Greetings from UMass Amherst!
September is a time of excitement and celebration as we welcome new and returning students to campus, and spotlight the many opportunities to get involved. In anticipation, we're writing with information on early-semester activities, Amazon@ UMass, SPIRE, Family Weekend, and more. Let the countdown begin!

Living at UMass
Has your student downloaded the new "Living at UMass" app yet? It's packed with great move-in information for you and your student: directions to campus, interactive maps, and details for each day of move-in. Download it on iTunes or Google Play.

Move-in reservations
Students can now complete move-in reservations for all halls on SPIRE. Under the main menu, choose Housing > Room Selection Home. Find helpful information, including video tutorials on move-in reservations and packing, on the Move-in website.

Move-in reception for first-year families
We look forward to welcoming all new families during move-in, Friday, Sept. 4. Once you've dropped off your student and helped them arrange their room, stop by any of the four Dining Commons (Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Worcester) between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. for a family meal. Visit the Office of Parent Services table in your chosen DC to meet other families and write a postcard with good wishes for your student. Our office will deliver the card to your student via campus mail the following week.

Fall New Students Orientation (NSO)
Fall NSO, Friday, Sept. 4 through Monday, Sept. 7, is an action-packed semester kick-off for first-year and transfer students. Students will reconnect with their summer NSO friends, classmates, and colleges, while forming communities in their residence halls. There'll be free giveaways and events including the UPlay Jamboree, Authoring Your Story, college meetings, Convocation, UFest, rope pull, Get Your Game On, The Game of Life, Adventure into Amherst, and Mall Madness. Encourage your student to begin creating their UMass experience with this active, engaging lineup. Details are on the Fall NSO web page.

Welcome Weeks
While Fall NSO is designed with new UMass students in mind, Welcome Weeks, Sept. 8-20, are for all students. Departments across campus sponsor events, cookouts, and more throughout the first weeks of the semester. There's something for everyone, from involvement opportunities at the Student Activities Expo to shopping for room decor at the poster sale or New2U tag sale. Encourage your student to explore the Welcome Weeks web page and make the most of the new school year.

SPIRE
SPIRE, the university's secure online student information system, is where students register for classes, sign up for on-campus housing, manage their university finances, and more. Be sure your student is staying up to date on their holds, to-do items, financial aid awards, and payments through
their SPIRE account. If you're contributing financially to your student's education, make sure you're an authorized payer in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Visit the Office of the Bursar's website for more information.

**Amazon@UMass**
Still have items on the back-to-school shopping list? No worries ... Amazon@UMass has it covered. Order everything from textbooks to room and life essentials and have them shipped to campus. If you want to receive your orders over the Labor Day weekend, choose the Amazon@UMass location in the Campus Center as your shipping address at checkout. Pick up items Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; noon to 6 p.m. on weekends. **Residential Service Desks will not be accepting package deliveries during the holiday weekend.**

**Off-campus living**
Before you know it, your student may start talking about living off-campus. Help them get off to the best possible start with the Living Off-Campus Certification. This 20-minute online course is required or recommended by landlords, and provides basic information about leasing and housemates, sharing expenses, safety and security, and living responsibly in the greater Amherst community. To complete the certification, students register on the Off-Campus Student Services (OCSS) website. You can take the course too, so you know what we've told your student. Click the Guest Access link on the OCSS website.

Watch for the new "Take Time Before You Sign" campaign, providing students with timely tips for finding and securing their ideal rental!

**A "Taste of Home"**
The award-winning UMass Dining Services would love to include your family's favorite recipe in its Taste of Home special next fall. Recipes will be featured in all dining commons at a particular meal, and be published in the eighth edition "Taste of Home Cookbook." Submit your recipe by Wednesday, Sept. 2; participants will receive a UMass baseball cap or t-shirt (limit two caps or shirts per family per year).

**Family Weekend**
You and your family are invited to join us for Family Weekend, October 2-4. This year's schedule has something for everyone, including a Chancellor's welcome, home football game, BBQ lunch, UMass entrepreneurship session, student talent showcase, and much more. Visit the Parent Services website between now and your arrival for the latest updates.

**Discount football tickets**
All families and friends visiting UMass students for Family Weekend are invited to attend the October 3 UMass football game against Florida International University at McGuirk Stadium on campus. Admission is free for current UMass undergraduate students. Families can purchase up to eight tickets at a discounted rate through UMass Athletics. When prompted in the checkout process, use the promo code FAMILY.

Family tickets are general admission seats for Section 10. Students are welcome to sit with their families in Section 10 by using their student tickets (they do not need to purchase a general admission ticket). While Section 10 is general admission, seating within the section is first come, first served.

For questions on purchasing these or any other athletic tickets, contact the UMass Athletics box office, (866) UMass-Tix (866-862-7784), Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
**Important dates**

**August 31:** Move-in reservation ends  
**September 4:** First-year move-in, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
**September 4-7:** Fall NSO for new and transfer students  
**September 5:** Transfer move-in, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
**September 6:** Returning student move-in, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
**September 6-20:** Welcome Weeks: "Create Your UMass"  
**September 8:** First day of classes  
**September 21:** Last day to add/drop classes, waive the Student Health Benefit Plan, and submit immunization records  
**October 2-4:** Family Weekend  

**Helpful links**

- [Fall NSO](#)  
- [Family Weekend](#)  
- [Office of the Bursar](#)  
- [Welcome Weeks](#)  

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the Office of Parent Services. Our office is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. We're more than happy to assist you.

Sincerely,  
Jeanne Horrigan, Director  
Office of Parent Services

*Treating Our Parents as Partners*

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[Office of Parent Services Website](#)  
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