

UMassAmherst

International Programs Office

FACT SHEET

2020-2021 Graduate Exchange Program

CONTACT INFORMATION

International Programs Office (IPO):

70 Butterfield Terrace
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Amherst, MA 01003-9361
USA

Exchange Advisor:

Claire Novotny
cnovotny@umass.edu
Tel: +1 413-545-2710
Fax: +1 413-545-1201

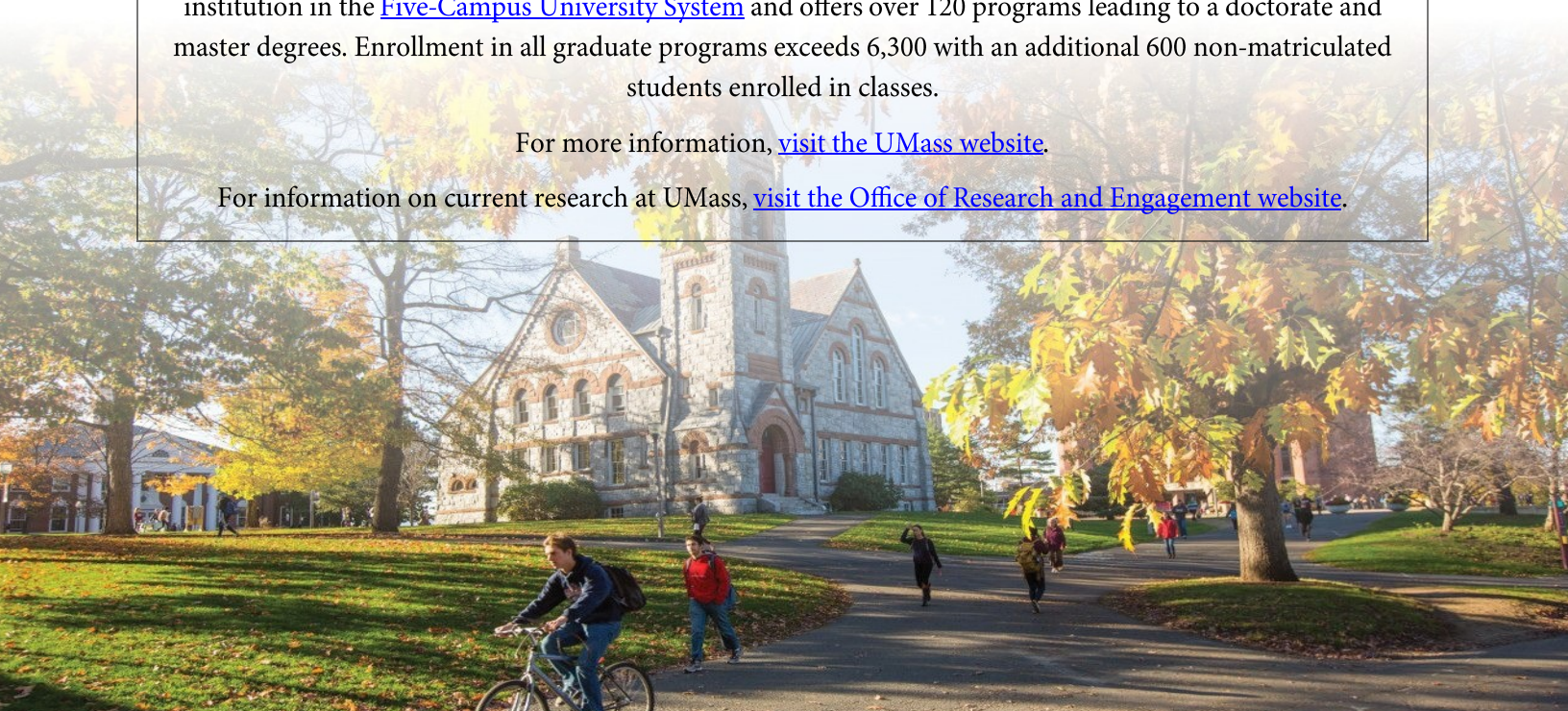
International Programs Office: www.umass.edu/ipo/iss

ABOUT UMASS AMHERST

UMass Amherst, the Commonwealth's flagship public research university, is one of the nation's top universities for research as measured by national and international rankings, academic citations, and research funding. With a Graduate Faculty of approximately 1,400, the Amherst campus is the major research institution in the [Five-Campus University System](#) and offers over 120 programs leading to a doctorate and master degrees. Enrollment in all graduate programs exceeds 6,300 with an additional 600 non-matriculated students enrolled in classes.

