

THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI STREAMLINES STUDENT SERVICE WITH 'CANES CENTRAL ONE-STOP SHOP

The University of Miami (UM) is a private research university comprising 11 schools and colleges that serve more than 17,000 students. As part of an effort to improve student service and increase efficiencies, UM leaders, in collaboration with Huron experts, leveraged Salesforce technology to create a comprehensive platform to align UM's processes and product mix to best support their students and staff. This platform was utilized to create an online self-service portal and empower staff to personalize student service in an all new, state-of-the-art facility.

The "Miami Shuffle" Resulted in an Unsatisfactory Student Experience

While the current pandemic has created new challenges for higher education, it has exacerbated existing concerns — including the need for comprehensive student services that make navigating the business of education much easier.

For years, college and university leaders have been aware of a phenomenon common across institutions in which students must access several different offices to resolve a single issue. At UM, this inefficient process was called the "Miami Shuffle," wherein students with questions about their financial aid award might be passed around by as many as three separate offices before getting a complete answer.

As it became apparent that this pattern of inefficiency was detracting from their mission of student success, UM leadership began to seek solutions and determined that building a comprehensive student service model (to include student accounts, financial aid and the registrar) was the right next step for the university. Thus the idea of ['Canes Central](#) was born.

'CANES CENTRAL MISSION

"To provide a transformational and compassionate student service experience so that students feel valued and empowered to reach their full potential."

"We are a university that prides itself on white glove treatment for students, but the Miami Shuffle detracted from that."

— **FRANK AZUOLA**, ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT
FOR ENTERPRISE APPLICATION SERVICES

GOALS OF THE 'CANES CENTRAL PROJECT



Efficient and
Effective University
Operations



Hyper-Personalized
Student
Experiences



Sustainable Tools
That Support
Student Success

A Blended Team Approach Enables Success

Several factors enabled the university to achieve the project's goals, including a blended team approach that integrated cross-functional stakeholders from across the university with Huron experts to provide comprehensive project oversight. The university chose to collaborate with Huron because of the firm's deep expertise in higher education and a strong reputation for developing innovative, sustainable solutions that can be effectively implemented in large, complex universities. With the right combination of institutional knowledge, technological savviness, industry expertise and passion, the collaborative project team strategically executed a long-term plan to [enhance the university's vision for student success](#).

"It's been so great to see the team be completely collaborative to the point where you don't realize that the Huron team is not a part of UM. They feel just as passionately as we do about getting this right."

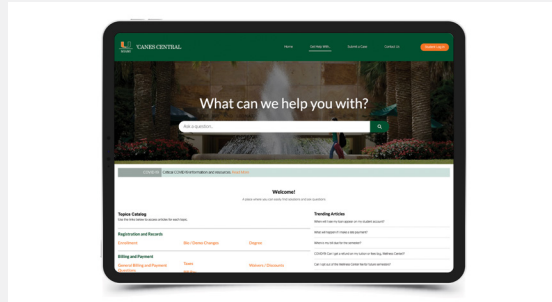
— **MARIANA VALDES-FAULI**, ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT FOR SERVICE AND EXPERIENCE EXCELLENCE

'CANES CENTRAL'S PERSONALIZED INTERACTIONS GIVE STUDENTS OPTIONS

One of the primary objectives of the project was to create unique, personalized experiences that would give students an expanded range of options for obtaining support. Thus, the 'Canes Central model included both a virtual self-service portal for students who prefer digital interactions and an innovative facility powered by data and technology for those who require in-person assistance.

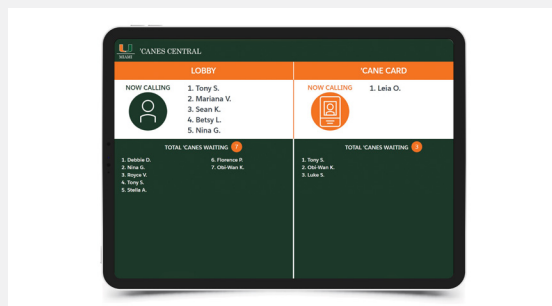
DIGITAL INTERACTIONS

Virtual Self-Service Portal



IN-PERSON INTERACTIONS

Lobby Queue Management



Regardless of the method students choose to engage, this new model for student service is streamlined, integrated, collaborative and personalized, and allows students to get the help they need without requiring multiple distinct interactions. One of the clear benefits of this platform is that it gives staff a more holistic view of student engagement and performance, which enables them to support each student's success comprehensively.

"It was important to integrate this new solution into our existing technologies to provide a seamless in-person and virtual student experience."

— **FLORENCE PARODI**, RAPID APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

A Strong Foundation Enables Institutional Agility in Emergency Response

With a planned two-phase launch (the first focused on the digital self-service platform, the second on the in-person facility), the team intended to gradually acclimate students and staff to the new 'Canes Central over the course of several months. The original goal was to unveil the digital self-service platform in early May 2020 and the on-campus facility in July 2020.

However, with higher education's shift to a largely virtual delivery model in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, project leadership made the difficult decision to fast-track the virtual launch to begin serving students at the beginning of April 2020 rather than May.

This accelerated go-live focused on providing students with critical services (financial aid, registration, records, billing and payment) as they quickly transitioned to a virtual environment. Because UM had already built a strong foundation for virtual student support, the institution was able to be [agile in response](#).

"In a lot of ways, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the 'Canes Central project has been a boon for us because we already had a lot of the groundwork done for our shift to operating in a more virtual environment. The whole team has rotated on a dime to make this happen, and we've been ready to roll since the start."

— SEAN KILPATRICK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF 'CANES CENTRAL

'CANES CENTRAL PROJECT TIMELINE



New Student Service Model Energizes Institutional Innovation

By all accounts, the institution's staff, faculty and leaders have been energized by the 'Canes Central project, and many are hoping to replicate that success in forthcoming initiatives that build on this innovative model.

The key to these efforts will be in proving the value of the 'Canes Central model. To that end, the university is tracking myriad indicators to ensure that engagement and satisfaction remain strong.

Project leaders say they have been pleased with Salesforce's built-in reporting capabilities, and they are already iterating on the out-of-the-box features; Huron recently helped the team to build a case timer to keep track of how long it takes to resolve student issues.

In the first nine weeks of operation, the virtual 'Canes Central platform has helped staff handle more than 13,000 student interactions. Survey results have overwhelmingly shown a high level of satisfaction with the new program:

- Customer satisfaction: 94.12%
- Net promoter score: 9.29 (out of 10)

As the in-person facility opens and more students engage with 'Canes Central, project leaders believe the data will continue to paint the picture of an institution dedicated to providing exceptional student support.

"With 'Canes Central, we are meeting students where they are to provide exceptional customer service, but I want us to keep striving to get better."

— SEAN KILPATRICK, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF 'CANES CENTRAL



huronconsultinggroup.com

© 2020 Huron Consulting Group Inc. and affiliates. Huron is a global consultancy and not a CPA firm, and does not provide attest services, audits, or other engagements in accordance with standards established by the AICPA or auditing standards promulgated by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB"). Huron is not a law firm; it does not offer, and is not authorized to provide, legal advice or counseling in any jurisdiction. Huron is the trading name of Pope Woodhead & Associates Ltd.

20-0910