CatCloud student portal brings new functionality to student tools

University Information Technology Services

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Beginning this fall, students have a new, all-in-one digital portal that allows them to actively manage their personal and academic needs.

Built initially for undergraduate students, CatCloud is integrated with D2L, which is used by students and instructors for sharing course-related information and documents, such as syllabi, readings, assignments and grades.

CatCloud automatically imports items and grades from the current semester and allows students to view their classes and manage corresponding items. Using the available grades for assignments and quizzes, students can visualize grade scenarios, and estimate their overall cumulative grade. They also can view feedback from instructors and the status of their requests to student service units, such as the Office of the Registrar and the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid.

"CatCloud allows students to take further control of their academic success through setting goals, and then tracking and planning against those goals in their classes," said Darcy Van Patten, chief technology officer.

CatCloud improves students’ ability to:

- View upcoming assignments and quizzes, classes and grades, appointments and events in a single calendar.
- Manage upcoming assignments and quizzes, even if they don’t appear in D2L.
- View grades and class averages for all assignments and quizzes in one place.
- Get notifications of key enrollment dates for classes.
- Customized the user experience through quick links.
- View their CatCash balance and recharge when needed.
- View meal swipes remaining and dining dollars remaining (for students with a meal plan).
- Find and schedule appointments with advisers and other student support organizations.

Additionally, students have a variety of options for customizing their experience, ensuring they are seeing information that is specific to their circumstances.

"The best part about CatCloud, in my opinion, is that this was developed by students, for students," said senior Mya Cisneros.

In alignment with a commitment by University Information Technology Services to incorporate the student voice in digital innovation, students are a key part of the development team, working alongside developers in the Trellis program to create and support the product. They also chose the portal’s name in a vote held in fall 2021.

CatCloud – contained within the Trellis initiative of the University’s strategic plan – is a collaboration involving University Information Technology Services, the Office of Instruction and Assessment, instructors, students and student support units.

The first pilot program of CatCloud was conducted in the W.A. Franke Honors College in January 2022.

The CatCloud team continues to work with a representative group of students on future features, and the portal will eventually be available to graduate and professional students. Undergraduates can submit feedback on current features and suggestions for new features using the UITS service website.