

Standard Six: Students

I. Admissions, Financial Aid and Records

Description

A total of 20,539 undergraduate students and 5,820 graduate students were enrolled at UMass Amherst in fall 2008. To attract and enroll its students, UMass Amherst maintains an orderly and ethical admissions program directed toward meeting the enrollment goals of the university. Application procedures, the application process, required tests, admissions standards and the decision-making process, as well as Massachusetts Department of Higher Education requirements, are available for freshman applicants at http://www.umass.edu/ug_programguide/admissions/freshman.html, and for transfer applicants at http://www.umass.edu/ug_programguide/admissions/transfer.html. This information is published in the *Guide to Undergraduate Programs*. The admissions office fully subscribes to the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) *Statement of Principles and Good Practices*. (Issues pertaining to graduate students are fully described in the Graduate Degree Programs section of Standard Four: The Academic Program.)

First-year applications increased by 64 percent from fall 2004 to fall 2009, rising from 17,930 to 29,469 over five years. During the same period, the acceptance rate fell by 14 percentage points. Representation of African-American, Latino, Asian-American and Native American (ALANA) students rose from 17 percent in 2004 to 22 percent in 2009, a 29 percent increase over five years, according to [data](#) updated in August 2009. By comparison, the proportion of ALANA students among Massachusetts high school seniors planning to attend a four-year college is 18.5 percent. *Selected Undergraduate Admissions and Enrollment Statistics* are updated regularly and are found at http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/factsheets/select_undergrad_stats/FS_sel_01.pdf.

In recent years, the entering freshman class typically has numbered about 4,000 students, with more than 75 percent from Massachusetts. Each fall, the university also enrolls a sizable transfer class of more than 1,000 students, with more than 85 percent of entering transfer students from Massachusetts. About one-third of these transfer students enter through a Joint Admissions program with the state's community colleges, which guarantees acceptance upon completion of an associate's degree with a 2.5 or better cumulative grade point average.

The admissions staff recruits students from Massachusetts, New England, the Northeast and other targeted areas throughout the country. This past year, the staff conducted a number of off-campus recruitment activities:

- About 550 visits to high schools.
- 40 college fairs sponsored by national and regional professional organizations.
- More than 400 college nights and mini-fairs sponsored by high schools.
- 36 panel presentations to students and parents.
- 7 receptions for students and family sponsored by the university.
- 9 guidance counselor receptions.

On campus recruiting activities include:

- Campus tours led by current undergraduate students. The number of visitors participating in campus tours has increased by 46 percent since 2003, with more than 30,000 people annually visiting campus.
- Group information sessions are available twice a day, six days a week.
- Fall Open House is a campus-wide event held each October for prospective students and their families. Attendance has increased to about 4,500.

- A series of 10 Open House programs for admitted students occurs each spring. Two Early Action sessions have been added, and overall attendance has increased to more than 7,200 admitted students and family members.

In 2006, the Admissions Office instituted an Early Action (EA) program designed for applicants with strong academic records who wish to apply early and receive early admissions decisions. Deposits are not required until the standard reply date, May 1. EA applications have more than doubled, from 3,030 for fall 2006 to 8,000 for the fall 2009 entering class. Students admitted through the EA program made up 16 percent of the 2006 entering class; the percentage increased to 34 percent in 2009.

Beginning in fall 2007, UMass Amherst participated in the Common Application, a member organization that provides online and paper applications that members agree to accept and treat as they would their own applications. In the three years UMass Amherst has participated, the portion of the applicant pool using the Common Application has grown from 54 percent to 82 percent.

Student financial aid information is clearly presented through the [Financial Aid Services website](#). Need-based aid is used to promote access to higher education; merit-based funding enhances the academic quality of the student body.

Detailed financial aid information is available in printed materials, on the UMass Amherst website, and is presented at Admissions Open House events. The only application required for financial aid is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The Financial Aid Services follows all federal, state and institutional policies and regulations related to financial aid management. The office is audited on an annual basis by an independent auditor as required by federal regulations; it is audited every third year by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Students may access their financial aid information at any time through the online registration and records system, SPIRE.

UMass Amherst has established a schedule for student records retention and final disposition that assures consistency and security of students' permanent records (See [Schedule of Student Records](#)). The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulates release of student records. Staff in the Office of the University Registrar and the Office of Information Technologies (OIT) ensure records security by managing access approval for campus employees who require student records to execute their jobs. All staff with access to student records are FERPA-certified through OIT. Third-party requests for student records are subject to guidelines of the Directory Information Policy Committee, composed of representatives from the Dean of Students, who serves as the campus FERPA Compliance Officer; the University Registrar; the Office of Institutional Research; and University Relations. The committee seeks advice from University Counsel when necessary.

Appraisal

UMass Amherst has consistently met its enrollment targets for first-year students and transfers. Numbers of freshman applications have increased dramatically, selectivity has increased, student profile has increased, and ALANA representation has increased. Also up are the number of visitors to campus and the number of programs attended and hosted by Admissions.

Out-of-state students are central to enrollment goals because the campus retains out-of-state tuition, and this revenue is increasingly important to the campus budget (See Standard Nine). The number of applications from out-of-state students has increased from 6,459 in 2004 to 11,734 in 2009, an 82 percent increase over five years ([Selected Undergraduate Admissions and Enrollment Statistics](#)). While this is a positive sign, out-of-state yield rates – reflecting the percentage of out-of-state applicants who accept offers of admission – have fallen sharply in the past few years, from 21 percent in 2004 to 11 percent in 2009, a decrease of 48 percent in out-of-state yield over five years. The same trend of rising applications and falling yield are present, though

less dramatic, within the in-state population; in-state students remain critical to UMass Amherst enrollment goals and to the institution's mission.

Increases in applications, selectivity and academic profile have provided the opportunity for the campus to consolidate its position in an increasingly competitive admissions market, and to attract the attention of a broad pool of applicants. This is an important strength on which to build. At the same time, such issues present the campus with several challenges:

- UMass Amherst has begun to compete more directly with large private institutions in the state.
- This heightened competition is reflected in yield, the percentage of applicants who accept offers of admission. Students with higher profiles have more choices and are more difficult to yield. Overall, yield has declined from 29 percent in 2004 to 21 percent in 2009, a drop of 28 percent over five years.
- The current economic recession, while likely to increase interest in UMass Amherst among Massachusetts residents, may further complicate efforts to attract non-residents.
- In 2009, out-of-state applications decreased by 4 percent, marking the first decline in out-of-state applications since 2003. This might reflect larger economic trends. It also underscores the challenge of competing for higher-profile applicants. This challenge is likely to continue given projections of a 15 percent to 20 percent decline in high-school graduation rates over the next decade in Massachusetts and UMass Amherst's primary out-of-state market areas in the Northeast.

