MyUW Annual Usage Report Academic Year 2012-2013

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Introduction

The MyUW service has provided the University of Washington community with a single location to find a variety of resources since 2000. This service includes two versions: The MyUW full site designed for desktop browsing and contains the full set of MyUW features and information, and the MyUW Mobile version designed to meet students' greatest on-the-go needs consisting of a limited array of information in a mobile-friendly presentation.

This report contains information about users, site statistics, usage patterns and site content utilization for both the MyUW full site and the MyUW Mobile version. Important trends and implications for the improvement and future development for MyUW are identified providing information to guide refinement of this service.

Report Highlights

- Despite the release of MyUW Mobile, the number of visits to the MyUW full site from mobile devices and tablets continues to increase significantly, possibly due to a limited functionality and content provided in MyUW Mobile.
- There were more mobile visits to MyUW during the first few days of each quarter and immediately after the end of finals period than at other times during a quarter.
- Users most frequently use the MyUW full site to access academic resources such as registration, grades, and transcripts.
- Usage data and search data show that users access the MyUW more often for personal content and timely information.
- Apple iOS devices represent a growing proportion of MyUW and MyUW Mobile visits.

Terminology

- **MyUW** refers to the full MyUW site, which contains the complete set of features and information available through the MyUW service.

- **MyUW Mobile** refers to the mobile-optimized version of MyUW, which was released in October 2012 and contains a more limited set of features designed for students' on-the-go needs.

- **The MyUW service** consists of both the MyUW full site and MyUW Mobile, and refers to the overall service being provided to users rather than the specific site through which they access the service.

- **Quarters** are considered to begin the Sunday immediately preceding the first day of classes and end the last Saturday of the break period immediately following the academic quarter. Specific dates for each academic quarter during the 2012-2013 academic year are shown in Table 1.

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Table 1: Quarter Start and End Dates

Quarter	Period	Length
Autumn	September 23 – January 5	105 days
Winter	January 6 – March 30	84 days
Spring	March 31 – June 22	84 days
Summer	June 23 – September 21	91 days

- **Users** are individual users with a unique UW NetID, and do not include supplemental accounts.

- **Site visits** refer to the number of times a user accesses the MyUW service. Each visit represents a group of interactions a user has with the MyUW service, and ends when the user leaves the site or stops interacting with it and becomes inactive. A single user can generate multiple site visits.

- **External links** are links on MyUW that take the user to content outside of the MyUW site.

- **Page views** are the total number of pages a user views when visiting the site. If the same page is viewed more than once, each view is counted as an additional page view. Page views include visits to external links for the full MyUW site, but not for MyUW Mobile. A single visit can generate multiple page views.

MyUW Full Site Usage

Site Visits and Page Views

During the 2012-2013 academic year (September 23, 2012 – September 21, 2013), MyUW was visited 29,296,326 times, with a total of 123,812,879 page views. On average, a visitor views 4.23 pages per visit.

Figure 1 shows the visits and page views for MyUW on a daily basis for Autumn Quarter 2012, as an example of typical trends seen each quarter. The first day of the quarter shows a sharp spike in both visitors and page views. On a weekly basis, visits and page views tend to be highest on Mondays and significantly lower on weekend days. At mid-quarter, visits and page views tend to increase noticeably during the registration period for the next quarter. Immediately after the quarter ends, visits and page views increase, likely because students are checking their grades. During break periods, MyUW usage is substantially lower than during the academic quarter.