For more information, [visit the UMass website](#).

For information on current research at UMass, [visit the Office of Research and Engagement website](#).



ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Current Calendars: <https://www.umass.edu/registrar/calendars/academic-calendar>

FALL SEMESTER 2020 (September - December)

Arrival	September 3 (TBA)
Orientation	September 3 - 5 (TBA)
Classes Begin	September 8
Classes End	December 14
Final Examinations	December 16 - 22 (Snow Day during Exams, December 23)

SPRING SEMESTER 2021 (January - May)

Arrival	January 15 (TBA)
Orientation	January 15 - 17 (TBA)
Classes Begin	January 19
Classes End	April 28
Final Examinations	April 30 - May 6

EXCHANGE NOMINATION

Nomination Requirements	<p>Student nominations by partner institutions are accepted in the following mandatory format.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full name (as written on passport) - Date of Birth (month/day/year format. Example: April 12, 1998 is 4/12/1998) - Personal email address - Academic department - Duration (Fall Semester, Spring Semester, Academic Year, or Calendar Year) - Scanned copy of passport ID page (PDF format, titled by last name)
Nomination Deadlines	<p>Fall Semester: February 1, 2019</p> <p>Spring Semester: September 15, 2020</p>
Nomination Procedure	<p>Once a student is nominated, the above information will be entered into UMass's system of record, SPIRE. The student will receive an email from UMass Amherst IT, regarding their UMass (SPIRE) credentials.</p> <p>To gain access to the application, the Exchange Advisor will send the nominated student a link to the online application by email. SPIRE credentials are required to access the application.</p>

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Deadlines	<p>Fall Semester: March 1, 2019</p> <p>Spring Semester: October 1, 2019</p>
Admission Notification	<p>Fall Semester: Early April</p> <p>Spring Semester: Early November</p>
Application Procedure	<p>Application materials must be submitted through the online portal. All required documents should be prepared in PDF format <i>before</i> starting the application as students will not be able to save their application progress.</p>

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Transcript(s)	<p>Official transcript(s) of all completed courses as well as a list of current courses.</p> <p>Note on Grades: Students are required to submit an explanation that addresses grades falling below a letter grade of B by US standards. Reasons could be specific personal circumstances or an explanation of the distribution of grades at home university. Grades could also be addressed in letters of recommendation.</p>
Study Proposal	<p>In the study proposal, graduate students must provide detailed information on their academic background and achievements AND articulate how their time at UMass will help them achieve their academic and career goals. Therefore, the study proposal should mention specific UMass courses of interest, relevant courses taken at their home university, research and/or specific lab work they might be interested in, and internships or other work experiences that are related to their field of study. Students must choose a specific academic department at UMass to which they will direct their application. The study proposal should be two pages double-spaced and the main emphasis should be on academics and why a semester or year in a specific department at UMass Amherst will be beneficial. For applications to more than one department, students must submit a for each one. One or two courses listed in the study proposal can be selected from outside departments. To find courses, students must use search the course catalogue for the previous fall or spring semester. Do not reference the department websites. See the Study Proposal Guidelines for more information.</p>
Letters of Recommendation	<p>Students need two (2) letters of reference from sources who know the student in an academic setting and will be able to rank their academic achievements.</p>
Financial Documentation	<p>Current bank statement(s) are required from either the student, financial sponsor, or both, along with the financial sponsor form, if applicable. Bank statements must be dated within the last 6 months.</p>
CV/Resume	<p>Students must upload a copy of their most recent Curriculum Vitae (CV)</p>
English Language Proficiency, if applicable	<p>Either TOEFL (score of 80 on computer-based or 550 on paper-based tests) or IELTS (6.5 with no section under 6). Economics, Political Science, Linguistics, Philosophy, or Isenberg School of Management students must have a score of 100 iBT or 7.5on IELTS (TOEFL ITP is not accepted). A certificate verifying proficiency as being equal to or better than the above criteria may be accepted. An additional interview by the departments may be required.</p>

EXCHANGE EXPENSE ESTIMATES

IMPORTANT: Mandatory fee amounts indicated on the Expense Estimates are based on current 2018/2019 academic year rates and could increase for the 2020/2021 academic year. The actual fees could be 10% higher.

