Greetings from UMass Amherst Office of Parent Services (OPS)!

Now that spring break is behind us, the end of the spring semester is rapidly approaching! As we look forward to warmer days, our students are preparing for fall and summer session course registration, final projects, Commencement, and more. Below is some information to guide you and your student as you wrap up this school year and prepare for the fall semester.

Fall 2019 course registration

Fall 2019 course registration begins Monday, April 1. Talk with your student about fall semester plans. If they have not already met with an advisor about course selection, they should do so as soon as possible. Students can register online through April and make changes to their schedules until the Add/Drop period ends on September 16.

New registration tool now available

The University Registrar’s office has implemented a new registration tool called Schedule Builder, available for students to use for Fall 2019 registration. Schedule Builder allows students to add courses, generate all possible schedule combinations, and select the set of classes that best fit their needs. Students can easily build a preferred schedule around work or extracurricular activities, and send them to the student records system for registration.

Online Summer Session classes

Summer Session registration is now open. With nearly 600 online class offerings, students can complete Gen Ed requirements, stay on track, or earn extra credits towards graduation. They can take online classes from any location without disrupting summer plans. Sessions start May 20 and July 8 and fill up quickly. Note: there is an additional fee for summer session—classes are not included in your student’s regular tuition.

Finishing spring semester

Fall 2019 online room selection

The Single and Shared Room Selection process ends on Friday, March 29 at 4 p.m. If your student plans to live on campus, make sure they have used their appointment to select a housing assignment for Fall 2019. Students that have not selected a housing assignment by March 29 will not be guaranteed on-campus housing and will need to consider off-campus options.

Final exams

Final exams begin Friday, May 3 and end Thursday, May 9. The Spring 2019 final exam schedule is now available. Students can view their individual final exam schedule by logging onto SPIRE. If your student has conflicting exams or has three or more exams scheduled in one calendar day, they should contact the Office of the Registrar for assistance.

Spring move-out

Residence halls close for spring semester on Thursday, May 9 at 8 p.m. Graduating seniors and Commencement volunteers are permitted to stay until 10 a.m. Sunday, May 12. Other students who have a specific need to stay late may request permission to do so using the form on the Residential Life website from April 29 until May 9 at 8:30 a.m.

Prepare early to avoid getting stuck later

To ensure a smooth move-out, be sure your student has planned their departure from campus ahead of time.

More students than ever are scheduled to move-out on Thursday, May 9. To mitigate some of the impact of 7,300 students leaving campus on one day, Residential Life is recommending all students to do the following:
• Bring home as many belongings as possible during April. The long weekend of April 13-15 is a great opportunity for this.
• Reserve storage space ASAP. Facilities near campus fill up quickly.
• Donate items you no longer need to the New2U collection tent in your area, starting May 6.
• Familiarize yourself with the information on the Move-Out page available starting April 1.
• If possible, move out early to avoid the heavy traffic on Wednesday and Thursday.
• Be fully packed and ready by the curb before calling your ride to get you. Only cars in the process of loading will be allowed near the halls.

The Residential Life Move-Out page will be updated on April 1 with information on routes to campus, traffic pattern changes, loading zones, and important reminders.

If you have questions, please contact Residential Life Student Services at living@umass.edu or 413-545-2100.

Commencement updates
Commencement Weekend is rapidly approaching. Here are a few reminders to help you and your graduate get ready for the big day.

Every senior should check their SPIRE account

• To be certain the graduation date and major are listed correctly. If the date is incorrect, seniors must speak with the Registrar’s Office senior staff in Whitmore, Room 213.
• To check the diploma address to make sure it’s current; this is where UMass Amherst will mail your student’s diploma.
• To check on FERPA Holds. If your student has a FERPA Hold on their account, their name will not be listed in any commencement programs. To remove a hold, visit the Dean of Students Office, Whitmore, Room 227.

Commencement weekend is Thursday–Saturday, May 9-11. Visit the Commencement website for the complete schedule, parking information, dining in our award winning dining commons, accessibility information, and where to get caps and gowns.

Summer plans
Now’s the time for your student to plan for summer. Will they move back home, do an internship, study abroad, take classes, work part- or full-time, and/or volunteer? Discuss options and encourage them to make and finalize plans. Refer them to the International Programs Office or encourage them to connect with Career Services. If your student is staying in the Amherst area, direct them to Living@UMass365, which lists what UMass has to offer during breaks and over the summer.

The value of internships
Internships are an important complement to classroom learning. Student interns gain experience vital to their overall success and may also earn credits toward graduation. Other reasons your student should consider an internship include:

• It’s a great resume and self-confidence builder and may lead directly to a job offer. Some employers use internship experience to screen future hires.
• An internship gives students an opportunity to research and test different careers and fields.
• It helps students develop job search skills, such as writing a cover letter and resume, completing an application, and going on an interview.
• Students gain valuable practical experience with a particular job and with the workforce in general.
• It gives students an opportunity to network and make important contacts that will come in handy after graduation.
• Students learn important lessons about themselves, including their strengths and weaknesses and the type of work environment in which they do or do not thrive.

Let’s go shopping
UMass students are invited to attend a special JCPenney Suit-Up Event on Sunday, April 7, 6-9 p.m. at the Hadley Mall.
Whether your student is interviewing for opportunities, looking forward to a summer internship, or starting a full-time career after graduation, they’ll need to dress to impress! Sephora will provide mini makeovers and samples and the hair salon will offer free consultations and discounts for future visits. The store will be closed to the public and open just for UMass students! All UMass students who attend will receive an EXTRA 40% off coupon for career apparel and sale items, accessories, and shoes. A UCard is required for identification purposes. Students should RSVP on Handshake. PVTA buses and a continuous shuttle van will be available from the Haigis Mall bus stop to the store or students can drive. For questions, contact careerservices@umass.edu.

April Poll Question
On what topic(s) has your student most requested your assistance or advice? Participate in the poll and view previous results here.

Important dates
April 1: Registration begins for Fall 2019
April 15: Patriots Day (no classes)
April 17: Monday class schedule followed
May 1: Last day of classes
May 3: Final examinations begin
May 9: Last day of final examinations
May 9: Residence halls close at 8 p.m.
May 9–11: Commencement Ceremonies

Helpful Links
Commencement 2019
Office of Undergraduate Research & Studies
Residential Life Calendar

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

Sincerely,
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In case of a campus emergency, always follow the university’s main web page at www.umass.edu. The website will display a distinctly colored stripe at the top containing pertinent status updates and information related to ongoing emergencies.