

UMatter at UMass Grad Student Guide

Graduate Student Guide to Campus Resources

As a graduate student, you may think you should work independently, but independence does not have to mean being on your own.

You can make the most of your time here by engaging with fellow graduate students, asking for help when you need it, or guiding fellow graduate students to contact available support resources.

If you or someone you know needs assistance while at UMass Amherst, this guide gives an overview of campus resources.

Student Affairs and Campus Life

319 Whitmore Administration Building

www.umass.edu/studentlife

(413) 545-2300

**UMASS
AMHERST**

UMatter
at **UMass**
Actively caring for each
other and our community

UMass Amherst Graduate School

The Graduate School is the hub for all academic programs and provides many key services:

1. Guidance for you and your department on university policy and procedure.
2. Funding for dissertation research, fellowship preparation and support (Ford Foundation, National Science Foundation, etc.), and information about on-campus funding opportunities through assistantships.
3. Support for issues at the departmental level (your faculty, program chair, dean, etc.) that you need help resolving.

The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) is your formally recognized governance body at the university. By working with university administrators, advisory councils, the Board of Trustees, and other governance bodies, GSS leaders advocate for the social, cultural, material and academic needs of the graduate student community. GSS provides:

1. Social engagement and community building activities throughout the year.
2. Childcare reimbursement to graduate students with families.
3. Leadership and advocacy opportunities through the Graduate Student Senate.
4. Funding for a campus Graduate Student Organization.

Learn more: blogs.umass.edu/gss



Visit the graduate school website
to get familiar with resources to help you
smoothly navigate graduate student life:
www.umass.edu/gradschool

Student Legal Services Office

The Student Legal Services Office (SLSO) can assist you in taking care of routine legal matters or resolving issues such as landlord-tenant disputes, reviewing leases, drafting wills, divorce and child custody, citizenship and visas, employment discrimination, civil rights issues, and more.

www.umass.edu/slso/about

Graduate Employment Organization (GEO)/UAW 2322

The Graduate Employment Organization (GEO) is the collective bargaining unit that advocates for graduate students on wages, healthcare (including dental and vision), and other employment related benefits.

www.geouaw.org

Graduate Student Employee Benefits

Graduate student employees who meet eligibility requirements receive year-round dental and vision benefits. They may also apply for a \$190 annual gym reimbursement and reimbursement of out-of-pocket childcare costs for families.

Visit www.uawumasstrustfund.org for a complete list of plan benefits, eligibility guidelines, and enrollment procedures and deadlines. For benefits assistance, contact: uawdental@external.umass.edu.



TIP!

The Office of Family Resources (OFR) offers support, resources, and activities for students with children: www.umass.edu/ofr

Get involved in a UMass Graduate Student Organization (GSO): blogs.umass.edu/gss/graduate-student-organizations-gsos/list-of-gsos

Keep Safe

Whether you are going out on the town or staying home, these are some basics for staying safe:

- **Program your phone with emergency numbers:** UMPD: (413) 545-2121, Amherst Police: (413) 259-3000, or the police department in your local town.
- **Do not give out personal information**, such as your social security or credit card numbers.
- **Always carry identification with you**, but never attach your name or address to your key chain.
- **Go out with your friends and go home with your friends.** Look out for one another.
- **Stay in control.** If a social situation or party gets out of hand, leave!
- **Have someone you can call for a ride or for help**, and create a code word or phrase that means, "Come help me out of this!"
- **Use UMPD's free walking escort service.** Escorts are on call from 7 p.m. to 3 a.m. every night during the academic semester.
- **Report any suspicious or unusual activities immediately** to campus or local police.
- **Avoid scams.** Beware of callers posing as Internal Revenue Service (IRS) or Immigration (ICE) representatives, or landlords demanding upfront payments without verification. If in doubt, consult Student Legal Services or Off Campus Student Life for guidance.
- **Never leave personal property unattended!** Take valuables with you or lock them up, even if you are only leaving for a few minutes. UMPD programs **Project Protect** and "**Like it – Lock it – Keep it**" can help protect valuables and recover stolen items.



Keep your emergency contact information updated on SPIRE (My Personal Information > Emergency Contacts)

More personal safety tips: www.umass.edu/offcampuslife/safety

Cyber Safety 101

To protect your devices
& personal data:

Use anti-virus & anti-malware software.

Update & patch your operating system.

Regularly update third-party software.

Set up User Account & Administrator Account
on your computer.

Report scams, suspicious emails, or phishing
immediately to itprotect@umass.edu

Clear private data from Web browsers.

Choose strong passwords & change them regularly.

Use a password-protected screen saver.

Download from reputable sources only.

