

AN ANALYSIS OF KIOSKS AT UCF

**Lucas Henderson, LEAD Scholar
Julia Pet-Edwards, UCF 21 Project Director**

**UCF 21-TR-98-008
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UCF 21 Operational Excellence Initiative
Department of Industrial Engineering and Management Systems
University of Central Florida
P.O. Box 162450
Orlando, FL 32816-2450
(407) 207-4900
FAX: (407) 207-4903
ucf21@iems.engr.ucf.edu
<http://ie.engr.ucf.edu/ucf21/>

Approved: _____

Dr. Julia Pet-Edwards
UCF21 Project Director

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ABSTRACT

This Technical Report is part of a systems analysis to examine the importance and satisfaction levels of students with respect to student services at the University of Central Florida. An important information service at UCF is the set of Kiosks that are located across the UCF main campus and branch campuses. This technical report presents an analysis of the accessibility, content, and usage of the Kiosks.

UCF maintains fourteen Kiosks primarily located within buildings on the UCF campus. The evaluation indicates that while the Kiosks provide students with useful information, there are some potential problems regarding the recency of the information as well as operational maintenance of the Kiosks.

THE UCF 21 PROJECT TEAM

Dr. Julia Pet-Edwards, Director
Catherine Baltunis, Public Relations,
Christina Caruso, Technical Support
Lucas Henderson, Office Support

Dr. Robert L. Armacost, Systems Manager	Dr. Charles H. Reilly, Process Manager
Doreen Susan Lanham, Systems Analyst	Carolyn Pace, Process Analyst
Linda Trocine, Systems Analyst	Mitra Eriksson, Process Analyst
Bartricia Williams, Systems Analyst	Hans Peder Hagglund, Process Analyst

AN ANALYSIS OF KIOSKS AT UCF

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE

The University of Central Florida currently serves a diverse student body population of over 28,000 students. One of University's primary objectives has been and continues to be to improve the quality of institutional services. Several offices (e.g. Student Affairs and Quality Initiatives) have administered surveys to obtain an index of student satisfaction. Their findings show a high student approval rating with respect to most academic issues, in contrast to a lower approval rating with respect to those issues generally classified as "student services". Quality Initiatives has worked closely with the process owners to improve their processes. Their approach has helped to enhance communication and understanding within various organizational functions and improve processes. There is a need, however, to identify and address systemic issues that cross organizational boundaries that involve multiple process owners.

The University, as part of its Strategic Planning Initiative, has provided funding to support the University's Customer Focus for the 21st Century (UCF 21) project to address this need for a systems level study of student services. The primary goals of the UCF 21 project are to: 1) develop a systems level view of student services and their interrelationships; 2) identify systems level improvement opportunities, including re-engineering; 3) recommend changes and/or in-depth studies; and 4) develop implementation plans for changes and/or in-depth studies.

As part of the UCF 21 Project, there is a need to examine the importance and satisfaction levels of various student services. A major information service provided to students is the Kiosk. This technical report provides an evaluation of the accessibility, content, and usage of the Kiosks. Section 2 of this report provides an overview of the Kiosks, describing the intent of the Kiosks. Section 3 describes the locations of the Kiosks and evaluates their accessibility. The content of the Kiosks is described and evaluated in Section 4. Section 5 summarizes the trends in the usage of the Kiosks. This is followed by some general recommendations in Section 6.

2.0 OVERVIEW OF KIOSKS

Information for students is provided through many means at UCF. For example, through the Internet, the UCF website provides students with a wealth of information about UCF and its programs and services (see UCF 21-TR-98-007). Polaris is a web-based student service providing students with access to their individual data as well as providing an alternative means for registration. Students may also access information by visiting offices directly, or contacting offices by mail, phone, or email. Kiosks provide an additional source of information for students.

The primary goal of the Kiosks is to provide students with information on a more accessible basis than through visits to offices or phone calls. The Kiosks provide students with access to their records, admissions information, information about registration, graduation, and other university policies and procedures, financial aid

information, information about student accounts, campus maps and directories, event calendar, various services for students, frequently asked questions, and employment and career planning.

3.0 AN EVALUATION OF KIOSK ACCESSIBILITY

Each Kiosk remains operational 24 hours a day. Students, however, can only access a Kiosk at the times when the building in which it is located is open. Kiosks have been placed at a variety of locations across campus and at area campuses. This allows students the opportunity to access a Kiosk without having to go very far out of their way.

