Welcome to UMass Amherst

UMass Amherst ranks among the nation’s Top 30 public universities (U.S. News & World Report, 2015). It is rated one of the most affordable public universities in the nation and is committed to innovation, sustainability, and social justice. Of all your educational options, you chose UMass Amherst. And we chose you too, for the many qualities only you could bring to our diverse campus community.

UMatter at UMass is an initiative intended to affirm the values the university set in motion 150 years ago: care, compassion and active engagement. UMass Amherst is committed to supporting all students and ensuring that you receive academic, emotional, and practical support throughout your time in college.

This guide is designed to give you an overview of campus resources and general support services for concerns, including alcohol and other drug abuse; bias; harassment and violence; sexual misconduct; and depression and suicide. If you or someone you know needs assistance while at UMass Amherst, these resources can help. Don’t know where to begin? Contact the Dean of Students Office: (413) 545-2684, www.umass.edu/dean_students.

UMatter at UMass
 Actively caring for each other and our community
Commit to a culture of caring

Every day we witness many things (both good and not so good). This makes us all bystanders.

We also make decisions about how to respond to what we see. Our choices can turn us into active bystanders.

When an active bystander witnesses a harmful act, they take action instead of just passively observing or walking away. We ask all members of the UMass Amherst community to learn and practice active bystander techniques.

The 3Ds of Active Bystandership:

Direct: Step in and interrupt a harmful situation by pointing out the problem and engaging participants in conversation about better alternatives.

Distract: If you aren’t comfortable calling out the problematic behavior, try interrupting a risky situation by distracting and redirecting the people involved.

Delegate: If you can’t do it alone, involve others.

Learn more: www.umass.edu/umatter

TIP!

Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) are a great way to get involved with the social culture and make friends at UMass Amherst: https://umassamherst.collegiatelink.net/organizations
Help yourself and others
Going to college can be a difficult transition. It’s normal to feel lost, lonely, confused, anxious, inadequate and stressed at times during this stage of life. This difficulty can be compounded by stereotypes of college life and college students. A first step in self-discovery is shaping who you want to be and learning skills for the rest of your life.

Trust your instincts
If something doesn’t feel right, chances are it isn’t right.

Listen sensitively and carefully
Learn to listen carefully without interruption or judgment. Express concern and care. Ask direct questions.

Involve others
Reach out to friends, parents, or other family members for support and connection.

Ask for help
Several campus offices have staff trained to handle difficult situations sensitively, with respect for student privacy. Partner with campus care coordinators to get help for yourself or a friend.

Take care of yourself
It’s okay to be yourself, not buy into stereotypes about college, and be true to your own values. Make sure to acknowledge what you’re going through and receive adequate support.
The key to coping with stress is being aware of your personal tolerance levels for different types of stress. You must either let go of or change situations that cause you stress. Some of the following self care suggestions may help immediately, but if your stress is constant, it may require you to make lifestyle changes or visit your counseling center for support.

**Focus on time management.** Plan ahead and schedule enough time for schoolwork and other obligations.

**Take one thing at a time.** When overwhelmed, deal with one urgent task at a time. When it’s done, move on to the next.

**Be realistic.** Don’t feel pressured into taking on too much. If overwhelmed with school, say no to certain extracurricular activities.

**Meditate.** When stressed, find a quiet place to breathe deeply for a few minutes or take a quick walk. Five to ten minutes of quiet reflection can clear the mind and bring some relief.

**Exercise and sleep.** Thirty minutes of physical activity and eight hours of sleep per day helps both body and mind.

**Take a break.** Sometimes it’s best to stop working and do something you enjoy.

**Share your feelings.** It’s important not to try to cope alone. Friends and family can provide support and guidance.

**Be flexible.** Conflict only increases stress. It’s okay to stand your ground, but do so calmly and rationally. It’s important to learn to compromise and to make allowances for other people’s opinions.

