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Introductory Message

Dear UMass Dartmouth Community,

I first want to thank people across campus who have been hard at work analyzing how our Fall 2020 Semester Plan can be adapted for this upcoming spring. Due to the proven capabilities of our on-campus Testing Center and contact tracing program, lessons learned from the fall 2020 semester, and our community’s willingness to abide by health and safety protocols, UMass Dartmouth will offer a modest increase face-to-face courses to ensure students can persist and make timely progress towards the completion of their studies and invite more students to live on campus in the spring 2021 semester.

Importantly, the University has decided to make no changes to its academic calendar. The first day of classes is Tuesday, January 19, 2021, and UMass Law classes begin on January 4, 2021.

Spring recess is currently scheduled to begin on Friday, March 5, 2021. The decision to retain spring recess reflects UMass Dartmouth’s desire to balance the risks associated with potential travel and the mental health needs of our community. Accordingly, the University strongly discourages making plans to travel out of state during the spring recess period and will abide by and enforce state travel quarantine policies at the time. Please review the most current University Travel Guidelines for more information.

With the decision to increase the residential student population and offer more face-to-face courses, the University will need to be adequately staffed on campus. Decisions regarding those positions that require on-campus functions and those that will continue to operate remotely are being planned by supervisors and Human Resources. Employees that can effectively complete work from home without adversely impacting face-to-face classes or student life are encouraged to continue. More information regarding any changes will be available soon.

In closing, please know that this is not back to normal. Far from it, but it is progress toward the ‘next normal’. UMass Dartmouth expects to see continued increases in positive case rates across the country and Commonwealth this winter and should local conditions considerably worsen, our Spring 2021 Semester Plan will need to be altered in the service of public health.

Everyone in the UMassD community has worked tirelessly to make our campus safe and altered their behaviors to ensure that we can continue to help students reach their educational ambitions. Everyone must stay vigilant to ensure the spring semester is as successful as this past fall. I want to again thank you for your hard work, patience, and sense of community during this difficult time.

Sincerely,

Mark Preble, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Chief Operating Officer and Acting Chancellor
Planning Process

In the summer of 2020, UMass Dartmouth formally announced the creation of an overarching Pandemic Emergency Response Team (PERT). PERT is a collaborative effort of students, faculty, and staff to help the University address the immediate needs of the community and maintain the continuity of its critical mission of education.

PERT has been configured into ten planning groups that span the workings of every area of campus and bring multiple forms of expertise and skills to help campus operate safely. Each group has submitted a detailed report on their specific area, which was used to create UMass Dartmouth’s official re-opening plan for fall 2020. In September 2020, those groups began building on the fall semester plans to modestly increase face-to-face courses and invite more residential students to campus for the spring 2021 semester.

The groups are:
- Onsite Learning with Social Distancing
- Lab and Research
- Online and Blended Learning
- Graduate and Law
- Facility Preparation and Supplies
- Daily Operations
- Residence Halls
- Dining Services
- Pre-Opening Programs
- Events and Athletics

Please note that PERT and its committees remain in place and regularly evaluate progress in their respective areas.

The University has an Implementation Team made up of students, faculty, and staff that meet weekly to address issues as they arise and recommend adjustments to this plan and daily operations, as necessary. In addition, the Health and Safety Committee is a joint Labor-Management Committee established and dedicated to working in collaboration to identify, bargain, and resolve, to the best of its ability, the health and safety issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the campus, students, staff, and the South Coast region. The Committee is comprised of the UMass Dartmouth Administrative Team and members of the UMASS Dartmouth Unions United.
Health & Safety

In each functional area of UMass Dartmouth, health and safety remain the top priority. Throughout the entire COVID-19 pandemic, the University has followed the science as well as the guidance of the CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health and will continue to do so in the future. All efforts are aimed at mitigating the risk of infection and the potential for spread on campus and within the greater community. Every member of UMass Dartmouth must abide by public health and campus guidelines to ensure the safety of the entire campus community.

- UMass Dartmouth is using all available methods of communication to promote the necessary safety precautions to inform the community.
- All students are required to sign the UMassD Shared Responsibility Compact that confirms their commitment to all UMass Dartmouth required safety practices.
- Face coverings are required in all public places on campus unless a medical exemption is obtained.
- The University utilizes a robust asymptomatic surveillance-testing contact tracing program.
- Areas of campus that contain a high volume of personal interaction are outfitted with transparent barriers.
- Increased and enhanced cleaning is occurring in all campus buildings, especially high traffic areas. The Facilities team uses a specific protocol if an individual who has been on campus reports being sick or tests positive for COVID-19.
- Necessary sanitation supplies are provided across campus.
- Occupancy requirements in all areas are continually monitored and updated as needed to meet requirements per CDC and Massachusetts guidelines.
- All meetings and gatherings, if appropriate, should continue to take place over video chat.

