



## A continuity planning tool for the University of Massachusetts Amherst to sustain our

TEACHING RESEARCH PUBLIC SERVICE

### INTRODUCTION

The University of Massachusetts Amherst faces a variety of risks from disasters and events that can disrupt our teaching, research and public service mission. These risks can be wide in scope (*ice & snow, wind damage, tornado, pandemic*) or localized (*fire in your building, loss of network capabilities, or even the failure of your hard drive!*). UMass Amherst is committed to the safety and protection of its employees, students, operations, research, teaching, public services and facilities. In support of this commitment, the University has critical operations that must be performed, or rapidly and efficiently resumed in an emergency. Continuity planning is an effort to ensure that essential functions of the University can continue across a wide range of potential emergencies.

***“That’s my life’s work...and I don’t have another life...”***

*A researcher from CSU, Northbridge watching his office burn down after the 1994 earthquake (Source: Academic Aftershocks)*

Continuity Planning at UMass is designed to address three types of disruptions:

- Denial / loss of access to a facility (such as damage to the building);
- Service interruption due to a reduced workforce (such as a communicable disease); and
- Service interruption due to equipment or systems failure (such as IT systems failure).

The Office of Emergency Management and Continuity will help departments implement readiness planning for such events through the use of an online software tool known as “UMass Ready”. This tool enables departments to produce continuity plans. It is designed to be user friendly and efficient in both time and effort through ‘fill-in-the-blank’ features and ‘drop-down lists’. The tool has been customized for the University of Massachusetts Amherst for departments to use to create their own continuity plans.

### WHY SHOULD WE PLAN?

We face many risks to our work and these risks affect **our opportunities** and **our abilities**. What we do today will determine what our lives are like tomorrow.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is world-renowned University. We have a major economic impact in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts such as:

- Contribute nearly **\$1.4 billion** in economic activity to the Massachusetts economy
- Employing over **7,000** faculty and staff
- Real estate acreage of more than **1,450** acres in Pioneer Valley

UMass is also a billion dollar entity operating on a massive scale such as:

- Over **28,000** students
- Over **\$191 million** in supported research activities in FY2013
- **110** bachelor’s degree program, **6** associate’s, **74** master’s and **47** doctoral programs in **9** schools and colleges
- **19** teams compete at the NCAA Division 1 level

We live in an area of risk and with that risk, comes great responsibility. Our families, our community, our students, and our co-workers depend on us to take steps to protect the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

## **WHAT DOES A UMASS READY CONTINUITY PLAN CONTAIN?**

The UMass Ready tool will guide you step-by-step, to create a continuity plan that identifies:

- ✓ **Critical Functions:** Work that is essential for continuing the mission of the department and the factors needed for their continuance.
- ✓ **Information and Strategies:** that will help during and after a disaster / event.
- ✓ **Actions Items:** that can be started immediately to prepare us for and lessen the impact of disaster events.

## **HOW DOES THIS PLAN HELP MY DEPARTMENT?**

A continuity plan will assist departments in becoming ready for disasters by:

- ✓ Helping to prioritize actions to take before, during and after events that disrupt a department's functions.
- ✓ Assisting in a broad range of events, from natural disasters, information technology systems failure to loss of staff.
- ✓ Reducing liability and helping with decision making by preventing disruptions to work and providing details for recovery.

## **HOW WILL UMASS READY HELP ME?**

UMass Ready is an online tool that will prompt you to provide answers in Steps 1 through 5. When you have done this, you will have created a complete continuity plan. The tabs and steps are explained in the following sections.

## **GETTING STARTED**

The first step in the continuity planning process is **appointing a department continuity coordinator**. The department continuity coordinator is typically a staff member who has access to senior management; and given the authority to facilitate the continuity planning process; they are organized and respected by others to ensure that this venture is successful. The role emulates that of a project manager, requires the ability to delegate and follow-up. It is a temporary, part-time assignment for the duration of the planning project. But the point of contact continues informally as the departmental expert and contact person for the continuity issues.