Check out Campus Recreation at [www.umass.edu/campusrec](http://www.umass.edu/campusrec) and the Center for Counseling and Psychological Health (CCPH) at [www.umass.edu/counseling](http://www.umass.edu/counseling) for physical activities, mindfulness, meditation, and other de-stressing resources!
Dealing with a Mental Health Setback

Some college students suffer from anxiety, depression and other mental health concerns. So, it’s not surprising that with the demands and stress of college, setbacks can occur. Finding the right approach to self care and managing your emotional condition and knowing what to do when a setback happens can help you get back on track.

To minimize setbacks and their impact, learn to spot your personal warning signs. Talk to a counselor or therapist to create a list of signs you should watch out for, such as crying easily, waking up anxious every day, eating less, getting mad quickly, skipping class, or having a tough time concentrating on work. **By spotting the warning signs early, you can get help sooner, and get better faster.**

Use Your Support Network

Managing the daily demands of college life can be difficult, especially if you’re a student struggling with an emotional health issue. Having a support system – including your treatment team, a college advisor and a few friends you trust – can make a big difference. So, if you’re falling behind academically, feeling stressed out or struggling in general, **speak up and use your support system.**

TIP! Learn About Accommodations

If you have a psychological, physical, auditory, medical, cognitive/learning disability, or another chronic condition, as defined by a qualified professional, register with Disability Services (161 Whitmore) for support and accommodations.
Whether you are going out on the town, want to be better prepared for emergencies, or make sure your stuff doesn’t get lost or stolen, these are some basics for staying safe:

- **Never sign in someone you don’t know** to your residence hall or hold the door open to let them in.
- **Do not give out personal information**, such as your social security or credit card numbers.
- **Share your school, work, and social schedule** with family and close friends.
- **Always carry identification with you**, but never attach your name or address to your key chain.
- **Go out with your friends and go home with your friends.** Look out for one another.
- **Stay in control.** If a social situation or party gets out of hand, leave!
- **Have someone you can call for a ride or for help**, and create a code word or phrase that means, “Come help me out of this!”
- **Use UMPD’s free walking escort service.** Escorts are on call from 7 p.m. to 3 a.m. every night during the academic semester.
- **Program your phone with emergency numbers:** UMPD: (413) 545-2121, Amherst Police: (413) 259-3000.
- **Report any suspicious or unusual activities immediately** to campus or local police.

- **Protect your computer and passwords.** Use anti-virus software and firewalls. Create passwords that are hard to guess.
- **Never leave personal property unattended!** Take valuables with you or lock them up, even if you are only leaving for a few minutes. UMPD programs Project Protect and “Like it – Lock it – Keep it” can help protect valuables and recover stolen items.

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**TIP!**

Keep your emergency contact information updated on SPIRE (My Personal Information > Emergency Contacts)

More personal safety tips: [www.umass.edu/studentlife/community/off-campus/safety](http://www.umass.edu/studentlife/community/off-campus/safety)
Financial Wellness

The financial decisions you make during college can impact your future. To practice smart money management:

- **Make a budget and stick to it.** Sites like mint.com and spendster.org can help track spending and distinguish between wants and needs. Many businesses offer student discounts – use them.

- **Rent or buy discounted textbooks.** UMass Amherst partners with Amazon.com to help reduce the cost of textbooks. Rent, buy, and resell textbooks at umass.amazon.com. Orders receive free one-day shipping to campus pick-up locations.

- **Leave your car at home.** Save money on parking permits, insurance, and repairs by leaving your car at home and using public transportation, walking, and biking.

- **Ask for assistance.** If a crisis impacts your finances, contact the Dean of Students Office at (413) 545-2684.

Financial Aid

The **Bursar's Office** issues online bills and credits accounts for tuition and fee payments and financial aid awards. The **Financial Aid Services** website (www.umass.edu/umfa) includes a guide to understanding financial aid. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) must be completed annually to qualify for aid: www.umass.edu/umfa/undergraduates/apply.

If your family's financial circumstances change after receiving your financial aid package, contact the **Financial Aid Office**.

Scholarships

Scholarships and awards are like grants – they are financial aid that you do not have to repay. Listings of potential scholarships can be found at: www.umass.edu/umfa/scholarship.

