

UMassAmherst

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College of Education

# **College of Education Graduate Student Handbook & Advising Guide**

Academic Year 2025-2026

## Foreword

The **College of Education Graduate Student Handbook & Advising Guide** is designed to supplement individual program handbooks as well as the [Code of Student Conduct](#), [Academic Regulations](#), and the [Graduate School Student Handbook](#). You are responsible for acting in accordance with the University and College of Education regulations and policies set forth in these publications.

This handbook is reviewed annually and kept as accurate and current as possible. Should there be a change in policies, procedures, or regulations, they will be communicated via electronic documents, and you assume responsibility for incorporating them into this handbook. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with this handbook. It provides an extremely useful orientation to the programs and standards of the College of Education.

If you have a question that is not adequately answered by this handbook or have feedback you would like to provide, please email the Graduate Programs Office at [educ-gpd@umass.edu](mailto:educ-gpd@umass.edu). For the most up-to-date information, please visit the [College of Education website](#).

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## From the Graduate Program Director

Welcome to the College of Education!

We are thrilled to welcome you to our community of learners! At the College of Education, we are committed not only to advancing the practice of education through high-quality programming, research, and teaching, but also to ensuring that every student has access to the various resources and support that position you for success. Our work is grounded in the values of community engagement, social justice, and collaborative innovation- and you are an important part of that mission.

As Graduate Program Director, my role is to serve as a bridge between the Graduate School and our graduate programs. I work closely with college leadership and the Graduate School to strengthen the rigor, vitality, and impact of our programs, always with students' needs and success at the center of our efforts.

This handbook was designed with you in mind. It includes practical information and insights from faculty, staff, and past graduate students who generously shared “what they wish they had known” when beginning their studies. We hope it helps you feel more confident and connected as you start your journey here. You can also explore the [College of Education Faculty and Staff Directory](#) on the college's web site.

Remember: this handbook is a companion, not a replacement, for the personalized guidance you'll receive from your program faculty and academic advisor. Your advisor will be a key partner in your success—so we encourage you to schedule a meeting with them early on to discuss your goals and design a plan that works best for you.

We are deeply invested in your growth, wellbeing, and success, and we look forward to learning alongside you. We are so glad you are a part of our college community. Best wishes on your academic journey!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Nina Tissi-Gassoway". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping flourish at the end.

Nina Tissi-Gassoway, Ph.D.  
(they/them & she/her)  
Graduate Program Director  
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## Our Values in Practice

### **Holistic Teaching, Collaborative Research, Community Engagement, Social Justice**

These are the lenses through which we consider every aspect of education, the values we put into practice every day. They influence the ways we teach our students, conduct our research, serve our communities, and work toward a global future that is more equitable and just. Our teaching practice synthesizes foundational scholarship, pioneering research, and practical engagement. Our leading-edge research promotes policies, practices, and partnerships that nurture diverse, just, and effective educational communities. We collaborate with our local, state, national, and global communities, leveraging our research and evidence-based expertise to inform public policy, enrich public debate, and contribute to social change. We recruit and support a vibrant student body that reflects the many dimensions of diversity in the Commonwealth, preparing teachers and leaders who will revolutionize education through their professional practice and research.

## Academic Advising

Amongst all the support and resources available to you as a graduate student, academic advising is crucial to your success. Your relationship with your academic advisor is an opportunity to engage in a collaborative teaching and learning experience in a consistent and enduring manner throughout your studies.

### Academic Advising Values Statement

**Academic advising is a collaborative process** in which the academic advisor and the student form a partnership to assist the student in their learning by

- exploring academic and professional opportunities.
- building the capacity to achieve academic and career objectives.
- thinking critically and making informed decisions about available options.

**Academic advising is characterized by a multidimensional relationship** between the academic advisor and the student in which both commit to

- communicating clearly, honestly, and respectfully.
- maintaining a working knowledge of college policies, procedures, practices, requirements and resources.
- working together to meet the student's academic goals and objectives.

Academic advising occurs formally between a student and their assigned primary academic advisor. However, advising may also occur informally between a student and numerous other contacts with faculty, staff, and others across the College and at the University. It is equally important for students to seek mentors, who often serve as informal advisors throughout a program of study.

#### **The primary academic advisor is responsible for being**

- familiar with college and university policies and procedures, including milestone requirements for the student's program of study.
- available and responsive to the student by appointment (in-person, Zoom or telephone) or email.
- mindful of cultural or personal differences.
- knowledgeable about academic services and resources, and able to refer the student to the appropriate resources.
- maintains appropriate confidentiality in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

#### **The student is responsible for being**

- familiar with the policies, procedures, and requirements of the University, the College, their program, and their concentration to make informed decisions about their academic progress.
- responsive in communicating with the academic advisor.
- prepared for scheduled meetings by reviewing and submitting appropriate materials in advance.
- responding to feedback provided by the advisor.
- using appropriate academic services and resources as recommended by the advisor.

## Getting Started

### Connecting with the College

The [College of Education Quick Reference](#) page offers a summary of essential contacts in the college. Print a copy or save the URL for future reference. The [Information for Current Students](#) page offers resources for students, including a specific section on being a graduate student.

### Setting up Email & Accessing SPIRE

You will receive information from IT about your [UMass Google Email](#) account. Verify you can access your UMass email, then check it regularly, as email is the official mode of communication between the University and its students. IT's [Guide for Students](#) has information about setting up and using the technologies on campus.

1. Learn your [NET ID](#) and set your password. Your NET ID serves as the primary user name for your IT Account and gives you access to the campus network, SPIRE, email, and more.
2. Log on to [SPIRE](#) (UMass' online system to manage all student information):
  - o Update your [contact info](#)
  - o Designate an [emergency contact](#)
  - o Select your pronouns (look under My Personal Information/Pronouns) ([What's this?](#))
  - o Review your Bursar Bill (under Finances/Account Summary) and plan your finances for the semester.

### Connecting with your Academic Advisor

Your program will assign you an academic advisor after you have been admitted to the college, accepted the admission offer, and matriculated.

You may look up your advisor in SPIRE or contact your Department Administrator to learn the name of your advisor and obtain their contact information.

If you decide you would like to change advisors during your course of study, please contact the Graduate Programs Office ([educ-gpd@umass.edu](mailto:educ-gpd@umass.edu)) and we will assist you with this request.

For additional information, including advising general practices, visit the [College Advising Resources page](#) of the College of Education website.

### Developing Your Program of Study

Early in your graduate studies you will work with your advisor to develop a program of study. This program of study will outline the courses you intend to take over the course of your program. The program of study will be signed by both you and your advisor. For master's students this is the [Master of Education Proposed Program of Study form](#) and for doctoral students this is the [D2: Doctoral Proposed Program of Study form](#). Ed.S. degree candidates complete the [Education Specialist Degree Proposed Program of Study form](#). Changes in the plan of study should be made in consultation with your advisor.

## Planning your Semester

### Registering for Courses

Information outlining important registration reminders will be emailed prior to the registration period each semester from the Graduate Program Director to your University email address.

You will [register for classes on SPIRE](#). SPIRE is the University's secure online student information system and is used for many official processes. For more information on how to use SPIRE, refer to the [SPIRE support pages](#) on the IT site.

### Degree Status (Full-time, Part-time, Eligibility for Student Loan Deferrals)

Students admitted as fully qualified to undertake a program toward a graduate degree are termed “degree-seeking students” as opposed to “non-degree students.” Degree status is often critical to College of Education students because of the way it relates to student loan payments or loan deferments.

The Graduate School defines the difference between full-time, half-time, and part-time students based on how many courses they take in a semester.

- Full-time status = nine or more credits
- Part-time status = eight or fewer credits
- Half-time status (for loan deferments) = six or more credits per semester.

Audited courses do not count toward degree requirements or enrollment status.

### Maximum Credit Load

Students may register for up to 16 credits during the fall and spring semesters, nine credits during the summer session, and eight credits winter session. If you want to register for more than the maximum credit load, you must complete a [Credit Overload Request](#). Signatures must be obtained from your advisor indicating approval. Submit your completed form to the Graduate Program Director's Office.

