NEW FACULTY QUICK START GUIDE to work and life at UMass Amherst

FACULTY LIFE

TEACHING

RESEARCH

TECHNOLOGY

WELLNESS
How do I access all of the online services on campus?
Your IT Account NetID and password gives you access to most online services like our student information system (SPIRE), UMass Amherst learning management systems (Moodle, Blackboard), library resources, and human resources services. If you have not yet received your NetID, contact UMass Amherst IT User Services at 413-545-TECH (8324), ext 2.

How do I sign up for payroll and benefits?
You will need to attend a New Employee Orientation with the Office of Human Resources (HR). Your department’s personnel coordinator will register you for an orientation date. After you are registered, but before you attend New Employee Orientation, you will receive an email from a contact in HR confirming your orientation date, when your payroll and benefits forms are due, when your health/dental insurance goes into effect, and a checklist of what to bring with you to orientation.

Do I need a campus ID card?
We strongly encourage you to get your UCard before the semester starts, which will allow you to take books out of the library and use the PVTA bus system and the UMass Amherst recreational facilities. You can also use your UCard as a debit card.

What are my options for commuting/parking?
If you plan to bring a car to campus, you will need to purchase a parking permit through Transportation Services. You will want to bring your license and car registration with you when you visit the office for the first time. You may find it helpful to view a campus parking map before you go.

UMass Transit operates PVTA buses for the Five Colleges and some neighboring towns and provides information on routes and schedules. You can also access bus schedules through the PVTA Bus Tracker app. The UMass Commuter Options Program has also started forming vanpools.

Where can I find information on available rental apartments and homes?
Some helpful housing sites include UMass Amherst’s Off Campus Housing Service, Western Massachusetts craigslist, and Rent Noho.

Where can international faculty go for assistance on immigration matters and visas?
The International Programs Office provides information and assistance on J-1 visa stamps, mandatory health insurance, H-1B immigration information, and applying for U.S. permanent residency.

Where can I find the names of elementary and secondary schools in Western Massachusetts?
GreatSchools provides a list of schools in the area, organized by town/city and county.
How do I manage my courses (class roster, schedules, email my whole class, grades)?
UMass uses the SPIRE system for all course management activities. Course management by instructors occurs through the SPIRE Faculty Center. You will need your NetID to access SPIRE. If you have any issues, you can email for help at spire-support@it.umass.edu.

How do I know what to put in my syllabus?
The UMass Amherst Office of Academic Planning & Assessment (OAPA) has created a very handy Syllabus Construction Tool designed to help faculty prepare their syllabi. You can schedule a syllabus consultation through the Institute for Teaching Excellence & Faculty Development (TEFD). You can also view the “Instructor’s Roles and Responsibilities” section of the Disability Services’ Faculty Handbook, which details how faculty should make their syllabus and course accessible to students.

Are there any teaching-related workshops I should put on my calendar?
Check the TEFD calendar for upcoming teaching events and workshops scheduled throughout the academic year.

What types of online tools can I use for my courses?
Moodle and Blackboard are the two learning management systems at UMass. They are used to collect assignments, share readings, post grades, manage online discussions, deliver quizzes, or manage group work. You request your Moodle or Blackboard course in SPIRE. You can also email instruct@umass.edu for help.

Are there resources on online teaching and learning?
The UMass Amherst Office of Academic Planning & Assessment (OAPA) has created a detailed Teaching and Learning Online guide on how best to approach and conduct online learning. You can also find resources for Blackboard and Moodle.

What supports are available through the library?
- Reserving Course Materials
- Research Course Guides
- Interlibrary Loan
- Image Collection Library
- Open Educational Resources
- Academic Liaison Program
- Digital Media Lab
- Science and Engineering Library
BEFORE THE SEMESTER BEGINS

I'm interested in applying for an external grant during my first semester—what should I know now?

1. All researchers who plan to apply for sponsored activities are required to use the Office of Grant and Contract Administration (OGCA) Electronic Data System.

2. All proposals to external funding sources in support of sponsored programs are submitted by OGCA. Proposals are due to OGCA five (5) working days before the sponsor deadline. There is a Five-Day Proposal Submission Procedure Overview that is a very helpful document to faculty.

