

UMassAmherst

International Programs Office

FACT SHEET

2020-2021 Undergraduate Exchanges

CONTACT INFORMATION

International Programs Office (IPO):

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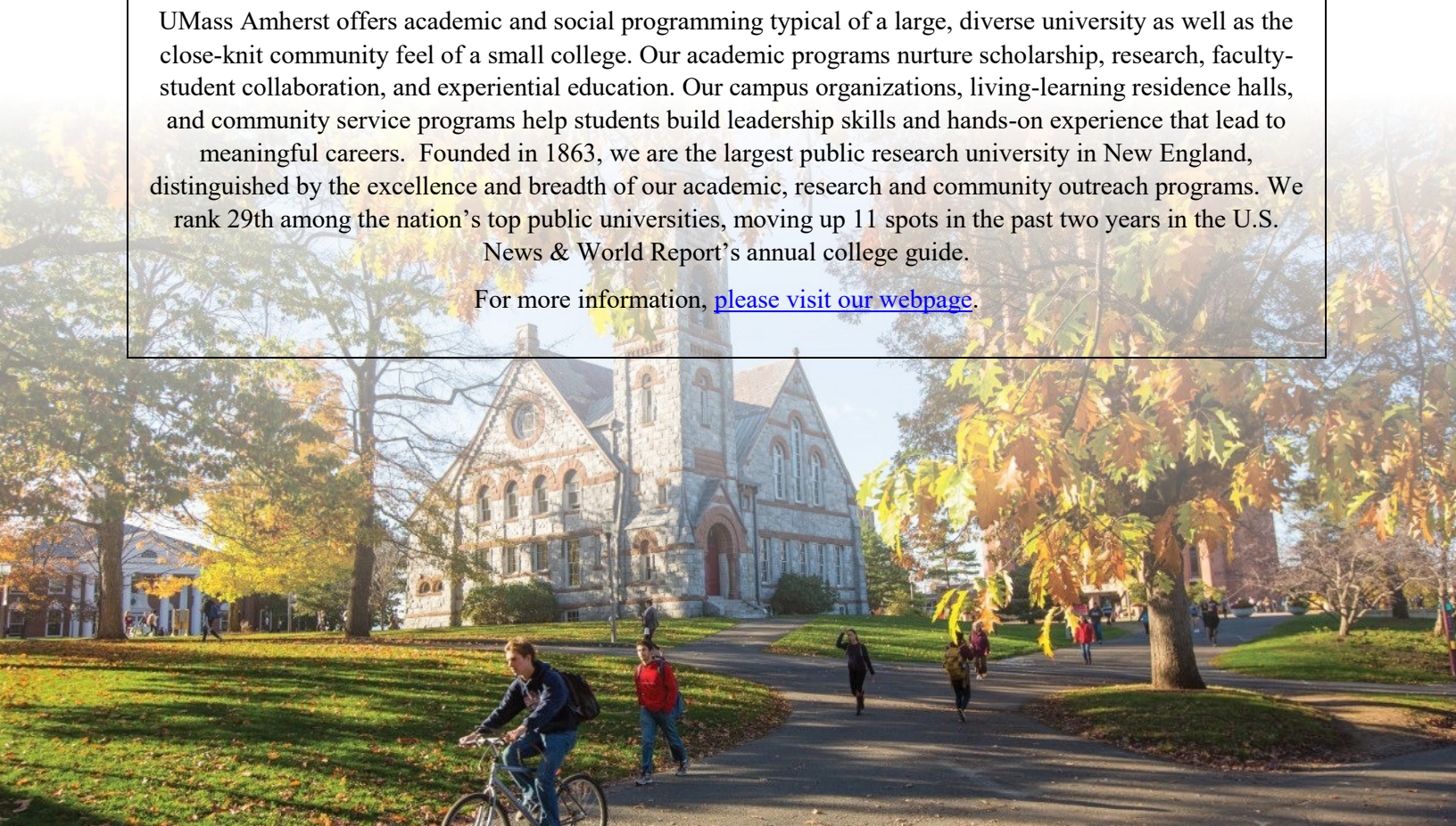
International Programs Office: www.umass.edu/ipo

ABOUT UMASS AMHERST

UMass Amherst offers academic and social programming typical of a large, diverse university as well as the close-knit community feel of a small college. Our academic programs nurture scholarship, research, faculty-student collaboration, and experiential education. Our campus organizations, living-learning residence halls, and community service programs help students build leadership skills and hands-on experience that lead to meaningful careers. Founded in 1863, we are the largest public research university in New England, distinguished by the excellence and breadth of our academic, research and community outreach programs. We rank 29th among the nation's top public universities, moving up 11 spots in the past two years in the U.S.