### Adding, Dropping, or Changing a Course

You may add and/or drop courses on SPIRE through the Add/Drop period as noted on the University academic calendar. This is typically the first ten days of the semester. Only your final selections will appear on your permanent record. You will not be able to add or drop courses on your own after this date.

From the third through the eighth week of the semester, you can drop a course after obtaining the approval of your instructor. The course will be listed as Drop (DR) on your permanent academic record. Fill out a [Late Add](#) or [Late Drop](#) form and return to Academic Affairs.

If you drop a course after the eighth week of the semester, your instructor will assign you a grade of Withdraw Passing (WP) or Withdraw Failing (WF). You cannot withdraw from a course after final examinations begin.



## Independent Studies or Individualized Practica

An Independent Study or Individualized Practicum provides you an opportunity to explore a specific knowledge base or set of professional competencies which cannot be developed through our regular course offerings.

**Practicum** is a required experience for students in certain programs in Education. Student competencies are fully developed and are supervised by approved employer partners and the academic program.

An **Independent Study** offers students a way to receive academic credit for completing an in-depth examination of a topic related to their course of study. To pursue an independent study, students need to arrange for faculty supervision and submit a proposal for approval that includes the scope of work to complete, the academic value of the project, and the method for performance evaluation.

To pursue an independent study (IS) or individualized practicum, identify an instructor whose knowledge or professional competency will provide depth in a particular area (your advisor may be helpful in this process.) Next, contact the instructor to see if they are willing to act as a supervisor for the semester. You and the instructor will develop a contract describing the goals, procedures, and outcomes of the Independent Study or Individualized Practicum.

You cannot self-register for one of these courses. To enroll in an Independent Study or Individualized Practicum, fill out the contract and submit the form to Academic Affairs. If the instructor is an adjunct instructor or is not a member of the Graduate faculty, a faculty sponsor from your academic concentration will have to sign. **Independent study paperwork, signed by all parties, needs to be submitted no later than two weeks prior to the start of an academic semester to Academic Affairs ([education@umass.edu](mailto:education@umass.edu)).**

There is a maximum of 9 credits of Independent Studies or Individualized Practica (**combined**) that can be applied to a program of study.

## Staying Enrolled Throughout Your Program (Continuous Enrollment)

If you are not registering for any courses or credits in each semester, you must instead enroll in GRADSCH 999 and pay for “Continuous Enrollment” so that you maintain your active status. The deadline for paying this fee is indicated on your SPIRE account. Note that an incomplete course from a previous semester does not maintain your status as enrolled. If you take a semester off and do not pay the Continuous Enrollment fee, you will be withdrawn from the University. You will need to reapply to the University to continue your program.

To qualify for full-time status, a doctoral student must be enrolled for nine or more credits per semester, either in regular graduate courses, Doctoral Dissertation Credits (EDUC 899), or in some combination of both. **If a doctoral student is registered for fewer than 9 credits or continuous enrollment, but is working full-time on their comprehensive exam, dissertation proposal, or dissertation, they must request their chairperson/advisor endorse their enrollment status and forward a request for enrollment verification to the Graduate Program Director each semester.** Requests may be emailed to the Graduate Program Director or Graduate

Program Manager in Academic Affairs. Multiple override requests during a program require doctoral students to demonstrate satisfactory progress through each of their degree milestones.

### **Residency Requirement**

A minimum of one continuous academic year as a full-time graduate student in residence at the University is required for all doctoral students. The residency year must consist of two consecutive semesters, either a fall/spring or a spring/fall sequence of nine (9) credits each. The summer session cannot be considered for residency. Dissertation credits can be used to fulfill this residency requirement.

### **Earning Multiple Education Degrees**

The University of Massachusetts Amherst Graduate School can grant only one education degree at each level (M.Ed., Ed.S. or Ph.D.) to an individual. For example: A student who has earned an M.Ed. in Higher Education from UMass Amherst can also earn a Ph.D. in Education, or an MBA, from UMass but not another M.Ed. in a different concentration. Degrees earned from other institutions do not limit what degrees a student can earn from UMass.

### **If Seeking an Educator License Outside Massachusetts**

All Educator Licensure programs at the University of Massachusetts Amherst are approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Second Education (DESE) to meet licensure requirements\* ONLY in the state of Massachusetts.

Many US states are signatories to the [NASDTEC Interstate Agreement](#) which facilitates the mobility of educators among the states that are members of NASDTEC. This agreement makes it possible for an educator who completed an approved program and/or who holds a certificate or license in one jurisdiction to earn a certificate or license in another state or jurisdiction, with possible additional requirements.

If you are seeking licensure in another state, refer to the [Teacher Licensure Agency Directory](#) for information on contacting other states.

*\*Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) endorsements require completion of a DESE approved licensure program of study.*

## Grades and Making Progress Towards Your Degree

### Grades

Instructors of graduate courses determine whether the courses are graded with letter grades or a SAT/UNSAT (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory, similar to Pass/Fail grades). Faculty must clearly describe the grading policy and options at the beginning of the semester. Many courses will allow the student to request the grading option. However, you must request a change in the grading policy at the beginning of the semester. Contact your instructor at the beginning of the semester if you want to request a different grading option.

Letter grades carry the following numerical equivalents for purposes of computing grade point averages: A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7, D = 1.0, F = 0.

### Incomplete Grades

If you are unable to complete a course during the regular semester, you can request that your instructor assign an Incomplete (INC) instead of a letter grade. The Instructor is not obligated to grant an INC for the course and will require you to provide a plan for the completion of the work (varies by course and instructor). You can obtain credit for an Incomplete (INC) only by finishing the agreed upon work required by that course. If a grade has not been submitted by the end of one year after initial enrollment in that course, the Incomplete (INC) changes to an Incomplete Failure (IF). The initiative in arranging for the removal of an Incomplete rests with you.

### Satisfactory Progress

All students must make satisfactory and reasonable progress toward completion of their degree program based on the Statute of Limitations for that degree set by the Graduate School. A student who is not making satisfactory or reasonable progress is subject to academic dismissal. The college includes the following components in our review for Satisfactory Progress to Degree:

- Achieving an overall 3.0 GPA for each semester
- Completing all requirements and milestones of the program by the stipulated deadlines
- Maintaining continuous progress towards the degree

The College of Education strives to provide each candidate with a level of support that will ensure successful completion of their program. **Should a student be identified as not making satisfactory progress to their degree, the student and advisor will be notified and a collaborative approach to resolving the situation will include the student, their Academic Advisor, and the Graduate Program Director as needed.**

Graduate School regulations, requirements, and administrative processes which affect your progress toward receipt of the degree are found in the [Graduate School Student Handbook](#).

## Minimum Grade Point Average

To satisfy degree requirements, students need to maintain a minimum average grade point of 3.0 and earn a grade of “C” or above in any courses that count toward degree requirements. Students with a semester grade point average below 2.8 in any two semesters (consecutive or otherwise), will be subject to academic dismissal.

## Timeframe for Completing Your Degree (Statute of Limitations)

The Statute of Limitations (SOL) is set by the Graduate School and represents the period within which all degree requirements are expected to be completed.

**Master’s students** are expected to complete their program within four years.

**Doctoral students** are expected to complete their coursework and comprehensive exam within six years. Then, once you achieve candidacy (i.e., complete your comprehensive exam) you have five years to complete your dissertation and final defense.

**If your Statute of Limitations is due to expire, and you are not planning to graduate before the expiration date**, you and your advisor will need to request an extension no later than two months before the expiration date in order to meet Graduate School deadlines and avoid being discontinued from your program.

1. First, you will want to have a conversation with your committee chairperson (i.e., advisor).
2. Next, you will need to write up your request, which should include
  - An outline of your academic progress to date
  - A rationale for the extension
  - A timeline (month/year) for completing each remaining part of your program (e.g., comprehensive examination, formation of dissertation committee, dissertation proposal, final oral defense, and date of graduation).
  - A schedule of meetings with your advisor (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
3. Your advisor needs to endorse this request and forward it to the Graduate Program Manager in the Office of Academic Affairs.

