should close itself and you should be back to "My Files" and be done
- make sure to log out of *FileLocker*, quit the browser and log out of your terminal or computer session

To **download** a file from *FileLocker*:

- Use the terminal in your office or in one of the departmental computer labs to log into banach or hardy or use a computer in an ITaP managed computer lab. (Using a personal computer is not allowed. We cannot guarantee the security of computers managed by other departments, etc.)
- open a web browser; to facilitate finding the file later on, set convenient preferences about downloads in the web browser (e.g., "always ask me where to save files")
- go to <https://filelocker.purdue.edu> - bookmark the page if used frequently
- login using your Purdue (career) login and password
- (the first time) read the terms to use *FileLocker* and, if you agree, click on "accept"
- you should get a page called "My Files" with some help links on the bottom right - you might have to scroll down to find them

- look for the file in the scrollable pane towards the middle of the screen; click on the arrow on the right of the file line to get a drop-down menu; click on "download"
- make sure to download the file to banach or hardy or an ITaP managed server, to log out of *FileLocker*, quit the browser and log out of your terminal or computer session

For **more help** with *FileLocker*: try the "Quick Tips" and "Quick Help" links on the "My Files" page (at the bottom right - you might have to scroll down to find them).

- **Print and copy grade records and submitted grades** only when absolutely necessary. (You are required to print and turn both in to MATH 842 at the end of the semester.) Departmental printers and copy machines (when used for copying, not for faxing) are secure. The Department of Mathematics cannot guarantee that others are. Print grade records, etc. only when you are able to retrieve them immediately from the printer.
- **Paper copies of grade sheets, submitted grades** as well as **graded quizzes, homework and exams** contain sensitive or restricted data and must be handled carefully. Do not let leave them in plain view on your office desk, or at home if you have housemates or expect visitors. Keeping offices locked when no one is in them, not only secures sensitive or restricted data but also reduces the theft of personal effects. TAs from other departments and Limited-Term Lecturers should not leave sensitive or restricted data in the offices they use since these offices are often kept unlocked and have a high occupancy.
- **Disposing of papers with sensitive or restricted data** should be done securely. There are secure paper recycling bins available in the department, for example on the 6th, 7th and the 8th floor. Since exams must be kept until the deadline for a grade appeal is passed, the department recommends giving all the midterm and final exams you have to MATH 242 for secure storage at the end of the semester.
- **Sending a student's grade by unencrypted e-mail** is forbidden under Purdue policy. Since mistakes might be discovered and grades might have to be changed after you submitted them, grades should not be sent to students unless there is a pressing reason to do so. Due to the level that Purdue holds individual instructors responsible, the Department of Mathematics strongly encourages you only to give a student his/her grade by using *FileLocker* and only if (a) the student asks for it by e-mail (= in writing) and (b) does so using a Purdue e-mail address that matches the e-mail address on the class list in *myPurdue*. Students have access to their grades on-line on the Wednesday after finals week.
- Purdue has strong restrictions on **scanning and faxing grade records or grades** but doing this should very rarely be necessary. If it seems to be necessary, please send e-mail to saerens@math.purdue.edu before doing it, explaining why *FileLocker* cannot be used instead.
- Instructors are at times asked to **report on how students in certain special programs** (e.g., Purdue minority programs, athletic programs, ROTC, etc.) are doing in the course. By participating, students have implicitly agreed that this information may be released to the person in charge of such a program. When in doubt, please send e-mail to saerens@math.purdue.edu before doing it.
- For issues related to sensitive or restricted data not covered in the above, please send e-mail to saerens@math.purdue.edu.

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