Figure 1: MyUW Site Visits and Page Views, Autumn 2012

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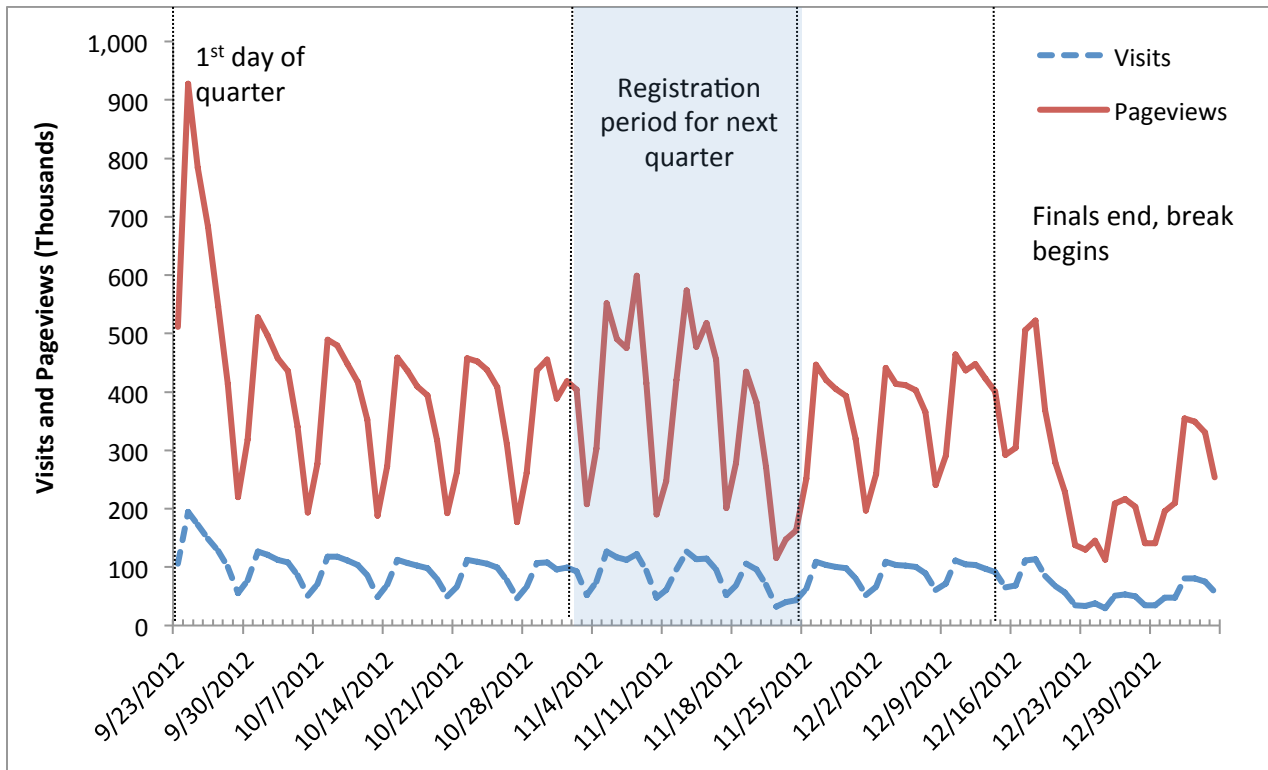
Autumn quarter has the highest number of visits on a daily basis. The number of visits tends to decrease each quarter as the academic year continues, with the lowest number of daily visits in Summer quarter (Table 2).

Table 2: Quarterly Visits

Quarter	Total Visits	1st Day of quarter	Weekday Average	Weekend Average
Autumn 2012	9,050,606	195,042	107,330	56,838
Winter 2013	7,828,254	177,682	104,924	59,525
Spring 2013	7,242,296	176,949	98,711	54,187
Summer 2013	5,175,170	100,413	64,617	34,637

Note: "Weekday Average" represents the average number of visits on a "typical" weekday during the quarter, when classes are meeting on their regular schedule and it is not the first day of the quarter. "Weekend Average" is the average number of visits on Saturdays and Sundays after the first day of classes and before the last day of classes.

Compared to the 2011-2012 academic year, MyUW saw a decrease in visits and page views in 2012-2013. There were 5,996,785 fewer total visits (a 17% decrease), 3,033,901 fewer total page views (a 2.4% decrease), and approximately 24,000 fewer visits on an average weekday during the core school year of Autumn, Winter and Spring quarters. It is interesting to note that Autumn quarter has the highest drop in visits (a 30% decrease or 3.7 million visits), but its page views have increased by 6.5%, approximately 2.3 million page views (Figure 2). That is, although users visited MyUW less frequently, they viewed more content (pages) per visit.