3. You should work with the appropriate staff member of the OGCA Pre-Award team to submit your proposal.

How do I find funding for my research?
The Office of Research and Engagement provides links to internal and external sources of funding for scientific and academic research.

What should I do if I’m bringing a grant with me to UMass Amherst from a previous institution?
Please consult the Office of Research Administration & Compliance’s advice on transferring grants.

Does my school/college offer research support?
Some, but not all, schools and colleges offer their own structures for supporting faculty research and scholarship.

- **College of Education**
- **College of Natural Science**
- **College of Humanities and Fine Arts**
- **College of Nursing**
- **School of Public Health and Health Sciences**
- **College of Social and Behavioral Sciences**

Most schools and colleges also have an assistant/associate dean of research who is another great research contact. You can identify your school/college’s dean of research through your faculty directory.

What types of central campus support are available to help me with my research?
The Office of Research and Engagement (R&E) provides leadership, support, and oversight for research and engagements with academic, industry, and government partners. The major functions of R&E in support of the University’s mission and strategic priorities are the following:

**Sponsored Research Development:**
- Support and promote interdisciplinary research
- Support and promote international research collaborations
- Support and promote community partnerships for research
- Consulting and capacity building for acquiring sponsored research funding
- Economic development and other statewide initiatives
Sponsored Research Development (continued)

- Commercialization of UMass research for public benefit (Technology Transfer Office)
- Facilitating flexible and creative industry partnerships (UMass Innovation Institute)

Sponsored Research Administration:

- Proposal development (Research Business Managers Network, Office of Research Development)
- Proposal submission (Office of Grants and Contracts)
- Sponsor negotiation and award setup
- Final reporting and project closeout
- Facilities and services to support specialized research needs and facilities (e.g., Animal Care Services, Core Research Facilities, and Life Science labs)

Research Compliance:

- Animal use and care
- Human subjects research
- Biological and chemical safety
- Export control
- Responsible conduct of research
- Conflict of interest
- Data security
- Specialized facility access

Where can I find information about the research activities of my new colleagues here at UMass Amherst?

1. ResearchNext is a short-form online magazine highlighting the research, scholarship, and creative activity that distinguishes UMass Amherst as a top research university.
2. UMass Amherst is home to approximately 60 campus-based research Centers and Institutes spanning a wide array of disciplines and specialties within and across campus Schools and Colleges.
3. Numerous departmental and faculty member websites contain additional information about the diversity and depth of research and scholarly activity here at UMass Amherst.
How can I make sure I am able to access the Internet in my classroom?
Wired and wireless Internet is available in most campus buildings and scheduled classrooms. For wired connections, be sure to register your device(s) on the campus network each semester. Use the eduroam wireless network for encrypted wireless access. IT provides directions and FAQs for wired and wireless connections.

How do I go about using audio/video resources in my classroom?
Classroom Technology Services provides technical support, equipment delivery, and consultation services for faculty using classrooms and auditoriums on campus.

How do I flip my classroom and record lectures to post online?
Instructional Innovation can help you flip your classroom (delivering content outside of class so students spend class time doing active learning approaches) by offering lecture capture technology.

Do I have access to assistive technologies?
The Assistive Technologies Center works with Disability Services to bring full access for all persons at UMass Amherst and offers assistive technology services.

Does IT have recommendations on computer configurations or software?
IT User Services offers IT consulting and support services to members of the university community enabling teaching, learning, research, and engagement.
What tips do you have to help me manage my time during the semester?

- Consider putting a statement on your syllabus about how long you will take to respond to student emails (some faculty say within 24-48 hours).
- Determine a calendar/scheduling system that works for you. Some faculty use Microsoft Exchange to schedule meetings, while others prefer Google Calendar or YouCanBookMe for office hours sign-ups.
- Use a timer during course prep.
- Commit to a project management system to accomplish daily goals. Some popular tools are the 1-3-5 Rule, the Bullet Journal system, or Getting Things Done Workflow Diagram.

What resources does UMass Amherst offer for health and well-being?