Significant changes are under way for transfer programs within the state. Students entering Massachusetts community colleges in fall 2009 will no longer qualify for the Joint Admissions program but instead will participate in the new MassTransfer program. Under MassTransfer, students complete coursework ensuring a smooth transition to a bachelor's degree program; however, the grade point average required for guaranteed admission varies based on the program.

The campus has emphasized maintaining adequate need-based aid. Before 2009, a substantial portion of revenues from any increase in mandatory student fees was devoted to increased need-based aid. This policy continues, but this year included expanded availability of need-based aid to a broader group of students. Need-based aid now is awarded to students with family incomes of less than \$90,000; students receive aid equal to tuition plus fees minus the students' expected family contribution.

Projection

In 2009, the Admissions Office and the Financial Aid Office were transferred to Academic Affairs; the offices previously were organized within Student Affairs and Campus Life. This shift is intended to strengthen overall enrollment management, especially the coordination of enrollment planning and academic program planning. The Deputy Provost leads an Enrollment Management Group involving staff from across the institution to develop enrollment goals and strategies.

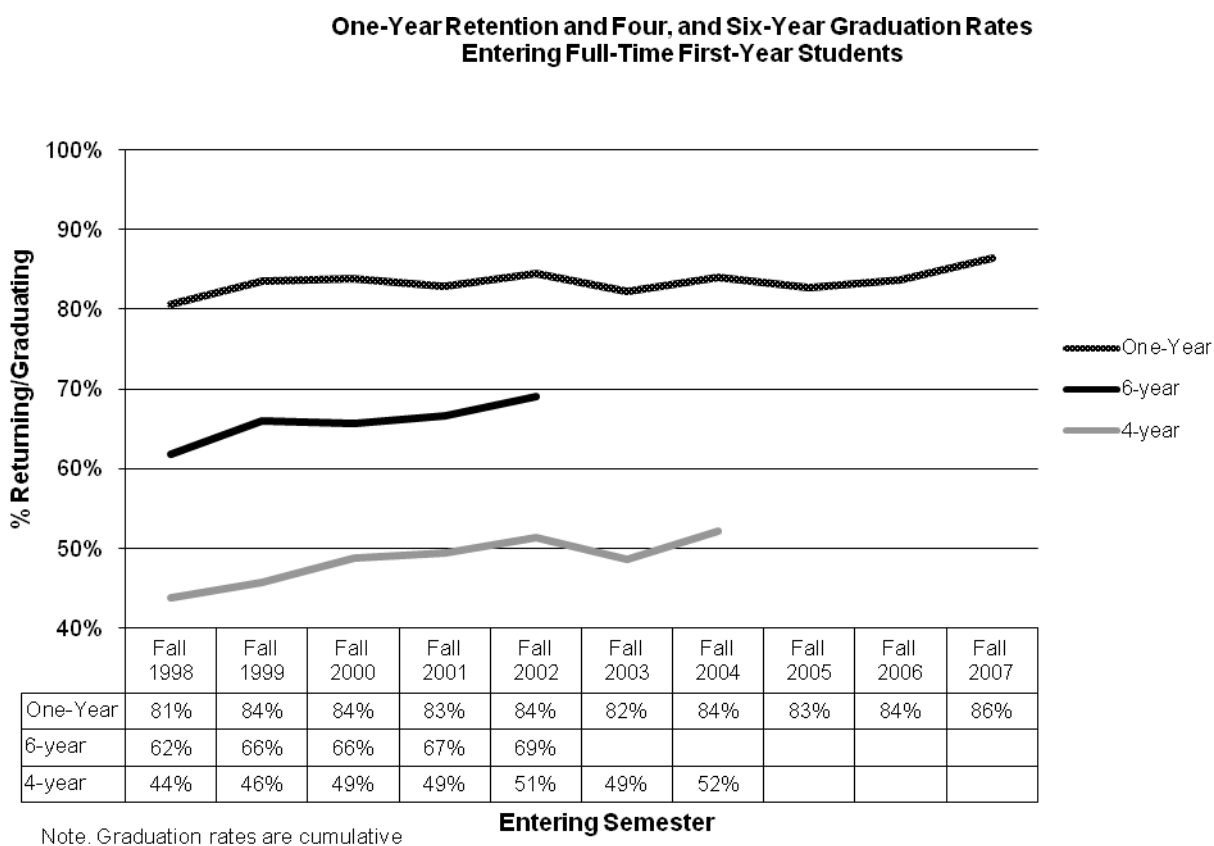
UMass Amherst is emphasizing strategies to grow enrollment by 2,500 students over time, with a focus on out-of-state enrollment growth. To achieve this goal, the campus is working with enrollment marketing and financial aid consultants, and is pursuing multiple strategies to increase admissions competitiveness and maximize the impact of financial aid. These strategies include:

- Closer alignment and integration of enrollment-related activities across the campus.
- Increased focus on distinctive features of the academic experience for prospective undergraduates.
- New methods to increase out-of-state enrollment, such as:
 - Area representatives who live and recruit in selected geographic areas.
 - Staff dedicated to international student recruitment.
 - Revised and expanded collateral recruiting publications.
 - An expanded and well-trained alumni volunteer organization.

II. Retention and Graduation

UMass Amherst tracks the progress of its undergraduate students on an ongoing basis. Since the last Self-Study, there have been improvements in both the one-year retention and six-year graduation rates of entering first-year students, as shown in Figure 6.1. The one-year rate increased from 81 percent for the fall 1998 cohort to 86 percent for the 2007 cohort, a gain of about 6 percent over a decade. The six-year graduation rate also has improved, increasing from 62 percent for students entering in fall 1998 to 69 percent for the fall 2002 cohort, a gain of about 11 percent.

Figure 6.1



These gains have been accompanied by upward trends in combined SAT scores and, more notably, high school grade point averages for entering first-year students ([Selected Undergraduate Admissions and Enrollment Statistics](#)). The high school grade point average, which is a better predictor of one-year retention, stood at 3.57 for the 2009 cohort of entering first-year students. Although the campus has made progress, both academic profile and retention and graduation rates are somewhat below the average of other major public universities.

The campus also monitors the retention and graduation rates of student populations of particular interest, including those who enter the institution as transfers and students in selected majors. For example, the campus has participated in a project funded by the National Science Foundation to increase the participation rate of undergraduate students in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, known as the STEM disciplines. The progress of students who entered in STEM majors is tracked and updated annually. The campus participates in the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange (CSRDE), and retention and

graduation data are submitted to CSRDE for full-time first-year students, including STEM majors, and community college transfer students. The campus uses these data to compare the retention and graduation rates of UMass Amherst students to the rates for similar populations at other research universities.

The campus's strategy to promote student retention and graduation are described in the following components of this Standard, and in the discussion of academic advising in Standard Five.