Figure 2: Changes in Site Visits and Page Views
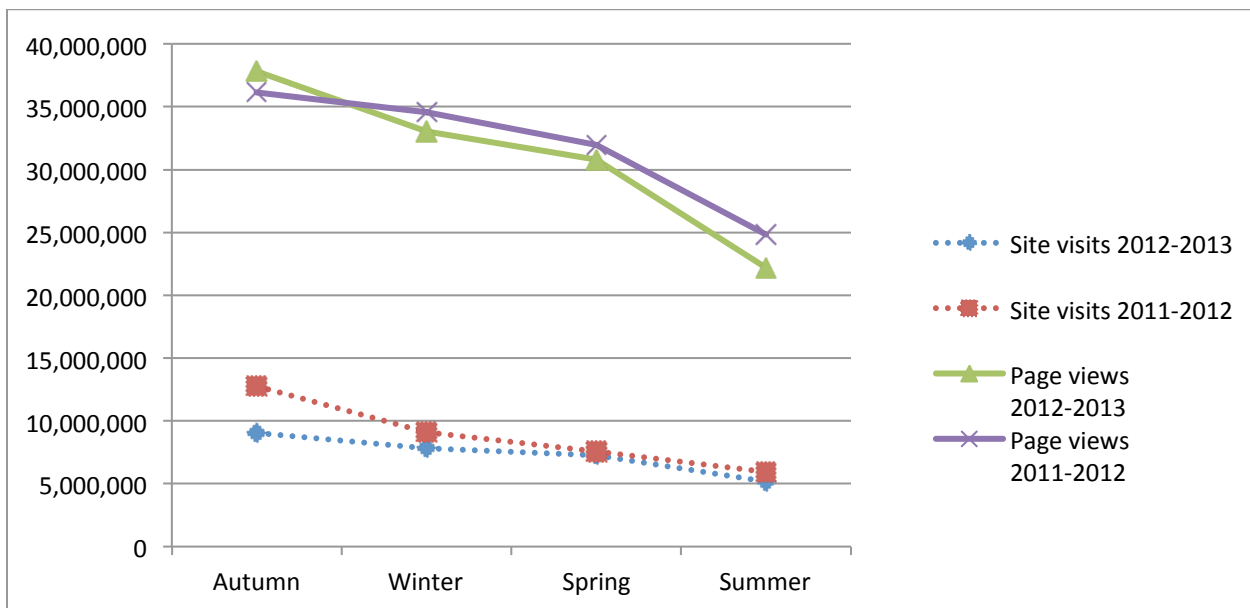
Traffic Sources

The data on traffic sources explain how users come to MyUW. MyUW traffic came from three sources:

Direct traffic: users entering the URL into their browser or bookmarking

Search traffic: users entering terms into a search engine in order to find the site

Referral traffic: users coming to MyUW through another website

The majority of MyUW visits came from another website, rather than going directly to the MyUW site by typing in the web address or using a link to reach the site.

The proportions of traffic sources are largely unchanged from the 2011-2012 academic year, as shown in Figure 3. A majority of MyUW's traffic comes from direct traffic (44% of the total). Another 39% of total traffic comes from users using a search engine to find the site. Google is by far the most common search engine source of traffic (87% of all search engine traffic). The remaining 16% of total traffic comes from referral traffic, non-search engine websites. The vast majority of referrals come from UW-affiliated websites (81% of referral traffic). The home pages for the University and for the Tacoma and Bothell campuses, as well as websites for the UW Libraries and UW Medicine, are the main UW websites that refer users to MyUW.

Figure 3: MyUW Traffic Sources

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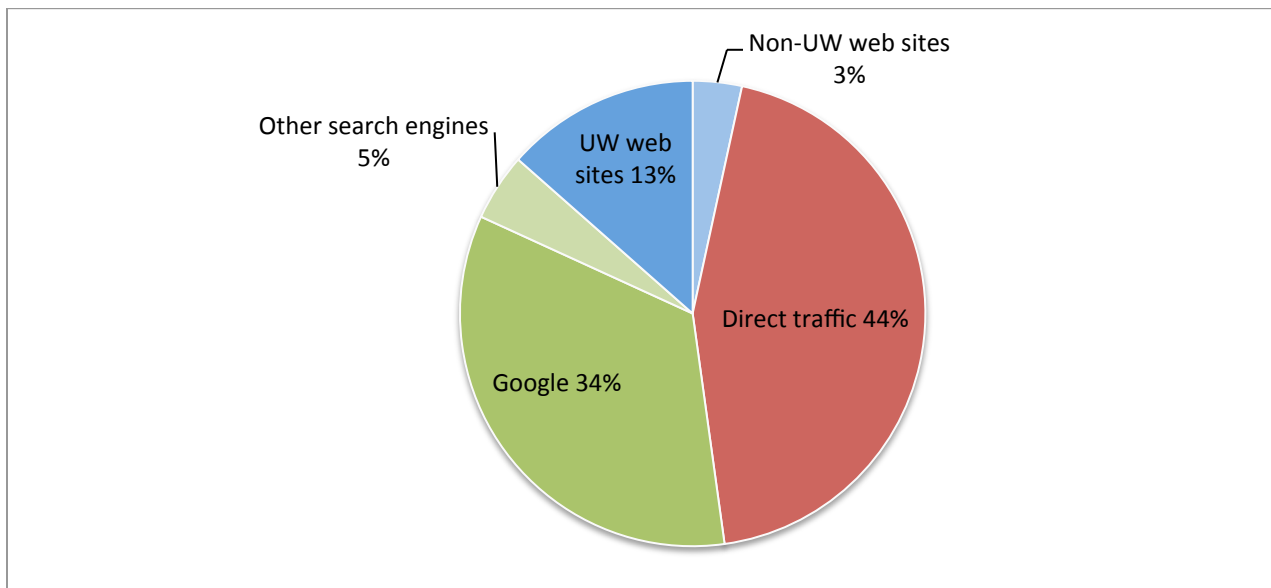
Users