## Degree Guidelines: Graduate Certificates

College of Education Graduate Certificate Programs range from 12-15 credits and offer a sequence of courses which have a clear educational objective to be achieved in an efficient and defined manner.

There are three major steps towards a Certificate:

1. **Admission to the program and assignment of initial advisor.** Meet with your advisor to review the list of courses required for the Certificate and plan your course of study.
2. **Taking courses.** Take classes that are required for your program and stay in touch with the program coordinator about your progress.
3. **Filing for your Certificate.** In the semester you plan to graduate, complete and review the [Graduate Certificate Eligibility Form](#) with your advisor and then submit to Academic Affairs.

Certificates are conferred three times a year. To receive your certificate on time, turn in your completion form ahead of posted deadlines.

### Minimum Credit Requirements for a Certificate:

- A minimum of 9 credits at the 600-level or above
- A C is the minimum allowable grade for credits to count towards your certificate; in addition, you must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better in order to graduate
- Individual programs of study may have more specific requirements.

## Degree Guidelines: Master's of Education (M.Ed.)

There are three major steps toward the Master's of Education degree:

1. **Admission to the program and assignment of initial advisor.** Work with your advisor to complete a [Proposed Program of Study](#) during your first semester of study.
2. **Taking courses.** Meeting regularly with your advisor, you will complete your program of study; your actual courses may not be identical to the proposed program of study completed with your advisor because your interests may develop in different directions than you initially thought, and the courses offered in any given semester may mean that you need to make adjustments from what you initially outlined.
3. **Filing for your degree.** In the semester you plan to graduate, you will need to file the [M.Ed. Degree Eligibility Form](#) by posted deadlines.

Academic programs vary in terms of credit requirements; master's degrees include a minimum of 33 credits beyond the baccalaureate degree (your degree program may require more than 33 credits).

NOTE: The School Counselor Education and School Psychology concentrations admit students into a joint Master's/Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree program. Students in the program receive their Master's and Ed.S. after completing a minimum of 63 credits (33 M.Ed. credits and 30 Ed.S credits).

### Transfer of Prior Course Credits

If you have taken graduate courses at UMass Amherst or other institutions prior to being admitted to a UMass Amherst master's program, you may be able to apply those credits to your master's degree. Such credits can not have been counted towards another degree, and generally a maximum of six non-degree graduate credits from UMass, and up to an additional six graduate credits from another institution, taken prior to matriculating at the College of Education can be applied to your master's degree. If you have completed a graduate certificate in the College of Education at UMass Amherst you may be able to apply up to 15 credits towards your master's degree. **No more than 15 credits in total may be transferred into a degree program per Graduate School policy. Final approval of transfer credit rests with the Graduate School.**

**Courses taken at another institution.** To request transfer of graduate course credits taken at another institution (and not counted towards a prior degree): after consulting with your academic advisor, complete the [Transfer of Graduate Course Credit Taken at Other Academic Institution](#) form.

**Courses taken at UMass Amherst as a non-degree student.** To request transfer of non-degree course credits taken at UMass to a master's level program (including courses taken in a graduate certificate program): after consulting with your academic advisor, complete the [Request for Transfer of Non Degree Course Credit for Master's Level Programs request](#) form.

**Courses taken at UMass Amherst as an undergraduate student as part of an approved College of Education 4+1 accelerated master's program.** To request transfer of undergraduate degree course credits taken at UMass to a master's level program: after consulting with your advisor, complete the [Request for Transfer of Graduate Course Credits Taken as an Undergraduate Student Toward an Accelerated Master's Degree Program](#) form and a [Master of Education Proposed Program of Study](#). **Forms are due within two months of the start of your master's program.**

Additional information about M.Ed. requirements is available on the [Degrees and Milestones page](#) on the College of Education website. Contact your advisor with any questions.

### **Additional Guidelines**

These additional guidelines reflect elements unique to the College of Education or items which have proven especially helpful to College of Education graduate students.

### **Minimum Credit Requirements for M.Ed.**

All M.Ed. concentrations in the College of Education include at least 33 credits plus the following requirements:

- A minimum of 12 credits at the 600-level or above
- 21 credits or more in the College of Education
- At least 18 letter-graded (as opposed to SAT/UNSAT) credits from UMass Amherst
- A C is the minimum allowable grade for credits to count towards your master's degree; in addition, you must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better to graduate
- A maximum of 9 credits from Independent Study or Independent Practicum combined
- Credits for courses below the 500-level cannot be applied to your master's degree
- Individual programs of study may have more specific requirements.

### **Filing for Your Degree**

Congratulations! You're in the final semester of your program! You will need to file the appropriate forms that will be submitted to the Graduate School. See the College of Education [degree forms and milestones page](#) for more information.

## Degree Guidelines: Doctor Of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Our Ph.D. concentrations seek to contribute to the preparation of education leaders and scholars in all educational settings.

The College of Education offers a number of academic concentrations leading to the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Education. The School Psychology program leads to the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in School Psychology.

There are seven formal stages to the doctoral degree. In the course of completing these steps, you need to fill out a series of forms that will mark the completion of a milestone (see [Doctoral Forms and Milestones](#)) towards your doctoral degree. If you have questions about any of these forms, including how to fill them out or deadlines for submission, contact the Graduate Programs Office ([educ-gpd@umass.edu](mailto:educ-gpd@umass.edu)).

1. Admission and Assignment of Initial Advisor ([D-1 form](#))
2. Formation of Guidance Committee and Development of a Proposed Program of Study ([D-2 form](#))
3. Formation of Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination Committee ([D-3 form](#))
4. Preparation for and the Completion of Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination ([D-3A form](#), [D-4 form](#), and [D-5 form](#))
5. Formation of Dissertation Committee ([D-6 form](#))
6. Completion of Dissertation Proposal ([D-7](#) & [D-7A](#) forms)
7. Preparation for and Completion of the Dissertation and Oral Examination ([D-8 form](#), Announcement of Final Oral Examination; [D-9](#), Results of Final Oral Examination.)

### College Policies for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree

The guidelines that follow provide information which reflects elements unique to the College of Education ([www.umass.edu/education](http://www.umass.edu/education)) or items which have proven especially helpful to College of Education doctoral students. Within the framework of the University Graduate School regulations and with the advice and approval of a guidance committee, students plan academic programs of study which include two consecutive semesters of full-time residency (see Graduate School [Residency Requirement](#)).

#### Program Of Study

A doctoral concentration leads to the highest degree awarded in the profession. You should carefully plan your academic program of study during the early part of your second semester with the help of your Academic Advisor. Previous academic work and professional experience should be considered in planning academic goals and scholarship.



### Degree Requirements for Ph.D.

Your program of study needs to meet the following criteria:

- **All credits you plan to use towards your doctoral degree must be approved by your academic advisor.**
- A minimum of 36 credits of coursework (these do not include dissertation credits). Credit requirements vary across concentrations. Check on the [academic concentrations page](#) on the College of Education website for concentration specific requirements.
- Dissertation credits (in addition to the credits associated with coursework) are also required to meet the dissertation requirement for the Ph.D. Dissertation credit requirements vary by program. Refer to your program of study for further information.
- A maximum of 9 of the credits can be from independent studies or practica combined
- **Courses that you audit do not count** toward degree requirements.
- All credits must be earned within your [Statute of Limitations](#) period.
- [Residency Requirement](#)

### Registering for Dissertation Credits

Doctoral students are required to register for dissertation credits in consultation with their primary advisor. A maximum of nine (9) dissertation credits may be taken during any one semester. You may find that registering for dissertation credits during the summer session is more cost effective.

### What are Dissertation Credits (EDUC 899)?

Each concentration requires doctoral students to take dissertation credits as part of the degree requirements. The number of required credits varies across programs, so you should refer to your program's degree requirements to plan accordingly.