III. Student Services

The responsibility for most student support services at UMass Amherst falls to the [Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Campus Life](#). Its works to enhance the life of students outside of the classroom, enriching their intellectual, emotional, physical, spiritual, cultural, ethical and social development in a safe and secure environment ([Student Affairs Mission Statement](#)).

Student Affairs serves the population of more than 20,000 undergraduate students. More than half of these undergraduates live on campus. *UMass Amherst at a Glance* http://www.umass.edu/oapa/publications/glance/FS_gla_01.pdf provides an overview of the campus student body, including the demographic data that guide many student services. During the past 10 years, Student Affairs has focused on improving the undergraduate student experience to boost retention and graduation rates, and to advance UMass Amherst in its mission as a public research university. A central goal is helping students to identify, access and benefit from the broad array of services available on a large campus – and to continually improve those services to meet student needs. Student Affairs has worked to:

- Eliminate silos and improve cooperation with other campus units, especially Academic Affairs, to benefit students as life-long learners.
- Further integrate academic and co-curricular experiences.
- Foster cross-cultural interaction as a core campus value.
- Remove barriers to student success and help students integrate into campus life.
- Improve communication with students and their families, with a focus on timeliness, consistency and reliability.
- Develop a comprehensive approach to ensure student health and safety.

Student Affairs staff are selected on the basis of formal training and relevant work experience. In 2006, Student Affairs introduced a formal orientation program for all new employees; it provides an introduction to UMass Amherst, and focuses on diversity and creating a respectful environment. Student Affairs employs graduate students, primarily from the Higher Education Administration program, and provides training in student development, multiculturalism, and meeting the needs of underrepresented students.

The [Commission on Campus Diversity](#), formed in 2004, has sparked or supported many Student Affairs initiatives. The Commission was composed of national experts, campus participants and community members; it conducted a comprehensive review of UMass Amherst's approach, support and investment in campus diversity. The resulting documents [UMass Amherst: A Commitment to Inclusiveness and Diversity](#) (2006) and [On Improving Campus Diversity: Action Plan](#) (2005) provided a number of recommendations for Student Affairs:

- Student Affairs and Academic Affairs should work together to enhance, build and reorient their programs and personnel to support student academic success.
- Following the model of comparable institutions, the campus should move quickly to fully develop first-year residence halls as part of a "First Year Experience," in order to provide an effective, academically sound, and socially and culturally enriched first-year experience aimed at increasing the likelihood of graduation.
- Student Affairs should organize its programs and activities to ensure that UMass Amherst has a diverse student body and that all students will have full access to the campus's resources and support. This effort should emphasize intercultural dialogue, and redefining and restructuring the African-

American, Latino, Asian-American and Native American (ALANA) support programs to help connect students of color with the general campus community, and to connect students within the ALANA community.

Over the past five years the campus has focused closely on programs and services to promote first-year student success. Much of this effort has centered on academic advising (See Standard Five), but also extends to the full range of student services. First-year programs focus on three areas of student development: helping the student develop a complete academic plan, guiding the student in becoming an educated and responsible citizen, and guiding the student in becoming an involved member of the campus community.

Residential Academic Programs

Description

UMass Amherst has a long history of residentially based academic programs. It was an innovator in the 1960s and 1970s, with the Inquiry Program and Residential Colleges in the Orchard Hill and southwest residential areas. In recent years, these programs have evolved into a successful model that serves nearly half of first-year students. These [Residential Academic Programs \(RAPs\)](#) provide students with one or more small General Education classes, usually in the residential area; a connection to an academic department and/or advising unit; often a one-credit seminar; and a designated residence hall. The first RAPs were organized around particular majors, but the model has expanded and now includes programs developed around a variety of academic topics as well as programs designed specifically for undeclared students seeking to identify majors, and to honors students in Commonwealth College, who may enroll in required honors coursework through their RAP.

The programs are developed in collaboration with faculty and advisors from academic departments across campus. The majority of the courses affiliated with RAPs fulfill university General Education requirements. These residentially based academic learning communities are managed by Undergraduate Advising and Learning Communities (UA&LC), reporting to the Deputy Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education. The list of current RAPs offerings is at http://www.umass.edu/rap/rap_index.htm.

UA&LC also offers OASIS, a one-credit first-year seminar designed to address the needs of students entering UMass Amherst without declared majors. Taught by advisors in Undergraduate Advising and partners across campus, first-year students are introduced to the academic programs, services, resources and opportunities available at the university. Students are guided through a variety of exercises and activities designed to assist them in identifying academic majors that match their interests and abilities. A primary component of this course is the work students do during mandatory individual meetings with academic advisors.

In 2008, the campus completed the transition to dedicated first-year residence halls. With the advent of first-year residence halls, Student Affairs and Campus Life developed a program of peer-supported communities in which students develop an understanding of what is required for success, how to recognize problems early, where to go for help, and how to engage and interact productively with students from many different locations, backgrounds and experiences. The program encourages students to be involved in campus events and activities and prepares them to take ownership of their academic and personal development.

The Residence Life program focuses on leadership, involvement, academic success, diversity and transitions. The programming in each hall is developed around a particular interdisciplinary theme. For instance, the Enterprise & Action cluster is oriented toward students interested in social action and public service, along with those interested in business and economics. The Science, Innovation & Leadership cluster is oriented toward students interested in science and research. This thematic approach is intended to allow students to live with peers with similar academic and career interests.

A Focus On: The First-Year Experience

A new focus on the first-year experience is meant to help college students get off to a good start at UMass Amherst. Central to this effort is an understanding that students on a big campus have many choices and many responsibilities. The First-Year Task Force (FYTF) is examining the student experience from admission through transition to the sophomore year. The goal is to help ensure students receive the support and guidance they need. The examination, a joint effort of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, is guided by a few principles:

- ✓ *The university delivers services through numerous offices and agencies, but students often want a single, coherent experience.*
- ✓ *Success in the first year has at its core a clear academic plan for each student, and an explicit advising relationship capable of supporting that plan.*
- ✓ *The academic plan and advising relationship form a foundation on which other elements of the first-year experience are constructed. These elements include residentially based programs, first-year seminars and other ongoing orientation programs. Additional first-year elements include appropriately designed and organized co-curricular and enrichment opportunities.*

To promote this kind of coordination, the Task Force has developed a “roadmap” for the first year based on six advising milestones strongly related to academic success. This framework helps students know what to expect, and helps the campus organize its services in a consistent and effective manner.