Per quarter, an average of 156,607 unique NetIDs logged into MyUW. These users had a wide variety of relationships with UW, ranging from current students to retired staff. A single individual may have more than one affiliation. For example, an undergraduate student who works on campus and is applying to a graduate program at UW may have student, applicant and employee affiliations. A graduate student who is teaching a course could have student, employee and instructor affiliations. Because a user's affiliations may change from quarter to quarter, Figures 4 and 5 below are based on data from Spring 2013, and serve as a snapshot of user affiliations.

As shown in Figure 4, students constitute the largest MyUW user group approximately 50% of all users. The most dramatic change from the 2011-2012 academic year is in the number of affiliates, who work with the UW and have access to UW resources but are not on UW payroll. These user affiliation data highlight an important point about MyUW users: although the majority of users are students, there is a diverse range of user types, and thus of user needs.

Figure 4: User Affiliations
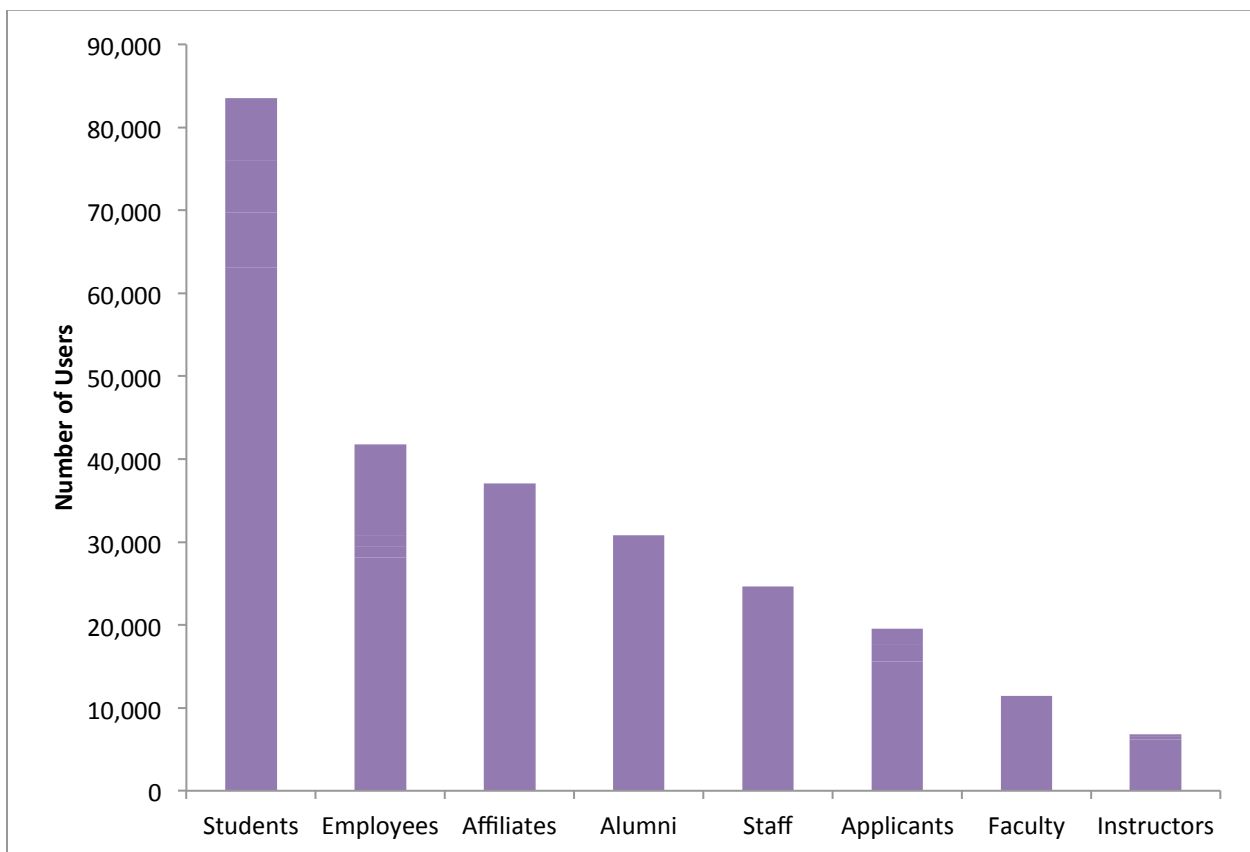
Note: Retirees are not included on graph due to low number of users with that affiliation.