### **How Long Does it Take To Create A Plan?**

Think of this as a two-to-four-month project. Our experience is that longer time frames do not produce better plans. Most of the time will be "blank space" waiting for meetings to happen and people to come to agreements on the priorities and action items. The number of actual staff hours required is surprising small, because **UMass Ready** uses a "fill in the blanks" process. Virtually no time is spent learning how to do a continuity plan – simply fill in the blanks and your plan is done.

## **REGISTERING FOR THE UMASS READY TOOL**

To register, send your full name and department to Jeffrey Hescoock (jhescoock@ehs.umass.edu). At the same time please login to the following site.

<https://us.ready.kuali.org/uma>

Once you have logged in successfully and are registered you can begin to develop your plan(s)!

**THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU PLAN... "KNOW..."**

In preparation for completing your department's continuity plan it is helpful to know the following before beginning.

**Know...**

- a. ...who your **department continuity coordinator** and **alternate** (s) are.
- b. ...if **one plan or multiple plans** are conducive for your departmental situation. In some cases it is appropriate to create divisional plans or sub-divisional plans based on function or location.
- c. ...the **number of personnel** your plan covers.
- d. ...the **department hierarchy** – who does your department report to.
- e. ...**all locations** (addresses), please include where personnel from your department are housed as well as facilities your department is responsible for.
- f. ...the **critical functions**. Collect a '10-minute list' from all managers of critical functions that your department performs.
- g. ...who keeps the **personnel emergency contact** information.
- h. ...who **depends on the functions** you perform, who you depend on to preform your department functions.
- i. ...how your **department would cope**. How functions would operate without current space, staff, network access? What particular skills are needed and who can perform them? Risk involved in alternate methods of operation?
- j. ...**proprietary software** applications that your department utilizes.
- k. ...**key resources** that support your critical functions:
  - a. ...who can work from home.
  - b. ....department stakeholders.
  - c. ...documents and plans.
  - d. ...supplies and equipment needed.
  - e. ...facility and transportation needs.

**FEATURES IN UMASS READY**

These are tabs, buttons and features that you will use to create your plan.

**Starting Your Plan**

When you first log-on, you will see the **Introduction Screen** that will say “Welcome <Name> - Univ Mass-Amherst, click on “**Begin or Edit Your Plan,**” to be taken to a list of existing plans.



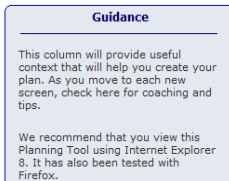
Select your plan or chose the “**Create New Plan**” Button.

\*NOTE: You will only have access to your department’s plan.

**Plan Tabs**



**Guidance**



This column, on the right of each screen, will provide useful context that will help you create your plan. As you move to each new screen, check here for coaching and tips.

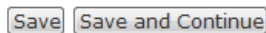
This drop-down tool within easy included.

**Handy Links**



list, at the upper right of every page, places all features of this reach. FAQ’s, planning guidance, and interview forms are also

**Save Your Work**



Hit the “Save” button before leaving a page. If you prefer, the “Save and Continue” buttons will more you through the pages in the pre-set sequence.

While progressing through this planning tool, make sure to click ‘Save’ often. The UMass Ready has a time out feature. If you do not click ‘Save’ frequently, UMass Ready will time out and you will lose all of the work you completed since you last ‘Saved’.

**IMPORTANT**

**Leaving a page without saving may lose the data you have just entered.**

**Logging Out**

The logout button is located at the bottom center of each page.

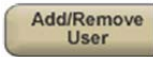
## PLAN HOME



This is the home page for your plan where you can edit your department information, add/remove a user, print out interview forms, update the status of your plan and printout your plan.



**Edit Your Dept Info:** Here you can modify your department name (unit), organization chart and head of the department (unit).



**Add/Remove User:** Access to your department’s plan is restricted to the persons who are specifically authorized for your plan. There are two options: Full Access or View Only Access. “Full Access” users can do anything to the plan: read/write/add or delete other users. “View Only” access users can view anything within the plan or uploaded documents, but are not allowed to edit the plan.