Dissertation credits are considered “course credits” and tuition/fees are charged per credit (see Fee Schedule attached). You are therefore strongly advised to register for your requisite dissertation credits while you have funding that will waive your tuition and curriculum fees (e.g., graduate assistantships).

Students can register for dissertation credits (EDUC 899) directly on SPIRE during the registration period. You must select either PhD or EdD dissertation credits.

**IMPORTANT: Enrollment in EDUC 899 will not impact the number of hours you can work on campus—i.e., your “workload”.** Dissertation credits are not calculated into your total permissible “credit load” for each semester. (Additional information on workload is included below.)

### **When should I register for my Dissertation Credits?**

Students most commonly enroll in dissertation credits when they are finishing up their course work and/or working on comprehensive exams to maintain “full-time enrollment,” if they are not taking a full course load (9 or more credits). Some students also enroll in dissertation credits (with or without course credits) if they need full-time status to fulfill the university “Residency” requirement of two consecutive full-time semesters.

Since dissertation credits are tied to tuition and fees, you are strongly advised to register for your required number of dissertation credits while you have funding that will waive your tuition and curriculum fees (e.g., graduate assistantships). Otherwise, there is no prescribed timing for taking dissertation credits because it varies by the student’s pace of study and funding opportunities.

### **Dissertation credits may be used to meet the residency requirement.**

If you are unsure about how or when to register for dissertation credits, please speak with your faculty advisor or the Department Administrator about your individual academic plan.

Dissertation credits will be graded as in-progress (IP) until the dissertation has been accepted by the Graduate School and you successfully complete your program, at which time they will be converted to SAT (Satisfactory).

### **College of Education Requirements for Research Methods Courses**

The college’s Academic Matters Committee has vetted courses that meet the Research Methods designation. Should you choose to take a course to meet the research methods requirement, which is not listed, make sure that you consult with your academic advisor or guidance committee in advance of registering for the course.

- You are required to take at least four research methods courses. Two of those four courses must be quantitative, and one must be a qualitative research methods course (applies to any student who matriculated in Fall 2017 or later).
- You may not use research methods coursework taken during a master’s program (at UMass Amherst or elsewhere) to fulfill the Research Methods Course requirement. (Applies to any student admitted into the Ph.D. in Fall 2016 or later.)

Additional information about this requirement can be found here: [Research Methods Requirements](#)

### **Comprehensive Examinations**

The purpose of the exam is to demonstrate a student’s foundational knowledge and preparation to do dissertation research. The comprehensive exam must be clearly described by the concentration/specialization. If an area of concentration/specialization offers more than one option to fulfill its comprehensive exam requirement, it must clearly describe all such options and make them available to all students pursuing that area of concentration/specialization.

Specific timelines for the completion of the comprehensive exam must be clearly described by the concentration (one year from completion of the formation of your comprehensive examination committee is strongly recommended).

### **Register for Continuous Enrollment (GRADSCH999) when not taking classes**

If you are in a degree program but not enrolled for any course credits in fall and spring semesters, you must register for continuous enrollment (GRADSCH999) and pay a continuous enrollment fee each semester until your degree has been formally awarded. The deadline for payment of this fee is indicated on your SPIRE account.

### **Dissertation**

The Dissertation must be a formal manuscript that addresses a specific research problem. The dissertation should meet the scholarly standards required by refereed publications. The dissertation should involve systematic empirical/theoretical inquiry. The manuscript should include five chapters, including an Abstract: Introduction; Literature Review; Design and Methods; Results; and Discussion of Findings.

***When filing to graduate, you must complete the Doctoral Form D-9 Results of Final Oral Exam, the Doctoral Degree Eligibility Form, Dissertation Signature Page, and obtain all the appropriate signatures.*** Submit these three forms at the same time to the Graduate Program Manager in the Academic Affairs Office, by the posted deadlines.

You must also upload your complete dissertation to [Scholarworks](#) and complete the Survey of Earned Doctorates by the Graduate School's posted deadlines.

## **Doctoral Advising/Milestone Forms**

### **D-1 Advising Information**

Form D-1 assures you meet with your advisor, receive appropriate academic advising, and receive and review appropriate catalogs, handbooks, guidelines, rules and regulations.

The Form D-1 must be submitted by the end of the first semester of study in the concentration to your Department Administrator in the College of Education.

### **D-2 Formation of a Guidance Committee and a Proposed Program of Study**

Form D-2 establishes your doctoral Guidance Committee, including your Chair as the primary advisor, and records a proposed program of study.

In effect, it is an academic plan developed by you and your committee. Your Form D-2 will be reviewed prior to the scheduling of your Comprehensive Exams to assure that requirements agreed upon have been satisfactorily completed. You should attach any additional documents which are required by individual concentrations to Form D-2.

If you have taken graduate level courses at UMass Amherst or at other universities, you may use up to 9 credits toward the minimum of 36 course credits required by your concentration. You should discuss this possibility with your Guidance Committee. If the committee agrees, list these course(s) on Form D-2.

Form D-2 must be submitted by the end of the second semester of study to your Department Administrator in the College of Education.

**D-2A Amendments to Program of Study**

Since the Program of Study is a proposed plan, there may be changes or revisions. Use Form D-2A to record any changes to your Program of Study and your Guidance Committee approval of those changes. The Form D-2A should be submitted to your Department Administrator in the College of Education

**D-3 Committee Membership/Comprehensive Qualifying Examination Committee**

Form D-3 is used to establish your Comprehensive Examination Committee, your Chair and primary advisor, and to record the information in both student and faculty databases. This committee should be established and convened prior to completion of your formal course work. Committee members, including a student's Chair, may be changed, but note that students have found it very helpful to have committee membership which carries through all phases of the degree process. Submit the Form D-3 to your Department Administrator in the College of Education.

**D-3A Institutional Review Board (IRB).**

The following is a change to the IRB process, please read carefully and follow directions. Students are required to submit proof of IRB approval to their Department Administrator along with the D-3A prior to beginning their research.

Any scientific research being conducted by a University of Massachusetts Amherst affiliate that involves interacting or intervening with human subjects/participants must undergo a review by the IRB. The IRB ensures that research plans are in compliance with all laws and regulations, and that the risks to subjects are properly balanced against potential scientific gains. This is in accordance with federal law, and all research with human subjects, regardless of location or category of review, is subject to IRB review.

Before submitting an IRB application, all researchers must also complete an ethics education online training course via CITI. Certification of completion of the CITI training Group 2 Social Behavioral and Education Research Investigators & Key Personnel – Basic Course must also be attached to the protocol application whether the research is funded or unfunded. CITI courses are free and usually take about two hours to complete.

IRB/Human Subjects Compliance Homepage:

<https://www.umass.edu/research/compliance/human-subjects>

**D-4 Announcement of Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination**

Form D-4 verifies the completeness of your coursework, content of your exam, and represents notice to the college that your Comprehensive Examination is to take place. You must submit the Form D-4 to your Department Administrator in the College of Education no later than two weeks before the Comprehensive Examination.

**D- 5 Results of the Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination**

Form D-5 notifies the college and graduate school of the results of your Comprehensive Examination. This form should be submitted to your Departmental Administrator after exam completion. The Graduate Program Director will review this form during the nomination to candidacy process.

### **D-6 Formation of Dissertation Committee**

Form D-6 establishes your Dissertation Committee. It is used by the college and graduate school to review the Graduate Faculty Status and academic appropriateness of the membership of the members and to record that information in the student and faculty databases.

Your Dissertation Committee is composed of a Chair and a member from the College of Education faculty in your own department, and a third faculty member who must be outside of your department. You should check with the Office of Academic Affairs to verify each faculty member's Graduate Faculty Status (GFS) to be sure they are eligible to serve on your Dissertation Committee. You should complete your Form D-6 at the time of or soon after completion of your Comprehensive Examination and submit it to the Graduate Programs Manager.