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Figure 5 shows the breakdown of student users by type. Of the total number of student users, approximately two-thirds are undergraduates. Graduate students make up 18% of student users. Approximately 17% of student users are Professional and Continuing Education (PCE) students, either in conjunction with graduate or undergraduate education or in a stand-alone program.

Figure 5: Student Users

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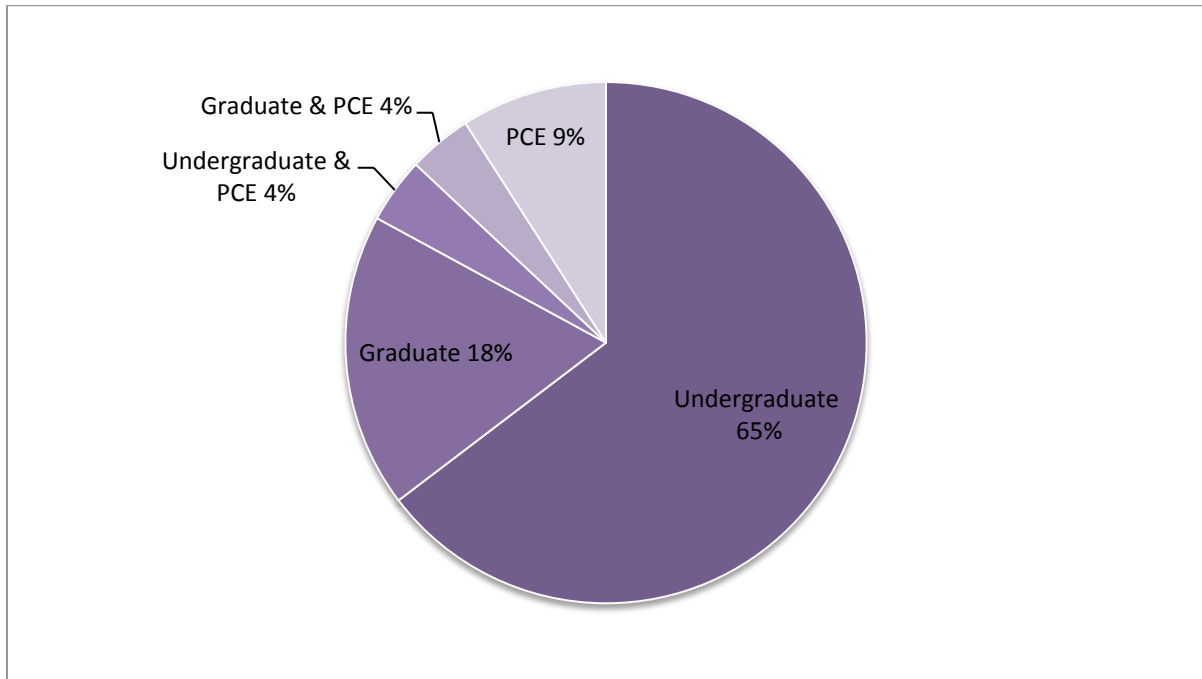
Content Usage

MyUW is organized into multiple tabs that contain information related to specific topic areas. MyUW's default landing page is called MyFrontPage, which contains useful resources such as course schedule, tuition balance and links to email and other resources. This default page received the highest page views among all tabs (approximately 41.6 million page views) during the 2012-2013 school year.

MyUW currently divides its content into 12 tabs (in addition to MyFrontPage). Figure 6 shows the number of page views for each of the tabs for 2012-2013 (excluding MyFrontPage). The most commonly accessed tabs are Academics, Student Finances tab Libraries, Admissions, Working and Around Campus tabs. These top five tabs are the same as those in the 2011-2012 academic year.