**Interview Forms:** Printable interview forms that can assist you complete a plan offline then transfer the information to UMass Ready.



**Printing Menu:** Here you can print or view your department’s continuity plan, print any documents that have been uploaded to accompany the plan and print interview forms.



**Choose a Different Plan:** If you have multiple plans, this button will allow you to select another plan without going back to the home page.



**Instructions for Plan Sign-Off:** This is the location to sign-off that your plan is complete.



**Instructions for Annual Sign-Off:** This is the location to sign-off that you have reviewed your plan annually.

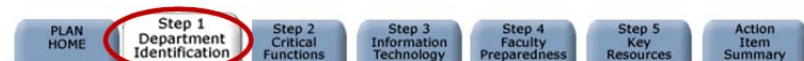
Once you leave this TAB, you may also “Edit Your Dept Info”] form the that appears at the upper right portion of each



access these feature options [except HANDYLINKS pull-down menu page.

## STEP 1 THROUGH 5: A QUICK WALKTHROUGH

### STEP 1: DEPARTMENT IDENTIFICATION



Here you provide key information for your department:

**Number of Personnel:** If possible, put exact numbers but an approximation is okay.

**Type of Department:** If the type of department is not listed, please click on “Add to List” and include the type of department.

**Locations Occupied:** Identify any buildings / locations department personnel occupy.

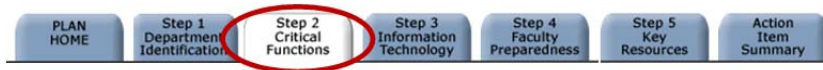
**Evacuation Plans:** Identify if your building / location has an evacuation plan you know of.

**Cost Center:** Leave this question blank.

**Comments / Explanations** (if needed): Add anything here you think is needed to better explain your department. If you filled in the section “Other” for “Number of Personnel”, please describe what “Other” refers to.

## STEP 2: CRITICAL FUNCTIONS

Step 2 is the step as you identify the most important critical functions



performs, the corresponding level of criticality (recovery time objective) and details on the function. Identify functions that provide vital services to the Department / University, ensure operational capabilities, ensure the reputation of the University, meet regulatory/statutory requirements and maintain the safety of faculty, staff, students and visitors. Include activities and deadlines that occur seasonally, as well as those that revolve around the academic or fiscal calendar.

### Identify Your Critical Functions

Name the major functions that your unit NORMALLY performs. See Guidance at right.

Enter those functions here. After each, press "Add to List".

[Add to List](#)

Sort	Function	Level of Criticality (see Guidance at right)	
1	Test function	Please select ...	<a href="#">Go To Detail Screens</a> <a href="#">Delete</a>

[Reorder List](#)

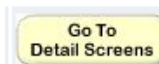
[Save](#) [Save and Continue](#)

After identifying the function consider the level of criticality (Recovery Time Objective). The Recovery Time Objective is the maximum period of time which an essential function must be restored following an unplanned event or disaster. “(In other words, what is the maximum period the function can be out-of-operation without causing a severe impact on the Department/University?)”

### Levels of Criticality:

- **Tier 1: Uninterruptable: 0 to 24 Hours** – Functions with direct and immediate effect on the Department/University to preserve life, safety, property, and have an effect on damaging the University's reputation.
- **Tier 2: Critical Function: 24+ Hours to 1 Week** – Functions necessary for Department/University core functioning.
- **Tier 3: Ongoing Function: 1 Week+ to 2 Weeks** – Functions that support Department/University objectives and have great consequences if paused for more than 2 weeks.
- **Tier 4: Periodic Function: 2 Weeks+ to 30 Days** - Functions that are not critical for core functioning of the Department/University and may pause for 2 weeks+ to 30 days if forces to do so.

After you determine the ‘Level of Criticality’ Click on the Yellow “Go to Detail Screens” to enter details about the specific function.