**If a member of your proposed dissertation committee is not affiliated with UMass Amherst or the Five Colleges, they need to be approved by the Graduate School and granted one-time Graduate Faculty Status (GFS). The approval process involves the following steps:**

1. **Your Dissertation Chair sends an email to the Graduate Program Office for review ([educ-gpd@umass.edu](mailto:educ-gpd@umass.edu)).** This email needs to include the following:
  - a. The reason this person should be granted one-time only Graduate Faculty Status (GFS) to serve on your committee as an outside member.
  - b. The role that this person will serve on the committee (committee member or outside committee member), and what this member will bring to your committee in support of your research.
  - c. This person's date of birth for creation of a SPIRE record.
  - d. An attached CV of the person (pdf format only) with their formal name, current and preferred address, phone number, and email address.
2. **The Graduate Program Director reviews the request and forwards it to the Graduate School, which makes the final decision about awarding GFS to this outside member.**

### **D-7 Dissertation Proposal Approval**

Form D-7 notifies the Graduate School that your proposal has been approved and that your committee members have agreed to review and evaluate your proposed research. You must submit copies of Form D-7 and your proposal to the Graduate Program Manager. They are used for review and processing by the College of Education and the Graduate School.

### **D-7A Institutional Review Board (IRB).**

The following is a change to the IRB process, please read carefully and follow directions. Students are required to submit proof of IRB approval along with the form D-7 (Dissertation Proposal) prior to beginning their research.

Any scientific research being conducted by a University of Massachusetts Amherst affiliate that involves interacting or intervening with human subjects/participants must undergo a review by the IRB. The IRB ensures that research plans are in compliance with all laws and regulations, and that the risks to subjects are properly balanced against potential scientific gains. This is in accordance with federal law, and all research with human subjects, regardless of location or category of review, is subject to IRB review.

Before submitting an IRB application, all researchers must also complete an ethics education online training course via CITI. Certification of completion of the CITI training Group 2 Social Behavioral and Education Research Investigators & Key Personnel – Basic Course must also be attached to the protocol application whether the research is funded or unfunded. CITI courses are free and usually take about two hours to complete.

#### **D-8 Announcement of Final Oral Examination**

Form D-8 notifies the Graduate School and the University when and where your final oral examination is to take place, that the committee members will attend the examination, and that they agree the dissertation is complete and ready for presentation. You must submit the Form D-8 to the Graduate Program Manager at least four (4) weeks plus 2 additional business days by 10:00a.m. before the oral defense. Both the College of Education and the Graduate School publish scheduled oral examinations.

#### **D-9 Results of Final Oral Examination**

Form D-9 informs the College of Education and the Graduate School of the results of your oral examination. When successfully completed, you proceed with final required revisions of the dissertation: you submit your dissertation electronically and complete the Graduate School protocols associated with receipt of the degree and graduation.

#### **D-10 Change of Committee Membership**

Form D-10 is used at any stage of the doctoral process to change the composition of your committee. Form D-10 indicates that the new member has agreed to serve and that the previous member agreed to withdraw from the committee. The Office of Academic Affairs and the Graduate School use the information to revise appropriate databases.

Submit the Form D-10, if necessary, to the Graduate Programs Manager.

### **Filing for Your Degree**

Congratulations! You're in the final semester of your program! You will need to file specific forms to the Graduate School to finalize your PhD. Please refer to the College of Education [degree forms and milestones page](#) for more detailed information.

### **Earning a Master's Degree 'En Route' to a Doctorate**

For doctoral programs that do not require a Master's degree at the point of admission, doctoral students who do not have a Master's degree (M.Ed.) may file for the M.Ed. (non-licensure) after the completion of the M.Ed. graduate credit-hour requirement for their program with approval from their advisor/guidance committee.

Students with an M.Ed. earned in the College of Education who request their coursework be counted towards both their Master's degree and the doctoral program of study in the same program should discuss this option with their academic advisor. Final determination of applied credits to the doctoral program of study is at the discretion of the student's academic advisor/guidance committee.

## Degree Guidelines: Education Specialist Degree (EdS)

The three major steps to an Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree are detailed below.

1. Admission, assignment of an initial Advisor, and completion of a [Proposed Program of Study](#) during your first semester of study.
2. Completion of the Program of Study
3. File to Graduate. (go to the [degree forms and milestones page](#) for more information).

The following guidelines are among the most important for an Education Specialist degree; however, they do not exhaust the list of policies that support your graduate education in the College of Education. Academic programs of study within each concentration have distinct requirements that may differ from programs of study in other concentrations.

Each student is assigned an advisor in their concentration area. Your advisor's name is listed in your SPIRE account. Your advisor will guide you through the degree program and serve as your point of contact for your concentration's requirements.

In conjunction with your advisor, you will chart a program of study which will meet the Education Specialist degree requirements, your concentration's requirements and your unique needs. Courses and course details can be found online in SPIRE under Catalogs & Schedules.

### Degree Requirements for Ed.S.

The Education Specialist degree (Ed.S.) in the College of Education requires a program of study that meets the following criteria:

- It must contain a minimum of 30 graduate credits beyond a master's degree (**Graduate School requirement**). Note: Social Justice Education (SJE) requires a minimum of 34 graduate credits beyond a master's degree.
- All courses must be at least at the 500 level (none at the 400 level or below).
- At least 15 credits must be earned with College of Education courses.
- At least 18 of the credits must have a course number of 600 or above.
- No more than 9 of the credits can be independent studies or practica.
- No more than 6 independent study credits per term.

All credits must be approved by your advisor. An official transcript noting a conferred master's degree from the granting institution must be on file with the UMass Graduate School.

### Ed.S. Concentration Requirements

Several concentrations have slightly different requirements for the Ed.S. See your faculty advisor for information on such items as using independent study credits or student teaching credits toward degree requirements.

**The Ed.S. degree is NOT eligible for Optional Professional Training (OPT) for international students.**



## Earning an Ed.S. Degree ‘En Route to’ a Doctorate

Doctoral students may also file for an Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree after the completion of 30 UMass Amherst graduate credit hours beyond the master’s degree that meet the Ed.S. degree requirements (see above). *Exceptions: Social Justice Education (SJE) requires 34 graduate credit hours beyond a master’s degree; School Psychology students are not eligible to apply for an Ed.S. en route to a Ph.D..*

To apply for an Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree “en route” to a Ph.D., students must complete the following steps at least two months prior to the degree period in which they plan to graduate:

1. Email a request to be able to file for the Ed.S. “en route” at the next degree period to the Graduate Programs Manager, copied to their chair/advisor.
2. Email the Graduate School to request confirmation that the Graduate School records office has their official master’s transcript on file, indicating the conferred master’s.
3. Complete the electronic Ed.S. degree eligibility form in SPIRE **after the Ed.S. degree has been added to their Spire record.**

## Terminating a Ph.D. and filing to earn an Ed.S. and graduate at the next degree period

Doctoral students who are no longer going to pursue a Ph.D. and have completed 30 UMass Amherst graduate credit hours beyond the master’s degree that meet the Ed.S. degree requirements (see above), may file for an Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree. *Exception: Social Justice Education (SJE) requires 34 graduate credit hours beyond a master’s degree.*

To terminate the Ph.D. program and apply for an Education Specialist (Ed.S.) degree, students must complete the following steps at least two months prior to the degree period in which they plan to graduate:

1. Email a request that their Ph.D. be terminated and that they wish to file for the Ed.S. at the next degree period to the Graduate Programs Manager, copied to their chair/advisor.
2. Email the Graduate School to request confirmation that the Graduate School records office has their official master’s transcript on file, indicating the conferred master’s.
3. Complete the electronic Ed.S. degree eligibility form in Spire **after the Ph.D. has been terminated and the Ed.S. degree has been added to their Spire record.**

## Filing for Your Degree

Congratulations! You’re in the final semester of your program! You will need to file the appropriate forms that will be submitted to the Graduate School. See the College of Education [degree forms and milestones page](#) for more information.



