

UC San Diego First Public University to Provide Its Own iPhone Application

A top-10 educational download for iPhone this week

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UCSD map information via the new UCSD iPhone application.

The University of California, San Diego this week became the first public university in the nation to offer an iPhone application that provides mobile access to the latest information about its courses, faculty, athletics and even videos from the university's YouTube channel.

The free application will be most helpful to students, who will be able to touch the screen of an iPhone or iPod Touch to access a wide variety of information about UC San Diego, including current and next-quarter course listings, an interactive campus map that pinpoints the location of each course's classroom, and the ability to telephone, email or send a text message to instructors teaching any course of interest.

"It's going to provide so much information in such a sleek interface that it's going to add a whole new dimension to students' day-to-day experiences on campus," said Elazar C. Harel, assistant vice chancellor of administrative computing and telecommunications at UC San Diego. "By the end of the year, many of the students will also be able to use the application on a wider variety of handheld devices and use those devices to listen to audio podcasts of previous lectures while they're going to that day's class."

Information about this application and download instructions can be found at <http://iphone.ucsd.edu>. By the end of 2009, a Blackberry equipped with multi-touch capabilities will operate the same application.

UCSD video information via the new UCSD iPhone application.

The new application was developed for UC San Diego in only two months by TerriblyClever Design, a Palo Alto, Calif.-based startup company formed by two Stanford University undergraduate students. Harel said the TerriblyClever team was able to make a variety of improvements to an iPhone application that had been developed previously for Stanford and Duke University.

"Students are excited about the new application and their emails and Facebook and Twitter messages have resulted in more than 2,100 downloads of the application the first two days it was available," said Emily Deere, executive director of the Administrative Computing and Telecommunications Applications Group at UC San Diego. "We were caught off guard when our application shot up to one of the top-10 educational iPhone downloads of the week."

The UC San Diego campus is one of the most networked locations in the world, with more than 2,500 Wi-Fi access points that blanket the campus with high-speed wireless Internet connectivity. The lower-cost iPod Touch can use the same application within range of any Wi-Fi access point. In areas off campus or otherwise without Wi-Fi connectivity, iPhone users will be able to use their cell phones' signals to access the same information.

"UC San Diego has been on the cutting edge for many years of offering broadband wired and wireless Internet connectivity to faculty, staff and students, and this infrastructure will mesh seamlessly with this amazing new application," said Steve Relyea, vice chancellor of business affairs. "In just the first few days that the application has been available, we've gotten great ideas from every corner of the campus on how to make the service even better."

UCSD sports information via the new UCSD iPhone application.

A UC San Diego student organization called the iPhone App Development Club is one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the new service. "This app is so convenient, easy to use and powerful that it's already considered a must-have, especially for new students," said Alex Dodge, a UC San Diego student and a principal member of the club. "After only a few minutes of checking out the new UC San Diego app, one of the students commented that he had no idea we had so many intercollegiate athletic teams on this campus."

The iPhone application provides UC San Diego sports news, schedules, and scores for everything from basketball and crew to volleyball and water polo.

"It opens up a whole new avenue of visibility for us in our key demographic target group - college-age students," said Ken Grosse, senior associate athletic director for intercollegiate athletics at UC San Diego. "We just saw it for the first time a few days ago, and our younger staff is very excited about the marketing and communications opportunities it offers."

Current and prospective students and their parents can use the application to browse and search for current and future course schedules, including course descriptions, section times and locations, instructors' contact information and other pieces of information from the official Schedule of Classes found at UC San Diego's TritonLink website. Users of the application will also have access to videos available on UC San Diego's YouTube channel.

UCSD course information via the new UCSD iPhone application.

The application includes a searchable campus directory of faculty, staff and students. A tap on a touch-screen will provide options to make an immediate phone call, text message or email. Application users can even use the feature to quickly update their iPhone contacts list.

An interactive map feature offers a convenient way to search the campus for buildings by their name, pinpoint them on the map, view building photos, and see the position of those buildings relative to the current position of the person holding the iPhone or iPod Touch using GPS services.

"We predict that in a year or two, everybody with a mobile device such as an iPhone will be able to use this application," Harel said. "And by then, we will have campus news and events and many other features added to the menu."

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