- The Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (FSAP) is a free and confidential counseling, consultation, and referral service that assists employees in resolving personal, work-related, and family problems.
- Staffed by licensed mental health providers, the Center for Counseling and Psychological Health provides short-term individual, couple’s, and group psychotherapy; psychiatric medication consultation and treatment; psychological assessment (testing); behavioral medicine; and crisis intervention services.
- Campus Recreation offers a variety of fitness programs (personal and group fitness classes). Faculty can also sign up for a membership to the Rec Center.
- Newmass Yoga offers yoga classes in the Newman Center.
- Religious and Spiritual Life holds weekly meditation groups.
FACULTY LIFE

Where can I find the university’s expectations for reappointment, promotion, and tenure?
The Provost writes an Annual Letter on Promotion and Tenure, and the Provost’s Office provides a list of additional documents for the tenure process. You should also speak with your chair/head about your department and school/college’s expectations for promotion and tenure.

What is the governance model for UMass Amherst?
The Faculty Senate is responsible for faculty participation in university planning and governance and has numerous standing and ad hoc councils and committees.

What resources are available to faculty to support and promote diversity at UMass Amherst?
UMass Amherst is committed to building a diverse campus community. The following are some of the many programs that support and encourage our diverse community.

- Diversity Matters
- Center for Women & Community
- Office of Veteran Services
- The Stonewall Center
- Women in Science Initiative
- Women of Color Leadership Network

Where can I find information on the different leave policies (i.e., sick, personal, vacation, parental, or bereavement leave)?
Please refer to the Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP) contract for the various leave policies, which can be found under Article 27. Supplemental Compensation (Benefits).

Can I stop the “tenure clock”? The UMass Amherst parental postponement of tenure-year decision language, under the parental leave policy, is stated in the Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP) contract and can be found under Article 27. Supplemental Compensation (Benefits).

What supports are available to faculty parents?

- The Office of Family Resources provides information on events for UMass Amherst families, as well as childcare options.
- The Center for Early Education and Care offers full-day and flexible-schedule services for toddlers and pre-school-aged children throughout the year.
- The Childcare Assistance Program helps new tenure-track faculty with childcare expenses in the first three years of employment at UMass.

Am I eligible for tuition benefits?
Full-time benefited UMass Amherst employees and their spouses, domestic partners, and unmarried dependent children (through age 25) are eligible for tuition waivers and/or tuition remission.
What resources are available on campus to help my students with their learning?

- The Faculty Guide from the Provost’s Office contains detailed information on all learning support services on campus.
- The Learning Resource Center provides peer tutoring in both study skills and academic subjects.
- The Learning Commons is a space on the lower level of the W.E.B. Du Bois Library that brings together academic, technology, and library support.
- The Writing Center provides one-on-one consultations to students on their writing projects, providing feedback and strategies at any stage of the writing process. The Writing Center also supports faculty in designing writing assignments and in-class writing activities.

I’m a few weeks into the semester and I’m curious about how the class is going for my students. What can I do?

TEFD offers a Midterm Assessment Process (MAP), which is a confidential and voluntary service instructors may use to get student feedback on a course while the course is in progress. MAPs may be conducted in small, medium, and large-sized classes and the feedback goes directly to, and only to, the instructor.

Is there any funding available for the professional development of teaching?

Faculty can apply for a Flex Grant to support faculty professional development related to teaching. Flex Grants are funded by the campus through the MSP contract.

What is the University’s policy on academic dishonesty? What are my options if I suspect a student has cheated?

If you suspect a student of academic dishonesty, contact the Ombuds Office within 10 days of your suspicion. For a more detailed overview of your options, see the Academic Honesty Policy.

UMass Amherst also has a subscription to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service that detects textual matches between student papers and other documents available in electronic form on the Internet, in subscription databases, and in databases of other student papers. For more information on this software, visit the University Libraries’ page on Plagiarism Prevention at UMass Amherst, or contact turnitin@library.umass.edu
What should I know about research grants and compliance at UMass Amherst?

1. **Office of Grants and Contracts Administration (OGCA)** reviews and endorses proposals institutionally and submits them to sponsors.
2. You should work with the *appropriate staff member of the OGCA Pre-award team* to submit your proposal.
3. Research & Engagement (R&E) has outlined some of the steps and related resources UMass offers in support of the development of proposals for sponsored project funding.