## Suspending Enrollment or Leaving A Program

### Taking a Leave of Absence

Graduate students do sometimes need to take a leave of absence from their program, for reasons such as family responsibilities or health issues. If you are contemplating a leave of absence for whatever reason, you are encouraged to speak with your advisor and/or the Graduate Program Director (GPD) to explore your options. Your advisor, in concert with the GPD, will help facilitate the process of requesting a personal leave of absence. Graduate students who request a leave of absence must petition the Graduate Program Director through their advisor who, in turn, provides justification for the request to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the Dean of the Graduate School grants a leave of absence, the student's statute of limitations is extended appropriately.

Medical Leave of Absence requests are processed by University Health Services ([UHS](#)).

While you are on leave of absence you will need to maintain continuous enrollment every semester during the leave (see above section for more information on the process for enrolling in Continuous Enrollment.).

Your student status will be affected by taking a leave of absence: you will not be considered a full-time student, which among other things means that student loans will no longer be deferred. You can find additional information in the [Graduate School Handbook](#).

### Withdrawing from the University

If you need to withdraw from the University for whatever reason, we encourage you to contact the Graduate Program Director and/or your advisor for assistance. While this might be the right step for you, we also want you to be aware that there are resources available to students facing challenges affecting their academic progress. To officially withdraw from your program, you will need to send an email to the Graduate Program Director indicating the reasons for withdrawal. The GPD will then follow up with you to discuss your options.

### Applying for Readmission to the College of Education

**To be considered for readmission by both the college and the graduate school, students must be in good academic standing with an overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher.**

If you are interested in being readmitted to a program in which you were previously enrolled, please contact your academic advisor or the Graduate Program Director. You will need to submit a written request, endorsed by your chair/advisor, along with an agreed upon timeline to completion of your degree to the Graduate Program Director. If your request is approved by the college, the Graduate Program Director will request readmission with the Graduate Dean.

- Requests for readmission are generally reviewed only in the fall semester. All requests must be submitted in writing to the Graduate Program Director by November 1 each year. Requests are then reviewed by the GPD and associated program faculty.
- Spring semester requests are reviewed ONLY for students who were continuously enrolled during the prior fall semester.
- Students may request readmission to the College of Education no more than two times during a program of study.
- Students will be responsible for any accumulated back fees with the Graduate School upon readmission.

## Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are awarded according to the contract negotiated by the [Graduate Employee Organization](#) and include the benefits of a tuition and curriculum fee waiver. Students holding these types of awards qualify for a partial waiver of the health fee. Students with non-working fellowships do not qualify for some of these benefits and should check which benefits (if any) are associated with their fellowships.

Graduate assistantship positions are available to students in a variety of areas on the UMass campus. Assistantships are generally 10-20 hours/week, provide a full tuition credit, excellent benefits (including health care) and all are unionized positions.

Assistantships are not guaranteed upon admission to a program. Once you are accepted to a program, it will be your responsibility to seek out and apply for assistantships, with support from the program. Students with a full-time status (at least 9 credits or doctoral students with an approved full-time status override in SPIRE) each semester will be prioritized for assistantships awarded by the College of Education.

Many assistantship opportunities are posted to the College of Education [Assistantships & Funding Opportunities](#) page.

UMass offices post open assistantship opportunities throughout the spring, summer, and into the fall semester, so we encourage you to be patient even if you do not have an assistantship lined up immediately. Graduate employees shall qualify for a tuition waiver each semester provided they meet the minimum stipend or teaching responsibility requirements as outlined in Article 33 of the GEO Collective Bargaining Agreement.

### Assistantship Appointment and Reappointment Procedures

The College of Education employs students to assist in instruction and projects and makes every effort to provide graduate assistantships that bolster students' academic preparation. The number of available assistantships varies from semester to semester as these positions are contingent upon multiple sources of funding. Therefore, the college must take many factors into account when making decisions regarding the allocation of assistantships.

Assistantships are awarded on a semester or annual basis and reappointment to a position is not guaranteed beyond the end of the contract.

Criteria for appointment of graduate assistantships will be prioritized to support students who have:

- Full-time status (9 credits or more)
- Specialized knowledge and skills related to the specific assistantship duties and responsibilities
- Good academic progress in your program of study or demonstrated potential to make good academic progress

### Criteria for reappointment of graduate assistantships include:

- Full-time status (9 credits or more)
- Good academic standing and progress
- Demonstrated experience and knowledge of the position
- Past performance
- Needs of the academic department and available funding
- Other criteria specific to the position

Departments and Principal Investigators, with Department Chair approval, will post open and available assistantships to the college website or student list-serves, outlining duties, qualifications, and application instructions for each position. Graduate students seeking assistantships should follow the instructions for applying. Re-appointments are not posted.

Assistantships in the College of Education are generally 10-20 hours/week, unless approved otherwise by the Department Chair. To make funding available to as many students as possible, students may not have a total funding package from the college exceeding 20 hours per week (does not include grants or other restricted funding).

### Workload

The Graduate School includes course credit hours in the total permissible workload of 40 hours for students each week. A student, who, with the addition of credit hours, slightly exceeds the 40-hour maximum, may have the limit lifted with a letter from the Graduate Program Director. **Students may not work more than 40 hours/week for compensation on campus by state and Human Resources regulations.**

### Schedule of Appointment and Reappointment

Hiring Authorities and/or supervisors will review application materials and make recommendations for awarding assistantships to the relevant Department Chairs according to the schedule established by the Graduate Assistantship Office. Final decisions to award assistantships rest with the Department Chair.

By December 1 or April 15 of each semester, Department Chairs or their designee will notify each graduate student holding an assistantship, in writing, their expectations regarding whether they will be offered assistantships the following semester.

Students with fall appointments will be notified by December 1 of each fall semester; students with spring appointments or academic year appointments will be notified by April 15 of each spring semester.

Students holding assistantships or receiving University paychecks are paid bi-weekly via direct payroll deposit. If you are uncertain about the benefits associated with your award, contact the [Graduate Assistantship Office](mailto:gradappt@grad.umass.edu) at (413) 545-5294 or [gradappt@grad.umass.edu](mailto:gradappt@grad.umass.edu).

## **Classroom Teaching Assistant (TA) - Doctoral Students**

The College of Education recognizes the value inherent in student teaching and classroom support experience for many of our programs and encourages students to discuss options with their faculty mentors and/or program advisor. Students wishing to gain experience in a classroom setting must have one of the following:

- A contracted graduate assistantship with specific written duties related to teaching and/or classroom support in the form of administrative tasks.
- An approved independent study contract on file with Academic Affairs outlining specific responsibilities and learning objectives for the classroom experience.
- A contracted hourly position with specific written duties related to the assigned classroom administrative tasks, providing non-teaching support.

Students who do not have prior approval in one of these agreed upon categories are not eligible to serve as a teaching assistant or conduct administrative support to the classroom in any College of Education course.

## Guidelines for Remote Attendance

The pandemic has changed how we think about what it means to be together in the same physical space. As technologies that enable remote interactions have become increasingly commonplace, remote access to in-person classes and events allows individuals to participate who would otherwise be absent due to illness, disability, caregiving, or other limitations.

As a college community, we encourage instructors and event organizers to carefully consider the amount of flexibility and remote access they plan to offer based on format, objectives, and available resources. A good practice is to proactively include attendance flexibility and remote access practices in a course syllabus, event announcement, or other communications, rather than waiting until a need arises. *It is important to note that a remote participation option is neither a requirement nor an expectation for in-person courses or events except in the case of an approved accommodation.*

If your instructor offers or you have an accommodation that provides for remote access to an in-person class or event, pay close attention to any access instructions you are given, and be proactive about staying in touch with the instructor or event organizer. Remote technologies limit the typical interpersonal cues that demonstrate interest and participation, so it is a good idea to take extra steps to show that you are engaged. Many instructors will describe in their syllabus what they want you to do if you need to be remote or will miss an in-person class. If this is unclear, be sure to reach out and confirm the instructor's expectations. Even a short note helps reassure instructors that you are progressing and doing well, while academic ghosting could leave them imagining the worst.

