

School of Public Health and Health Sciences

Graduate Student Handbook: *Resources for Supporting your Success*

Introduction

Welcome to the School of Public Health and Health Sciences! We are excited for you to be part of our world-class faculty and diverse student body. You have a great team of faculty and staff supporting you every step of the way. We are dedicated to creating opportunities for engagement, and fostering a diverse, safe and inclusive environment.

Whether you just arrived in SPHHS or have been in the program for a few years, we hope this handbook supports you during your graduate studies at UMass. We included an overview of our school as well as links to common forms and to school and university resources. This handbook contains information that is relevant to all SPHHS graduate students. Your department will provide additional information on its policies and degree requirements.

Your Academic Advisor, Graduate Program Director, and Department Chair are invaluable resources for answering your questions about your program. You are also welcome to contact us with any questions, comments, or concerns.

We wish you success in your graduate studies, and we look forward to getting to know you!!

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Assistant Dean for Student Success

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Degree Requirements

Each degree program sets its own requirements; refer to your Program's website to access the most up-to-date version of its student handbook and degree tracking forms. Remember, you are held to the requirements that were in place at the time you enrolled in the program, so pay attention to the enrollment dates specified on the degree tracking forms. Use links below to navigate to your program's degree requirements.

[Biostatistics](#)

[Communication Disorders](#)

[Community Health Education](#)

[Environmental Health Sciences](#)

[Epidemiology](#)

[Health Policy & Management](#)

[Kinesiology](#)

[Nutrition](#)

[Public Health Practice \(online MPH\)](#)

Additionally, the UMass Graduate School sets policies that apply to all graduate students enrolled at UMass Amherst. You should familiarize yourself with their policies as well. To learn about the UMass Graduate School's specific degree requirements, submission deadlines, and submission processes for master's and doctoral students, start here with the [Graduate School's student handbook](#).

Below we include links to information that SPHHS students most frequently ask about: credit transfers, graduation requirements, and formatting of the thesis/dissertation document.

Credit Transfers

To transfer graduate credits from a non-degree program or undergraduate program at UMass, or from another institution, use one of the following forms:

- [Transfer of Credits, Accelerated Masters](#)
- [Transfer of Credits, External](#)
- [Transfer of Credits, Non-degree](#)
- [Transfer of Credits, Undergraduate to Graduate](#)

Graduation Forms and Degree Milestones

Master's students:

- [Masters Degree Checklist of Requirements to Graduate](#)
- [Masters Degree Eligibility Form for Non-Thesis Students](#)
- [Masters Degree Eligibility Form for Thesis Students](#)

Doctoral students:

- [Doctoral Candidacy Nomination Form](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Checklist of Requirements to Graduate](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Eligibility Form for Ph.D and Ed.D. degrees](#)
- [Doctoral Oral Examination Scheduling Request](#)

For a more comprehensive list of graduate forms, check out the [Graduate School Website](#).

Guidelines for Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations

Check out the Graduate School's [guidelines for master's theses and doctoral dissertations](#) on their website.

Information Technology

UMass Information Technology ([UMass IT](#)) provides support for all your computing needs on and off campus. Additionally, [SPHHS Information Technology Office \(ITO\)](#) supports faculty, staff, and students within our school.

SPHHS ITO

- Assists with questions specific about your time in SPHHS;
 - How do I gain access to the School's Qualtrics license for a research project?
 - How do I setup a subsidiary account for my work?
 - How can I work with my department or PI to secure a UMass owned device if collaborating with a SPHHS faculty member?
- Check out the [ITO website](#) for SPHHS specific policies and procedures that intersect with technology
- Contact: sphshhelp@umass.edu or sphhsit@umass.edu

Central UMass IT

- Central IT supports personal device questions, as well as campus wide technology support for apps and services such as:
 - Moodle
 - Classroom Technologies
 - Eduroam (WiFi)
 - General UMass IT related policy questions
 - Explore their vast catalog of how to articles: <https://umass.edu/it>
- Request support: <https://www.umass.edu/it/support>
- Blackboard
 - 24/7 helpdesk: <https://embanet.frontlinesvc.com/app/home/p/2101>

NetID, SPIRE, and IT Help

Your UMass NetID is your primary user name for your IT Account and gives you access to the campus network, SPIRE, and your UMass email. If you're having any issues with your NetID or need help finding or changing your password, check out the University Information Technology's [Understand Your NetID & Password page](#).