The listed total expenses do not calculate the amounts included in the graduate tuition credit, Graduate Assistantship awards, and other waivers agreed upon by UMass and our exchange partners. Please contact your home university for information on what costs are covered by the exchange agreement.

SEMESTER EXPENSE ESTIMATES

MANDATORY FEES	ESTIMATE
Tuition¹	\$16,196.00
Service Fee	\$635.00
Graduate Senate Tax	\$69.00
Mandatory Health Fee² (individual)	\$393.00
Student Health Plan² (SHBP/individual)	\$1480.00
Subtotal	\$19,178.00
HOUSING COSTS	ESTIMATE
Rent³	\$4,987.00
Meals/Groceries	\$2,924.00
Subtotal	\$7,935.00
VARIABLE COSTS	ESTIMATE
Miscellaneous (books, supplies, laundry, etc)	\$1,375.00
Grand Total	\$26,345.00
DEPENDENT COSTS (SPOUSE AND/OR CHILDREN)	ESTIMATE
Family Insurance	\$4,270.00
Dependent Living Cost⁴ (\$205/month for 6 months)	\$1,230.00
Total First Dependent Cost	\$5,500.00

¹ Tuition is billed on a per credit basis of 9 credits per term. Tuition waivers will be applied to the student's bill by the IPO. For those who qualify, the Graduate Assistantship is at least \$5,432.10.

² The Mandatory Health Fee and Student Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) are mandatory. Students are billed in the fall for the period of August 1 through January 31, and in the spring for February 1 through July 31.

³ If living in on-campus housing, a mandatory housing deposit is required in advance to confirm housing assignment. Most off-campus (non-UMass) living options require a security deposit and/or first and last month's rent in advance.

⁴ Add the Dependent Living Cost for each additional dependent.

ACADEMIC YEAR EXPENSE ESTIMATES

MANDATORY FEES	ESTIMATE
Tuition¹	\$33,202.00
Service Fee	\$1,270.00
Graduate Senate Tax	\$138.00
Mandatory Health Fee² (individual)	\$786.00
Student Health Plan² (SHBP/individual)	\$2,960.00
Subtotal	\$38,356.00
HOUSING COSTS	ESTIMATE
Rent and Utilities³	\$9,973.00
Meals/Groceries	\$5,897.00
Subtotal	\$15,870.00
VARIABLE COSTS	ESTIMATE
Miscellaneous (books, supplies, laundry, etc.)	\$2,750.00
Summer Rent and Utilities (June—August)	\$3,600.00
Summer Meals/Groceries (June—August)	\$1,800.00
Subtotal	\$8,150.00
Grand Total	\$58,089.00
DEPENDENT COSTS (SPOUSE AND/OR CHILDREN)	ESTIMATE
Family Insurance	\$8,540.00
Dependent Living Cost⁴ (\$205/month for 6 months)	\$2,460.00
Total First Dependent Cost	\$11,000.00

¹ Tuition is billed on a per credit basis of 9 credits per term. Tuition waivers will be applied to the student's bill by the IPO. For those who qualify, the Graduate Assistantship is at least \$11,525.40.

² The Mandatory Health Fee and Student Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) are mandatory. Students are billed in the fall for the period of August 1 through January 31, and in the spring for February 1 through July 31.

³ If living in on-campus housing, a mandatory housing deposit is required in advance to confirm housing assignment. Most off-campus (non-UMass) living options require a security deposit and/or first and last month's rent in advance.

⁴ Add the Dependent Living Cost for each additional dependent.

COURSE INFORMATION

At UMass Amherst, students register for courses using our Internet-based registration system, known as SPIRE. Course schedule information is ONLY available online. Students will need their NetID and password to log in to SPIRE. (The NetID and password are the same codes used to access their UMass email account.)