Choosing a remote access option in a class should also be done with care and a plan. As members of a learning community, we are each responsible for managing our work and our progress. Flexibility is a great way to ensure that those of us who face disruptions have more options to keep up, but unstructured flexibility can also lead to negative results (procrastination, overload, rushed work). If you find that you are falling behind in your work or you are struggling to engage, promptly reach out to the instructor and/or your advisor; they can offer support and work with you to help you stay on track.

## Code of Student Conduct

It is the expressed policy of the University that every aspect of graduate academic life, related in whatever fashion to the University, shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner by graduate students. The Code of Student Conduct can be found here: [Code of Student Conduct](#) or at the Dean of Students Office home page: [Dean of Students Office](#).

### [Guidelines for Classroom Civility and Respect](#)

The University of Massachusetts Amherst strives to create an environment of academic freedom that fosters the personal and intellectual development of all community members. To do this, the University protects the rights of all students, faculty and staff to explore new ideas and to express their views. A necessary condition for these pursuits is an acceptance of the spirit of inquiry and a respect for diverse ideas and viewpoints. For true academic freedom to exist, this acceptance and respect must exist in both the overall campus environment and in the classroom.

While the principle of academic freedom protects the expression and exploration of new ideas, it does not protect conduct that is unlawful and disruptive. The University preserves a high standard for members of the community in terms of mutual respect and civility. While each member of the community holds a number of rights, privileges and responsibilities, those individuals who disrespect the rights of others or who act in a way that discredits themselves or the University may forfeit privileges or receive sanctions. As members of an academic community, we are obligated to be exemplary, both in our behaviors and in our attitudes. This obligation is especially important within the classroom context since this is one of the primary ways that learning and growth are fostered.

## Graduate Student Options for Reporting Concerns

**For concerns about any aspect of your experience as a graduate student or graduate student worker in the College of Education:**

Contact the Graduate Program Director (GPD), at [educ-gpd@umass.edu](mailto:educ-gpd@umass.edu). Under most circumstances, what you discuss will not be shared with others without your permission; however, the GPD is not a confidential resource and may have to report information about possible harm to you or others, significant violations of University policy, or certain legal issues to others in the University. If you have any concerns about the privacy of the information you share, it may be best to discuss those concerns in advance.

**For concerns about courses, faculty members, or your graduate studies more broadly:**

Contact the Chair of your academic department. The current department chairs are:

EPRA - Dr. Bjorn Nordtveit, [bjorn@educ.umass.edu](mailto:bjorn@educ.umass.edu)

TECS - Dr. Charu (Nat) Turner, [nturner@umass.edu](mailto:nturner@umass.edu)

SD - Dr. Linda Griffin, [lgriffin@educ.umass.edu](mailto:lgriffin@educ.umass.edu)

Like the Graduate Program Director, Department Chairs may be required to inform others if you disclose certain kinds of information with them, but apart from following these requirements, department chairs will also do their best to respect your wishes regarding the information that you share. If you have any concerns about the privacy of the information you share, it may be best to discuss those concerns in advance with your department chair.

**If you prefer to contact someone outside the College of Education:**

The Dean of Students Office has a Graduate Student Case Manager who can answer questions, make referrals to other resources, and advocate on a graduate student's behalf. The Graduate Student Case Manager is not a confidential resource and may be required to share reported information with others under certain circumstances. For more information, contact Corinna Cusson, Assistant Dean of Students, [ccusson@umass.edu](mailto:ccusson@umass.edu).

The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion maintains a Climate Incident Report Form that can be used to share information about “incidents that have negatively impacted you, others, or the community, and/or are contrary to the University of Massachusetts values and codes of conduct,” which can be found here: <https://www.umass.edu/diversity/incident-report-form>. Staff responding to these reports will work to help respond to reported information anonymously wherever possible, but they are not a confidential resource and may be required to share reported information with others under certain circumstances.

The Equal Opportunity Office responds to reports of harassment and discrimination on the UMass Amherst campus. Reports made to the Equal Opportunity Office can initiate the formal complaint process required to begin an investigation of reported harassment or discrimination. Reporting information is available at: <https://www.umass.edu/equalopportunity/report>. Their

website notes that the Equal Opportunity Office is not a confidential resource and describes their commitment to privacy: “Please note that this office strives to protect the privacy of individuals and shares information only on a ‘need to know’ basis.”

The Ombud’s Office is a confidential resource that can help provide policy clarification, conflict coaching, and referrals to campus resources. They can be very helpful when you are not sure which of the options listed above (or otherwise available on campus) would be most helpful to you. Their contact information is: [ombuds@umass.edu](mailto:ombuds@umass.edu) or 413-545-0867. Information shared with the Ombud’s Office will only be shared with others if failing to do so creates an imminent risk of serious harm to you or someone else.

**If you require support or assistance beyond the resolution of a specific concern:**

The Center for Counseling and Psychological Health provides confidential mental health services to members of the campus community. More information is available at: [www.umass.edu/counseling](http://www.umass.edu/counseling).

Student Legal Services provides confidential advice, counsel, referrals and community legal education for students. More information is available at: [www.umass.edu/rso/slso](http://www.umass.edu/rso/slso).

University Health Services provides confidential healthcare services to members of the campus community. More information is available at: [www.umass.edu/uhs](http://www.umass.edu/uhs).

The Center for Women and Community provides confidential support to people of all gender identities and expressions. They have specific expertise in addressing gender-based oppression and maintain a 24 Hour Sexual Assault Crisis and Information Hotline, which can be reached at (413) 545-0800. More information is available at: [www.umass.edu/cwc](http://www.umass.edu/cwc).

For additional resources on campus and in the community, please visit the College of Education’s [graduate student resources](#) page.



## Additional Resources for Graduate Students

### Emergency Support

In situations where an immediate risk of harm exists, please contact the UMass Police Department at 413-545-3111 or from a campus landline by calling 911.

#### College of Education Emergency Fund

College of Education Emergency Fund Provides immediate financial assistance for College of Education students who have encountered an unexpected financial emergency that may impact their ability to focus on their studies. Funds are awarded typically in a range from \$100 - \$1,000 depending on the need and availability of funds. Please email your completed application to [EDUC-emergencyfund@umass.edu](mailto:EDUC-emergencyfund@umass.edu).

- [Additional information about the Student Emergency Fund](#)
- [Emergency Fund Application Form](#).

#### Food Insecurity

Information and resources for students who need assistance acquiring food can be found on the [Dean of Students Office website](#) and [Office of Student Life website](#).

#### Dean of Students Student Care Supply Closet

[www.umass.edu/dean\\_students/student-care-supply-closets](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/student-care-supply-closets)

The Student Care Supply Closets, which provide free toiletries and household items to students who are facing economic insecurity and/or an unexpected financial emergency. Complete a [shopping sheet](#) and you will be informed of when to pick up the items requested.

### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

UMass Amherst has a long-standing commitment to social progress and social justice. We value diversity and equity and strive for inclusive excellence in our classrooms, research labs, residence halls, workspaces, and beyond. All campus community members seek to uphold the following values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. <https://www.umass.edu/diversity/home>

#### College of Education Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Justin Coles, [jacoles@umass.edu](mailto:jacoles@umass.edu)

#### Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success

[www.umass.edu/cmss/](http://www.umass.edu/cmss/)

The Multicultural Center is here for you whether you are looking for social engagement, guidance in navigating the university, cultural connections, feedback on your plans for success, or to promote inclusion.

Cultural centers: [Josephine White Eagle](#), [Latinx](#), [Malcolm X](#) and [Yuri Kochiyama](#).

### **Center for Women and Community**

[www.umass.edu/cwc/](http://www.umass.edu/cwc/)

To provide innovative and informed education, leadership opportunities, advocacy and support services that address the cause and impact of sexism and recognize the multiple oppressions experienced by women.

### **The Women of Color Leadership Network**

[www.umass.edu/cwc/wocln](http://www.umass.edu/cwc/wocln)

Center for Women & Community provides advocacy, mentoring, programming, training and a home for women and non-binary people of color as well as workshops and events for the public.

