



STFC

Student Technology Fee Committee

At the University of Washington

Proposal

No annual report

UAC - MyPlan Year Two

Introduction

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Descriptions **Abstract**

The MyPlan year two proposal is being submitted under the \"Frontier Technology\" category because it delivers rich, Web 2.0 features to improve the student experience, and because it is being developed using a Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) to ensure that it delivers long-term value to future students. Proposed scope is based on input from over 400 students who responded to a recent survey. Demographic data show strong response both from undergraduate and graduate students, and our final scope proposal includes features that are specifically intended to ensure that the MyPlan system provides value to all students, regardless of class standing and \"in major\" status. If funded, MyPlan year two will build upon multi-quarter, academic planning capabilities by allowing students to compare program requirements across multiple academic programs, adding advisor created sample plans, and enabling students to have both a primary and alternate plan. MyPlan year two would also support pre-registration planning by providing robust tools for searching, filtering, and finding sections of interest. Additional details about scope can be found in the benefits section.

Students are under more pressure than ever to graduate quickly, competition for desirable majors and courses is increasing, and academic requirements can be complex and difficult to navigate. Students need enhanced student-centered features that support their needs. MyPlan will be developed collaboratively with students and advisors using industry-proven user-centered design processes. Ongoing research and input from students will be used as appropriate to adjust scope to deliver the highest value features.

Category Justification

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Background

The University of Washington has a variety of web-based, student facing self-service systems that support activities such as

registration, tuition payment, degree audit, and financial aid acceptance. For the most part these systems were developed in the late 90s as a means to move away from paper processing and phone based registration. While they meet the minimum requirements of allowing student to perform critical transactions, they are very limited in the features they provide, do not provide the information that students need to make decisions, and do not provide an integrated end-to-end experience for students. As a result, students need to use several stand-alone systems to access information they need and devise their own tools for academic planning.

MyPlan Year One Scope

MyPlan was originally funded through a Student Tech Fee (STF) award of \$420,000 that was approved in April of 2011. MyPlan year 1 scope that will be delivered in summer of 2012 includes the following broad features:

Finding courses - robust searching, filtering and save function that allows students to find courses of interest based on basic course data, as well as program requirements

Academic planning - the ability for students to plan future coursework and be notified when courses of interest are published in the time schedule

Improved academic progress tracking - improved usability of degree audit reports and integration with finding courses (by program requirements) and adding courses to an academic plan

Share with advisors - the ability for a student to share their plan with an advisor to get feedback

Explore programs - improved access to degree program information, including program requirements

In addition to these major features, MyPlan year one is also focusing on improving the breadth and quality of data that can be surfaced through MyPlan. Key activities include partnering with the Graduate School and graduate academic programs to pilot inclusion of graduate programs in the UW's degree audit system, and partnering with the Office of the Registrar on their biennial general catalog refresh. Additional details about the focus and deliverables for MyPlan year one can be found on the MyPlan project site: <https://depts.washington.edu/myplan/>

Benefits to Students and the University

MyPlan year one and two deliverables focus on making it easier for students to find courses and programs of interest, plan their

academic career, execute on that plan by preparing for registration, and track their academic progress. MyPlan year two will deliver the following feature set:

Comparison of program requirements across multiple majors - allows students who have not yet declared a major to develop flexible plans that allow them to make progress toward more than one major of interest. This feature is particularly valuable to students who are considering competitive majors.

Ability for students to develop and maintain a back-up plan - allows students to adjust course as necessary, which is important for students interested in competitive majors, students who are considering multiple degree programs, and students who for a variety of reasons need to adjust their plans after declaring a major.

Advisor shared sample plans that can be used as templates - our research shows that the majority of academic programs distribute sample plans to students. Providing these sample plans in a systematic and consistent way will make it easier for students to access and use this valuable information. Additionally, individual plans are critical to graduate students, who often work from highly individualized plan that are developed by their faculty advisors.

Plan for non-course activities (e.g., study abroad, internships, thesis work, etc.) - allows students to project non-course activities, which will encourage them to think about other experience based learning opportunities, and allow them to track and share this information with advisors.

Pre-registration planning - providing the ability to search, filter, and find courses based on section data, which could include instructor, day/time, seat availability, credits, and additional course fees. This feature set will make it significantly easier for students to prepare for registration.

Pre-registration section \"watch list\" and notifications - will alert students to changes in the time schedule or seat availability that would impact their ability to register for sections of interest.

MyPlan is intended to help students spend less time and energy on logistics, so they have more time for learning. And, we want to reduce stress associated with academic planning and registration. By including advisor-facing views and functions, like the ability to provide feedback on a student's plan and the ability for advisors to publish sample plans, we want to ensure that MyPlan is an effective tool in enhancing the student-advisor dialog.

MyPlan is being developed using a service-oriented architecture (SOA) to ensure that its core architecture supports flexibility and extensibility for the future. While current students don't really care

what's "under the covers" of MyPlan, this architecture ensures that the STF investment in MyPlan provides long-term value to future students. Funding MyPlan directly benefits current UW students in the near-term and builds the foundation of an integrated student self-service system that can continue to be enhanced for years to come.