In each first-year residence hall, the Residence Life staff of professionals, graduate students and undergraduates develops and leads activities to create a network of support and guidance. These include First-Year Experience Specialists, Residential Learning Graduate Assistants, Residence Directors, Assistant Residence Directors, Resident Assistants and Peer Mentors. These activities include:

- Peer mentoring.
- Residential Academic Success Centers, staffed by peer mentors and offering academic resources, study groups, workshops.
- Faculty/instructor chats and RAP socials.
- Off-campus trips.
- Initiatives based on hall themes, for instance student journal, performances and political discussions.
- Informational bulletin boards.
- Community-building activities, such as First Week activities, Trivia Challenge, study breaks, fitness and recreation, and social events.
- Career Services presentations and workshops.

Appraisal

A strong residential program is important to student success, particularly at an institution such as UMass Amherst that houses more than half its students on campus. Residential academic programs play a key role: Formal evaluation of RAPs demonstrates that participants show better outcomes in first-semester grade point averages, retention and first-year experiences when compared to students who do not participate in residential learning communities. The programs have been extremely popular, and have steadily expanded; about 45 percent of first-year students now participate in RAPs.

The first-year residence hall program has been fully implemented only since fall 2008, and comprehensive evaluation data are not yet available. Some preliminary assessments have noted positive student experiences that matched the goals of a first-year program: the support of peers going through similar transitions, ease of getting to know classmates who lived with them, a strong feeling of community in the halls, and appreciation of Peer Mentors as resources. Additional assessment will be required to understand the impact of first-year residence halls and Residence Life programming on student satisfaction and retention.

Projection

The expansion of residential programs for first-year students has created many opportunities for students, but it also has revealed a need for more effective collaboration among the various service providers. With a broad array of formal residential academic programs, residence hall themes, and multiple staffing approaches, students are presented with a sometimes bewildering set of choices. Responsibilities and hand-offs among staff are not always clear. In addition, the availability and nature of programming vary widely from residence hall to residence hall; the needs of individual students also vary widely. Therefore, the next step in first-year program development is to assess the interplay of programs and services, and to enhance collaboration between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs with the aim of bringing more clarity and consistency to offerings.

Academic Support Services

Description

The campus does not admit students on a provisional basis, nor does it offer remedial programs. It does, however, offer a number of formal programs to promote student academic success. The Learning Resource Center (LRC), previously known as Learning Support Services, is located in the W.E.B. Du Bois Library and offers tutoring and Supplemental Instruction (SI) to all undergraduate students. This peer-support program offers tutoring on a walk-in basis for more than 250 of required courses that students often consider difficult. SI sessions also are available in a number of courses that have been shown to be barriers to academic success. SI leaders are students who have successfully completed a course, attend each session of a particular course section, and then hold twice weekly 75-minute review sessions for that section. Leaders meet with the course instructor to review course content and are supervised by the LRC.

Several schools and colleges, and some academic departments, also offer academic support programs. These efforts include first-year seminars focused on student success (OASIS, described above, is one such seminar). Such academic support programs involve roughly one-third of first-year students.

An important recent effort to promote student academic success was development of the Learning Commons, which provides group and individual study facilities, reference and library services, technical support, and advising links 24 hours a day, five days a week on the main floor of the Library. The Learning Commons and its success are fully described in Standard Seven.

Appraisal

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) has provided academic support to thousands of students: The number of student visits to the LRC for tutoring and Supplemental Instruction (SI) grew from 4,789 during the 2003-04 academic year to 12,112 during 2007-08, an increase of more than 150 percent over about five years

The LRC evaluates specific needs with a variety of means: request tallies, class surveys, and one in-depth case study. Request tallies are made at the front desk throughout the semester; the selection of courses supported in subsequent semesters has been adapted to accommodate students' repeated requests. Communication with faculty also has contributed to the increasing number of courses supported, particularly through SI. Students in classes that include SI complete a survey at the end of each semester, and these surveys have been useful in developing improved training opportunities for the LRC student staff.

Projection

LRC will continue to adapt its programs to respond to increasing student interest and to promote the campus's retention goals. For example, student feedback indicated interest in SI support for upper-level courses, known to be barriers to student persistence in their majors, particularly in the sciences. A trial of SI

in organic chemistry resulted in a significant increase in attendance at SI sessions. The course instructor reported that students performed better on examinations and seemed to have improved understanding of course materials. Similar results were achieved in a physical chemistry course. These explorations will continue with the objective of bringing effective academic support to courses with the greatest impact on continued student success.

Orientation, Communication and Interaction

Description

New Students Orientation (NSO) is essential to integrating students and providing information on resources and services, academic and co-curricular opportunities, and academic expectations. The two-day program, offered primarily in summer sessions, includes placement exams for writing and foreign languages, information about academic requirements, work with an academic advisor to register for courses, housing selection, and information on extracurricular opportunities and the full range of campus support services and resources. There are separate sessions for freshmen, transfer students and those entering the Stockbridge School.

One recent development, recommended in the 2005 Commission on Campus Diversity action plan, is increased emphasis on the connection between the student, the family, and the university. Although NSO had long included program for parents, this has been expanded to a full parent and family orientation run concurrently with the student session.

UMass Amherst maintains consistent communication with students to help them integrate into the student body. This is a cooperative effort involving Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and other campus units, such as the Office of Information Technologies. Communication efforts introduce students to options for academic support, personal support available and co-curricular activities. To ensure consistency, email contact with students is coordinated, and consolidated messages are sent on a regular schedule.

When students enroll, they receive a [Welcome Guide](#). This detailed handbook brings together information from different units into one clear guide to take students from acceptance to matriculation, including information on preparing for New Students Orientation, technology needs, health insurance and immunizations, housing, financial matters, registration, and move-in. Parents receive a version tailored to their needs and interests. In the period leading to the start of the semester parents also receive a parent newsletter, and students receive [NSO and Housing Guides](#).

Student Affairs provides all undergraduate students with a Daily Planner for Academic Success. The planner is an organizational tool. It also consolidates contact information for campus offices; provides an academic calendar with key deadlines and dates; and summarizes academic regulations, graduation requirements, registration processes, the Code of Student Conduct, university policies and guidelines, laws affecting university students, Housing and Residence Life policies, and safety information.

The Office of Parent Services (OPS) formed in 2004 to address the important role of parents in the student experience. OPS functions as a contact point for parents, particularly those experiencing the first-year transition. OPS maintains a website with key information and links for parents; the Office sends monthly e-mails with updates and reminders to more than 18,000 subscribers.

Appraisal

Participant evaluations indicate generally high ratings for New Students Orientation (NSO) programs designed for freshman and students entering Stockbridge School; NSO programs for transfer students generally are rated somewhat lower. Across all groups, satisfaction with the process of registering for courses is rated lowest. Parent evaluations also have been positive. A larger question is how NSO fits into the effort

to build a more coherent and more effective first-year experience. In that context, NSO must be viewed as the on-ramp to a larger, ongoing program of orientation and acclimatization.