SPIRE is the university's secure online student information system. On SPIRE, you can register for classes, view your class schedule, change your meal plan, view and pay your bills, manage any holds on your account, and much more. To learn more about the resources on SPIRE, check out the University Information Technology's [SPIRE Information page](#).

If you have any other IT questions, please start by emailing the SPHHS ITO at spfhshelp@umass.edu and they will assist where they can and if they can't help they will direct you to Central IT support.

Computer Resources

High Performance Computing

SPHHS ITO maintains the only HIPAA compliant cluster for UMass Amherst researchers. The cluster is located in the [MGHPCC](#). This is a place where SPHHS researchers can collaborate with other UMass and outside entities on projects that need to meet NIST level compliance.

SPHHS provides access to a 7-seat computer lab in the basement of Arnold House. These computers are for use by research assistants, graduate students and students taking graduate level courses in SPHHS. The computers are networked, and share common software and printers. They are connected to the university fiber optic network to provide fast Internet access. Computers are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Additional computer access is often available in individual departments or through computers on research projects and grants.

UMass IT manages a number of computer classrooms and labs across campus. For additional on campus computing resources please visit the [Computer Classroom Resource page](#).

Software

In addition to the software in the computer labs, students can [request access](#) to a virtual machine if their current machine is not capable of handling the required software for a specific course.

Students can get access to some free or discounted software. For a list of all supported software [check here](#).

For instructions on how to obtain a software license for a specific software package please us [this link](#).

Email Safety

Please view the following - Google for Education presents: [Stay Safe from Phishing and Scams](#)
If you receive a questionable email, please forward it to: itprotect.umass.edu

Wireless and Eduroam

Eduroam allows UMass Amherst students, faculty, and staff to obtain free wireless connectivity at participating institutions in the U.S. and abroad, by simply opening their device. This makes connecting to the Internet easy and convenient when visiting other campuses for conferences, research, or other reasons.

1. Setting up Edu-roam on Windows – [Click Here](#)
2. Setting up Edu-roam on Macintosh – [Click Here](#)
3. Setting up Edu-roam on iOS devices (iPad, iPhone, mobile) - [Click Here](#)

4. Setting up Edu-roam on Android devices - [Click Here](#)
5. Setting up Edu-roam on Ubuntu Linux – [Click Here](#)

Financial Support and Graduate Assistantships

Complete information about funding for your graduate studies, including policies and job postings, can be found on the [Graduate School's website](#).

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships, including Teaching Assistant (TA) and Research Assistant (RA) positions, are an important source of funding for many graduate students, in addition to offering opportunities to develop your research and professional skills. These positions are managed by your department; please refer to your department's website for up-to-date lists of positions and how to apply. Accepting a TA or RA position from a department other than the one in which you are enrolled requires pre-approval from your Department Chair. Please note that students enrolled through the University Without Walls (UWW) program are not eligible for assistantships per University policy.

Financial Aid & Bursar

Information on financial aid available to graduate students, including federal student loans and grant programs can be found on the UMass Amherst [Financial Aid Services](#) website.

Bursar

The Bursars Office will send an email to your UMass student email when your bill is ready to view in SPIRE. To view your bill, log onto your [SPIRE account](#), click on "Main Menu", then click on "Finances", then click on "View/Pay Bill". The due date for your payment is listed on your SPIRE account.

AcademicWorks

The SPHHS offers a variety of scholarships to support you and help you reach your academic and professional goals. All SPHHS awards are administered through [AcademicWorks](#), which automatically matches you with the scholarships and financial awards for which you're eligible. You will need to have an updated FAFSA on file with the Office of Financial Aid.

Students will need to complete the application each academic year, and will be notified via their umass.edu email account when the new application cycle is open. By completing the UMass General Application, students will automatically be considered for several scholarships. In addition, many scholarships require a current Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be filed each year. Most SPHHS applications are open from November – February annually.

Simply enroll in [AcademicWorks](#), fill out both the UMass general application and the SPHHS Application to get started. These include funding for internships, study abroad, financial need, and research.

Resources to Support Your Success

Graduate school can often be a time of unique challenges for students. We all bring different strengths to the table, but we also all face different challenges. To support students, UMass has a number of both academic and non-academic resources. Please see several highlighted university and school resources below. You are also encouraged to visit the [Graduate Student Senate website](#) for additional information related to graduate students and available resources.