Please note that UMass Dartmouth is working with students, faculty, and staff who have self-identified as at-risk for severe illness to provide remote learning, teaching, and working opportunities. The University is also working with those who have childcare, homeschooling, or other life responsibilities that affect their ability to come to campus.

Personal Responsibility

A major aspect of stopping the spread of COVID-19 and the associated risks of contracting the virus comes down to personal responsibility. Every member of the UMassD community must do their part to protect one another, including:

- Mandatory daily symptom checking using the Daily Symptom tracker **before** coming to campus or attending classes. The Symptom Tracker is available within the Health Services portal.
- Staying home or isolated if you feel sick or exhibit known COVID-19 symptoms.
• Using face coverings in all public places on campus unless a medical exemption is obtained.
• Practicing good personal hygiene including handwashing per CDC guidelines.
• Ensuring that social distancing (at least 6 feet of space between people) is always maintained whenever possible.
• Keeping shared workspaces, living spaces, and equipment clean and clear by wiping down at the beginning and end of each day and removing clutter and unnecessary items from surfaces to allow for additional cleaning each night.

Testing & Contact Tracing
Following updated guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health COVID-19 Higher Education Control Plan and the UMass President's Office, UMass Dartmouth utilizes a robust asymptomatic surveillance-testing program. The University tests thousands of students, faculty, and staff a week.

All UMass Dartmouth residential students and commuter students that visit campus regularly are required to test weekly. The University encourages all faculty and staff to also participate in the on-campus testing program. Appointments can be scheduled via the Health Services Patient Portal.

The University has contracted with Clinical Research Sequencing Platform (CRSP), LLC of The Broad Institute, Inc. to process and analyze tests. The on-campus Testing Center in Woodland Commons is fully operational and open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:50 p.m. during the spring semester. Anticipated results are available 24-48 hours of pickup. Please note that negative test results will be emailed directly to the individual and reported directly to the Department of Public Health. All these systems and procedures are fully HIPAA/FERPA compliant.

Any faculty, staff, or student who tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate—even if they are asymptomatic—and will be required to follow the instructions of the COVID testing center case manager, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, and the Local Board of Health. Contact tracing will be done by the Local Board of Health in collaboration with the COVID testing center case manager and the Community Tracing Collaborative. Any faculty, staff, or student who is identified as a close contact will be required to quarantine for up to 14 days and referred for testing. A close contact is any individual within 6 feet of a laboratory-confirmed or probable COVID-19 patient for at least 15 minutes.

Each department, especially those that interact with students often, are required to keep a daily occupancy log. This log should have the name and contact information of anyone presenting to the department and should be kept for three weeks for contact tracing.

For more information on testing, please visit the COVID-19 Testing website.
Quarantine & Isolation

Quarantine and isolation help reduce the spread of COVID-19 within the community. According to the CDC, quarantine is the act of separating and/or restricting the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick (lasts 14 days). Isolation is the separating of sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. Quarantine and isolation will continue until advised by a healthcare provider or the local board of health.

- The University has specific residence halls and rooms on campus for required periods of quarantine and/or isolation for residential students.
- Both on-campus and off-campus students should have a plan for the possibility that they need to quarantine or isolate. This includes, if possible, returning to their primary place of residence. Students should plan to have items necessary for a prolonged period of restricted movement ready.
- All residential students who are in quarantine or isolation on campus will be fully supported including dining services, counseling, health services, and academic advising.
- Off-campus commuter students are not allowed to quarantine or isolate themselves on campus.
- For off-campus commuter students, faculty, and staff, please review CDC guidelines for quarantine and isolation.
- Please note that the local boards of health have the legal authority to require an individual to isolate or quarantine.
Academics
During the pandemic, UMass Dartmouth’s priority is to provide undergraduate, graduate, and law students with a high-quality educational experience that enables them to continue to make progress towards their degree with the least amount of disruption. In addition to an engaging learning environment, UMass Dartmouth is committed to providing advising and the academic support necessary to facilitate students’ academic success.