Departmental Endorsements

"MyPlan will serve an important role in helping students plan their own unique paths through UW. The work that has been completed so far and the enthusiastic response from students reinforces my commitment to continued development of MyPlan. I endorse this proposal for phase 2 of MyPlan." Ed Taylor, Vice Provost and Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs; Associate Professor, Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

"MyPlan phase 2 was designed with student input and clearly provides graduate students and their advisors with essential tools for academic planning, progress, and completion of studies. The Graduate School is happy to contribute towards its success and we very strongly endorse this proposal." Gerald J. Baldasty, Vice Provost and Dean, Graduate School, Professor, Communication

"The Office of the Registrar (OUR) supported MyPlan's year one proposal, and is happy to do so again. MyPlan will empower students to make critical and strategic decisions about their degree program and registration plan by providing increased transparency of departmental course scheduling, course availability, and degree progress. MyPlan is a critical resource that will contribute to the effectiveness of the overall student system tool set, and will better position these systems to meet the technological demands of future students. OUR is committed to developing learning resources for student and departmental users of MyPlan in partnership with Student Information System development teams. OUR will maintain learning resources over the life cycle of the MyPlan system." Virjean Edwards, University of Washington Registrar

"The College of Arts and Sciences continues to support these efforts to improve students' ability to find and access better information about courses and to get students into the courses they need when they need them. Courses are the most effective means of exploring and understanding majors, and better exploration and planning will help students find the right intellectual home more quickly. That is where and how students learn best. We need better tools to help them do these things." Kevin Mihata, Associate Dean for Educational Programs, College of Arts & Sciences

Installation Timeline

MyPlan is developed through an agile process. After MyPlan phase 1

is delivered in the summer of 2012, there is high probability of releasing proposed scope for MyPlan year 2 iteratively over the course of the year rather than all at once. The MyPlan year 2 release schedule will be determined with input from students and advisors, taking academic calendar usage patterns and risks into account. Regardless of the iterative approach that evolves, MyPlan year 2 scope will be developed within the constraints of the Student Tech Fee one-year funding cycle, and will be delivered prior to the start of 2013 academic year.

Resources Provided by Department

UW-IT and partner organizations are making significant financial and staffing contributions to the first year of MyPlan development, and will maintain this commitment if this year's proposal is awarded. UW-IT's contributions include supplementing the team with a project manager, user experience designer, senior engineers responsible for integrating into the on-line systems already in place at the UW, database administrators and other staff responsible for implementation of the underlying technical infrastructure. Additionally, the following academic administrative units are contributing significant resources to the project:

The Office of the Registrar - subject matter expertise associated with integrating course and section data, encoders who are working with graduate programs on preliminary pilots of graduate programs in u.Achieve (DARS), and learning manager who is developing on-line tutorials to support student adoption

Undergraduate Academic Affairs - web publisher to assist with user research and usability testing, as well as advising subject matter experts

The Graduate School - subject matter experts to help ensure that MyPlan serves the needs of graduate students, and software development staff to ensure integration to the MyGrad system.

Campus academic units - advising subject matter expertise to ensure that MyPlan enhances the student/advisor dialog, and curriculum subject matter expertise to assist with definition of program requirements

Once developed, ongoing technical support for MyPlan will be provided by the Student Information Systems team within UW-IT, with student-facing support provided by the Office of the Registrar and the UW advising community.

Access Restrictions (if any)

As a web-based application, MyPlan will be accessible to all UW

degree seeking students. Additionally, the public access portions of MyPlan, including course and section level data, and program requirements will be available to prospective students and applicants.

Student Endorsements

MyPlan directly addresses important priority themes that repeatedly emerge through empirical student input channels.

Student survey on MyPlan priorities: In December 2011, UW-IT partnered with undergraduate and graduate advisors to get broad student input on MyPlan year two priorities. Responses from over 400 students directly influenced our scope proposal. In addition to looking at the bulk statistics, we also evaluated outcomes based on class standing to ensure MyPlan adds value to all students regardless of class standing or "in major" status.

Student survey on 2012 Priorities: The Student Program in UW-IT conducted a survey in May 2011 to get student input on priorities for improving student self-service. Of the 119 responses, 40% of students indicated improved systems for academic planning as their highest priority for 2012. Improved information about course content came in second, with 30% of students indicating it as their highest priority. MyPlan year two will provide capabilities that address both of these priorities.

2011 Student Research Group Findings (Human Centered Design & Engineering): Data from a survey (n=226) conducted by a HCDE student research group led by Professor Judith Ramey shows that that student pain points relative to academic planning and registration change during their time at the UW. Freshman respondents indicated equal difficulty with finding a major, planning courses, and registering, while upper classman struggle specifically with course planning. MyPlan year two scope was developed to ensure broad benefit to undergraduate and graduate students at all phases of the student life-cycle.

Fall 2010 Registration Focus Groups: Planning tools, integration of information and resources for registering, and improved search and exploration systems were among the top needs expressed by students during focus groups held in the Fall of 2010.

Items

Group	Funded	Item	Unit price	Quantity	Subtotal
Software	*	MyPlan Year Three Deliverables	\$455,000	1	\$455,000.

Total requested: \$455,000.00
Total preliminarily funded: \$455,000.00

Comments No comments