Figure 6: MyUW Tabs Page Views
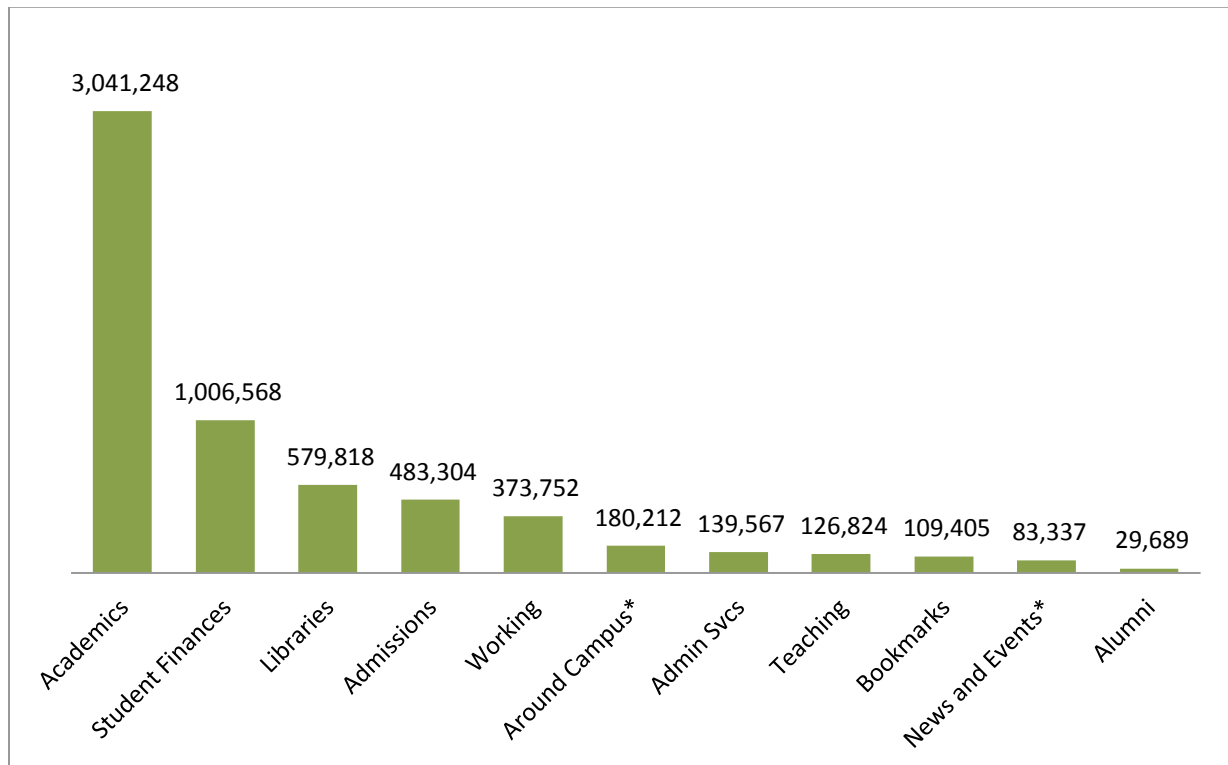
*Tabs that were changed during the 2012-2013 academic year.

Most tabs, except for Alumni and Admin Services tabs, show variations in usage during different portions of the school year. Academics, Libraries, Teaching and Bookmarks tabs are accessed more frequent in Autumn quarter, and show a decrease in usage as the academic year progresses. Some tabs, however, have a different variation in usage pattern (Figure 7).