With the testing and contact tracing program in place and other lessons learned from the fall semester, UMass Dartmouth will offer a modest number of additional courses in an in-person mode of instruction this spring to ensure students can persist and make timely progress towards the completion of their studies.

• All available modes for instruction for all spring 2021 courses are available in COIN.
• Most lecture-style courses will be offered in a fully remote mode of instruction.
• Labs, studios, clinicals, and other instruction that require on-campus facilities are offered in an in-person mode of instruction.
• There are no date changes to the UMass Dartmouth academic calendar or UMass Law academic calendar for the spring semester.
• Spring recess is currently scheduled to begin on Friday, March 5, 2021. While some institutions have decided to cancel their spring recess, UMass Dartmouth recognizes that the pandemic and its aftermath have a significant impact on the stress levels and mental health of UMassD students, staff, and faculty. This decision to retain spring recess reflects the desire to balance the risks associated with potential travel and the mental health needs of the community.
• The Library and other student support services are open during normal hours throughout the spring semester.
• Necessary health and safety supplies are provided in all instructional spaces.
• Classrooms, laboratories, studios, and clinicals all comply with the latest public health guidance, including:
  o Reconfigured furniture layout where appropriate
  o Limited class sizes
  o Mandatory face coverings
  o Eating and drinking prohibited
  o Routine cleaning and sanitization
• Students should work with their faculty and/or professional academic advisors to select courses that will allow them to make academic progress.
• Student academic support services are available to students via various modalities. Limited in-person advising will be available. Students are strongly encouraged to use remote advising options whenever possible.
Research

All research lab procedures at UMass Dartmouth comply with the Massachusetts Safety Standards for Laboratories to enable activities that are currently allowed by the State Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplaces.

- Only labs that have a “safe operations plan” that includes detailed protocols that comply with the Massachusetts Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplaces requirements and have been approved by the Chief Research Officer may perform on-campus research. Copies of specific lab safety protocols are available.
- Only work that requires the use of on-campus facilities can be performed on-campus.
- On-campus time will be kept to a minimum, with staggered schedules of necessary lab staff.
- All workplaces and equipment that are used must be sanitized by the person using them at the end of their use and before another person can use them. Training and sanitization products are provided.
- A logbook of lab sanitization activity must be kept and maintained in each lab area.
- All trash must be bagged, sealed, and placed outside the lab entrance for daily collection.
- If biohazardous materials boxes need to be removed, investigators should contact Environmental Health and Safety.
- If gloves are worn, they must be discarded every time someone leaves a lab space (unless carrying chemicals) and not re-used.
Students

Protecting the health and safety of students while enabling them to progress towards their educational goals is the most important part of the spring 2021 planning efforts. UMass Dartmouth is committed to supporting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) members of the campus community who have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. This includes counseling, academic advising, and all necessary support services.

- Students must adhere to all safety and wellbeing protocols and are required to complete the *UMassD Shared Responsibility Compact*. This virtual form confirms their commitment to all UMass Dartmouth required safety practices.
- Residential students are strongly discouraged from leaving campus unless for work and/or emergencies.
- If a student is identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive through contact tracing or tests positive themself, they will be required to quarantine or isolate and adhere to all guidance provided by Health Services practitioners.
- The University has specific residence halls and rooms on campus for required periods of quarantine or isolation for residential students. No visitors or guests are allowed in or around identified quarantine or isolation housing at any time.
- All residential students who are in quarantine or isolation on campus will be fully supported by health services, dining services, and additional offices as needed.
- Off-campus/commuter students are not allowed to quarantine or isolate themselves on campus.
- Off-campus/commuter students are encouraged to review [CDC guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov) for quarantine or isolation guidance and to consult with Health Services with any questions or concerns.
- Compliance with these requirements is a condition for returning to and remaining on campus.
- Student academic support services, such as advising, tutoring, writing support, are available to students via various modalities. Limited face-to-face advising is available by appointment. Students should continue to use remote advising options.
- Other support services, including the Counseling Center, Student Health Services, the Center for Access and Success (disability services), Career Center, and others are available via both virtual and limited face-to-face appointments. If you need assistance, please utilize this form.
Housing & Residential Life

The demand to live on campus was high for the fall 2020 semester. Yet, due to the need to de-densify, UMass Dartmouth reduced the number of students who were able to reside on campus. Again, with lessons learned this semester and the proven capabilities of the testing program and other safety policies, the University is inviting more students to live on campus safely.

