



University of Massachusetts Amherst  
**Office of Parent Services**

**September 25, 2009**

**Dear Parents, Families, and Guardians,**

We are writing to you today in anticipation of this weekend, when the Boston Red Sox will be playing the New York Yankees.

In the past, students on this campus have engaged in destructive behavior in response to athletic events. These students are often fueled by alcohol. We have witnessed similar behavior on other college campuses and in major cities. At UMass Amherst, these disruptive events are usually related to the Boston Red Sox and the New England Patriots games.

Student behavior reflects upon the entire campus, and, as a result, affects the entire reputation of the University. When students engage in riotous behavior, the public no longer sees our renowned faculty, our cutting edge research or the majority of students who are truly interested in their academic careers.

We know that the majority of UMass Amherst students do not participate in, nor approve of, behavior which compromises the reputation of the university and puts members of the campus community at risk.

Most students do not actively engage in destructive behavior, but it is common for students to gather at the scene and watch as their peers endanger others and destroy University property. Unfortunately, students who are "just standing around" are actively contributing to the problem: their presence provides an audience which spurs on the aggressive action by their peers, and this congregating impedes the efforts of law enforcement to protect students and the property of the Commonwealth.

Clear guidelines have been articulated to our students, differentiating between responsible, acceptable celebratory fan behavior, and actions which are illegal and put members of the campus at risk. Most critically, in the event that a "Dispersal Order" is read by the University Police, any students who are then "just standing around" will be considered active participants, and subject to consequences. The campus takes swift and decisive action toward all students who participate in these activities.

We recently sent an email to your student which included a link to the "University of Massachusetts Amherst Responsible Fan Behavior" website. The contents of the email and this link are included below and are also available on the Office of Parents Services website at [www.umass.edu/parents](http://www.umass.edu/parents). We ask that you speak to your student about these messages.

The majority of UMass Amherst students do not approve of destructive behavior, but we are committed to providing the safest possible environment for all of our students, and therefore must be prepared.

And, we will take the steps necessary to preserve a reputation of prestige and honor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

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Dear Students,

Both the fall semester and the Major League Baseball (MLB) season are in full swing. This weekend, the Boston Red Sox will be playing the New York Yankees. We encourage you to enjoy the games. Whether your team wins or loses, act responsibly and respectfully toward each other.

Over the past few years, we have seen destructive student action associated with athletic events. Today, we are reminding everyone of the influence that these actions have when a well meaning celebration turns into destruction of University property and injury to others. The results have lasting consequences to students and their families, negatively affect the reputation of the University and have financial repercussions for the University.

Below is a link to the "University of Massachusetts Amherst Responsible Fan Behavior" website, which lists responsible, acceptable celebratory fan behavior, and actions which are illegal. Please take the time to read the contents fully and understand it. You will be held responsible for your actions.

Most critically, in the event that a "Dispersal Order" is read by the University Police, any students who are then "just standing around" will be considered active participants, and subject to consequences. The University will take swift and decisive action toward all students who participate in these activities.

Please consult with your residence hall staff with questions and for the most updated information. The residence hall lobbies will have posters communicating policies and procedures throughout the playoffs.

Information about responsible fan behavior at UMass Amherst:

[www.umass.edu/stuaf/responsiblefans](http://www.umass.edu/stuaf/responsiblefans)