Campus Jobs

If you are seeking work, the undergraduate **Student Employment Office (SEO)** is the place to start. The SEO provides listings for work-study and non-work-study part-time and seasonal jobs. The student job board is at: www.umass.edu/umfa/seo/umass-amherst-student-job-board.

Your records are confidential and protected under the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**. The university will not disclose information to anyone (even family members) unless you complete a FERPA waiver: www.it.umass.edu/support/spire/set-up-your-ferpa-privacy-waiver.
Cause for Concern

**Behavioral:**
- Problems concentrating
- Lack of energy
- Personal hygiene changes
- Alcohol or other drug abuse
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Difficulty making decisions

**Academic:**
- Lateness or absenteeism
- Procrastination
- Poorly prepared work

**Emotional:**
- Withdrawal from activities and friends
- Personality changes
- Lack of pleasure in things they used to enjoy
- Inappropriate outbursts, angry or belligerent behavior
- Appears fearful, anxious or nervous
- Conversation, writing or social media posts preoccupied with death or mentions the desire to harm self or others
- Statements of hopelessness such as, “I hate this life” or “Everyone is better off without me”

If you recognize these or other troubling signs in yourself or someone you know, reach out to an RA or RD, a counselor, trusted friend or professor for help, or contact one of the resources on the following pages. **Always call 911 in a potentially life-threatening situation.**
Sexual Misconduct and Title IX

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to fulfilling requirements under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to foster a safe learning environment by responding promptly and effectively to complaints of all forms of sexual misconduct (including rape, sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, stalking, and sexual harassment).

These acts are violations of the Code of Student Conduct, state and federal laws. Perpetrators are subject to university disciplinary procedures as well as criminal prosecution.

If you or someone they know experiences sexual misconduct while at UMass Amherst, call the UMass Police Department: 911 or (413) 545-2121 or the Center for Women and Community’s rape crisis hotline for people of all genders: (413) 545-0800.

For more information go to www.umass.edu/studentlife/title_IX or contact support resources on following two pages.

Take a stand against bias

Students have the right not to be discriminated against by any university agent or organization for race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, mental or physical disability, political belief or affiliation, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or genetic information.

All members of the UMass Amherst community are asked to actively foster an appreciation for diversity by not tolerating bias-related acts.

Students who have been impacted by bias, whether as a target or bystander, may report the incident online (http://bit.ly/1zN59iF) or by contacting the Dean of Students Office or UMPD.
Your Campus Resources for Support and Safety

IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE (AVAILABLE 24/7)
UMass Amherst Police: (413) 545-2121 • Emergency: 911
585 East Pleasant Street, www.umass.edu/umpd – CONFIDENTIAL
• immediate response for all emergencies including threatening or dangerous behavior, accidents, injury

University Health Services: (413) 577-5000
150 Infirmary Way, www.umass.edu/uhs – CONFIDENTIAL
• medical care and 24/7 on-call service
• free sexual assault evidence collection for sexual assault victims/survivors

Center for Counseling and Psychological Health: (413) 545-2337
After-hours emergencies: (413) 577-5000 – CONFIDENTIAL
127 Hills North, www.umass.edu/counseling
• 24/7 emergency services, crisis intervention, assessment, consultation
• brief psychotherapy, anxiety, depression, mindfulness training

Center for Women and Community: (413) 545-0883
Rape Crisis: (413) 545-0800 – CONFIDENTIAL
180 Infirmary Way, New Africa House, www.umass.edu/ewc
• 24/7 rape crisis hotline for people of all genders
• safety planning, free counseling and support groups for survivors, friends and families
• community training on issues of consent, sexual assault and harassment

FOLLOW-UP AND SUPPORT
Center for Health Promotion: (413) 577-5181
150 Infirmary Way, third floor, www.umass.edu/studentlife/chp
• alcohol screening and brief intervention (BASICS)
• support for students in recovery and living sober at UMass

Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success: (413) 545-2517
101 Wilder Hall, www.umass.edu/multiculturalaffairs
• cultural enrichment, academic support, student development and support for institutional diversity
• mentoring, workshops, advocacy, scholarship and internship opportunities, graduate school preparation and career development
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| **Dean of Students Office**: (413) 545-2684  | 227 Whitmore, [www.umass.edu/dean_students](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students) | - advice and support in managing challenging situations  
|                                              |                                              | - emergency loans for students in financial need                                   |
| **Disability Services**: (413) 545-0892      | 161 Whitmore, [www.umass.edu/disability](http://www.umass.edu/disability) | - registering and accommodating students with all types of disabilities           |
| **Equal Opportunity & Diversity (EO&D)**: (413) 545-3464 | 243 Lederle, [www.umass.edu/eod](http://www.umass.edu/eod) | - campus affirmative action and equal opportunity policies, procedures and complaint administration |
| **Off Campus Student Center**: (413) 577-1005 | 314 Student Union, [www.umass.edu/studentlife/ocsc](http://www.umass.edu/studentlife/ocsc) | - resources and support for students who live or plan to live off campus          |
| **Ombuds Office**: (413) 545-0867            | Campus Center room 823, [www.umass.edu/ombuds](http://www.umass.edu/ombuds) | - facilitation and informal mediation; resolution of grade disputes                |
| **Psychological Services Center**: (413) 545-0041 | Tobin Hall, room 123, [www.umass.edu/psc](http://www.umass.edu/psc) | - free confidential initial consultation and sliding-scale psychotherapy           |
| **Residential Life**                         | [www.housing.umass.edu](http://www.housing.umass.edu) | - Support and referrals on any issue for students living on campus  
|                                              |                                              | - Help addressing roommate disputes, residence hall quality of life               |
| **Stonewall Center**: (413) 545-4824         | Crampton Hall (Southwest), [www.umass.edu/stonewall](http://www.umass.edu/stonewall) | - support, resources, programming, and advocacy for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual (LGBTQIA) students and allies |
| **Student Legal Services Office**: (413) 545-1995 | 922 Campus Center, [www.umass.edu/rso/slso](http://www.umass.edu/rso/slso) | - confidential legal counseling, advice, research, education, representation, and referral for all fee-paying students  
|                                              |                                              | - confidential support with misconduct issues, crime victimization, bullying and harassment and violence Issues |
| **Student Veteran Resource Center**: (413) 545-0939 | 18/19 Dickinson Hall, [www.umass.edu/veterans](http://www.umass.edu/veterans) | - a welcoming place for veterans and active members of the U.S. military to study, network, learn and seek support  
|                                              |                                              | - veterans benefit questions                                                      |
Six State and Federal Laws and University Policies You Need to Know

These laws and policies are important to understanding your rights and responsibilities within your UMass Amherst experience.

Academic Honesty Policy
UMass Amherst’s Academic Honesty Policy applies to all students and is administered by the Ombuds Office: www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acad honesty.

Code of Student Conduct/Residential Life Community Standards
All University of Massachusetts Amherst students are responsible for complying with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures contained in the Code of Student Conduct, as well as those in other official University communications. Find them at www.umass.edu/dean_students.

Guidelines for Classroom Civility and Respect
Faculty members are required to maintain classrooms that promote the safe and open exchange of ideas. Students are responsible for personal behavior that supports these goals. The full policy may be viewed at www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/classroomcivility.

University Alcohol and Drug Policies
It is illegal to possess or consume alcohol if under the age of 21. Open containers are not allowed in the residence halls or on UMass campus. Students are responsible for reading and following the University’s alcohol and other drug policies; they are available at www.umass.edu/studentlife/community/policies-and-guidelines.

“Minutes Matter” Medical Amnesty Policy
If you seek help for someone under the influence of alcohol or other drugs who needs medical attention, neither you nor that person will be charged with a Code of Student Conduct or Residence Hall Community Standards violation. If that person is a UMass student, they will be required to attend BASICS and pay the associated fee.

Town and State Bylaws
Amherst, other neighboring towns, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts all have bylaws outlining community standards that local residents (including college students) are required to uphold. View Amherst town bylaws at www.amherstma.gov.