- There are no guests allowed in residence halls for at least the first two weeks of the semester, based on public health guidance.
- Shared spaces including lounges, laundry rooms, and bathrooms have strict occupancy limits. Bathroom accommodations also have specific assignments for use and undergo frequent cleanings. Bathrooms in the Apartments and Dells are still expected to be cleaned by students.
- To minimize contact, students are required to follow directives for walkways, stairwells, and lounges, and to abide by occupancy restrictions on elevators.
- Staff will continue to assist students but will only meet face-to-face with individuals or small groups where social distancing is possible. Virtual contact is encouraged.
- For those physically able, the use of stairs, rather than elevators, is encouraged.
- Residence halls will be open to students for the duration of the spring 2021 semester, including spring recess.
- Those students who choose to leave campus for spring recess and travel to states not deemed a “Lower-risk State” by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are expected to quarantine upon return to campus in identified travel quarantine housing spaces until they produce a negative test result.
- Students that need to continue living in residence halls beyond the spring semester should contact Housing and Residential Education as soon as possible to discuss options.

Housing Assignments

Housing and Residential Education has utilized existing housing stock to accommodate all residential students with primarily single rooms with some offerings of “pod living” for upper-class students, in apartment-style communities, if public health guidance allows at that time. Housing contracts have been updated to reflect potential outcomes for repeated non-compliance with housing policies and procedures associated with COVID-19 risk reduction.

Housing and Residential Education has communicated with all students how they can apply for housing for the Spring 2021 semester, the specific times lines, and necessary deadlines. The University anticipates being able to fully meet the demand for on-campus housing. UMass Dartmouth encourages students to apply for housing as soon as possible to ensure appropriate assignments and selection. Students who lived on campus in fall 2020 do not have to take any action to retain their current housing assignment; however, should they wish to modify their assignment they should contact Housing and Residential Education.
Move-In
Move-in will require necessary safety measures which include:

- Students arriving or returning to Massachusetts **must** quarantine for 14 days unless they:
  - are traveling from a “Lower-risk State”, as defined by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, **or**
  - can produce, on request, proof of negative viral RT-PCR SARS-CoV2 test result from a test administered on a sample within 72 hours before arrival in Massachusetts, **or**
  - meet the exemption criteria.
- Additionally, travelers **must** fill out the Massachusetts Travel Form. This simple form will help contact tracing efforts if a positive test is confirmed.
- The University has dedicated spaces in residence halls available for residential students to self-quarantine. The earliest date available to begin quarantine on campus for travel purposes will be Monday, January 11, 2021. The nightly charge for housing before students’ formally designated arrival date is $31/day and will be billed to the student’s account. Please contact Housing & Residential Education at 508.999.8140 or housing@umassd.edu to apply for travel quarantine housing.
- Students will have one hour to move-in and are encouraged to pack accordingly.
- Students are allowed one person to assist with move-in, who will be logged by Housing and Residential Education staff. Students and their one helper must complete a COVID-19 symptoms checklist before entering the residence hall.
- All students and their one helper are required to wear a face-covering during move-in.
- A contactless move-in process will be facilitated to the greatest extent possible. A limited number of staff members will be available to help.
- **Law students** have assigned time slots to move-in on Sunday, January 3, 2021.
- **New students** living on campus for the spring semester have assigned time slots to move in on Saturday, January 16, or Sunday, January 17, 2021.
- **Returning students** from the fall semester have assigned time slots to move in on Sunday, January 17, or Monday, January 18, 2021.
- Students are required to bring a personal digital thermometer and other common medical items that can be found on the Health Services website.

Dining Services
Dining Services will remain open with modified capacity and operational protocols to ensure safety for students, faculty, and staff. Students on meal plans will be able to dine in the new residential dining facility, the Grove. The Grove will also offer to-go meals, as will several retail dining locations available to students, faculty, and staff including Dunkin’ and Birch Grill. For more detailed information on changes to the dining experience, please visit the Dining Services website.
Tuition & Financial Aid

The cost of a UMass Dartmouth education includes tuition and required fees, with additional room and board charges for students who live on campus. Tuition and fees are set by the UMass Board of Trustees. There is a tuition freeze for in-state undergraduate students for Academic Year 2020-2021.

