Greetings from UMass Amherst!

We had a terrific time at Family Weekend 2015, and collected a record number of canned foods for the Amherst Survival Center. Thank you for being part of it all - we look forward to seeing you again in 2016! October means students are preparing for midterms and the Majors Fair; in addition to these two very important topics, this message includes information on room assignment changes, upcoming breaks and much more.

Last day to drop a class with a 'W'
Thursday, Oct. 22 is the last day students can drop a course with a 'W' (for withdraw). Students considering withdrawing from a course are strongly encouraged to meet with an academic advisor first. Full-time status means your student is registered for a minimum of 12 credit hours per semester. Anything below 12 credits can impact their financial aid, athletic eligibility, health and car insurance benefits, graduation timeline, etc. Visit the Registrar’s website for more information on academic regulations.

Academic advising
Encourage your student to get to know their academic advisor and seek out help. Advisors are an excellent source of information on academic regulations, career exploration, and life after college. If your student has a question and doesn't know who to ask, their advisor can help. Students often turn to their advisors for career advice, academic counseling, or letters of reference for scholarships, internships, or employment. Students can find their assigned advisor and that person's contact information through SPIRE.

Mid-semester resources
As the middle of the semester approaches, some students may start to feel additional stress from coursework and midterm exams. There are many resources on campus that support students and can help them cope with stress, should it arise.

- The Learning Resource Center in the W. E. B. Du Bois Library offers a regular tutoring schedule and supplemental instruction.
- The Writing Center provides resources to help students of all levels and all disciplines become better writers. They help with all aspects of the writing process including brainstorming, refining ideas, and grammar.
- First-Year students have access to live-in Peer Mentors and academic support services at their Residential Academic Success Center (RASC).
- The Center for Counseling and Psychological Health offers individual and group support for students feeling stressed, anxious or overwhelmed.
- The Center for Health Promotion (CHP) offers programs and events related to health and well-being. The CHP’s Peer Health Educators help students relax by bringing therapy dogs to campus during midterms and finals. The next Paws Program is Wednesday, October 21, from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. in the Student Union Ballroom.
Fight the flu - get vaccinated!
With flu season around the corner, now’s the time for your student to get vaccinated! University Health Services offers walk-in clinics around campus and at the health center Thursdays and Fridays through early December. Both injected and inhaled vaccines are available. Immunizations are billed to your student’s health insurance; remind them to bring their plan ID card with them.

Residential Life updates

**In-semester room assignment change**
Students have several options to attempt to change their room assignment during the semester: Complete a person-for-person swap, a roommate pull-in, or submit a preference application to move to a vacant space on campus.

**Plan for hall closings**
Most residence halls on campus close for Thanksgiving, intersession, and spring break. Students should make Thanksgiving departure and return plans now. Opening and closing dates for the entire year are online.

**#GoGreenUMass**
Help us reach a 60% campus-wide recycling rate! Encourage your student to review and follow recycling guidelines posted in disposal areas, dispose of their e-waste at the service desks, and use the hydration station in their residence hall to help us reach this goal. Together we can make the campus healthier, cleaner, and greener!

**Living at UMass App**
We’ve updated the “Living at UMass” App! Encourage your student to download it now to get updates on campus events, submit an iService request, or report an incident on campus. It’s available on Apple’s App Store and Google Play.

Majors Fair
The annual Majors Fair is Wednesday, Oct. 28, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. Representatives from more than 100 UMass departments come together at the Campus Center so undergraduates with either declared or undeclared majors can explore options available to them. All students must be declared or affiliated with a school/college by May, 2016. Whether your student is seeking to declare a major, thinking about changing a major, or wanting to explore another subject area for a certificate, minor, or double major, encourage them to attend. The Majors Fair 2015 map will be available a few days before the event. For more information, email undergradadvising@umass.edu.

Career Services updates
Over the summer, Career Services upgraded UMass Amherst CareerConnect, its internship, job and employer database. The system has a fresh, updated look and allows students to:

- Search for: internships, co-ops (6 – 9 month positions) and post-graduation jobs.
- Take self-assessments to help them focus their ideas and career options.
- Set up job search alerts.
- Store resumes and cover letters to simplify their job search.
- Learn about employer sessions, career fairs, workshops, and networking events.
- Apply with employers coming on campus to recruit.
- Track current internship and/or co-op placement records online.
- Review handouts and tips for successful job searches.
- Schedule a career advising appointment.

The CareerConnect portal is on the right side of the Career Services website. Students can log in with their SPIRE Net ID and password.
Check out Career Services’ Internship Photo Contest winners! Students submitted over 80 entries for this summer’s photo contest, from as far away as South Africa and Korea, and as close as right here on the UMASS campus. They did extraordinary things through their summer internships!

The Career Services calendar is a great place to learn about upcoming employer information sessions, events, career fairs, panels and workshops.

Important dates

- **October 12**: Columbus Day (no classes)
- **October 14 – 17**: Homecoming 2015
- **October 13**: Monday class schedule followed (for Columbus Day holiday)
- **October 18**: Fall open house for prospective students at the Mullins Center
- **October 21**: Paws Program, 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Student Union Ballroom
- **October 22**: Mid-semester; last day to drop classes with a ‘W’
- **October 28**: Majors Fair, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., Campus Center Auditorium

Helpful links

Career Services
Center for Counseling and Psychological Health
Center for Health Promotions
Learning Resource Center
Majors Fair
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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UMass Amherst Parents on Facebook