### **Stonewall Center**

[www.umass.edu/stonewall/](http://www.umass.edu/stonewall/)

The mission of the Stonewall Center is to provide support, resources, programming, and advocacy for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual (LGBTQIA) and allied students, staff, and faculty at UMass Amherst and for the larger Pioneer Valley.

[Here is a list](#) of campus LGBTQIA+ resources.

### **Alliance Against Ableism**

<https://blogs.umass.edu/allagainstableism/>

A “community of disabled folks and allies” who host events and online communities to have conversations around disability identity and inclusion, discuss its intersection with other identities, address ableism and barriers to inclusion and equality, and incorporate disability into larger systemic conversations and help create a campus built for all people.

### **Religious and Spiritual life**

[www.umass.edu/orsl/](http://www.umass.edu/orsl/)

The Office of Religious and Spiritual Life offers a range of educational programs, individual and institutional advocacy, interfaith dialogue, and other bridge-building activities designed to foster an informed, caring and supportive campus community for students of all backgrounds and beliefs, and to promote a greater sense of meaning and purpose in students' lives.

## Health & Wellness

### University Health Services

<https://www.umass.edu/uhs/>

University Health Services' mission is to provide comprehensive medical care to a diverse population of UMass Amherst constituents and promote campus health in the broadest sense. UHS commits to the holistic integration of a multitude of campus services promoting health in educational and residential environments. UHS emphasizes students first, and strives for excellence, sustainability and efficiency.

### Center for Counseling and Psychological Health

[www.umass.edu/counseling/](http://www.umass.edu/counseling/)

Confidential services include crisis intervention, short-term psychotherapy for individuals, couples and families, support and therapy groups, psychological assessment, behavioral medicine, psychiatric services and eating disorders consultations.

Beginning in 2020, the center offers tele therapy options. Additionally, students will have daily opportunities to speak with a counselor for both urgent and routine concerns. Virtual opportunities will be offered to cultivate healthy habits and develop mental health and wellbeing strategies

### UMatter at UMass

<https://www.umass.edu/umatter/>

UMatter at UMass is an initiative intended to affirm the values the university set in motion 150 years ago: care, compassion and active engagement.

As part of this initiative, the university has launched the U Matter website to support increased campus connectedness and provide the community with resources to proactively engage in reducing the misuse of alcohol and other drugs; bias related activity; bullying, harassment and violence; sexual misconduct; and depression and suicide.

### Campus Recreation

<https://www.umass.edu/campusrec>

Campus Recreation, an integral part of the educational mission of the University of Massachusetts and Division of Student Affairs and Campus Life, provides comprehensive recreation and student development opportunities, as well as exceptional programs, services and facilities. Through positively reflecting the interests and values of the UMass community, we actively promote and encourage a lifelong commitment to health and wellbeing.

## Technology Support

The college's [Educational Technology \(EdTech\) Office](#) provides technology support to the college community. They have regular walk-in hours during the week (see site for details) and can be contacted via phone at 413-545-6981 or email at [edtech-ithelp@umass.edu](mailto:edtech-ithelp@umass.edu).

[UMass Amherst IT](#) is the central IT support group for the university. The [IT Help Center](#) can provide help with issues related to NetIDs, network access, SPIRE, Moodle, Blackboard, Zoom, computer repair, and many other IT services on campus.

Software licenses for Qualtrics, SPSS, and Nvivo are available for graduate students in the College of Education, contact EdTech for details. Graduate students can also access a wide range of [free and discounted software](#) provided to the campus by IT.

Furcolo Hall has computer kiosks and printing stations available for use by students in the building; a NetID is required to log in, and printing is charged to the students' UCard. The college Computer Lab provides remote access to computers with software that students do not typically have on their own computers, including SPSS, Stata, NVivo, full Adobe Suite, and full Microsoft Office Suite. Instructions for [accessing the remote lab](#) can be found on the EdTech support site.

## Funding Sources

### College of Education Scholarship Program

The College of Education offers a scholarship program for current and new students within the college. Scholarships are offered to undergraduate, master's, and doctoral students who are preparing to work in the education profession (i.e., P12 schools or higher education.) The scholarship application is completed online using [academic works](#).

The deadline to apply for scholarships falls in October each year. For complete information about the scholarship award process go to the [Scholarship Awards](#) page on our website.

### Graduate School Funding

[www.umass.edu/graduate/funding](http://www.umass.edu/graduate/funding)

From [paid graduate student positions](#) to both [internal funding](#) and [external funding](#), these resources will help you learn more about the affordability of the Graduate School.

### College Travel Grant Program

Support for College of Education graduate students to travel for presentations at conferences, professional meetings, and exhibitions. For additional information, including academic year deadlines, please visit our [travel grant web page](#).

### Financial Aid

The office of Financial Aid Services provides information about various loans, employment and scholarship programs to which students can apply. Many loan programs and all federal aid programs require that applicants be citizens or permanent residents, making international students ineligible to apply. <https://www.umass.edu/financialaid>

## Academic & Professional Support

### University Library

<https://www.library.umass.edu/>

Logging in to the library web site with your NetID gives you access to resources that are not available via the public site, this includes online journal articles, e-books, and media. The W.E.B. DuBois Library building includes a [Graduate Student Commons](#), [Digital Media Lab](#), and the Masha Kabakow Rudman Children's Literature Collection (on the 21st floor, look for the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles statue.)

**Education Subject Guide:** The library has an Education Subject Specialist who is available to assist with your research\*. They also maintain a web site that highlights education-oriented library resources: <https://guides.library.umass.edu/education>

[Citation management software \(Zotero\)](#) is supported by the library and will make keeping track of research-related articles and books much easier.

Library resources for remote learners:

<https://guides.library.umass.edu/distanceed>

### Academic Writing Center

<https://www.umass.edu/writingcenter/>

Writing Center tutors work with undergrad, graduate & postdoc, staff, and faculty writers on any academic genre at any point in the writing process. We meet individually with writers in 45-minute consultations online.

After an initial conversation about the writing project, the tutor and writer read the text and discuss options for its revision. Writers often bring just an idea or an assignment to the Center and work with a tutor on how to begin writing.

### Disability Services

[www.umass.edu/disability/about-disability-services](http://www.umass.edu/disability/about-disability-services)

This office works with students to put accommodations in place during the first few weeks of school. To set up an appointment, complete their [online intake form](#).

### Student Parent Programs

[www.umass.edu/ofr/](http://www.umass.edu/ofr/)

This office will help you navigate UMass, get connected to resources, apply for a childcare subsidy, meet other students with families, find kid-friendly educational and cultural activities to do in the community, and more.

### **Student Legal Services**

[www.umass.edu/slso/](http://www.umass.edu/slso/)

Offers free, confidential advice and/or referral in most legal matters affecting students, assisting them to identify and solve their legal problems. In certain limited circumstances, we represent students in court.

### **International Programs Office**

[www.umass.edu/ipo/](http://www.umass.edu/ipo/)

The International Programs Office is at your service to provide timely and accurate immigration advising, as well as programming and activities designed to integrate you into campus life and community.

### **Office of Professional Development**

<https://www.umass.edu/graduate/professional-development>

The Office of Professional Development (OPD) positions graduate students and postdoctoral researchers to achieve success at UMass and beyond. Building upon the technical and academic expertise of the scholars we serve, OPD provides professional skills training in areas such as career preparation, communication, grants, and fellowships.

### **Institute for Social Science Research**

[www.umass.edu/issr/](http://www.umass.edu/issr/)

Promotes excellence in social science research across the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The Institute for Social Science Research provides resources and support for researchers using social science methods, seeking to take part in collaborative and interdisciplinary research, doing publicly engaged research, and seeking external funding for research. Services offered by ISSR: [Strengthening Research Skills & Resources](#), [Securing Research Funding](#), [Fostering Interdisciplinary Collaboration](#) and [Promoting Research Visibility & Engagement](#).