If you have questions or need assistance getting connected with campus or community resources, or aren't sure where to begin, please fill out the [Dean of Student's Office Student Support Request/Referral Form](#) or contact acaddean@schoolph.umass.edu.

SPHHS Center for Student Success

The [SPHHS Center for Student Success](#) offers centralized resources for students in the school. The Center is dedicated to helping SPHHS graduate and undergraduate students achieve their highest potential through thoughtful support and career planning. It creates and complements other campus-wide programs that increase student retention; support timely progress toward degree completion; and enhance wellness, student engagement, and career exploration.

The Center supports all SPHHS undergraduate and graduate students academically, professionally, and personally through:

- Academic skill building and student development
- Helping students understand and navigate campus policies
- Providing referrals to campus resources
- Career planning and development
- Collaborating with departments and programs to create a comprehensive level of support

Contact: acaddean@schoolph.umass.edu

Career Advising

The [Office of Career Planning](#) works with all SPHHS students on a wide range of career planning activities, such as: identifying career interests; cover letter and resume writing, practicum/job search strategies, interviewing and salary negotiation skills. Additionally, they host employer information sessions, career fairs and panels. Connect with the Office of Career Planning early, utilize [Handshake](#) and read their Career Snaps, delivered directly to your UMass inbox.

Additionally, the [Graduate School Office of Professional Development](#) offers graduate students professional skills training on career preparation, communication, grants & fellowships, personal development, and teaching.

Housing

There are many housing options for graduate students both on and off campus. To learn about which options may work best for you, check out the [Graduate Student Senate's website](#).

Academic and Inclusive Learning

[Disability Services](#) at UMass Amherst is committed to full access for all persons at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and embraces the philosophy of social justice, promoting the empowerment of people with disabilities and their full integration into campus life and the community. Direct services are provided for all types of disability. Disability Services also provides information and referral on issues of accessibility, coordinates guest accommodations, and provides training and staff development to the university community.

If you have a disability and require accommodations, please register with Disability Services (413-545-0892). Information on services and materials for registering are available on their website.

[UMass Writing Center](#): Provides support for developing writing skills, tutoring, and editing of written work.

[English as a Second Language Program](#): Provides support for non-native English speaking students.

Well-Being and Support Services

- € [Dean of Students Office \(DOSO\)](#): Helps support students experiencing hardship, crisis, trauma, or financial or food insecurity. DOSO offers short-term loans.
- € [Center for Counseling and Psychological Health \(CCPH\)](#): Provides psychological counseling and therapy, diagnostic assessment, suicide prevention, behavioral management, and stress management. Provides services to meet the needs of the diverse cultural and linguistic populations of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Five Colleges and surrounding Hampshire County community. Services include on-call clinician for emergencies, confidential sessions with counselors, skill building and support workshops, individual therapy, psychiatric consultation, therapy resources for students of color, referrals to outside providers, and assessments. Unfortunately, CCPH services are not available to UWW students at this time.
- € [Student Care Supply Closet](#): Provides free toiletries and household items to students who are facing economic insecurity and/or an unexpected financial emergency.

- € [**Center for Women and Community**](#): 24-hour rape crisis service; counseling; support groups; training and community organization on issues of violence against women; advocacy and cultural, educational, and social programs for women of color.
- € [**Student Parent Programs**](#): Offers a number of support resources for student parents, such as childcare subsidies, connection to SNAP and WIC, and more.
- € [**Title IX at UMass Amherst**](#): Title IX is a federal education law that protects against discrimination based on gender. To report an incident of sexual harassment, discrimination, assault, violence, or stalking, contact the Title IX Coordinator: 413-545-3464
- € [**UMass Recreation Center**](#): UMASS Campus Recreation offers a range of facilities and fitness options, whether it's intramural or club sports, group fitness classes, yoga or drop-in recreation for pick-up basketball, walking on the track, swimming or running on the treadmill.

Community and Support Services

- € [**Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success \(CMASS\)**](#): Cultural enrichment, academic support, student development and support for institutional diversity.
- € [**International Programs Office \(IPO\)**](#): Supports international students with visas and transitioning to the University. IPO hosts many community events. Please note that IPO is not able to assist students who are only enrolled through UWW with obtaining a visa.
- € [**Stonewall Center**](#): Provides 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.
- € [**Veteran Services**](#): Certification of Education Benefits. Programming and support for families, actively serving military members, and separated veterans.
- € [**Office of Religious and Spiritual Life**](#): Educational programs, individual and institutional advocacy, interfaith dialogue, meditation groups and referral to pastoral counseling and support services.
- € [**Campus Pulse**](#): Campus Pulse is your gateway to hundreds of campus activities, campus offices, and more than 200 Registered Student Organizations (RSOs). Check Campus Pulse for the full list.