In addition to improved publications and parent services, technological advances in the past 10 years have significantly enhanced students' access to information, as well as their ability to manage their lives at UMass Amherst. The advent of SPIRE, part of the campus's PeopleSoft student system, has allowed the campus to simplify many interactions and processes. From the initial contact with UMass Amherst, students are able to participate in most processes online. They may apply for admission online; once accepted, they may activate their Office of Information Technologies (OIT) accounts, which provide UMass Amherst email accounts and access to SPIRE. Much of the enrollment process takes place online. Soon after admission, students may register for New Students Orientation, take math placement exams, and register for Residential Academic Programs. They may complete important steps regarding health insurance, immunizations, and drug and alcohol education. Students register for courses and select or change their housing assignments online. In 2008-09, the Bursar's Office initiated online, paperless billing of tuition and fees.

Projection

New Students Orientation (NSO) had been part of the Admissions Office when Admissions was organized within Student Affairs. With the transfer of Admissions to Academic Affairs, NSO will report to the Dean of Students and will continue to fill the critical role of introducing students to the campus and its programs. As the new approach to the first-year experience is implemented, as described above, NSO will serve as the on-ramp to a broader and more coordinated orientation program that extends through the year and involves many campus agencies. An important aspect of the examination of the first year will be to review how the broader changes may affect NSO, and to promote effective collaboration across units.

Communication with students will remain a high priority. The ongoing implementation of improvements to first-year advising creates the framework for more coherent and timely interactions with students (See Standard Five). Technological support will improve as the campus implements the next release of its PeopleSoft student system during 2009-10; the system will include new transactional and advising tools.

Student Development

Description

UMass Amherst views student development as a means of transitioning students from the structured environment of the first year to a more self-directed experience for the remaining three years. Student development opportunities help students become engaged citizens of the campus and the world.

The Center for Student Development (CSD) supports students' co-curricular development. In 2006, Student Affairs refocused the mission and structure of what had been called Student Activities to emphasize student leadership development, cultural education and interaction; to deepen students' engagement in campus life; and to build a stronger sense of community. Many changes were consistent with Commission on Campus Diversity recommendations.

Several agencies were folded into CSD to support the refocus on student development. These include: the Student Activities Center, support programs, cultural centers, and the Office of ALANA Affairs, now called the Office of Programs and Services for ALANA Students. (The acronym references African-American, Latino, Asian-American and Native American students.) This alignment enables stronger support for ALANA students, and helps overcome the tendency to balkanize students of color.

CSD supports more than 200 registered student organizations dedicated to academics, arts, cultures, government, media, politics, religion, community service, recreation and sports. CSD also supports the Student Government Association and the University Programming Council (UPC). Staff members train and

mentor students as they create campus-wide programming, fostering the development of high work standards, skilled decision-making, creativity, organization, planning, collaboration and leadership. CSD encourages better interaction among student groups, especially those dedicated to ethnic and cultural programming and support. CSD provides extensive opportunities for students to build leadership skills and have a voice in the governance of campus organizations.

Career Services at UMass Amherst helps undergraduates, graduate students and alumni develop career plans and pursue employment and graduate/professional school. Advisors and peer mentors work with students to explore career options, identify and apply to internships and co-ops, apply to graduate and professional schools, build job-seeking skills, search for jobs, and develop life-long career development skills. Offerings include one-on-one counseling, workshops, career fairs, networking sessions, employee information sessions, alumni panels, and an online job posting system (eRecruiting). Career Services serves about 5,000 students each year.

Appraisal

The evolution of the Center for Student Development (CSD) reflects several concerns on the part of the Student Affairs leadership: many students were not engaged in campus life, which affected satisfaction and retention; the professional staff had insufficient background in student development theory; and the organization needed stronger assessment tools and methods.

To improve engagement, CSD has moved away from a model of staff-initiated events to more student-initiated events, and has formalized training and recognition opportunities. The First Week program has been particularly successful in engaging students and helping new students learn about and become connected to student organizations and to many of the programs and services available in the greater campus community. The number of student-initiated events has increased, and new populations of students – such as returning veterans – have been engaged.

Staff development and assessment remain a priority for the CSD. Building an understanding of student development theory among CSD staff has been a priority since the unit was refocused in 2006. The unit has undertaken an initiative to train staff on assessment planning and has directed units to establish ongoing assessment objectives.

CSD professional staff have been able to cultivate more trusting relationships with student leadership, especially the Student Government Association (SGA). This has been achieved through better communication: Senior staff members, including the Associate Vice Chancellor, have made a new practice of attending SGA meetings and regularly meeting with SGA officers. CSD created a dedicated advisor for SGA, which allows better linkages among the organizations and better support for SGA. In addition, SGA has gained a greater voice in the leadership of agencies within CSD. The stronger relationship has allowed CSD to gain the support of student leaders for key campus events and issues, such as encouraging responsible behavior around sporting events.

The Career Services advising staff consists of three professional career advisors, two graduate assistants, peer mentors, a field experience director and support staff. A decade ago, Career Services used grant funding to adopt a new, decentralized advising model, with staff assigned to the various schools and colleges. Subsequent budget reductions have required a return to a diminished centralized operation. Two colleges—the Isenberg School of Management and the College of Engineering — support their own career advising staff.

Within its limited scope, Career Services has focused on its strengths. A new Peer Advising program has been useful in taking some of the preliminary advising responsibilities off of the professional staff. The graduate assistant program has also provided important support. Programs emphasize group activities that can reach large numbers of students versus more labor-intensive one-on-one advising. Career fairs involve about 4,000

students a year, although in the past year, the numbers of participating employers has decreased because of the recession. In addition to career fairs, Career Services has developed a successful networking night with employers and students. It is popular with students, but its high cost may make it unsustainable.

Collaboration has increased with academic departments, creating a variety of programs that bring Career Services staff into classrooms to educate students about career development. The Field Experience program has become very popular as students have become increasingly aware of the value of internships and co-ops. Participation has steadily climbed; 1,244 students took part last year, a 69 percent increase from the 736 who participated in 2005. Field Experience recently initiated a Post-Graduate Internship program allowing alumni participation for up to five years after graduation.

Projection

The Center for Student Development (CSD) plans to create a space called “UMass Underground” in the basement of the Student Union Building. The space will host more programming aimed at advancing student engagement on campus. CSD anticipates programmatic updates to meet the needs of an increasingly multiethnic and globally connected student body. Other changes will include:

- A Leadership Education and Development Center to provide customized leadership training for different student organizations and levels of students.
- Development of co-curricular transcripts to allow students to present their co-curricular achievements and leadership training alongside academic achievements.
- Further investment in professional development to help staff become more fluent in current student development theory and to look more strategically at student development.
- Resumption of efforts to improve assessment through benchmarking and more effective customer service feedback.

