The CSUN App Gets A Makeover

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CSUN students can easily find information they need with the newly redesigned CSUN mobile app. Photo by Lee Choo.

Thousands of users of the California State University, Northridge mobile app received a pleasant surprise when they opened the app after spring break. The CSUN app got a makeover with a complete redesign and added features, including an interactive 3D campus map.

Since 2013, the CSUN community has been able to access a wide array of features, including dining information, campus map, student account information, directories and even class enrollment through the free mobile app.

The new redesign kept all previous features while adding an event feed, pay-by-phone parking, student profiles and a 3D interactive campus map.

"We've largely had the same look and feel of the app since we launched," said Associate Vice President of Information Technology Ben Quillian. "What we're looking to do now with the re-launch is to provide a really nice graphical interface that makes it easier for students to find the information that they're looking for."

CSUN Information Technology, Student Marketing and Communication, University Advancement and Facilities Planning worked together on the re-launch project. In-app user feedback, surveys and a student focus group were utilized to find what key features and design elements students desire of the app. This research and design process resulted in a more photo-based interface that takes inspiration from popular apps and mobile trends and is easier to navigate.

The CSUN app is a great tool not only for students, but the entire CSUN community.

"The biggest audience is our students, but it's just as relevant for outside visitors and staff," said Quillian. "And it is available to everyone."

Campus visitors can use the interactive map to easily find where they need to go, purchase parking in-app or use the self-guided virtual tour to learn more about the academic and administrative buildings on campus.

"An updated 3D map was the most requested student item on the IT survey of the last two years," Quillian said. "So we're really pleased to deliver on that."

The new 3D interactive campus map eases navigation across campus by providing a graphic view of the campus, 360° panoramas and improved search capabilities.

An integration with Google Street View allows users to drag-and-drop the "Pegman" icon to select and view places on campus, and an integration with the campus shuttle show users, in real time, the shuttle moving through campus.

Another new feature added to the app is myCSUNprofile. The feature has previously been available to students online in the myNorthridge Portal. In myCSUNprofile, students can not only update information such as contact information and their emergency contact, but also record the pronunciation of their names and choose to have their CSUN ID photo shown to faculty on class rosters.

Upcoming additions to the mobile app will be focused on notifications, according to Quillian. There will specifically be a strong focus on personalized notifications, such as for when grades get posted or a registration appointment is coming up.

"It's much easier for students to get something that pops up on their phone with important information than getting an email that they may not check," said Quillian.

With today's students generally being avid mobile users, Quillian emphasizes that IT will continuously improve the app to enhance the CSUN student experience.

"Every feature that we roll out that is for the students, we are going to make sure that it's on a mobile device as well," said Quillian. "It's pretty clear that that's where students are, that's where they are looking all the time. Every place we can, we are going to try to meet the students where they are with every service that we're rolling out."

To download or learn more about the CSUN app visit: https://www.csun.edu/it/csun-mobile-app.