Greetings from the Office of Parent Services!

With only a week or so left before the fall semester begins, UMass is preparing for your student’s arrival to campus. A lot of activities and opportunities to get involved await them! In anticipation, this email includes information on Move-In, Fall Orientation/early-semester activities, Family Weekend, and other important dates your student needs to know to start off their semester right. Let the countdown begin!

Living at UMass
Has your student downloaded the "Living at UMass" app yet? It's packed with great move-in information for you and your student: directions to campus, interactive maps, and details for each day of Move-In. All the maps you need are available in the app! Remember to print your maps before coming to campus. No paper maps will be available on campus. Download it on iTunes or Google Play.

Move-in reservations
Students can now complete Move-In reservations for all halls on SPIRE under Main Menu>Housing>Room Selection Home. If your student hasn't logged in to complete their reservation, they must do so before coming to campus. Find helpful information, including video tutorials on move-in reservations and packing, on the Move-In website.

Move-in reception for first-year families
We look forward to welcoming new families during Move-In, Friday, Sept. 2. Once your student is settled into their room, stop by any of the four Dining Commons (Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, and Worcester) for a family meal. Look for the Office of Parent Services table in your chosen DC between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. We’ll have important materials for you to take home. You’ll also meet other families and write a postcard with good wishes for your student. Our office will deliver the card to your student via campus mail the following week.

Fall New Students Orientation (NSO)
Fall NSO, Friday, Sept. 2 through Monday, Sept. 5, is an action-packed semester kick-off for first-year and transfer students. Students will reconnect with their summer NSO friends, classmates, and colleges, while forming communities in their residence halls. There'll be free giveaways and plenty of activities to keep them connected to the bigger campus. Highlights include Adventure into Amherst, Drawn Together, UPlay Jamboree, Dinner Conversation: Many Voices, One Community, Mall Madness, laser tag, UFest, Get Your Game On, college meetings, and Convocation. Encourage your student to begin creating their UMass experience with this active, engaging lineup. Details are on the Fall NSO web page.

Welcome Weeks
While Fall NSO is designed with new UMass students in mind, Welcome Weeks are for all students. Departments across campus sponsor events, cookouts, and more throughout the first weeks of the semester. There’s something for everyone, from involvement opportunities at the Student Activities Expo to shopping for room decor at the poster sale or New2U tag sale. Encourage your student to check out the Welcome Weeks website and Campus Pulse for activities and make the most of the new school year.
SPIRE
SPIRE, the university's secure online student information system, is where students register for classes, sign up for on-campus housing, manage their university finances, and more. Be sure your student is staying up to date on their holds, to-do items, financial aid awards, and payments through their SPIRE account. If you're contributing financially to your student's education, make sure you're an authorized payer in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Visit the Office of the Bursar's website for more information.

Amazon@UMass
Still have items on the back-to-school shopping list? No worries ... Amazon@UMass has it covered. Order everything from textbooks to room and life essentials and have them shipped to campus. If you want your student to receive their orders over the Labor Day weekend, choose the Amazon@UMass location in the Campus Center as the shipping address at checkout. Pick up items Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; noon to 6 p.m. on weekends. Residential Service Desks will not be accepting package deliveries during the holiday weekend.

Off-campus living
The Off Campus Student Center is a place for all students, especially those seeking to move or moving off campus. Staff can assist with the housing search, landlord issues, getting your student to know their new hometown, and more. The center offers work stations, lockers, printers, free coffee Mondays, student jobs, and events and mixers. They're open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in 314 Student Union. For a list of fall semester opening events, your student can visit their Facebook page or Campus Pulse.

UMass Dining's 9th edition Taste of Home cookbook recipe submission deadline
Don't forget to submit your family's favorite recipe to UMass Dining by Tuesday, Sept. 6! Your recipe will be featured in all dining commons at a particular meal, and be published in the ninth edition Taste of Home cookbook. In addition, UMass Dining will send you a UMass baseball cap or tee shirt (limited to two caps or tee shirts per family per year) when they receive your recipe. Find more information here.

Family Weekend
It's not too early to start planning for Family Weekend, October 21 through 23. You, your family, and extended family members are invited to reconnect with your student and learn more about UMass Amherst, your student's home away from home. Register online now. The Parent Services website has a list of events, hotel room blocks, and other places to stay. Some new events this year include a tree grading demo, active shooter training, Police Department open house, parent/family reception, Chancellor's BBQ, and much more. We're constantly adding to the schedule, so check our website often between now and your arrival.

A blog exclusively for you
Check out UMass Amherst Family to Family – a blog written by UMass Amherst Parents Association (UMAPA) Advisory Council members! Find insights, advice, and resources for current and prospective parents from experienced UMass Amherst parents. Worried about your student being homesick? Wondering how to connect with on-campus clubs? Looking for advice on Move-In and Move-Out? Need ideas on how to help your student find an internship? Articles are added regularly. Whether you discover this site early in your student's college career or when planning for graduation and the world beyond college, the UMAPA hopes you'll find it helpful.

UMAPA Advisory Council accepting membership applications
Are you interested in becoming a UMAPA Advisory Council member? We are currently accepting applications. The Council seeks to further support UMass Amherst undergraduate families and enrich the experience of our students. Council members meet twice a year on campus (during Family
Weekend and in March) and provide feedback to university staff on issues related to undergraduate students and families. Consider becoming an active member by completing an application form online by Friday, Sept. 30. New members begin Sunday, Oct. 23 during the Advisory Council fall meeting.

**August poll question**

What's your student looking forward to this semester outside the classroom? Participate in the poll and view previous results here.

**Important dates**

- **September 2:** Move-In (first-year students), 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **September 3:** Move-In (transfer students), 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- **September 3 – 5:** Fall NSO for all new students
- **September 4:** Move-In (returning students), 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- **September 5:** Labor Day (no class)
- **September 6:** First day of classes
- **September 19:** Last day to add/drop classes, waive the Student Health Benefit Plan, submit immunization records, and change meal plan for fall semester

**Helpful links**

- Fall NSO
- Family Weekend
- UMass Amherst Family to Family blog
- Office of the Bursar
- Welcome Weeks

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact the Office of Parent Services, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. We're more than happy to assist you.

In case of a campus emergency, always follow the university's main web page at [www.umass.edu](http://www.umass.edu). The website will display a distinctly colored stripe at the top containing pertinent status updates and information related to ongoing emergencies.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Horrigan, Director
Office of Parent Services

**Treating Our Parents as Partners**

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