Turn on your firewall.

Use eduroam for wireless on campus.

Don't leave devices unattended & purchase
a security cable for your laptop.

Register your laptop & mobile devices with UMPD.

TIP!

Get free software (including anti-virus, anti-malware, Microsoft, and Adobe programs) and learn how to protect against security threats at www.umass.edu/it/security

Stay **Resilient**, Stay **Well**

Staying well in grad school means finding balance, developing good eating and sleeping habits, making time for physical activity, and managing stress. Learn your personal tolerance for different types of stress and try to let go of stressful situations. These self-care suggestions can help, but you may also need to make lifestyle changes or get some coaching or counseling to feel your best.

Focus on time management. Plan ahead and schedule enough time for schoolwork and other obligations.

Take one thing at a time. Taking things piece by piece will eventually get everything done. Start with the most urgent item on your list. When it's done, move on to the next.

Be realistic. It's okay not to over-commit. If academics are overwhelming, say no to certain extracurricular activities.

Use mindfulness. Find a quiet place to breathe deeply for a few minutes or take a quick walk. Five to ten minutes of quiet reflection can clear your mind and bring some calm.

Exercise and sleep. Thirty minutes of physical activity and eight hours of sleep per day keeps your body and mind at peak performance.

If you're anxious or stressed, share your feelings. Friends and family can give support and guidance to help you cope.

Be flexible. Conflict only increases stress. Learn to resolve differences calmly and rationally. Compromise and make room for other people's points of view.



Check out the **Center for Counseling and Psychological Health (CCPH)** at www.umass.edu/counseling for mindfulness, meditation, and other de-stressing resources. **University Health Services (UHS)** offers free acupuncture services for graduate student employees: www.umass.edu/uhs.

Practice Financial Wellness

Strengthening money management skills in graduate school is a great practice for establishing good credit and anticipating unexpected costs.

- **Make a budget and stick to it.** Sites like mint.com and www.cashcourse.org can help track spending and distinguish between wants and needs. Many businesses offer student discounts – use them.
- **Get free or discounted textbooks.** Rent, buy, and resell textbooks at umass.amazon.com. Get free textbooks through UMass Libraries' Open Education Initiative: www.library.umass.edu/services/teaching-and-learning/oer.
- **Forego a car, if possible.** Save money on parking, insurance, and repairs by using public transportation, walking, and biking.
- **Ask for assistance.** If a crisis impacts your finances, contact the **Dean of Students Office** at (413) 545-2684.

Financial Aid

The **Bursar's Office** issues online bills and credits accounts for payments. **Financial Aid Services** offers a guide to understanding financial aid: www.umass.edu/umfa.

Grants and Fellowships

Learn about various resources for financial assistance available to graduate students: www.umass.edu/gradschool/funding-support.

Ask for assistance. If a crisis impacts your finances, contact the office of the Dean of the Graduate School (413) 545-5271.



Your records are confidential and protected under the **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**.

The university will not disclose information to anyone (even family members) unless you complete a FERPA waiver:

**[www.it.umass.edu/support/spire/
set-up-your-ferpa-privacy-waiver](http://www.it.umass.edu/support/spire/set-up-your-ferpa-privacy-waiver)**

Single-Stop Resources

Got a personal, financial, or life challenge interfering with your college success and well-being? These resources can help you to get back on track. www.umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop

I Need Housing

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/housing



I Need Food

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/food



I Need Legal Advice

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/legal



I Need Employment

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/employment



I Need Transportation

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/transportation



I Need Money

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/money



I Need Stress Relief

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/stress



I Need Healthcare

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/healthcare



My Family Needs Help

umass.edu/studentlife/single-stop/family



Dean of Students Office (DOSO) staff can answer questions, advocate on your behalf, and make sure you get the help, resources, and support you need.

The DOSO **Student Life Team** is available to meet with you, listen to your concerns, and assist in developing a comprehensive action plan for your academic and personal success.

Reasons to Access the Student Life Team

- Difficulty transitioning to college life
- Missing classes or falling significantly behind in coursework
- Injury or illness
- Dealing with depression, anxiety, panic or other mental health concerns (including thoughts of suicide or self-harm)
- Financial struggles including homelessness and food insecurity
- Experiencing physical/sexual assault, bullying or harassment
- Relationship challenges/domestic violence
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Eating or exercise disorder
- Help coordinating campus resources
- Experiencing a problem and don't know where to go

www.umass.edu/dean_students/student_services

Finding Communities of Support

A strong support network is key to success. In addition to friends and family, consider expanding your support network to include advisors, support groups, and counselors. Your college support network can help you cope with stress or anxiety, find strategies to overcome challenges, and connect to helpful resources.