Course Catalog	Students can browse course offerings by semester without a UMass NetID by visiting www.spire.umass.edu and clicking “Search Classes/Catalog” under the heading <i>Catalogs & Schedules</i> . Course Registration Guidelines can be found here .
Course Access	No courses are guaranteed. Often, the same classes or similar ones will be offered each year, but sometimes during only one term, e.g., fall or spring. Since the course catalog for future semesters are not online yet, you will need to look at the current as well as previous semesters to see if the course may be offered.
Course and Program Restrictions	There are a limited number of exchanges spaces within many UMass departments. Some departments may accept applications on a first-come, first-served basis, while others may use other criteria for approving candidates. Clinical Psychology does not accept exchange students. Online courses are not covered by exchange agreements.
Language of Instruction	English (unless a specific language course)
Registration Period	Students will receive an email with registration dates and information. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SPIRE and have a variety of courses in mind so they can enroll as soon as their enrollment appointment begins. The first two weeks of each semester is called the “Add/Drop” period where students can freely add classes or drop out of classes without any record.
Course Number System	100-199 – Lower Division Undergraduate – Freshman (first year) level 200-299 – Lower Division Undergraduate – Sophomore (second year) level 300-399 - Upper Division Undergraduate – Junior (third year) level 400-499 - Upper Division Undergraduate – Senior (fourth year) level IMPORTANT: Graduate students are expected to take at least two 500 level or above courses per semester and no more than one undergraduate course per semester. 500 - 599 Combined graduate/undergraduate 600 - 699 Master's or first-year graduate 700 - 899 Doctoral or advanced graduate
Course Types	Courses will generally be lecture style though some lectures are accompanied with a separate discussion section or lab. Other types of classes are seminars or independent studies with professors (contact professor for information).
Course Load	Graduate exchange students must enroll in a minimum of 9 credits per semester. 6 credits must be 500+ level.

GRADING SYSTEM

UMass uses a typical American grade point average (GPA) system. The percentages corresponding to each letter grade vary depending on the professor and the department, but are generally stated in the syllabus.

For more specific information on GPA calculations, [visit the UMass Registrar Webpage](#).

Letter Grade	GPA	Letter Grade	GPA
A	4.00	C	2.00
A-	3.70	C-	1.70
B+	3.30	D+	1.30
B	3.00	D	1.00
B-	2.70	F	0.00
C+	2.30		

TRANSCRIPTS

Students must request official transcripts through SPIRE as either an electronic file or a paper copy. Both can be sent directly to your office from the UMass Registrars Office.

SPIRE HELP

SPIRE is the University's secure online student information system. Almost all student functions take place on SPIRE: Students use SPIRE to register for courses, view/pay their Bursar bill, view holds, select/view housing assignments, change meal plans, etc. You will need your Net ID and password to log in to SPIRE (the Net ID and password are the same codes that they use to access their UMass email account).

SPIRE Help Videos

[UMass Amherst Getting Started with SPIRE](#)

[UMass Amherst Searching for Classes](#)

[UMass Amherst Enrolling in Classes](#)

ACQUIRING A VISA

Students who are not US citizens or Green Card holders are required to obtain the proper visa or immigration status for study in the US, as well as pay the I-901 SEVIS Fee (approximately \$220) and the visa application processing fee (approximately \$160), both of which are not listed on the budget sheet.

As part of the UMass Amherst Exchange application, students are required to provide proof of funds sufficient to cover program and living expenses while in the US. In addition, students are required to upload a scanned copy of their passport. This information will be used to create the necessary forms needed to produce the DS-2019 form.

Acceptance letters and DS-2019 Certificate of Eligibility forms will be mailed to the address provided on the student application. Once the student receives the paperwork, they can pay the fees and make a visa appointment at their local embassy or consulate. Information on how to apply for a visa will be emailed to the student upon acceptance into the program.

For more information, please [visit our website](#).