**IMPORTANT: Repeat this step for each critical function.**



Sub-tabs ‘a’ through ‘g’ focus on the critical function named at the top of the screen under the main tabs. Step through each sub-tab, then **SAVE or SAVE and CONTINUE** to proceed to the next sub-tab.

- Description:** Provide a brief description of the function (simple overview of what is involved), name of section or group that performs the function (if applicable) and name and title of responsible person.
- Peak Periods:** Please indicate any months when you would expect there to be especially high activity involved in accomplishing this critical function. For example, this might be a peak workload period such as an annual fiscal closing for budget functions. Identify as many months as needed. Explain if necessary. If this function has no peak periods simply write ‘All Year’ in the ‘Explanation Needed?’ box.
- Documents:** Identify any documents that are important to this function, such as files, plans, contracts, procedures, legal document, etc. Do not include records that are stored within a database application, such as PeopleSoft or Summit. Please upload these documents in this section.

- d. **Dependencies:** Here you answer “What department(s) produce what we need” and “What department(s) needs what WE procedure”. (Note: Do not name IT Systems as either upstream or downstream dependencies. IT Systems are treated separately.)
  - e. **Consequences:** These questions show why this function is critical. If the function does not restart quickly, which of the ‘harmful sequences’ might occur. Answer only the ‘harmful sequences’ you feel may occur.
  - f. **How to Cope:** These questions ask you to visualize the conditions that might prevail in the weeks or months following a disaster.
- G. Action Items:** What can be done to prepare? Actions items are list of things that could be done now to make your department more prepared. Typically they begin with a verb. EX: “update...” or “cross-train...” or “purchase...”

### **STEP 3: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**



*Step a. Applications (central) should be completed by each department with the Office of Emergency Management and Continuity. Steps b. through f. should be completed by the Office of Emergency Management and Continuity and a OIT representative.*

- a. **Applications (central):** Using the drop-down menu, list the name of the centrally-owned (UMA and/or UITS) application(s) (i.e. Spire, PeopleSoft, Summit, etc.) your department utilizes to support essential functions. After identifying the application(s), please work with the Office of Emergency Management and Continuity on determining the Levels of Criticality of IT Systems. The Levels of Criticality of IT Systems are the Recovery Point Objectives for each application, which is the point in time that data can be restored from. For instance, if there is data corruption, loss or unavailability, at what point in time can a valid copy of the data be restored from?

**Levels:**

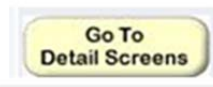
- **Level 1:** 0 to 5 Hours
- **Level 2:** 5+ Hours to 12 Hours
- **Level 3:** 12+ Hours
- **Deferrable**

- b. **Applications (department):** Departmental department essential functions. These types of department. List both the functional owner and Once you save the application, you will see the Click on the button to see the “**Details for This Application**” screen. Enter details about the specific application.



applications (or systems) support applications are unique to your the technical owner of the application. yellow, “**Go To Detail Screen**”.

- c. **Servers:** Departmental servers that support name, type of server and explanation of what yellow button, “**Go To Detail Screens**” in the button to see the “**Details for This Server**” screen. Enter details about the specific departmental application.



critical (essential functions). List the its purpose is. You will again see the record line of your entry. Click on the

- d. **Workstations:** The intent here is to get your opinion on the adequacy of the current backup procedures at the workstation level.
- e. **How to Restart:** What will you need to restart your IT?



- f. **Action Items:** What can your department do before an incident occurs to lessen the impact on your IT systems or to make it easier or faster to recover/rebuild your IT systems?

### **STEP 4: INSTRUCTION**



What can we do to increase the likelihood that classroom and web-based instruction will continue during and after a significant incident. It may be appropriate to select more than one department on this screen – e.g., if this continuity plan is being written for a cluster of departments or units, or for some other unit that encompasses more than one academic department – either undergraduate or graduate.

Sub-tabs ‘a’ through ‘e’ focus on the critical function named at the top of the screen under the main tabs. Step through each sub-tab, then SAVE or SAVE and CONTINUE to proceed to the next sub-tab.

