

UMassAmherst

International Programs Office

FACT SHEET

2023-2024 Undergraduate Exchanges

CONTACT INFORMATION

International Programs Office (IPO):

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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 24th among the nation's top public universities, moving up 11 spots in the past three 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) - 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 Spring Semester: September 15</p> <p>*Fall semester deadlines are somewhat flexible.</p>
Nomination Procedure	<p>To nominate a student, please fill out the Nomination Form found here. Once the student is nominated, they will be given access to the UMass Abroad application by email.</p>

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

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

FALL SEMESTER 2023 (September - December)

Arrival	August 31 (TBA)
Orientation	August 31– September 2 (TBA)
Classes Begin	September 6
Classes End	December 12
Final Examinations	December 14 - 20 (snow day December 21)

SPRING SEMESTER 2024 (February - May)

Arrival	February 2 (TBA)
Orientation	February 3-4 (TBA)
Classes Begin	February 6
Classes End	May 17
Final Examinations	May 19—25

APPLICATION PROCESS

Application Deadlines	<p>Fall Semester: March 1, 2021</p> <p>Spring Semester: October 1, 2021</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>Application materials must be submitted through the online portal. Students who are successfully nominated will be given details on how to apply.</p>

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Transcript(s)	<p>Official transcript(s) of all completed courses as well as a list of current courses.</p>
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.</p>
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 all students)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): minimum score of 80* • International English Language Testing System (IELTS): minimum score of 6.5 • Pearson Test of English (PTE Academic): minimum overall score of 53 • Duolingo English Test: minimum overall score of 105 <p>• Native English Speakers: Note from home institution stating language abilities.</p> <p>*Please note, when reviewing an application we does not superscore language tests (e.g. we do not accept the ETS MyBest Score set).</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 and Fees (including Technology and Student Activities Fee)	\$8,700.00
Total Paid By UMass	\$8,700.00
*Some exchange agreements may also cover some of the costs below.	
STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY	ESTIMATE
Cost from the year prior. Actual rates will be up to 5% higher.	
Room Fees ¹	\$3,920.00
Dining Services (Meals) ²	\$3,468.00
Mandatory Health Insurance ³	\$1,240.50
Student Health Benefit Plan (comprehensive medical insurance)	
Miscellaneous ⁴	\$1,375.00
Final Cost to Student	\$10,003.00
This amount may vary based on the specific exchange agreement.	

¹ **Room Fees** vary depending on room type. The room fee for a standard shared room without break housing is listed above. For 9 month break housing options, there is an additional fee. [Room fee rates can be found here.](#)

² **Dining Services:** Meal plans for students vary in price depending on plan. More information is available on the Meal Plan website. Students are automatically billed for the Unlimited 250 plan 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 **mandatory and non-waivable 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. These costs do not appear on your bill.

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 courses are closed to exchange students. • Upper level courses in economics, communication, the Isenberg School of Management (ISOM), and Engineering may have limited availability. • Isenberg students are limited to three courses in the department per semester. • 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.) • Students cannot take UWW/CPE (Continuing & Professional Education/University without Walls) or independent study 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. At the end of the exchange period, electronic transcripts will be emailed to the home university staff.

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 insurance. Coverage by non-U.S. insurance companies will NOT be considered.
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, visit the IPO J1 employment 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.
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 .

LIVING IN WESTERN MA

<p>Accommodations</p>	<p>UMass guarantees housing for undergraduate 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.</p> <p>For more information and resources about living off-campus, visit the Off-Campus Housing Website. However, because of a housing shortage in the town of Amherst, we encourage all undergraduates to consider living on-campus for their first semester.</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>