3.1 Location of Kiosks

There are fourteen Kiosks available to the public. They are placed at the following locations:

1. Administration building on the second floor by the information booth
2. Administration building on the first floor behind the elevator
3. Administration building at the entrance to the Registrar's office
4. Computer Sciences Building lobby.
5. CEBA 1, second floor hallway that leads to CEBA 2.
6. Joint use facility between CEBA 1 and CEBA 2, second floor near elevator.
7. CEBA 2 second floor, near stairwell #7
8. Health and Public Affairs lobby.
9. Library to your right just inside the entrance.
10. Health and Physics Building southwest lobby.
11. College of Education lobby near the information booth.
12. Daytona Beach Community College, building 34, students lounge.
13. Brevard Community College, Lifelong Learning Center, second floor hallway next to student lounge.
14. SARC, room 101.

3.2 Hours of Operation

The hours that the Kiosks are accessible are the same hours that the buildings they reside in are open. In many cases, this limits the accessibility to a Kiosk during evening and weekend hours.

3.3 Conclusions About Accessibility

The buildings in which the Kiosks are found are in general both accessible (primarily during daytime hours and weekdays) and heavily traveled by both students and visitors. Each Kiosk location is pointed out during a tour of the campus for visitors. During the tours, visitors are also shown how to use them and what they are used for.

While the Kiosks appear to be fairly accessible, there does not appear to be a listing of locations of the Kiosks that is accessible to students. The UCF website only lists the Student Government Kiosk for purchase of tickets. Consequently, if students

who had not attended a recent tour were looking for a Kiosk, they would likely have difficulty in locating the nearest one.

4.0 EVALUATION OF THE CONTENTS OF KIOSKS

The content of the Kiosks was documented and evaluated with respect to student services information. In addition, an evaluation of the recency of the information contained in the Kiosks was performed.

4.1 Description of Contents

The following reflects the table of contents for the Kiosks as of April 1998.

- 1 Your UCF records
- 2 Admissions information
 - location and hours
 - campus tour information
 - admissions calendar
 - application information
 - degree programs
 - application deadlines
 - tuition and fees estimates
 - residency classifications
 - campus profile
- 3 Records and Registration
 - location and hours
 - graduation procedures
 - policies and procedures
 - registration calendar
 - withdraw process
 - course information
 - description of colleges
- 4 Financial aid information
 - location and hours
 - how to apply
 - school information
 - college work study
 - maintaining eligibility
 - financial aid calendar
 - types
 - policies and procedures
 - special bulletins
- 5 Student accounts and tuition

- location and hours
 - policies and procedures
 - tuition payment guide
 - refunds
 - student accounts
 - current fee schedule
 - cashier's office information
- 6 Campus maps and directories
- main campus
 - building's direct
 - parking
 - Brevard
 - South Orlando
 - campus facilities
 - department directory
 - faculty/ staff directory
 - Daytona
 - Downtown Orlando
- 7 Calendar and events
- academic calendar
 - clubs and organizations
 - student activities
 - daily special events
 - athletic events
 - cultural events
 - student government
 - week-at-a-glance
- 8 Services for students
- bookstore
 - computer labs
 - food service
 - libraries
 - credit union
 - health services
 - check cashing
 - clubs and organizations
 - campus policies
 - student government
 - all campus card
- 9 Frequently asked questions
- academic emergencies
 - classes and grades
 - confusing words and phrases

- paperwork and procedure
 - safety
 - significant trivia
 - transportation and housing
- 10 Employment and career planning
- part time
 - career planning
 - college work studies
 - co-op
 - job placement
 - on campus recruiting

4.2 Evaluation of Content about Student Services

The content of student services provides information on when the bookstore, recreational services, the computer labs, the credit union, and the health center are open and each of their locations. For the new students on campus, the clubs and organizations section allows them to view what each of them offers. The UCF 21 team has identified 107 different student services (see UCF 21-TR-98-003). There are a number of significant student services that are not included in the listing provided in the Kiosk such as Counseling and Testing Services and Veterans Affairs.