- a. **High Priority Courses** - Those courses for which alternative teaching methods will be most important in the event of a disaster.
- b. **All Courses** - Estimate your department’s current usage of the practices as it pertains to online tools – UMassOnline, Moodle, OWL, other materials.
- c. **Departmental Practices** - Estimate you department’s current usage of ‘departmental’ practices regarding - disaster communication, backup of academic personnel, faculty leave, innovative pedagogy.
- d. **Special Teaching Issues** - Many courses have special formats or require special resources. Identify the teaching situations that may pose particular challenges (i.e. labs, studios, field work, special software, study abroad, etc.) following a disaster, so we can understand them all at a macro level.
- e. **Action Items** - What can be done to prepare? Action Items are the most important thing in a continuity plan. They are a list of things that could be done now to make your unit more prepared. Ask yourself questions such as what can be updated, who can be cross-trained and what can be purchased in the near term.

### **STEP 5: KEY RESOURCES**



Here you will identify key resources for your department as identified by each sub-tabs listed below.

- a. **Staff Basics:** Every department should keep it’s own list of home contact information for staff. Your list should, 1) be in a format of your choosing; 2) treated as confidential; 3) contain enough persons to be useful; 4) kept securely at home / or work; 5) updated twice a year. (Note: under “Key People” – resist the temptation to list all your staff.)
- b. **Work from Home:** List the names of staff who could do at least part of their work from home. Answer the questions then click ‘Add’. Make sure to click ‘Add’ every time you enter someone.



- c. **Staff of Other Units (Departments):** Who are the most important people from elsewhere whom your staff will need to contact within the first few hours or days after a disruptive event.
- d. **Stakeholders:** Identify people (vendors, clients, project partners, donors, sponsors, other stakeholders) that your department may need to contact after a disruptive event.
- e. **Document Summary:** In this location, all “Documents” that you have referenced and/or uploaded while working on your plan will be listed. You may also add additional documents in this section. (Note: Uploaded documents will not print with the plan. You will have to print these documents separate).
- f. **Equipment & Supplies:** List the MINIMUM equipment you will need to perform ALL the critical (essential) functions that you have listed in Step 2. Estimate, don’t agonize. You may know the exact number, you may not, but you should be able to approximate the bare minimum that your department needs to perform its critical functions.
- g. **Facilities and Transportation:** List any special space or facilities needs that are in addition to your office needs.

**ACTION ITEM SUMMARY**



All of the ‘Action Items’ added during the planning process will be listed there. You can also add more as needed in the tab. Remember, consider ‘Action Items’ that your department can do, those you will need to work on with another department and those that are a system-wide issue.

If you select ‘Edit’ beside each ‘Action Item’, you can update their status:

- Not Yet Begun
- Needs Further Discussion
- In Progress
- Completed

**PLAN SIGN OFF AND ANNUAL REVIEW**



**Plan Sign Off**

When you are satisfied that your plan is current, please sign off on the plan as follows: go to the Plan Home screen, hit “Instructions for Plan Sign-Off”, and enter the requested information. This will signal that your review is complete and your plan is current. Then distribute paper copies of your plan to key personnel and ask them to store them at home and at work (use the Printing Menu).

**Annual Review**

The Office of Emergency Management and Continuity recommends that continuity plans be reviewed and updated at least every 12 months. This annual review need not be time-consuming or arduous. Experience has shown that effective disaster planning requires the engagement of the head of the unit. Hence we recommend that, if the annual review is done by others, the final product be read and approved by the head of your department (Director, manager, etc.).

When you are satisfied that your plan is current, please sign off on the plan as follows: go to the Plan Home screen, hit “Instructions for Annual Review Sign-Off”, and enter the requested information. This will signal that your review is complete and your plan is current. Then distribute

paper copies of your plan to key personnel and ask them to store them at home and at work (use the Printing Menu).

The Office of Emergency Management and Continuity is available to provide assistance of any type. Please feel free to contact Jeffrey Hescocock ([jhescocock@ehs.umass.edu](mailto:jhescocock@ehs.umass.edu) | 413.545.7431).

