

uPortal 3.1

Open Source Enterprise Portal Platform for Higher Education



Universities continue to offer more resources online; the complexity of discovering, accessing, and managing these services increase. Portal technology centralizes and facilitates capabilities such as authentication, authorization, groups, and roles offered in the modern university web presence. The portal presents a unified, customized, and contextual user interface for discovering university services and applications.

Built by Higher Education for Higher Education

uPortal is the leading open source enterprise portal framework built by and for the higher education community. uPortal continues to evolve through contributions from its global community. uPortal is supported by resources, grants, donations, and membership of the Jasig community and Unicon's Cooperative Support for uPortal program, from academic institutions, commercial affiliates, and non-profit foundations.

A Unique Framework for Producing Campus Portals

uPortal is built on open standards-based technologies such as Java and XML, and enables easy, standards-based integration with authentication and security infrastructures, single sign-on systems, campus applications, web-based content, and end user customization. It is one of the most widely deployed open source enterprise portal frameworks, having been adopted by hundreds of institutions and the electronic research community, worldwide.



Universities can confidently deliver their online campuses using the flexible and integrated, standards-based approaches of uPortal.

uPortal 3.1

uPortal meets the demand of Higher Education for an enterprise portal.

uPortal is specifically built for higher education. It is a sponsored product of Jasig, the global community of colleges, universities, and commercial affiliates dedicated to sharing open source applications and technology standards. The feature set, support, and overall focus are well aligned with the requirements of higher education.

Based upon open standards Java, XML, XSLT, JSP and Spring development, uPortal 3 has developed into a highly scalable standard of stability. Higher education institutions have expectations for content delivery, services access, and administration functions - and these expectations can be met by the uPortal framework. Literally millions of users can confirm its reliability.

Powerful Technology for the Enterprise

Trusted Authentication

uPortal includes APIs and a configuration mechanism for validating user credentials against multiple backing credential stores, including databases and LDAP. uPortal ships with libraries and sample configurations for use of Jasig's Central Authentication Service (CAS) single sign-on technology and is commonly integrated with other SSO frameworks, such as PubCookie and Shibboleth.

User Attribute Collection

Commonly, universities store person attributes in a variety of central and local sources (e.g. LDAP, database tables, and administrative information systems). uPortal's user attribute service can draw from multiple sources, re-use attributes gleaned early in the retrieval process as keys into subsequent queries, apply pluggable strategies to merge these attributes and apply layered caching for performance.

For many applications, uPortal makes integration effortless through its included LDAP and RDBMS query support. In addition, uPortal has the components and the framework for connecting together more complex identity management systems to collect attributes for delivery of compelling and usable portal experiences.

Powerful User Group Management

uPortal includes a powerful and flexible user group management system. Groups may be nested and are backed by various group store implementations, allowing groups to be defined and managed through the administration user interface and stored in the uPortal database. Groups can be based dynamically on user attributes.

Flexible Layouts

uPortal's layout system permits fragments and portlets to be presented to users in combinations determined by personal user attributes, preferences, group memberships, and the application of configurable and extensible layout component audience rules.

Permissions Supported

uPortal includes an exceptionally powerful authorization system used to define and check each user who is permitted to take what actions in what contexts. uPortal supports permissions for access to layout fragments, individual portlets, group administration, and channel publication. uPortal's group and permissions support becomes even more valuable when leveraged by portlets integrating with this service (e.g. announcements channel).

Rich User Experience for Today's Campus

User Experience Features

uPortal 3.1 provides a rich user experience using a full-featured default theme and incorporating 3rd party projects and resources.

Theme and Skin

uPortal 3.1 includes a default theme and skin that can be easily customized to fit institutions' needs, allowing for a better user experience. The default theme is highly customizable and well-organized. Instead of one oversized file, the content has been split into multiple files arranged by content type. These files are well-documented, using a descriptive "color scheme" to indicate which sections should be considered user-editable and which are core to the theme's successful rendering.

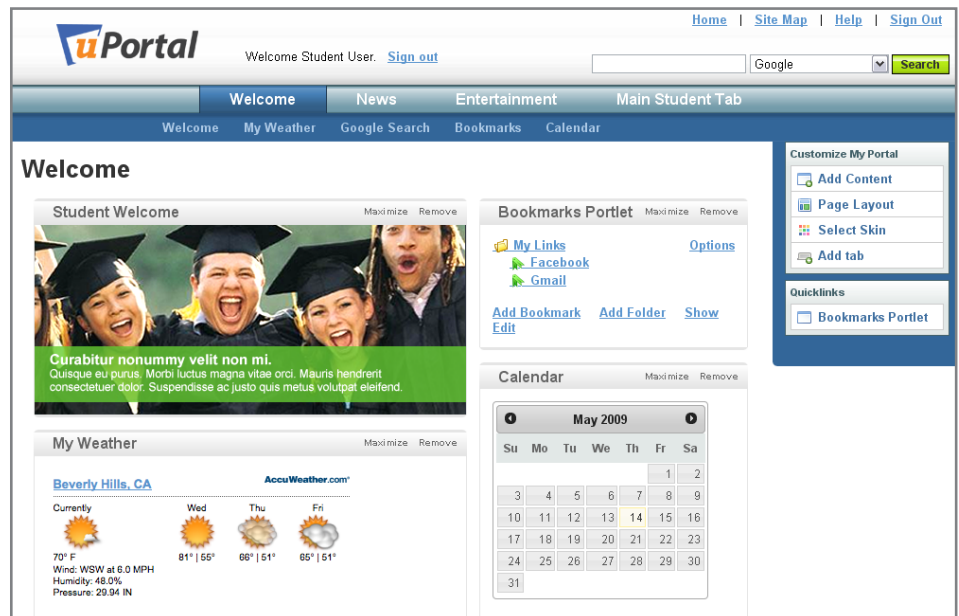
Most institutions can easily edit the default theme and then configure and skin it (using CSS and images) to achieve their desired results. A few of the uPortal 3.1 theme and skin features include the following: a sidebar configurable per view, location and width, Institution variable, sleek new skin following the Jasig re-brand, and a simpler, cleaner Cascading Style Sheet (CSS).