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Figure 7: Page Views per Content Tab by Quarter
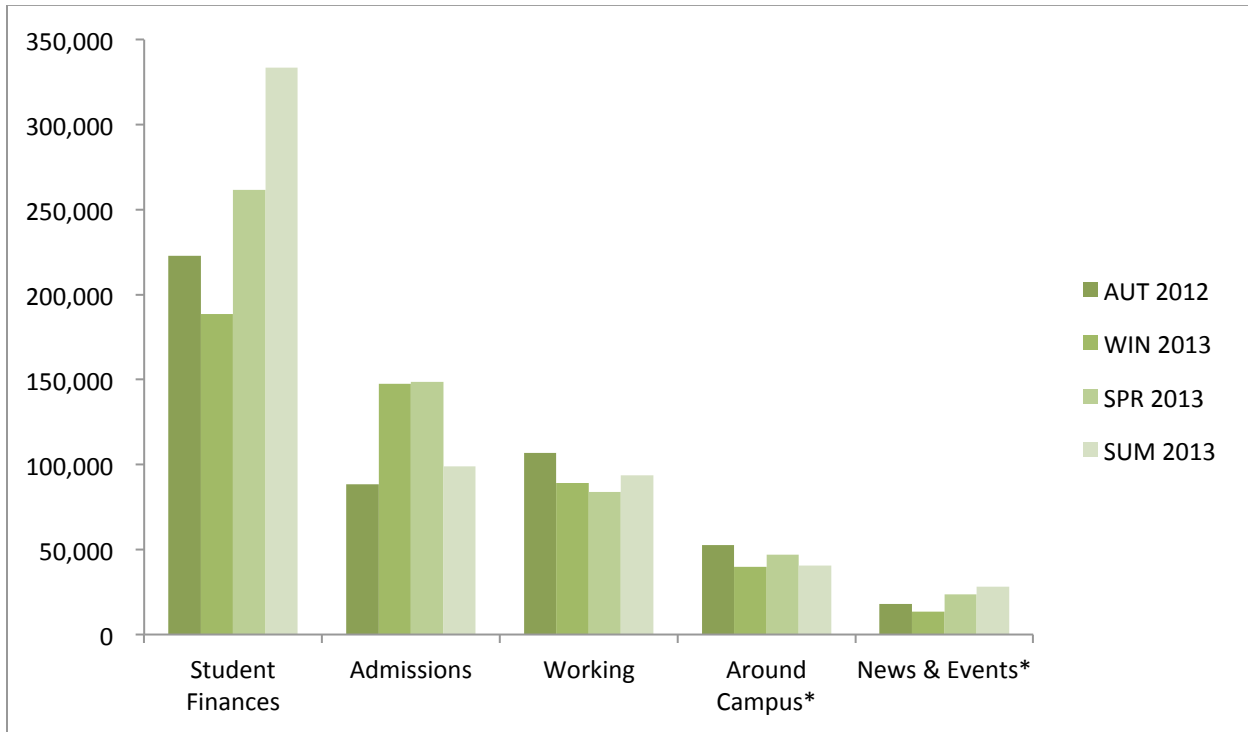
*Tabs that were changed during the 2012-2013 academic year.

The most dramatic examples of this variation in usage are the Student Finances and Admissions tabs. Their variation is even more noticeable when page views per week are examined. The Student Finances tab, which contains links to information such as tax forms, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and financial aid awards, tends to receive the greatest number of page views near dates with significance to student's financial status (Figure 8). For example, the tab sees spikes in page views near the beginning of the school year (when students must accept or reject financial aid), just after January 1 (when FAFSA becomes available), during late March/early April (when students must file taxes), and in late July (when financial aid decisions are made). On the other hand, the Admissions tab receives more than three times its average views during late March and early April, when the admission decisions are being released (Figure 9).

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Figure 8: Student Finances Tab Page Views