Parking and Transportation

There are many ways to commute to campus- bike, PVTA bus system, or car. Please check out the [parking and transportation website](#) for more information. Please note that students who are only enrolled through UWW do not have access to parking and transportation services at UMass.

Resources and Services @UMass Amherst Libraries

Subject Librarians

1. Ellen Lutz, Health Sciences Librarian, lutz@umass.edu
[Schedule an Appointment](#)

Libraries

- There are two Libraries on campus - W. E. B. Du Bois Library and the Science & Engineering Library (in the Lederle Lowrise - this is where Ellen's office is)
- Check the Libraries website for [current hours](#)
- [Graduate Commons](#) – Du Bois Library – 5th Floor

Articles, Books, Streaming Media, and Other Resources

- [Subscriptions to over 500 databases](#), including Web of Science, PsycInfo, SportDiscus, and integration with PubMed for easier access to full text:
- Robust [Interlibrary Loan service](#) for materials we don't have access to:
 - NEVER pay for articles - if we don't have it, we can almost always get it!
- [eJournals/Publication Finder](#)
 - Use it to lookup the title of a journal to see if we have online access to it.
- Use the Discovery Search (default on the Libraries webpage) to search for books, e-books, streaming media, newspapers, and some articles
 - NOTE: doesn't search all databases - for example, PubMed not included
- [Citation Managers](#)
 - We currently offer support for Zotero and Mendeley.
- [ScholarWorks @UMassAmherst](#)
 - Our institutional repository - where UMass Amherst dissertations, theses, and capstone projects are stored.

Other Services

- [Research Data Services](#)
 - If you are collecting data for your research, you should check this out!
- [Digital Scholarship Services](#)
 - Mapping & GIS, Project Planning, Digital Media, Digital Collections, Scholarly Publishing & More
- [Patent & Trademark Resource Center](#)
 - UMass Amherst & Boston Public Library have the only PTRC's in Massachusetts
- [Special Collections and University Archives](#) (SCUA)

Conflict Resolution and Grievances

The SPHHS promotes a healthy and respectful work and learning environment. Occasionally, issues arise that may require assistance to resolve. We would like to let you know how and where you can seek guidance.

Department Support

The most common issues that students encounter can be resolved informally at the department level. If it is an issue in the classroom, students are encouraged to start by discussing the issue with their instructor to see if it can be resolved informally. If not, or if a conversation with an instructor is not possible, students are encouraged to initiate a conversation with the Graduate Program Director, Department Chair, or Associate Dean for Graduate Academic Affairs.

If the individual you contact cannot or does not know how to resolve your issue, they may consult with other members of the department or staff. You may also be referred to the following offices for help resolving grievances:

[The Ombuds Office:](#) The Ombuds Office is a confidential and neutral place for UMass Amherst students, faculty, and staff to talk confidentially about any campus concern, issue, or conflict. Students concerned about an academic issue are encouraged to contact the Ombuds Office for assistance in determining if the situation is an academic grievance and to further understand the conflict resolution process. The Ombuds Office can help students and instructors weigh their options, understand relevant policies and available resources, and receive referrals for more formal measures when circumstances warrant. The Ombuds Office can also provide informal mediation services.

[The Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity \(EO&D\)](#)

The EO&D Office is a resource for discrimination, sexual harassment, and equal opportunity complaints. This office has responsibility for the sexual harassment grievance procedure, which is a separate and distinct process. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and therefore a violation of federal and state laws and University regulations.

[Academic Honesty and Grievance Office](#)

The Academic Honesty and Grievance Office is the process manager for academic grievances. The office is responsible for ensuring that only those matters properly defined as academic grievances are pursued through this procedure, for advising all concerned parties of their rights and obligations under this procedure, for convening hearing panels, and for scheduling hearings.

[Graduate School Academic Grievance Procedure:](#) The Graduate School Grievance procedure exists to deal with complaints by current or former graduate students against the University, one of its administrative or academic units, or one of its faculty or staff concerning “Very Serious Academic Matters”. Refer to the [graduate school website](#) for additional details.