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CU I&E Submission: Developing the UCCS Orientation Mobile App [1]

Summary

The new UCCS mobile app for orientation provides an early gateway to the campus community. The team wanted students to be able to schedule events, get familiar with campus layout, and organize their to-do actions before orientation even begins. The app highlights specialized tracks for unique participant types (first-year, transfer, veteran/military, parent/family). Students can now focus more time on the social integration process, rather than simply absorbing information.

Submission Highlights

Team Information



Pictured Above:

- Hailey Santonastaso, Orientation Program Coordinator
- Nick Lockwood, Director of Orientation and New Student Outreach
- University of Colorado Colorado Springs

Description

The UCCS Orientation Department developed the very first UCCSorientation mobile app using Involvio software. This new technology enhances the student orientation experience and assists students with their integration into UCCS by providing an early gateway to the campus community.

Students are instructed to download the app prior to orientation. Upon selecting their orientation date, they're given immediate access to critical campus resources (maps, contact information, departmental webpages, orientation schedules, etc.). This allows new students to familiarize themselves with the campus and their to-do items before orientation begins. Students can create event reminders that will guide them from one orientation event to the next. The app also highlights specialized tracks within the schedule for unique participant types (e.g., first-year, transfer, veteran/military, and parent and family).

Development of the UCCSorientation app involves designing graphics, writing event descriptions, listing session times and locations, creating an interactive map, and developing a comprehensive campus resource list with integrated contact information and links that are all mobile-friendly and readily accessible for users on-the-go. Orientation Leaders are responsible for the organization, design, and writing required to develop and maintain this comprehensive app.

How does this benefit the University?

With the implementation of the UCCSorientation app, new students can build connections with UCCS, before, during, and after orientation. Some of these specific benefits include:

- Uncertainty reduction- students are more familiar with the orientation schedule, campus departments and support services before attending orientation.
- Immediate access- to campus information in a manner that suits their generational preferences.
- Centralized guide- campus information is streamlined into a handheld resource guide.
- Orientation satisfaction- helps students navigate the campus setting, community, and resources.
- Promotes sustainability- fewer print publications such as schedules and handouts.
- Access to assessment learning outcomes- by leveraging built in mobile app surveys.
- Well informed students- are better prepared for orientation with a foundational knowledge of the university, which allows them to focus more time on the social integration process, rather than simply absorbing information.

Implementation/Future Plans

The UCCSorientation app was implemented in April 2017 for the summer/spring orientation cycle and had 2,378 downloads. During the 2018 summer/current spring 2019 cycle, the UCCSorientation app has 2,207 additional downloads and counting.

Through the initiative and partnership of Office of Information Technology (OIT) and Student Life, the UCCSorientation app is currently being expanded into a campus wide app. Their expanded version of the app entitled “UCCSconnect,” will include access to canvas, the student portal, and a largely expanded student involvement functionality. In the coming months, students will now have the functionality to sign up for student clubs, message other students and connect with campus events.

File Attachment

Source URL:https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/past-submissions/cu-ie-submission-developing-uccs-orientation-mobile-app

Links
[1] https://www.cu.edu/controller/i-e-awards/past-submissions/cu-ie-submission-developing-uccs-orientation-mobile-app