News & World Report's annual college guide.

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



EXCHANGE NOMINATION

Nomination Requirements	<p>Nominations for exchange are made by the home university coordinator. The following is required for each student:</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) - Scanned copy of passport bio page (PDF format, titled by student last name) - Personal email address - Duration (Fall Semester, Spring Semester, Academic Year, or Calendar Year) - Academic concentration(s)/major(s)
Nomination Deadlines	<p>Fall Semester: February 15, 2020 Spring Semester: September 15, 2020</p> <p>*Fall semester deadlines are somewhat flexible.</p>
Nomination Procedure	<p>When the UMass Exchange Coordinator processes the nominated student, the information will be entered into SPIRE (our system of record). The student will receive an email from UMass Amherst IT, not the International Programs Office (IPO), regarding their UMass (SPIRE) credentials. The Exchange Coordinator will then send a link to the online application by email. SPIRE credentials are required to access the application.</p>

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 2020 (January - May)

Arrival	January 18 (TBA)
Orientation	January 18-20 (TBA)
Classes Begin	January 22
Classes End	May 1
Final Examinations	May 3 - May 9

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Deadlines	<p>Fall Semester: March 1, 2020</p> <p>Spring Semester: October 1, 2020</p>
Admission Notification	<p>Fall Semester: Mid-Late March</p> <p>Spring Semester: Late October</p> <p>Students will be contacted via email when they are accepted.</p>
Application Procedure	<p>The exchange application is online. All application materials must be submitted through the online portal (unless the student has US citizenship). All required documents should be prepared in PDF format before starting the application as students will not be able to save their application progress. The completed online application as well as the PDF documents must be submitted at the same time.</p>

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Transcript(s)	Official transcript(s) of all completed courses as well as a list of current courses.
Study Proposal	<p>Writing Your Statement: The study proposal is a way to articulate academic and career goals and explain how a semester/year abroad at UMass Amherst would help the student achieve them. They should mention specific courses that they have taken at their home university, and how they provide an academic foundation for the UMass courses in which they are interested. Things to Avoid: Students should not mention personal matters, travel plans while abroad, or indicate their desire to improve their English in the study proposal. See the Study Proposal Guideline for more information.</p>
Letter of Recommendation	One (1) letter of recommendation is required from an academic source such as a professor or advisor.
Financial Documentation	<p>Current bank statement(s) are required from either the student, financial sponsor, or both. Bank statements must be dated within the last 6 months.</p> <p>The financial sponsor statement (same as the name on the bank statement) must be signed and submitted online with the application.</p>
English Language Proficiency (Required for non-English speakers)	<p>Either TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), or IELTS (International English Language Testing System)-only the academic version of test is accepted. The minimum scores are 550 for the paper-based TOEFL test and 80 for the computer-based TOEFL test, and 6.5 for the IELTS.</p>

ACQUIRING A VISA

Acceptance letters and DS-2019 forms will be mailed to the home university coordinator after acceptance. These will need to be distributed to the student. Students can then apply for their J1 visa. Information on how to apply for a visa will be emailed to the student upon acceptance into the program.

SEMESTER EXPENSE ESTIMATES

All of the following estimated costs are per semester.

All exchange agreements with the University of Massachusetts Amherst cover all costs associated with university tuition and fees. These expenses are paid by the UMass International Programs Office (IPO) and will appear as a payment on the students Bursar bill. The bill must be paid before the start of each semester.

PAID BY THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OFFICE (IPO)	ESTIMATE
Tuition, Registration, Curriculum Fees	\$8,600.00
Total Paid By UMass	\$8,600.00
*Some exchange agreements may also cover some of the costs below.	
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY	ESTIMATE
*Actual costs could be up to 5% higher.	
Room Fees ¹	\$3,749.00
Dining Services (Meals) ²	\$3,254.00
Mandatory Health Insurance ³	\$843.00
Student Health Benefit Plan (comprehensive medical insurance)	
Miscellaneous ⁴	\$1,375.00
Final Cost to Student	\$9,220.00
This amount may vary based on the specific exchange agreement.	