Get started at www.umass.edu/counseling

Let's Talk sessions with counselor consultants are a good place to drop in and talk out anything that might be bothering you. **/services/lets-talk**

Stress GPS is a drop-in workshop that teaches practical skills for coping with college stress and anxiety. **/services/group-therapy**

Therapist Supported Online (Tao) is a seven-week, interactive, web-based program to help overcome anxiety and depression. **/tao**

Mindfulness training can help you feel less stressed, sleep better, and feel more relaxed. **/services**

Support Groups are safe and confidential therapist-facilitated spaces to talk with others with shared identities (LGBTQIA, students of color, etc.) or who are dealing with similar challenges (anxiety, grief and loss, dissertation stress, etc.). **/services/group-therapy**

Apps for Wellness and Wellbeing can help with anxiety, time-management, sleep, depression and more. **/resources/apps**



Learn About Accommodations

If you have a psychological, physical, auditory, medical, cognitive/learning disability, or another chronic condition, as defined by a qualified professional, register with **Disability Services (161 Whitmore)** for support and accommodations.

Diversity Matters

is a one-stop site for information on the support systems, organizations, policies and procedures, news, and events related to diversity, equity, and inclusion at UMass Amherst: www.umass.edu/diversity

We invite you to explore the many facets of our diverse campus community, reach out to meet new people, try new experiences, and explore the breadth and depth of how we are all both different and similar. These are some resources to start your journey:

Campus Life and Social Resources:

umass.edu/diversity/resources/campus_social

Cultural and Diversity Themed Events:

umass.edu/diversity/umass-events-calendar

Academic Resources: umass.edu/diversity/resources/teaching

Mentoring Resources: umass.edu/diversity/resources/mentoring

We want anyone who experiences acts of bias, discrimination, harassment, hate, or sexual misconduct to feel safe, know their rights, and be connected to the right support resources. While we hope you never have to use them, the university has several ways to report incidents and receive support:

- **Emergency** (413) 545-3111 or 911 (University Police)
- **University Police** (413) 545-2121 (non-emergency)
- **Dean of Students Office** (413) 545-2684
- **Anonymous Tip Line** umass.edu/umpd/anonymous-tip-line
- **Anonymous Witness Form**
umass.edu/umpd/anonymous-witness-form
- **Bias Reporting Form** tinyurl.com/umass-bias-report
- **Confidential Reporting for Sexual and Relationship Violence**
24 Hour CWC Crisis Hotline (413) 545-0800
Center for Counseling and Psychological Health
(413) 545-2337 or (413) 577-5000 (24/7 Emergency)
University Health Services (413) 577-5000
University Police Civilian Advocate (413) 545-2121

You can find information about gender respect, Title IX, and resources for survivors of sexual misconduct, harassment, and dating or sexual violence at umass.edu/titleix

Concerned about yourself or a friend?

When to Worry, Where to Reach Out

Behavioral:

- Problems concentrating
- Lack of energy
- Personal hygiene changes
- Alcohol or other drug abuse
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Difficulty making decisions

Academic:

- Late or absent a lot
- Procrastination
- Poorly prepared work

Emotional:

- Withdrawal from activities and friends
- Personality changes
- Lack of pleasure in things they used to enjoy
- Inappropriate outbursts, angry or belligerent behavior
- Appears fearful, anxious or nervous
- Conversation, writing or social media posts preoccupied with death or mentions the desire to harm self or others
- Statements of hopelessness such as, "I hate this life" or "Everyone is better off without me"

Always call 911 in a potentially life-threatening situation.



Your Campus Resources for Support and Safety

IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE (AVAILABLE 24/7)

UMass Amherst Police: (413) 545-2121 • Emergency: 911
585 East Pleasant Street, www.umass.edu/umpd – CONFIDENTIAL

- immediate response for all emergencies including threatening or dangerous behavior, accidents, injury

University Health Services: (413) 577-5000
150 Infirmary Way, www.umass.edu/uhs – CONFIDENTIAL

- medical care and **24/7 on-call service**
- free sexual assault evidence collection for sexual assault victims/survivors

Center for Counseling and Psychological Health: (413) 545-2337

After-hours emergencies: (413) 577-5000 – CONFIDENTIAL

180 Infirmary Way, 415 New Africa House, www.umass.edu/counseling

- **24/7 emergency services**, crisis intervention, assessment, consultation
- brief psychotherapy, anxiety, depression, mindfulness training

Center for Women and Community: (413) 545-0883

Rape Crisis: (413) 545-0800 – CONFIDENTIAL

180 Infirmary Way, New Africa House, www.umass.edu/cwc

- **24/7 rape crisis hotline** for people of all genders
- safety planning, free counseling and support groups for survivors, friends and families
- community training on issues of consent, sexual assault and harassment

