

One University in Many Places: The My ASU Story

This is the story I compiled and wrote for submission to the 2011 ASU President's Award for Innovation, which the University Technology Office won as a result.

A Culture of Progress

Prior to My ASU, Arizona State University offered several different online experiences to its students, faculty and staff without a central starting point. ASU's vision to transform higher education into "One University in Many Places" led the University to reexamine its online presence and streamline the delivery of its academic and administrative services to the ASU community.

In February 2007, the University began exploring ways to transition the ASU community away from using multiple Web pages to find information and accomplish tasks and toward one personalized My ASU experience. The My ASU team was formed with experts in processes, communication and technology from members across the University, including University Student Initiatives, the Provost's Office and the University Technology Office.

The My ASU team looked toward other higher education institutions (University of California, Los Angeles and Northern Arizona University) as well as corporations such as Amazon and Yahoo to better grasp the ways in which users prefer to consume online content. The My ASU team explored hundreds of design concepts and off the shelf products before finally organizing student focus groups and implementing student surveys to help decide which features would best serve the ASU community.

The My ASU team also took advantage of new technologies including PeopleSoft, Drupal, Google Apps for Education and eAdvisor and folded these technologies into the development of My ASU, creating a streamlined and simplified online experience that personalizes content to individual students, faculty and staff and helps achieve higher retention and graduation rates. The successful integration of ASU's new student administration and human resources systems are a foundational component of the My ASU environment.

A Culture of Service

My ASU went live in the Summer of 2008 and has remained fully operational with incremental enhancements. My ASU quickly became the virtual projection of the University, the online embodiment of "One University in Many Places."

My ASU is the primary point of contact between ASU and its students, applicants, faculty, staff and friends. It provides each affiliate type with a customized and personalized experience that includes integrated, interactive access to the information and services intrinsic to his or her role in the institution, such as registering for courses, checking financial aid status, logging into email and managing courses. My ASU is also the central point of deployment for new technology into the University community, including access to learning management systems, registration

systems, the ASU Help Center, Gmail for ASU, Microsoft Exchange, My Apps, My Files, My Docs and more.

The screenshot shows the My ASU student portal for a user named Sparky Sundevil. The browser address bar displays <https://webapp4.asu.edu/myasu/student>. The page features a navigation bar with links to ASU Home, My ASU, Colleges & Schools, A-Z Index, Directory, Map, and a user profile for Liisa. A search bar is also present.

The main content area is titled "Sparky Sundevil" and includes several sections:

- Quick Links:** My Docs, My Apps, My Files, My Sites, My Stuff (Google), My Bookmarks, ASU on Facebook, Accounts & Resources, My Finances, Library, Transportation, Housing & Dining, Health & Wellness, Jobs & Careers, and Tutoring & Support.
- My Classes:** A list of courses for Spring '10, Summer '10, Fall '10, Winter '10, and Spring '11. Courses include CIS 394 (Advanced Excel in Business), CIS 440 (Systems Design/Electronic Comm), COM 263 (Elements Intercultural Comm), ECN 306 (Survey International Economics), and TEL 493 (Honors Thesis). Instructors listed are Hayes, Kauffman, Carey, Robinson, Hill, and Gehrke.
- Announcements:** ASU offices closed Monday, Jan. 17, 2011; Support and counseling available to talk about Tucson tragedy; 2010 year in review: ASU in pictures; "I Have a Dream" speech reenactment highlights MLK Week activities.
- ASU Events | Academic Calendar | Sports Calendar:** A list of dates for Spring Tuition/Fee Payment Deadline, Complete Withdrawal Deadline, Degree Conferment Date, Last Day of Classes, Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday, and Spring Late Registration & Drop/Add.
- My Programs and eAdvisor:** Links to Programs, Find Programs, Guides & Tips, and Graduation. It lists programs like Computer Information Systems (BS) and Small Business and Entrepreneurship (certificate).
- My Tasks:** A section for Hold items (none) and To Do items (none). A "My Notes" box indicates that the section is not viewable when using View-as-Student.
- My W. P. Carey School of Business:** A "Happy New Year" message and information about the W. P. Carey Business Career Center and scholarship opportunities.
- Weather:** A small weather widget showing current, today, and Wednesday's weather for Tempe, AZ.

At the bottom of the page, there is a banner for "ASU has talent!" with the text "Join the competition Entrance deadline is Jan. 14, 2011". A feedback button and a footer with links for Copyright & Trademark, Accessibility, Privacy, Emergency, and Contact ASU are also visible.

My ASU

In FY2009, ASU released My Files and My Apps through My ASU. These two services give members of the ASU community access to secure Web-based storage and over 250 software applications. Using Web-based delivery technologies, students and faculty can access these applications from anywhere in the world, on their own personal devices. As this service matures, an even broader set of applications will be made available, and the system will be continually enhanced to increase usability and performance.