4.3 Evaluation of Recency and Accuracy of Contents

The Kiosks are updated once a month. Consequently, the accuracy of the information will depend on when the individual accesses the Kiosk in relation to the last update. This can cause some major problems when a student accesses their academic records. Changes in majors, for example, may have taken place in the appropriate college, department, and student records, but there may be a one month delay before the change is reflected in the Kiosk.

5.0 EVALUATION OF KIOSK USAGE

During the months of December 1997 and January 1998 it was found that for the two most heavily used Kiosks (located on the first floor of the Administration building) there were approximately 3000 visits per month on each. This was followed by over 2200 visits for the Kiosks located in the CEBA joint use facility, CSB, and EDU. For January alone, the 14 Kiosks were used over 22,000 times. The top five uses during January 1998 were as follows:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1 | 2300 unofficial transcripts |
| 2 | 2132 class schedules |
| 3 | 2109 financial aid information |
| 4 | 1232 college costs |
| 5 | 940 grades last term |

During the week before the April 1998 registration for the summer and fall terms of 1998, the usage for the Kiosks appeared to increase because of the Polaris system of on-line registration. The increased usage may be attributed to the students' need to check their pin codes before they could register by phone.

During a ten hour study of the Kiosks on the main UCF campus, there were 110 students that used the Kiosk only for checking their pin code. Twenty-five students checked their pin code and then their unofficial transcript. An additional twenty seven students used the Kiosks for uses other than that of the pin code and transcript.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The Kiosk system appears to be a fairly highly utilized system, particularly just prior to and during registration when students would like to perform a quick check of their records. The location of the Kiosks allows students to quickly and easily check for information between their classes. While much of the current information contained in the Kiosks is important to the students, our analysis indicates that there are a number of deficiencies.

Kiosk usage appears to increase around the time of registration as students access their records to prepare to register by phone. With only fourteen Kiosks available (twelve on the UCF main campus), it is important that they all be accessible, that the information is accurate and useful, and that the Kiosk is in good operating condition. The lack of recency of information provided by the Kiosks and Kiosks that are in disrepair may create a problem during registration as the following "run-around" experience of a member of the UCF 21 team indicates:

"I spent part of this morning checking out three of the Kiosk machines. Part of my motivation was to find out why I was unable to register last night for the spring semester. The voice response system told me to see the Registrar.

I checked the machine in the library first since I was already there early this morning. When I got to the screen to look at my hold status, it was blank. Then I touched "main menu" and it crashed the machine!

So, I headed over to Administration Building to try another. The machine in the Records office wasn't working -- it had red squiggly lines across the screen. (Meanwhile I asked a person why I had a hold - she said patent form, go to the Graduate Admissions office.)

I proceeded to the Graduate Admissions office to find a line of six people out the door. Half of them were there because of registration holds. I gave them some hell because I already signed a form last semester, they should have it on file, I wasn't notified that I had a hold, and why couldn't they just find my existing form instead of making me sign another. No good answers...

I found another Kiosk in the Administration building to try. I checked most of the menu options in it. The student accounts button (while checking an individual's records) says "under development" after you click it. As I said above, the hold did not show up under the holds screen. And my major was incorrectly listed as "Elec. Engr. Tech - Elec. Systems" - I have never heard of such a major. Graduation status was also under development. And, at least for me, there's no financial aid information to view.

I did find a list of many student services - primarily a list of student organizations and clubs. There are on the order of 100 or more of these. I didn't find anything of benefit on the Kiosk except the unofficial transcript printout and the list of student organizations (but only for the UCF 21 project is this of interest to me)."

The Kiosks have a very good potential for providing useful and timely information for students. However, we have identified a number of potential issues, including lack of recency and accuracy of the information within student records, incomplete and missing information, a lack of comprehensive information about services, non-working Kiosks, and a lack of information about the location of the nearest Kiosk.

Implementation of some following suggestions would make the Kiosks more useful to students:

1. ensure that the information is accurate and timely by instituting more frequent updates
2. ensure that the Kiosks are in good working order
3. including a listing of classes that are closed during registration time would be helpful in preparing a schedule
4. including a listing of the type of hold that a student has and the process to remove the hold would be helpful
5. a more complete listing of student services, offices, and locations could be added
6. additional Kiosks located in buildings or other locations with 24 hour accessibility would be useful
7. a sign on each Kiosk listing the locations of other nearby Kiosks