Tuition costs for spring 2021 are not differentiated based on the mode of instruction. To maintain a healthy and safe environment, UMass Dartmouth continually monitors the most current public health recommendations and will adapt to changing conditions. By registering for courses, students agree that UMass Dartmouth reserves the right to modify course mode of instruction according to the latest public health guidance. Courses offered remotely are of the same rigor and quality, taught by the same outstanding UMass Dartmouth faculty. The cost to provide instruction does not change based on the mode of instruction. In some cases, the cost of providing remote instruction is higher than in person because of the technological resources required. Students are provided the same resources and support services, such as the Academic Resource Center and academic advising, tutoring, library, language labs, writing, and technology supports regardless of the mode of instruction.

Financial aid awards are posted on a student’s COIN account. Students should monitor their COIN “To Do” list to make sure all required tasks are completed. Students experiencing financial hardship should contact Financial Aid Services. Additional information regarding tuition and fees is available by visiting the Undergraduate Admissions website.

Employees

All faculty and staff are required to view the training video that can be found on the Human Resources website. Further information can be found on the employee portal.
Events & Athletics

All events, athletic contests, and student activities will adhere to the latest CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health recommendations and Commonwealth requirements.

Events

UMass Dartmouth will not be hosting events that are open to external visitors in Spring 2021.

- Meetings and gatherings should be arranged via teleconferencing whenever possible.
- For those few instances when an in-person meeting or gathering of five (5) or more people is necessary, the meeting must be approved in advance by a dean or division head.
- People who are not students, faculty, or staff at UMass Dartmouth may only enter UMass Dartmouth facilities if arrangements have been made in advance and their visit has been approved by a Dean or division head at UMass Dartmouth. Generally, approval will only be given to single individuals or small groups who are on-campus to perform specific tasks, and to people contracted for services by UMass Dartmouth.
- Campus tours for prospective students and families are allowed provided all visitors have registered in advance.
- Parents and family members of residential students who wish to bring something to or visit their students are welcome to do so. However, drop-offs and visits should occur in parking lots or spaces outside of residence halls with social distancing.
- Student activities are limited to UMass Dartmouth students only.

Commencement

Commencement is the most rewarding event on campus, but also the most difficult to plan as it necessitates many people gathering and traveling. UMass Dartmouth is currently exploring all options to find a way to honor UMassD students and their accomplishments safely. Please visit the Commencement website for more information.

Athletics

UMass Dartmouth intends to sponsor intercollegiate competition in most of its sports during the Spring 2021 semester. Working in collaboration with local boards of health, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the CDC, the University will adhere to all current and future health and safety regulations.

The University intends to compete in the sports of men's and women's basketball under the Little East umbrella, as schedules are being discussed and finalized by the conference. As guidelines and protocols warrant, the University intends to compete in all spring sport competition sponsored by the Little East in baseball, softball, women's lacrosse and men's & women's outdoor track and field.

The University intends to compete in the fall sports of football, men's and women's soccer, field
hockey and volleyball this spring, as the logistics of a condensed schedule continue to be discussed and formulated. With a large amount of crossover between student-athletes, there will be no sponsorship of men's and women's cross country in the spring. The MASCAC announced on November 13, 2020, the cancellation of all remaining competition scheduled for the 2020-21 winter season which directly impacts men's ice hockey and men's & women's indoor track and field. The option for non-league events in those programs is being explored.

More information on the status of Spring 2021 semester competition will follow over the next few weeks. For additional updates, please visit corsairathletics.com.

Athletics & Recreation is planning to open the Fitness Center with reduced occupancy and increased cleaning protocols for students living on campus. For more information, please visit the Fitness Center website.

Travel Information
Effective August 1, 2020, all visitors and returning residents entering Massachusetts must follow state travel orders. Additionally, travelers must fill out the Massachusetts Travel Form. Please review the list of “Lower-risk States” as defined by the Commonwealth. Returning to Massachusetts from “Higher-risk States” are expected to quarantine until they produce a negative test result.

Travel during the pandemic is strongly discouraged and should only be undertaken in exceptional circumstances. Therefore, University-related travel is restricted for all students, faculty and staff. Examples of university-related travel include conferences, research, colloquia, data gathering, fieldwork, archival work, human subject research, and student organization sponsored/organized travel, to any location. Please visit the Travel Information website for more information.

Resources & Contacts

- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- Governor Baker’s Plan for Reopening Massachusetts
- UMassD Returning to Campus Informational Website
- Student Affairs Department Directory
- Human Resources – 508.999.8060 or humanresources@umassd.edu
- On-Campus Emergency – UMassD Police – x9191 or 508.999.9191
- Counseling Center – 508.999.8648
- Health Services – 508.999.8982