Career Services will focus on promoting participation in existing programs. Part of this effort will be to better connect with students during their sophomore year. Career Services will also explore better connections to students and employers – and between students and employers – using emerging technologies, such as ConnectEDU, Twitter and other social networking services.

Student Behavior, Academic Honesty, and Grievances and Appeals

Description

UMass Amherst has established clear standards for student behavior and for academic honesty, which are outlined in the [Code of Student Conduct](#), the [Alcohol and Drug Policy](#) and the [Academic Honesty Policy](#). These appear on the Dean of Students website and are published in the Daily Planner for Academic Success. The [Academic Honesty Policy](#) is also published in the [Guide to Undergraduate Programs](#) online and in print. Violations of the [Code of Student Conduct](#) are handled through the Dean of Students judicial system. Violations of academic honesty are addressed through the Academic Honesty Office, a component of the [Ombuds Office](#). Students with an academic grievance against the university or a faculty member, who need assistance with a dispute, or who wish to appeal a charge of academic dishonesty receive assistance from the Ombuds Office.

Appraisal

The priority is to ensure that judicial cases are handled fairly, openly and honestly. The most common complaint of students is that a sanction is too harsh, but there are few formal appeals and decisions are rarely overturned. The principal weakness of the judicial system in the view of the Dean of Students is that it is sanction-driven and often seen as punitive. Students may therefore be reluctant to report problematic behavior. Training of the 30 professional staff who hear cases is also a challenge.

Very few formal student academic grievances are filed – approximately one per year. The emphasis of the Ombuds Office is to help students resolve complaints informally, and to assist them in the process when informal resolution fails. If a student does choose to file a formal grievance, the Ombuds Office convenes a grievance panel consisting of faculty and students, with the burden of proof falling to the student.

It is also rare for a faculty member to file a formal charge of academic dishonesty against a student, occurring approximately twice a year. In such cases the Ombuds Office will convene the Academic Honesty Board, both parties will present their positions and answer questions, the board will deliberate, and charges will be upheld or dismissed. The Ombuds Office does not advocate, but seeks to ensure that students understand their rights. To encourage participation in the process, versus *ad hoc* actions on the part of faculty members, the Ombuds Office recently secured a change to the *Academic Honesty Policy* establishing two options for resolving a charge of academic dishonesty: informal resolution, in which a student agrees that he or she committed an act of dishonesty and agrees to a confidential sanction with no appeal process; and a formal charge which, if upheld, results in a notation on the student's discipline record until graduation.

Making faculty and students aware of grievance policies and Ombuds Office services is a challenge. The Ombuds Office provides reminders to housing staff, student groups and other support staff, places ads in student media and provides information tables during New Students Orientation. But lack of awareness remains a chronic problem. Similar challenges exist in promoting appropriate use of academic honesty procedures. In particular, faculty do not consistently inform students of their rights or give them the opportunity to appeal.

Projection

The Dean of Students Office is shifting its approach from a legalistic model of sanctions and punishment to a model that emphasizes student development through the use of educational sanctions and, when appropriate, mediation. Staff with mediation training have been hired and will be collaborating with Residence Life to extend training to the Residence Life student staff. The Ombuds Office will continue its focus on mediating conflicts, and will increase efforts to provide information about its services and students' rights to the campus community.

Athletics

Description

UMass Amherst fields 21 intercollegiate sports teams. These are: men's baseball, basketball, cross-country, football, ice hockey, lacrosse, skiing, soccer, swimming and diving, and track and field; women's basketball, cross-country, field hockey, lacrosse, rowing, skiing, soccer, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, and track and field. All are part of the Atlantic 10 Conference, with the exceptions of men's ice hockey, which is in the Hockey East Association; men's lacrosse, which is in the Eastern College Athletic Conference; and men's and women's skiing, which are independent. The intercollegiate athletics program is an integral part of the university's educational program.

Appraisal and Projection

UMass Amherst Athletics adheres to the standards of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Atlantic 10 Conference to assure that athletic programs are conducted in a manner consistent with sound educational policy, standards of integrity and institutional purposes. In 2005-06 the university undertook a self-evaluation in the form of the Division I Athletics Certification Self-Study. At the completion of this process, UMass Athletics received certification without conditions ([NCAA Certification Letter](#)).

The institution maintains full responsibility for Athletics through the UMass Amherst administration, which retains considerable autonomy for intercollegiate athletics; the University of Massachusetts President, who

has responsibility for certain budgetary decisions; and the Board of Trustees Committee on Academic and Student Affairs and Athletics, which is involved in major policy decisions and in approval of student fees. All funds raised for and expended on behalf of UMass Amherst Athletics are under the control of the University, and the athletics budget is subject to the University's normal budgetary process. All funds received and expended for Athletics are handled in compliance with NCAA requirements.

Student-athletes are admitted to UMass Amherst following the same procedures used in admission for all students. An athletics counselor manages all athletes' applications to ensure compliance with University and NCAA rules. Student-athletes, with no exceptions, are held to the same standards and policies, and are evaluated by the same campus agencies, as are all students. Athletics programs will continue strict compliance with NCAA and campus standards.

IV. Health, Wellness and Safety

UMass Amherst takes a comprehensive approach to promoting health and safety, with a significant emphasis on prevention and preparedness. Programs range from the level of the individual student to the entire campus, and include recreational opportunities, health education and wellness programming; formal prevention, treatment and risk-assessment capabilities; comprehensive residence hall and campus security programs; and emergency preparedness and response. As part of this comprehensive approach, the Chancellor is forming a Campus Risk Management Team (CRMT) cutting across functional areas to assess and prioritize risks that affect UMass Amherst's ability to accomplish its mission. The CRMT will monitor the full range of risks to campus safety and well-being, and will make recommendations to the campus leadership.

Recreation

Description

Campus Recreation and Sport Clubs, part of UMass Amherst Athletics, promotes physical fitness for health and well-being. Intramural Sports organizes 24 different sports or tournaments for students. In 2007-08, nearly 10,000 students participated in intramural sports. Several Sport Clubs – ranging from men's baseball to women's volleyball – engage in intercollegiate competition with other sport clubs, junior varsity and varsity teams.

Students have had access to two campus gymnasiums, two fitness centers, two indoor pools, and courts designed for squash, handball and tennis. Students also have used an extensive drop-in exercise program, in its third year. Last year, student visits to these facilities numbered 170,570. In addition, residence halls have hosted four wellness centers that offer fitness equipment and exercise classes.