3rd Party Resources

uPortal 3.1 incorporates 3rd party resources including jQuery and the Fluid Project to achieve additional functionality and improve performance.

jQuery

jQuery is a fast and concise JavaScript library that simplifies HTML document traversal, event handling, animating, and Ajax interactions for rapid web development. This greatly improves page loading times and Javascript performance. Since jQuery is part of the core uPortal theme, portlets have an opportunity to make use of all the power jQuery provides for their own UIs.



uPortal 3.1 is delivered with a highly customizable and user friendly default graphic theme

The Fluid Project

The Fluid community is an international group of designers, developers, volunteers, and advisers who focus on improving the user experience of open source web applications. The Fluid and uPortal communities have both benefited from nearly two years of successful collaboration on user experience issues. The Fluid Project helps improve the user experience of uPortal 3.1.

Fluid Infusion

Fluid Infusion enables designers and developers to build user interfaces that can more readily accommodate the diverse personal and institutional needs found within uPortal 3.1. Fluid Infusion is a collection of rich, reusable, and accessible user interface components built for the Web. These components have been designed by a cross-disciplinary team and thoroughly tested for usability, accessibility, and security. uPortal 3.1 has integrated two components from this framework, the Reorderer and the Skinning System.

Fluid Reorderer

The Reorderer is a set of JavaScript objects that can be used by developers to create rich, accessible user interfaces that allow users to directly move around and re-arrange content on the page. The Fluid Reorderer has been implemented as the drag-and-drop layout customization within uPortal.

Fluid Skinning System

Fluid Skinning System (FSS) is a modular CSS framework, which allows you to add, remove, and mix pre-existing modular classes to get the desired effect. FSS supplements your own CSS and to reduce the effort required to get your site into production. FSS supplements your own CSS and reduces the effort required to get your site into production. FSS has four basic CSS functions: Reset, Text, Layout, and Themes (aka Color Schemes). With FSS and User Interface Options, institutions can design the appearance of their website while allowing users to control their individual experience by choosing personal preferences.

Open Platform, Open Standards, Open Community

Extending the Portal

Successful enterprise portals are compelling integrations and services delivered through the portal. As such, uPortal focuses on delivering the portlet types and framework for implementing compelling local portal experiences.

Supported Channels and Portlets

uPortal includes built-in support for presenting syndicated feeds, images, collections of bookmarks, web proxies, inline frames, and custom Java-developed components. In addition, uPortal presents standards-compliant JSR 168 portlets, so many of the portlets developed for use with uPortal are also usable in other portals. Likewise, standards-attentive portlets implemented for use with other portals will work in uPortal.

Available Portlets

There are numerous ways to extend uPortal. Jasig lists its continually growing collection of portlets at <http://www.jasig.org/portlets>. These portlets can be deployed as is or customized and integrated into your uPortal instance. Institutions are encouraged to contribute new portlets via the Jasig Incubator program and to participate in the enhancement of existing portlets.

One of the JSR 168 portlets recently entering Jasig incubation is the Announcements Portlet developed by the University of California-Irvine (see above). This portlet presents multiple announcement topics, each with access control for authoring and subscription, optional RSS feed support. Announcements are authored in the portal using a WYSIWIG editor with support for scheduled release and expiration.

Status	Title	Displaying	
Pending	Check out the Wiki	07/21/2008 - 07/21/2009	
Showing	Extra Message	05/23/2008 - 06/30/2009	

[Add Announcement](#)

Administrators	Moderators	Authors	Audience Members
Portal Administrators	USER.seison	Edit	Everyone

[Admin Home](#)

Announcements Portlet

Available JSR 168 Portlets Contributed for uPortal 3

Portlets	Available with uPortal 3.0	Available with uPortal 3.1
Announcements	X	X
Bookmarks	X	X
Calendaring	X	X
Functional Tests	X	X
NewsReader	X	X
Tabbed RSS	X	X
Tabbed Search	X	X
Weather	X	X
WebProxy	X	X
Facebook	X	X
DLM Fragment Admin		X

Jasig

Jasig, the non-profit membership organization, is a consortium of educational institutions and commercial affiliates sponsoring open source software projects for higher education.

Jasig is responsible for the uPortal community open source enterprise portal and goes out of their way to foster collaboration within and among communities of practice. Jasig organizes conferences in

support of open source software design, development, and implementation.

Find out more about the Jasig community:

<http://www.jasig.org/>

<http://www.jasig.org/uportal>



Unicon provides uPortal services and support. Unicon is a uPortal Solutions Provider and a Jasig partner.

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