¹ **Room Fees** range between \$3,000 to \$7,000 depending on room type. The room fee for a standard shared room without break housing is \$3,749. [Room Fee Rates can be found here.](#)

² **Dining Services (Meals):** Students living on campus must enroll in a meal plan (between \$2,862 to \$3,367). Students are automatically billed for the unlimited plan (\$3,254) but have the [option of changing to another plan.](#)

³ **Mandatory Health Insurance:** All full-time students are automatically enrolled in and billed for the [Student Health Benefit Plan](#) (SHBP). Fees appear on your Bursar's bill in August for the period of August 1 – January 31 and in January for the period of February 1 – July 31.

⁴ **Miscellaneous** costs include books, supplies, laundry, local travel, entertainment, etc.

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 Net ID 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 Access	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.
Language of Instruction	English (unless a specific language course)
Registration Period	<p>Students will receive an email with registration dates and information.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
Course Restrictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No courses are guaranteed • Art, Dance, Music, Nursing and Computer Science are closed to exchange students. Please email the exchange coordinator if you have questions. • Exchange students may not enroll in independent study courses. • English Writing 112, courses that fulfill the “UMass Junior Year Writing Requirement,” and courses that fulfill the “Integrative Experience Requirement” are closed to exchange students. (See the course description.) • Upper level courses in economics, communication, the Isenberg School of Management (ISOM), and Engineering may have limited availability. • Exchange students cannot take CPE (Continuing & Professional Education) courses.
Course Number System	<p>100-199 – Lower Division Undergraduate – Freshman (first year) level</p> <p>200-299 – Lower Division Undergraduate – Sophomore (second year) level</p> <p>300-399 - Upper Division Undergraduate – Junior (third year) level</p> <p>400-499 - Upper Division Undergraduate – Senior (fourth year) level</p> <p>Instructor Permission may be required:</p> <p>500 - 599 Combined graduate/undergraduate</p>
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	Must be enrolled for a minimum of 12 credits and a maximum of 15 credits each semester.

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

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](#)

HOUSING

UMass guarantees housing for international exchange students in accordance with instructions from [Residential Life](#). Students needing housing when UMass is closed for breaks should refer to instructions from Residential Life about break housing options.

All housing information will be sent via email to students through Residential Life. Students contact them directly with questions and concerns. Student Living email: living@umass.edu

DINING

UMass Dining, rated #1 in the US in 2016 by the Princeton Review, is a premier program that is committed to providing healthy, flavorful, world cuisine using freshly prepared, sustainable ingredients. Students can find UMass Dining at every corner of campus. With four dining commons, eighteen retail cafes, Kosher and Halal options, two food trucks, a delivery service, the bakeshop, UMass Catering, concessions, and the University Club, UMass Dining is ready to welcome your students with open arms.

All students living in residential housing (except North Apartments) are required to have a meal plan. Information about the various types of meal plan options are on the [UMass Dining website](#).

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Student Health Insurance	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 are automatically enrolled in the UMass health insurance plan, Student Health Benefit Plan (SHBP). All students must be enrolled in health
Immunizations	State law requires that college students have certain immunizations before coming to school. 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.
Health Services	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.

STUDENT SERVICES

Academic Support	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.
Employment Options	For employment options for J-1 students please visit the IPO J1 website .
IPO Buddy Program	IPO Buddies is a buddy/mentor program designed to enable exchange students to meet current UMass student to transition into life in the U.S.. If your student is interested in the buddy program, please email buddy@ipo.umass.edu .
IT and Wi-Fi	The IT office is available to answer all questions concerning technology needs. There is Wi-Fi access and a large number of available computer stations all over campus.
Public Transportation	The PVTA provides public transportation in and around the Amherst area and is completely FREE for UMass and Five College students and faculty.
Student Organizations	UMass is home to over 500 student organizations that students can join through Campus PULSE . From professional networking organizations to hobby clubs, there is something for everyone and all are welcoming to international and exchange students.
Sports and Recreation	UMass is home to many sports teams including but not limited to football, basketball and hockey. There are official recruited university teams where students can buy tickets and attend games but there are also many club and intramural teams that anyone can join. Our campus is also is home to state of the art recreation facilities which are available to all students. For more information, visit the Campus Recreation website .