Appraisal and Projection

The quality and quantity of recreational facilities has been a weakness when compared to those at other universities. However, the new \$50 million UMass Amherst Recreation Center, with 120,000 square feet on three levels, is opening in fall 2009; this will dramatically change the view of recreational facilities available for students. Recreational needs, including those of the sports clubs, were considered in its development. The new center adds a three-court gym lined for basketball, volleyball and badminton; a suspended track; 24,000 square feet of cardiovascular equipment and weights; multipurpose activity rooms with proper exercise flooring; and locker rooms, administrative offices, a lounge, a resource room for sports clubs, and an armory for the fencing club. The new Recreation Center lacks an aquatics center and additional courts for squash and racquetball, but meets many other recreational needs.

Recreation also seeks to improve drop-in workout and group exercise programs, and in cooperation with University Health Services is planning a Wellness Area to provide self-assessment tools aimed at helping students examine and improve diet, nutrition and other aspects of good health.

University Health Services

Description

University Health Services (UHS) is a fully accredited, comprehensive campus health center, providing physical and mental health care, health promotion, diagnostic services, specialty care and more. The UHS staff includes board-certified physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, physician assistants, certified medical assistants, psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers. Also practicing at UHS are specialists in acupuncture, mind/body medicine, obstetrics/gynecology, orthopedics and sports medicine. On-campus resources include a full-service pharmacy, laboratory, radiology, physical therapy, eye care and optical services, allergy and travel medicine clinics, nutrition services, alcohol and drug-abuse programs and sexual health services. Massachusetts requires full-time college students to have primary health care insurance; a mandatory Student Health Fee works with insurance, providing access to UHS services and absorbing many costs not covered by insurance.

Appraisal

UHS has identified three areas of emerging importance on college campuses nationwide and is seeking to further address these issues at UMass Amherst. They are: suicide prevention, timely access to mental-health urgent care, and drug and alcohol abuse.

- **Suicide Prevention Gatekeeper Training Project:** Recognizing that suicide is a significant issue that often is insufficiently addressed on college campuses, Mental Health Services (MHS) has improved the ability of faculty and staff members to identify the warning signs of students at risk. Supported by a three-year, \$225,000 grant from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Service Administration, MHS has provided gatekeeper training to individuals regularly interacting with students to improve their ability to adequately refer students in distress to appropriate services. Training has been provided to hundreds of campus members and resident assistants.
- **MHS Clinical Triage System:** Universities nationwide have seen increased use of mental-health services, and an increase in the complexity and severity of students' situations. MHS has adopted a triage system to improve intake and give priority to patients with acute needs. This triage system replaced a comparatively slow assessment system and is designed to quickly provide vital mental-health treatment. Since the system began, 95 percent of clients surveyed describe themselves as satisfied with their experiences, and the number of urgent walk-ins to MHS has decreased significantly. UMass Amherst's model has been adopted on many other campuses.
- **Center for Alcohol and other Drug Abuse Prevention (CADAP):** For decades, UMass Amherst struggled with a national reputation as a "party school." In 2004, CADAP was created to promote responsible decision-making regarding alcohol and other drugs through the design, implementation, and evaluation of comprehensive evidence-based prevention initiatives. CADAP uses an environmental management approach with the following components: a mandatory online alcohol education course for first-year students; a large-scale social norms marketing campaign; creation of the Campus and Community Coalition to reduce High-Risk Drinking; ongoing review and revision of campus policies and community bylaws; a prevention program tailored to student athletes; and active outreach to parents and other stakeholders. Campus surveys indicate a decrease in potentially harmful behavior. Central to CADAP's programming is BASICS, an alcohol screening and intervention program. Launched with a three-year, \$1.5 million start-up grant from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), BASICS was recently recognized as an Exemplary Model Program by the U.S. Department of Education; its leaders have provided training and consultation to institutions of higher education nationwide.

Projection

UHS will continue providing high-quality, targeted services to address student needs; to enhance existing prevention-oriented initiatives; and to identify emerging trends in student health. A significant challenge comes in sustaining grant-funded initiatives beyond the expiration of startup funding.

UMass Amherst Police Department

Description

The UMass Amherst Police Department (UMPD) includes 63 full-time sworn police officers and 30 student cadets, as well as support staff. Officer training, authority and responsibilities are identical to those of municipal police officers in Massachusetts. UMPD services include patrol, investigation, specialized and emergency response, and crime prevention and educational programs. The UMPD prepares the annual [Clery Report](#) in cooperation with campus and local law enforcement agencies. UMPD also posts a [Crime Log](#) on its website.

Residence Hall Security has a student staff of 220; police cadets provide additional security. Residence hall doors are locked 24 hours a day, and students must use identification cards to enter. All exterior doors are connected to a silent alarm system. There are 618 security cameras on campus, as well as 115 HELP phones. Student Security provides a walking escort program and this, along with a campus shuttle bus, provides safe transportation after dark. The UMPD operates numerous specialized units: mounted, K9, bike, motorcycle, and Rape Aggression Defense (RAD).

Appraisal

The UMPD is now one of the largest police agencies in western Massachusetts. At one time it was common for UMPD officers to leave the department for positions in local or state police agencies; this trend has been reversed, with municipal officers often transferring to UMPD, citing its professional commitment and service.

The university is constructing a new 25,000 square foot state-of-the-art police station, replacing the current 8,000 square foot facility. When occupied in December 2010, it will be among the most advanced police stations in the state.

UMPD has made significant progress toward attaining Massachusetts Police Accreditation status, which emphasizes professional public safety services. The Department also continues to strengthen collaborative efforts with student groups through community outreach and day-to-day interactions.

Projection

The UMPD's major ongoing shift in focus is to expand preparation for and response to active threats. The department will increase training to prepare students for potential threats, and will work with the Emergency Operations Center to prepare the campus for any potential campus-wide incident. UMPD will also expand use of the department website to provide streamlined services to the community.

Emergency Management and Business Continuity

Description

The university formalized its Emergency Management and Business Continuity efforts in 2008 with the appointment of an EM/BC Manager in the Department of Environmental Health and Safety. The [Campus Emergency Management Plan \(CEMP\)](#) provides the framework for campus administrators to manage emergencies and disasters. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC), with two backup sites, serves as the

central location from which all emergency management operations are coordinated. The campus conducts regular drills and exercises, including unannounced full-scale drills for each UMPD shift. The Campus Alerts emergency notification system allows text messaging about situations that pose an imminent threat to campus safety. This system is tested each semester. UMPD provides [active threat response guidelines](#) on its website.

UMass Amherst's Business Continuity program focuses on two areas: business/academic resumption planning and disaster recovery planning. The campus is in the early stages of a transition from decentralized *ad hoc* planning to a formal, centralized program.

Appraisal

The UMPD's published policy on response in the event of an active threat on campus was cited as a best practice among Massachusetts colleges and universities in a 2008 report on campus violence prevention for the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education. A recent review by Marsh USA, a leading risk and insurance services firm, recommended that other campuses model emergency management programs after that at UMass Amherst.