The My Finances box displays important dates like tuition/fee payment deadlines and makes it easy to view and make these payments. Students can also search for ASU scholarships, accept loans, grants and financial aid and manage Sun Card dollars and meal plans.

The screenshot shows the My ASU website interface. The main content area is titled "My Finances" and includes several sections:

- My Account:** Financial Aid, Sun Dollars
- My Charges:** A table with columns for Description, Due Date, and Charge. One entry is "Tuition UG Nonres Tempe" with a due date of 01/11/2011 and a charge of \$7,116.00. A "Total Balance" of \$7,116.00 is shown with a "Make a Payment" button.
- My Financial Holds:** A message stating "You have no Holds to complete."
- Helpful Links:** Tuition Installment Plan, IRS 1098-T, Add Authorized Payer, Payment Options, Refund Policy, Direct Deposit Enrollment, Contact Us.
- Cost Estimator:** Fields for Year (2010-2011), Campus (Tempe), Career (Undergraduate), Admit Term, Admitted As, and Housing, with a "Calculate" button.
- Important Dates:** A list of dates from Jan 11 to Jan 31, including financial aid acceptance, tuition/fee payment deadlines, and automatic enrollment.

The left sidebar contains "Quick Links" such as My Docs, My Apps, My Files, My Sites, My Stuff, My Bookmarks, ASU on Facebook, Accounts & Resources, My Finances, Library, Transportation, Housing & Dining, Health & Wellness, Jobs & Careers, and Tutoring & Support. A weather widget shows "Current 61, Today 67, Wed 70" for Tempe, AZ.

At the bottom, there is a banner for "ASU has talent!" with the text "Join the competition. Entrance deadline is Jan. 14, 2011." and a footer with "Copyright & Trademark | Accessibility | Privacy | Emergency | Contact ASU".

My Finances Box

The My Classes box makes it easier for faculty to see their rosters, teaching schedules, academic status reports and grading options. The new My Profile simplifies the entry and review of bio-demo data for students, staff and faculty.

Also in FY2009, the My ASU team added a host of new capabilities to increase process performance for employees, including notification and delivery of benefits information as well as tracking of all work, vacation and sick time.

Narrowcasting capabilities now built into My ASU allow colleges, schools and administrative departments to post announcements targeted at specific audiences. Examples of successful narrowcasting include commencement ticket reservations, benefit open enrollment announcements and notifications of appointment -- all of which were delivered through a series of differentiated announcements to specialized populations through My ASU.

In Spring 2010, My ASU Mobile was released, allowing students, faculty and staff to access My ASU from their hand held devices. Also in Spring 2010, My ASU launched several enhancements, including employee "To Dos" and a collaborative and streamlined finances and financial aid section for students.

ASU is currently working on creating a more refined My ASU experience for prospective students (freshman and transfer students).

My ASU will continue to become increasingly personalized and process oriented, supporting the growth of online self-service for the administrative and academic needs of the ASU community.

A Culture of Performance

My ASU became the most popular destination on the ASU Web site only two months after its release and now draws more than 250,000 hits from more than 40,000 unique individuals every day. During ASU's busiest times, such as the start of a new semester, My ASU draws over 400,000 hits from over 75,000 unique visitors per day.

A year after its release, a questionnaire revealed that 88% of surveyed students use My ASU every day.

In a 2009 survey, only 60% of students said paying their tuition was successful through My ASU, which led to the release of a new Finances and Financial Aid portion of My ASU. The same survey also revealed that 89% of students successfully find links to their advisors, which led ASU to run specific ads during key advising times on how to contact advisors. The surveys continue to help expand or highlight My ASU at relevant times in a student's life cycle.

Student reaction to My ASU has been overwhelmingly positive. A review by the State Press, ASU's student newspaper, said:

This site is pretty legit. It's got everything we need right there on one page, including our needs as students — schedules, drop/add, advising, grades, financial aid, general info, Blackboard and pertinent-to-daily-life links are only one quick click away — and as employees. It even has clever little tabs all over that remind us lovingly of our other Internet pastime, Facebook.

Examples of typical student feedback include:

- *I love it! My ASU is very comprehensive and convenient.*
- *I LIKE*
- *I think My ASU is setup efficiently. It's always nice to have a homepage that provides all the info you need on one page--much more user friendly. Keep up the great work.*
- *FREAKIN' SWEET*

Numerous institutions have requested information from ASU asking how to implement a similar online experience for their university communities. ASU will continue to expand My ASU's range of personalized features and will continue to survey users and gather feedback (such as more calendaring and scheduling of events across campus to include academics, athletic and art events) to keep My ASU fresh and maintain a current level of information delivery and self-service options.



The My ASU Team