### **Mini-Exercise Scenarios**

Provided are some mini exercise scenarios that can be used to stimulate discussion of departmental readiness at staff meetings. (Optional – not part of your annual review).

- 1) **Theft**. A nighttime theft removed all the desktops & laptops from your main department office.
  - a. What would be the most serious impact of this?
  - b. Would any data be irretrievably lost?
  
- 2) **Need to Move**. Your building is closed indefinitely following an earthquake. Your entire department is given other space to relocate to. You are allowed to move all your furniture & equipment.
  - a. What issues would you face?
  
- 3) **Fire**. A fire destroys the building that houses your department's main office.
  - a. What would you lose?
  - b. How would you recoup?
  
- 4) **Campus Closure**. Public Health authorities have ordered the campus to close for at least three weeks due to an epidemic.
  - a. Are there activities in your department that could not be temporarily ceased? If so, what?
  
- 5) **High Absenteeism**. A virulent flu causes 40% of your department's staff to be absent, each for 1-3 weeks, over a period of 2-3 months.
  - a. What are the challenges that are of greatest concern as remaining staff struggle to keep the department functioning?

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. **Who needs to do continuity planning?**

All departments that conduct teaching, research or public service need to have a continuity plan.

2. **What type of support should I suspect?**

The Office of Emergency Management and Continuity is available to assist the departments with any components of the continuity planning process. Please contact Jeffrey Hescock ([jhescock@ehs.umass.edu](mailto:jhescock@ehs.umass.edu) | 413.545.7431).

3. **How ‘detailed and complete’ does our plan need to be?**

UMass Ready will prompt you for the appropriate level of detail and most of those details will be things that your department easily knows or can figure out. BE BRIEF: most questions are best answered with one-to-a few sentences or bullets.

If you find yourself debating whether an answer is thorough enough, declare victory and move on!

4. **Will the plans be tested and exercised?**

Yes, the Office of Emergency Management and Continuity will conduct annual tests and exercises of the continuity plans. In addition, departments can use the mini-exercise scenarios during a staff meeting to exercise their own plans.

5. **How safe and secure are the continuity plans being online?**

The UMass Ready tool is hosted by the University of California, Berkeley, which has taken a variety of security measures to protect the data and has recovery procedures in place.

6. **Does UMass Amherst have a Planning Team?**

Yes, UMass Amherst has Business Continuity Team’s to ensure that the campus is able to sustain operations after a disruption occurs.

7. **How can we develop a plan to handle unknown circumstances?**

The UMass Ready tool uses an all-hazards approach. This means that it aims to increase UMass’ readiness for all types & sizes of disaster events:

- Natural disasters (regional earthquake, fire in your offices, infectious disease epidemic, unexpected death of a key employee, etc.)
- Technological disasters (data loss, connectivity loss, equipment failure, etc.)
- Human-caused disasters (terrorism, theft, civil disturbance, cyber-attack, etc.)

8. **What is the difference between continuity planning and emergency management?**

Continuity Planning is a process that identifies and documents key functions of UMass, devises strategies to sustain operations, and proposes actions that can be done in advance to make UMass more resilient. Its focus is on continuing normal operations. Emergency Management, on the other hand, focuses on the preservation of life, health, and property; and the fast & effective response needed to secure those when disaster hits. Both approaches are necessary. There is overlap, and although the methodologies of the two disciplines are quite different, close collaboration between the two is quite important.



*“Whatever the emergency or event, UMass' goal is to be "Ready" so that we can continue our teaching, research and public service mission with minimal interruption”*

**For More Information Contact the Office of Emergency Management**

**Jeffrey Hescock**

Director of University Emergency Management and Business Continuity

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[jhescock@ehs.umass.edu](mailto:jhescock@ehs.umass.edu)

or

**Robert Laford**

Assistant Director of Emergency Management and Business Continuity

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[rflaford@ehs.umass.edu](mailto:rflaford@ehs.umass.edu)