In 2006, a campus-wide security review was performed by Arup & Partners Inc. The Arup report recommended establishment of a Security Implementation Committee to oversee integration of all campus responsibilities pertaining to life safety, security, crime prevention and property protection. This group was established in 2008, and will monitor security capabilities and needs on an ongoing basis.

Projection

The campus Emergency Management and Business Continuity (EM/BC) program has developed a three-year strategic plan to ensure the campus's resiliency in the aftermath of emergencies and disasters. New software has been acquired to assist in creating and maintaining emergency action plans, department emergency operations plans, and department business resumption and disaster recovery plans.

The campus has installed an outdoor warning system as part of the Campus Alerts emergency notification system. The system was tested in August 2009, and will support alert tones and voice recordings for a variety of potential emergencies; it also has the capability for live-voice public address.

Recognizing and Helping Community Members in Distress

Description

Many campuses have examined risk-assessment systems since the shooting incident at Virginia Tech in spring 2007, when a single student gunman killed 32 people and wounded many others on the Blacksburg, Virginia, campus. UMass Amherst, like other campuses nationwide, wanted to know if it had the capacity to prevent a similar occurrence. UMass Amherst had a number of protocols in place; a comprehensive review has formalized and strengthened its capacity with respect to both students and staff members.

Student Affairs had long maintained an on-call system geared to administrative response. In 2007, UMass Amherst moved to a preventive model: The Dean of Students and director of Mental Health Services created an Assessment Care Team that focuses on students – including undergraduate and graduate students, living both on and off campus – who may pose a threat to themselves or others. The Team acts to help individuals and to protect campus safety. The Team meets at least weekly to share information about particular students and incidents, to discuss concerning behavior, and to develop clear actions plans. ACT members also consult with faculty, advisors and staff to identify problem behaviors and to outline response. The Team has produced a variety of educational materials and guides for faculty and staff. These include publications available in print and on the [Student Affairs website](#): *How to Recognize and Handle Students in Distress; Intervention, Policies & Safety; Clinical Assessment & Referral Services; and Education & Prevention.*

Similarly, the UMass Amherst Faculty and Staff Assistance Program focuses on faculty and staff through the Workplace Violence Management Team. The Team was established to systematically address workplace violence prevention. The Team is divided into three workgroups: Prevention and Education, which broadly focuses on policies and procedures, training, and resource awareness; Risk Assessment, which helps provide case assessment and appropriate response; and Crisis Management, which coordinates intervention should an incident of workplace violence occur. These workgroups include representatives from Labor Relations, Workplace Learning and Development, the UMass Amherst Police Department, the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program, Mental Health Services, and the Ombuds Office.

Appraisal

There have been no incidents of student violence on campus, so the work of the 2-year-old Assessment Care Team (ACT) may be appraised this way: Students monitored by the ACT have been able to continue at the University, have ceased to be a concern, have entered some sort of treatment program, or have left the UMass Amherst. ACT's work was cited as a benchmark for best practices among Massachusetts colleges and universities by Applied Risk Management in a June 2008 report to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education.

Likewise, the campus has not seen avoidable incidents involving faculty and staff since the Workplace Violence Management Team was organized. One challenge has been building support for appropriate interventions at different levels of the organization.

Projection

Moving forward, ACT will continue to monitor its effectiveness and assess outcomes for individual cases. A priority is to avoid formulaic responses and to maintain focus on individual needs. The Workplace Violence Management Team also plans to assess its success as it gains experience over time.

Campus Safety and Accident Prevention

Description

The Department of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) promotes safety and manages the campus's accident prevention program. The comprehensive approach to safety and prevention has four main components:

- The Accident Prevention program encompasses basic activities of safety management that include: hazard recognition and hazard analysis; inspections and audits of facilities and operations; regulatory compliance; incident investigation and data collection; and safety-related training.
- The Fire Prevention program ensures that campus buildings and fire protection equipment are maintained in compliance with all appropriate state fire codes and campus safety policies. The Fire Prevention staff inspects buildings, tests and recharges fire extinguishers, investigates fires and fire alarms, checks fire alarm systems, tests laboratory safety showers, and ensures that all fire hydrants, fire pumps, stand pipes, and sprinkler systems are in good working order.
- Environmental and Hazardous Materials Management Services include comprehensive pollution control services; emergency response to chemical leaks and spills, equipment decontamination, and characterization of unknown chemical wastes; hazardous waste management; toxic use reduction programs; and comprehensive environmental impact assessment and pollution control services.

- Academic Safety and Environmental Health Services include the Biological Safety Program, which focuses on protecting students, employees, and the campus environment from biological hazards and the challenges that are unique to biomedical and biotechnology research; lab safety and industrial hygiene; environmental health; and radiation safety services.

Appraisal

EHS has successfully passed rigorous CDC inspections of Biological Level 3 facilities and program operations. Federal and state compliance inspections regarding use of chemical and radiological materials had similar successful outcomes. An aggressive program to update fire suppression systems in all residential facilities is on track. The unit has fully implemented a comprehensive chemical inventory management program and is able, in real-time, to determine types and quantities of hazardous materials across the entire campus by building and by Principal Investigator. This system allows the campus to meet the new Department of Homeland Security “chemical of interest” tracking requirements. A new construction safety program has resulted in increased safety compliance and injury prevention on major campus construction projects. EHS received recognition from the National Safety Council, including the Award of Honor for outstanding achievements in campus safety.

Projection

Since Sept. 11, 2001, regulatory requirements related to the security of hazardous materials have increased, and this trend is expected to continue. Chemical tracking, mentioned above, most recently has been supplemented with increased regulation of irradiators. It is anticipated that EHS will need to apply additional resources to support compliance of research activities in the biological sciences and nanotechnology. The December 2009 laboratory fatality at the University of California, Los Angeles has resulted in a heightened concern about laboratory practices, and this will receive more emphasis. The focus on fire prevention and fire safety systems in residential areas will continue, and increased attention will be devoted efforts to reduce the waste stream.

Institutional Effectiveness

UMass Amherst has placed a major emphasis on improving its understanding of how students come to and progress through the institution. It has launched a broad program of enrollment management research, employing both enhanced campus-based tools and advice from external experts. As a result, the campus has improved the organization of its enrollment management function, has modified its enrollment goals and practices, and has put in place a new approach to institutional financial-aid policies. The past five years have also seen an institution-wide reappraisal of student success, especially in the first year. Research into factors contributing to student attrition has strengthened, and as a result fundamental changes in student advising and student service programs have been set in motion. These include a new, integrated approach to the first-year experience and adoption of a first-year residential model. Student services have been increasingly focused on promoting student success through engagement with campus activities and resources. The campus has made a major commitment to health and safety, with a strong emphasis on prevention and anticipation of potential threats.