Follow-Up and Support

Center for Health Promotion: (413) 577-5181

150 Infirmary Way, third floor, www.umass.edu/studentlife/chp

- alcohol screening and brief intervention (BASICS)
- support for students in recovery and living sober at UMass

**Center for Multicultural Advancement and Student Success:
(413) 545-2517**

101 Wilder Hall, www.umass.edu/multiculturalaffairs

- cultural enrichment, academic support, student development and support for institutional diversity
- mentoring, workshops, advocacy, scholarship and internship opportunities, career development

More Follow-Up and Support

Dean of Students Office: (413) 545-2684

227 Whitmore, www.umass.edu/dean_students

- advice and support in managing challenging situations

Disability Services: (413) 545-0892

161 Whitmore, www.umass.edu/disability

- registering and accommodating students with all types of disabilities

Equal Opportunity & Diversity (EO&D): (413) 545-3464

Bartlett Hall, room 225, www.umass.edu/eod

- campus affirmative action and equal opportunity policies, procedures and complaint administration

Off Campus Student Center: (413) 577-1005

314 Student Union, www.umass.edu/offcampuslife

- resources and support for students who live or plan to live off campus

Ombuds Office: (413) 545-0867

Campus Center, room 823, www.umass.edu/ombuds

- facilitation and informal mediation; resolution of grade disputes

Psychological Services Center: (413) 545-0041

Tobin Hall, room 123, www.umass.edu/psc

- free confidential initial consultation and sliding-scale psychotherapy

Residential Life

www.umass.edu/living

- Support and referrals on any issue for students living on campus
- Help addressing roommate disputes, residence hall quality of life

Stonewall Center: (413) 545-4824

Crampton Hall (Southwest), www.umass.edu/stonewall

- support, resources, programming, and advocacy for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual (LGBTQIA) students and allies

Student Legal Services Office: (413) 545-1995

922 Campus Center, www.umass.edu/rso/slo

- confidential legal counseling, advice, research, education, representation, and referral for all fee-paying students
- confidential support with misconduct issues, crime victimization, bullying and harassment and violence issues

Student Veteran Resource Center: (413) 545-0939

18/19 Dickinson Hall, www.umass.edu/veterans

- a welcoming place for veterans and active members of the U.S. military to study, network, learn and seek support
- veterans benefit questions

Six State and Federal Laws and University Policies You Need to Know

These laws and policies are important to understanding your rights and responsibilities within your UMass Amherst experience.

Academic Honesty Policy

UMass Amherst's Academic Honesty Policy applies to all students and is administered by the Academic Honesty Board: honesty@umass.edu. The Ombuds Office can advise students on the Academic Honesty policy and related grievances: www.umass.edu/honesty.

Code of Student Conduct/Residential Life Community Standards

All University of Massachusetts Amherst students are responsible for complying with the rules, regulations, policies, and procedures contained in the Code of Student Conduct, as well as those in other official University communications. Find them at www.umass.edu/dean_students.

Guidelines for Classroom Civility and Respect

Faculty members are required to maintain classrooms that promote the safe and open exchange of ideas. Students are responsible for personal behavior that supports these goals. The full policy may be viewed at www.umass.edu/dean_students/campus-policies/classroom.

University Alcohol and Drug Policies

It is illegal to possess or consume alcohol if under the age of 21. Open containers are not allowed in residence halls or on UMass campus. Marijuana in any form is prohibited on university property or university sponsored off campus events. Students are responsible for reading and following university alcohol and other drug policies: www.umass.edu/dean_students/campus-policies.

"Minutes Matter" Medical Amnesty Policy

If you seek help for someone under the influence of alcohol or other drugs who needs medical attention, neither you nor that person will be charged with a Code of Student Conduct or Residence Hall Community Standards violation. If that person is a UMass student, they will be required to attend BASICS and pay the associated fee.

Town and State Bylaws

Amherst, other neighboring towns, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts all have bylaws outlining community standards that local residents (including college students) are required to uphold. View Amherst town bylaws at www.amherstma.gov.



Download the **My UMass app!**

- Your source for campus events, information, and resources from arrival through Commencement.
- Connect to campus life through student experience videos and social media feeds.
- Engage with your community, strengthen academic success, learn about campus resources, and find out what's happening at UMass Amherst.



[**tinyurl.com/MyUMass-apple**](https://tinyurl.com/MyUMass-apple)



[**tinyurl.com/MyUMass-android**](https://tinyurl.com/MyUMass-android)