Sam Williams: Welcome to the UP Tech Talk podcast, coming to you from the new academic multimedia studio on the University of Portland campus. Produced by academic technology services. With your hosts Maria Erb and Sam Williams. Welcome to the UP Tech Talk podcast. Today we have with us Ann Harris, Associate Director of Web and Enterprise services. Welcome to the podcast Ann.

Ann Harris: Thank you very much.

Maria Erb: Ann it's really nice to have you here and thank you so much for sharing some tea with us this afternoon. Ann we wanted to talk with you today about the new UP mobile app. Can you tell us about some of the big features that the app contains.

Ann Harris: The biggest feature that seems to be getting utilization is our course module. You are able to use the app to look up the courses that you're currently enrolled and expand that to include all the contact information for those classmates as well as your professor. Further expanding it to see all of your module coursework, assignments, and discussions. You can click on it and it'll automatically add it to you calendar, all the things that you would need to stay on top of your courses and coursework.

Sam Williams: What are some other key features, at least key features in your mind for the mobile app.

Ann Harris: I think one of the other features that this valuable is particularly if you happen to be maybe new to the institution is we have the animated map and so you can enter where you are and where you need to be and it'll tell you the most efficient way to navigate whether you're walking, driving, or riding your bike across campus. Other features, events. I didn't know many of the events going on campus until we added this button in the mobile app, so it lists everything that happens to be going on today, tomorrow, next week so you can keep in contact. Whether it be intramural sports, whether it be academic related or whether it's just ...

Sam Williams: You know, I'm really happy that we have this mobile app. It's been a great addition to the university. Where did the request come from? Where did this need come from to have a mobile app?

Ann Harris: When I first joined University of Portland, we were asked to look at, strategically, some of the things that we might provide in terms of technology and services. We identified at that point in time that we really didn't have a mobile, certainly not a coordinated mobile presence at University of Portland. That was one of the first things we wanted to do was brand something that was the UP app. Then identify a solution that could incorporate all of the mobile

apps that we do have, that are specialty items, library, athletics, orientation, things like that. That was kind of the catalyst that got us started.

Sam Williams: There are, as you said, so there's a couple others. We have, I believe, the beacon has an app that is downloadable when you click on it from the university app. What are the others?

Ann Harris: The beacon app also includes the radio station here at University of Portland, library has a mobile presence. Athletics certainly does, orientation has an app. We've incorporated those although the radio station we still need to incorporate that. That's kind of phase 2, that was identified as something important to be included. Then we've added other features and functionalities so we do have an application, although it doesn't have a mobile component for listing events or the directory, or some of those ... maps. We brought that into the mobile apps so that there is a single point to start that will then link you to the information that you most desire to know about University of Portland.

Maria Erb: So far, the app has only been rolled out for what, a few months now, right?

Ann Harris: Right. We rolled it out just before students started arriving at the end of August.

Maria Erb: Yeah, so we'll probably get some good feedback about how students are using it this semester, right?

Ann Harris: We do, we have some very good statistics. Certainly we've gotten a lot of input from students as well as the general community about hey now that we have this this is really cool, I wish we also had ... My white board has 32 items listed on it now of suggested things they would like added.

Maria Erb: What are some of the things that they've been suggesting?

Ann Harris: Extending some of the things that you can do now in banner as a student. Being able to review your housing application, things that you might be doing in regards to financial aid and it's status, your invoice. Other things would certainly include the radio station and the beacon app.

Sam Williams: Who are the key players on your team that we can do a big shout out to on the mobile app?

Ann Harris: Brad [Kerr 00:05:17] certainly had a lot to do with helping bring that to fruition as well as Amy [Shelly 00:05:22] from marketing. The 3 of us worked very closely with the vendored identifying what we needed to include and putting together a presentation plan and communication plan for getting this out into the hands of our students, and faculty. We'll certainly work very tightly to also prepare for phase 2.

Sam Williams: I will say that it's always great when we can work across divisions and come up with this because we're not all going to see the usage from the same place. This is a great example of where marketing and ISIT have worked together to bring a service to the campus. Of course Brad, if anybody's ever met Brad, we actually should get Brad in for a podcast sometime. He is a comical individual but he has just amazing institutional knowledge having been at the help desk and worked in several positions in IS. It's just great that we have that insight as well. I believe he also works with our students, the RCC students, is that correct?

Ann Harris: He does.

Sam Williams: I think he's able to also see it from multiple angles as well.

Maria Erb: Ann, this certainly is a great thing for students to have this new app but what about faculty and staff? What else can the app do for them?

Ann Harris: For faculty they're able to see of course all of their courses and again, they can see when it is scheduled to meet and add that to their calendar if that helped them in organizationally. It also gives them a quick point of reference of who the students are in their course and the contact information if they wanted to reach out to them either as a group or individually. There are more features that are intended to be added in the future as well. Another feature that could be helpful to some faculty as well as students, is the ability to order their books with a couple clicks. They're able to see their courses and if they wanted to utilize the UP Bookstore, another click and they can automatically order the materials the faculty member has identified as being required. Then it will handle the credit card transaction and all is done. They just pick them up then on start of classes.

Sam Williams: That is awesome. The mobile app, I'm very happy to see this, the mobile app. Especially with the integrations into other systems. It's one thing to have a mobile that has a map and stuff but I think having that additional functionality is going to really allow people to make it a functional part of their existence here at the University of Portland.

Maria Erb: How about for potential students? Is there anything targeted specifically at them?

Ann Harris: Right now there is a component for students, potential recruits where they can get information about the admissions office. They can indicate requests for additional information and it certainly has contact information so that they can identify when the tours are and such. There's not a lot there for a recruit. The map function would certainly be valuable because it includes both the visual tour, or virtual tour, excuse me in addition to the ability to navigate here I am, where do I want to go on campus and what might I see. It would help them as they try and become more familiar with our community.

Sam Williams: We'll point out to people that the other features are behind credentials, you do have to have university credentials in order to participate into the advanced features. As soon as those potential students are campus and receive their credentials for the first time they'll be able to jump in and enjoy all the advanced features of the mobile app.

Ann Harris: Which we intend to expand greatly here in phase 2 and what I'm going to guess will be 3 and 4.

Sam Williams: Awesome. Where can people find out more about the mobile app? Do we have a site that they can visit or how can they find out about the mobile app?

Ann Harris: You can find out more about the mobile app at up.edu/mobile and that happens to have the QR codes on it too if you want to just scan that and they'll take you right into the appropriate app store whether it be Android or Iphone, and Microsoft we know have the Microsoft app too. All 3 of the major platforms are supported.

Sam Williams: That is great. Thank you so much for coming and visiting with us today.

Ann Harris: Yeah, thank you for having me.

Sam Williams: Giving us a little background on the mobile app.

Maria Erb: It's been great to have you on.

Sam Williams: Thank you for joining us for another episode of the UP Tech Talk podcast. Just a reminder that we post a new podcast every Friday morning and you can find us techtalk.up.edu.

How did Kira do?