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Student Health Insurance	<p>The U.S. Federal and Massachusetts State governments require that all J-1 visa holders have health coverage. In compliance with Massachusetts insurance requirements, students will automatically be enrolled in the Student Health Plan (SHBP) in order to meet the State’s insurance requirements and are not eligible to waive any part of the SHBP.</p> <p>Graduate students who are eligible for health fee exemptions through an assistantship in the GEO bargaining unit are only responsible for 5% of the cost of individual SHBP and</p>
Insurance for Families	<p>Students who will be accompanied by their families will need to purchase the Student Family Health Insurance Plan.</p>
Health Fee	<p>In addition to the SHBP, students pay a mandatory Student Health Fee that entitles them to be seen at University Health Services. This fee cannot be waived.</p>
Immunizations	<p>State law requires that college students have certain immunizations before coming to school.</p> <p>Students are required to submit immunization information through the online system found at www.umass.edu/uhs/immunizations, not to the IPO. Students are not able to submit this information until they have been assigned a UMass email.</p>
Health Services	<p>University Health Services (UHS) provides a large range of medical services on-campus for UMass community members including but not limited to: regular appointments, pharmacy, walk-in clinics, and women’s health services.</p>

STUDENT SERVICES

Academic Support	<p>UMass has multiple libraries, study spaces, tutoring centers, and technology resources available for students to use. Most notably, the Dubois Library stands 28 stories tall as a campus landmark.</p>
Employment Options	<p>For employment options for J-1 students please visit the IPO J-1 website.</p>
IT and Wi-Fi	<p>The IT office is available to answer questions concerning technology needs. There is Wi-Fi access and a large number of available computer stations all over campus.</p>
Public Transportation	<p>The PVRTA provides FREE public transportation in and around the Amherst area.</p>
Student Organizations	<p>UMass is home to over 500 student organizations that students can join through Campus PULSE.</p>
Sports and Recreation	<p>UMass is home to sports teams including football, basketball, and hockey. There are official university teams where students can buy tickets and attend games. There are also intramural teams that anyone can join. For more information, visit the Campus Recreation website.</p>

LIVING IN WESTERN MA

<p>Accommodations</p>	<p>Beginning in Fall 2020 there is NO Graduate housing on-campus. All graduate students, including international graduate students, are expected to find accommodations in the community. The IPO recommends that students research housing within walking distance to a PVT A bus route. PVT A buses are free for UMass students while classes are in session.</p> <p>For more information and resources, visit the Off-Campus Housing Website. Graduate Exchange students are expected to independently find accommodations.</p>
<p>Hampshire County</p>	<p>Hampshire County in Western Massachusetts is where city living meets homesteading, where you can sip a cosmo, dine on creative cuisine, and see a cow or two. In one weekend, you can explore our world-class museums, rocking music scene, bustling downtowns and hike to the peak of a mountain or snowshoe the iconic rail trails.</p> <p>Hampshire County is just one of those pockets on the planet where you can be yourself – any side, any shade, any shape. It’s one of the most inclusive places in the nation, and we embrace residents and visitors just the way they are. Use this visitors’ guide to find favorite hotspots in and around Amherst, Easthampton, Northampton, and South Hadley, and hidden gems in the hilltowns.</p> <p>Check out the Western MA Guide to learn about our beautiful area.</p>
<p>The Town of Amherst</p>	<p>Amherst—the most populous town in Hampshire County—is a vibrant, intellectual hub with three prestigious colleges: Amherst College, Hampshire College, and UMass Amherst. Bask in the academic tradition as you stroll through the grand campuses and recite poetry (try local heroine Emily Dickinson) under a towering elm tree. Then we might suggest enjoying the more hedonistic perks of a college town—late night pizza and cookies, fancy cocktails, and music.</p> <p>Amherst’s youthful, lively downtown boasts an independent movie theater, diverse restaurants, and a handful of coffee shops, museums, art galleries, and bookstores set against the backdrop of historical architecture and blooming flower gardens. Yes, it looks like a movie set for a quintessential New England town—only Amherst is the real deal.</p> <p>Much like the rest of Hampshire County, Amherst is known for its bookishness, its artsiness, its local food obsession, its openness and tolerance, and its beauty. Travel farther afield to swim in the beloved Puffer’s Pond or hike Amethyst Brook. Swing by the University Museum to see contemporary art (Warhol, anyone?), before you watch a touring dance company take the stage at the Fine Arts Center.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Retrieved from visithampshirecounty.com</p>
<p>Images of UMass Amherst</p>	<p>UMass Amherst is a beautiful place to live, work, and study. Watch our video slide show for a snapshot of the campus.</p>