Central campus support for proposal development, prior to submission, is available from:

- **Research Business Manager Network Services** (assistance with proposal & budget preparation/post-award training)
- **Office of Research Development** (large-scale proposals/strategic initiatives/internal funding/capacity-building workshops)
- **Corporate and Foundation Relations** (assistance to faculty seeking to secure private foundation and non-governmental external funding)
- **The UMass Innovation Institute** (facilitates industry-sponsored research collaborations)
- **UMass Amherst Libraries’ Research Data Services** (assistance with all aspects of data management throughout the life of your scholarship, including data management plans required by many sponsors)

The **Office of Research Compliance** oversees all compliance requirements at UMass related to research under one coordinated unit. Major areas of compliance include:

- Use of **Animal Subjects** in research
  - **Animal User Training**
- Use of **Human Subjects** in research
  - **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**
  - **Human Subjects CITI Training (compliance for IRB)**
- **Research Ethics**
- **Research Safety and Security**
- **Export Controls**

The **Technology Transfer Office** provides central campus support for technology transfer and intellectual property management.

What other research-related resources should I be aware of?

There are many resources available to new faculty, some of which are specific to a particular area of research and scholarly activity. Some of the more generally applicable resources are listed here:

Publishing supports include:

- **UMass Press**
- **Digital Scholarship & Consultation Services**
- **Copyright Services and Open Access**
- **TEFD Scholarly Writing Support**
Methodology supports include:

- Institute for Social Science Research Methodology Workshops
- Statistical Consultation and Collaboration Services

UMass Amherst Libraries supports include:

- ScholarWorks (repository of research and scholarly output)
- Science & Engineering Library
- Special Collections and University Archives
If I need IT support for my computer, what can I do? UMass IT User Services provides computer maintenance and repair, as well as support and consultation for supported applications and operating systems, security check-ups, data destruction services, audio-visual training and support, pre-purchase consultations, and enterprise services to members of the UMass Amherst campus community.

How do I reserve a computer classroom? UMass IT maintains Windows and Macintosh classrooms across campus and in the Learning Commons and Teaching Commons and provides directions for computer classroom requests as well as computer software installation requests.

How do I know if a certain piece of software is installed on computers in the classrooms? IT User Services provides a list of software installed on computers in classrooms.

What options do I have for online student collaboration? Apps at UMass Amherst (similar to Google’s online tools) allows users to share files, edit documents, facilitate team-based projects, and maintain class calendars. In addition to Drive (accessed through Apps), you can also use Box to securely store documents that can be accessed by a group of users.

How can I find out about new innovative technologies for teaching? Innovate@UMass’s Instructional Innovation team supports instructors by offering one-one-one consultations, and a calendar of ongoing innovation events.

What are team-based learning (TBL) classrooms? The TBL classrooms’ layout supports student-centered teaching and learning where student/faculty and student/student interactions are encouraged by round tables and technologies throughout the room. Each table has 9 chairs, 3 computers, a wall display, and a whiteboard, with the additional capability of hooking up student-owned laptops and smart technology.
AFTER THE SEMESTER STARTS

I really need to take a break from sitting in my office. Where can I go to refresh and reset?

The Durfee Conservatory is a greenhouse complex that features a bonsai collection, orchid collection, succulents, and tropical plants that surround a 4,000 gallon fish pond! You can visit the Fine Arts Center, which offers performing arts programming and is home to the University Museum of Contemporary Art.

I'm hungry. What are my dining options on campus?

Check out this annotated Google Map of all the eat-in and take-out dining options for faculty (does not include student dining halls). UMass Dining also offers a Dining app to make it easy to access campus dining locations with daily menus, operating hours, and real-time traffic reports.

Faculty can buy a meal plan or pay with cash or credit and eat in any of the dining locations.

Marriott Meals is a student-run restaurant in the Campus Center, managed by students who are studying hospitality management through the Isenberg School of Management. Many people have remarked it is the “best meal on campus.”
The New Faculty Quick Start Guide was developed by the Institute for Teaching Excellence & Faculty Development (TEFD), Office of Research and Engagement, Innovate@UMass, UMass Amherst Libraries, and Disability Services.