Greetings from UMass Amherst!
The 2015-2016 academic year begins in just a few short weeks, and we can't wait for your student to come to campus! This email is packed with information to help them get off to a great start: move-in details, the new Amazon @ UMass Amherst online bookstore, important reminders, and much more. With you and your family well-prepared, we hope you can relax and enjoy the remaining days of summer!

Amazon @ UMass Amherst
UMass Amherst recently transitioned from an on-campus bookstore to Amazon @ UMass Amherst, an online bookstore managed by Amazon.com. Depending on the course, students can purchase or rent textbooks online and take advantage of free one-day shipping, or free one-day pickup at the Amazon @ UMass Amherst location in the Campus Center. Here's what students need to know before ordering:

- Amazon does not accept the UCard debit account as payment. Do not deposit funds to your student's UCard account for book purchases; use a debit card, credit card, or another form of payment accepted by Amazon. Get more information on the UCard website.
- Students living on campus should order textbooks after moving in; they won't be able to ship to residence halls or the mailroom until then.
- Although Amazon.com is the university's official online bookstore, some instructors may require students to buy custom course packets which may not be available on Amazon @ UMass Amherst. In that case, the instructor will provide specific instructions via SPIRE on where to purchase and pick up materials.
- Required course materials are listed on SPIRE. Students should log into their SPIRE account to view their class schedule and requirements.

Questions? Ask the Helpline!
The university Helpline provides students with answers to a range of basic questions, including billing, financial aid, student health insurance, class registration, meal plans, parking, and more. Helpline staff can only provide student-specific information directly to the student, unless they've designated an authorized payer and/or completed a FERPA privacy waiver. Learn more on the Office of the Bursar's website. To reach the Helpline, call (413) 545-6900, Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., until the end of the add/drop period; follow them on Facebook for useful tips, important dates, and more.

Before your student arrives this fall...

Fall semester bills
Fall semester bills are due today, Wednesday, August 12. All financial information is posted on SPIRE and can be viewed and paid online through QuikPAY. Paper invoices were not mailed. Visit the Office of the Bursar's website for more information.

Student health insurance
Students taking five or more credits in a semester are automatically enrolled in the Student Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) and charged on the semester's tuition bill. Students may be eligible to waive the plan; the deadline is Monday, Sept. 21. SHBP information, waiver eligibility guidelines, and instructions are on the University Health Services website; a link to the online waiver process is also
New "Living at UMass" app
Download the new "Living at UMass" app for iPhone and Android before move-in. It's packed with important information including reservation instructions, interactive maps with driving directions, weather and traffic updates. Search "Living at UMass" on either iTunes or Google Play.

Move-In: reservations, boarding passes, and information
On Friday, August 14, every student with an on-campus housing assignment must complete a move-in reservation and print their boarding pass for fall 2015 move-in. Residential Life's Move-In webpage has the information you and your student need, including the reservation schedule, video tutorials, guides and checklists, driving directions, and more.

Student employment
The Student Employment Office (SEO) website is a great place for undergrads to find part-time and seasonal job opportunities. Students beginning their first job at UMass Amherst must complete several forms and provide specific types of identification before starting work. Students with questions should contact SEO.

Enrollment verification
Students and families needing verification of full-time enrollment at UMass Amherst for insurance coverage, financial aid, or other purposes can request it through SPIRE's Student Center. Using the 'Other Academic' drop-down menu, your student should select 'Enrollment Verification,' and follow the instructions. Questions? Contact the Office of the Registrar, (413) 545-0555.

UMass Amherst alerts and emergency contacts
Check with your student to ensure they've enrolled in UMass Amherst Alerts, the campus emergency text messaging system. Subscribers receive immediate updates on ongoing emergencies and campus closures, with instructions on staying safe. It's quick and easy to sign up - from the SPIRE menu, choose UMass Amherst Alerts > Cell Phone Info.

Also encourage your student to supply emergency contact information. On SPIRE, go to Main Menu> My Personal Information> Emergency Contacts.

Students should check their UMass Amherst Alerts and emergency contact information once a semester to make sure it's up-to-date.

Haven - Understanding Sexual Assault
Encourage your student to complete Haven, an interactive online platform focused on healthy relationships, the importance of sexual consent, and the role of bystanders in creating safe, healthy communities. Course exercises help students identify personal and relationship values, understand consent, identify relationship red flags, and model safe, positive bystander behavior.

For new students...

New Student Immunization Program (NSIP)
College students must have certain immunizations, and submit documentation to the university, before coming to school. Learn what's required at the University Health Services website. Students who've completed necessary immunizations should log in to the UHS patient portal to enter their information before the end of the add/drop period, Monday, Sept. 21.

MyStudentBody
All first-year students, including transfers, must take and pass MyStudentBody Essentials before the Monday, Aug. 31 deadline. The required online course includes separate modules covering alcohol use, illicit and prescription drug use, and sexual violence. Students received an email late last month with
instructions on logging in and completing the course; information is also posted on the course webpage.

Transcripts and test scores
New first-year students need to send an official final high school transcript to Undergraduate Admissions by the beginning of the semester. Those who do not will have a hold placed on their record, preventing them from registering for spring courses. Transfer students and any other new student who took college courses elsewhere must send official, final transcript(s) if they were enrolled in courses in the spring or summer.

Students may earn advanced standing and/or credit based on their AP or SAT II scores. Official score reports must be sent to UMass Amherst's admissions office to receive credit. Students may have already requested this when they took the test; if not, they should go to the College Board website to make arrangements.

Important Dates
August 12: Fall semester bills due
August 14: Move-in reservation begins
August 31: Move-in reservation ends
September 4: First-year move-in, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
September 5: Transfer move-in, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
September 5-7: Fall NSO for new and transfer students
September 6: Returning student move-in, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
September 8: First day of classes
September 21: Last day to add/drop classes, waive the Student Health Benefit Plan, and submit immunization records

Website Links
Welcome Weeks
University Health Services patient portal
Residential Life Student Services Calendar
Student Employment Office
University Health Services

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
UMass Amherst Parents on Facebook