Figure 9: Admissions Tab Page Views

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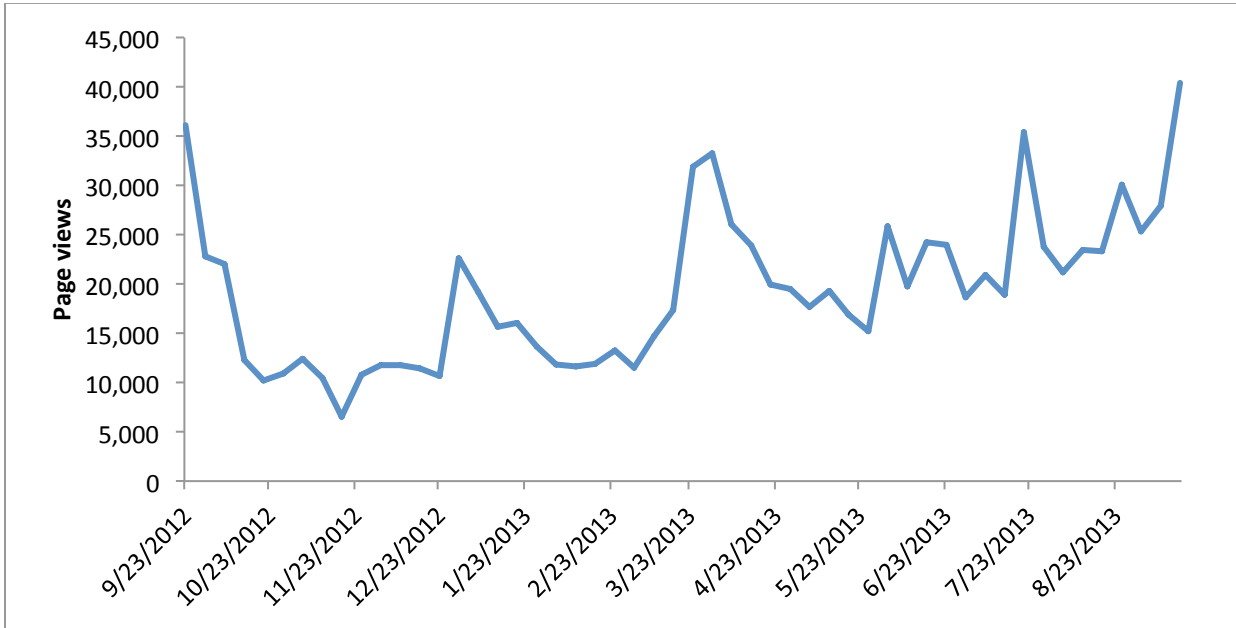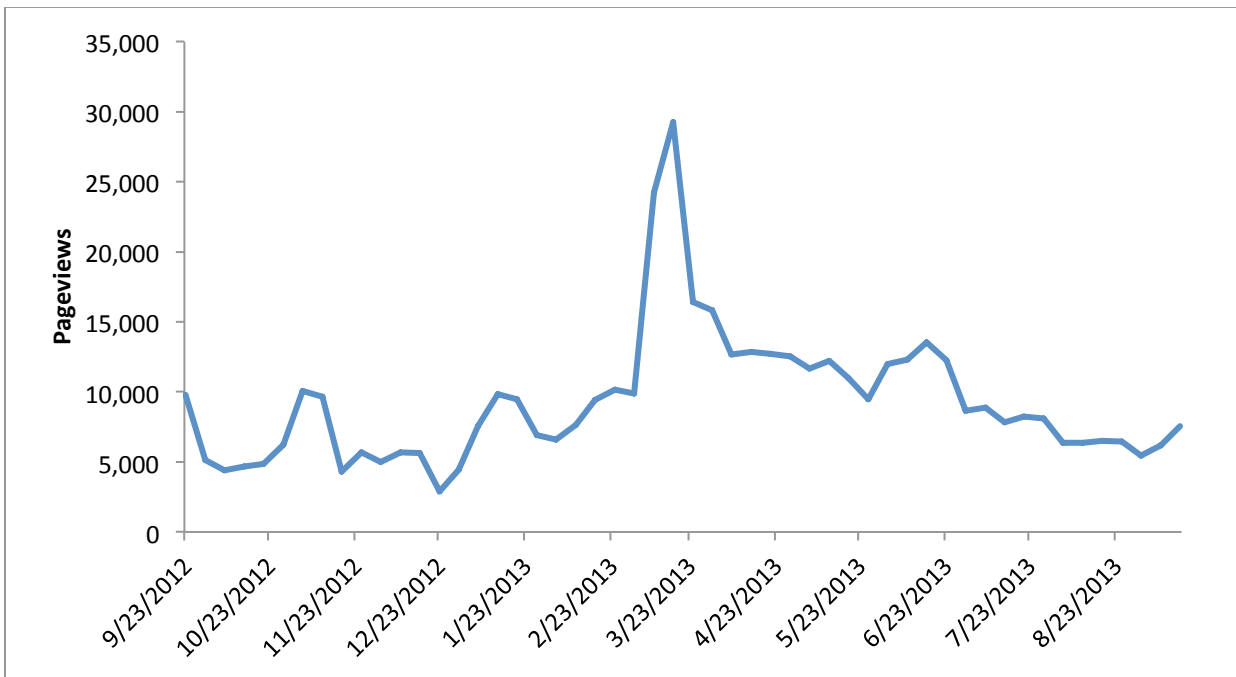
MyUW users are most likely to visit MyUW to view content presented on the MyUW site, which makes up approximately 43% of all page views (Figure 10). They also visit MyUW to access external resources (23% of all page views). Although MyUW contains over 500 external links, nearly three-quarters of visits to external links is from a small portion: email (links to Gmail and Alpine), course websites and content (Catalyst and Canvas), registration resources (registration system and time schedule), grades, Employee Self-Service (ESS), a visual schedule of courses and tuition. This usage trend is the same as the previous year.

Figure 10: MyUW Content Usage

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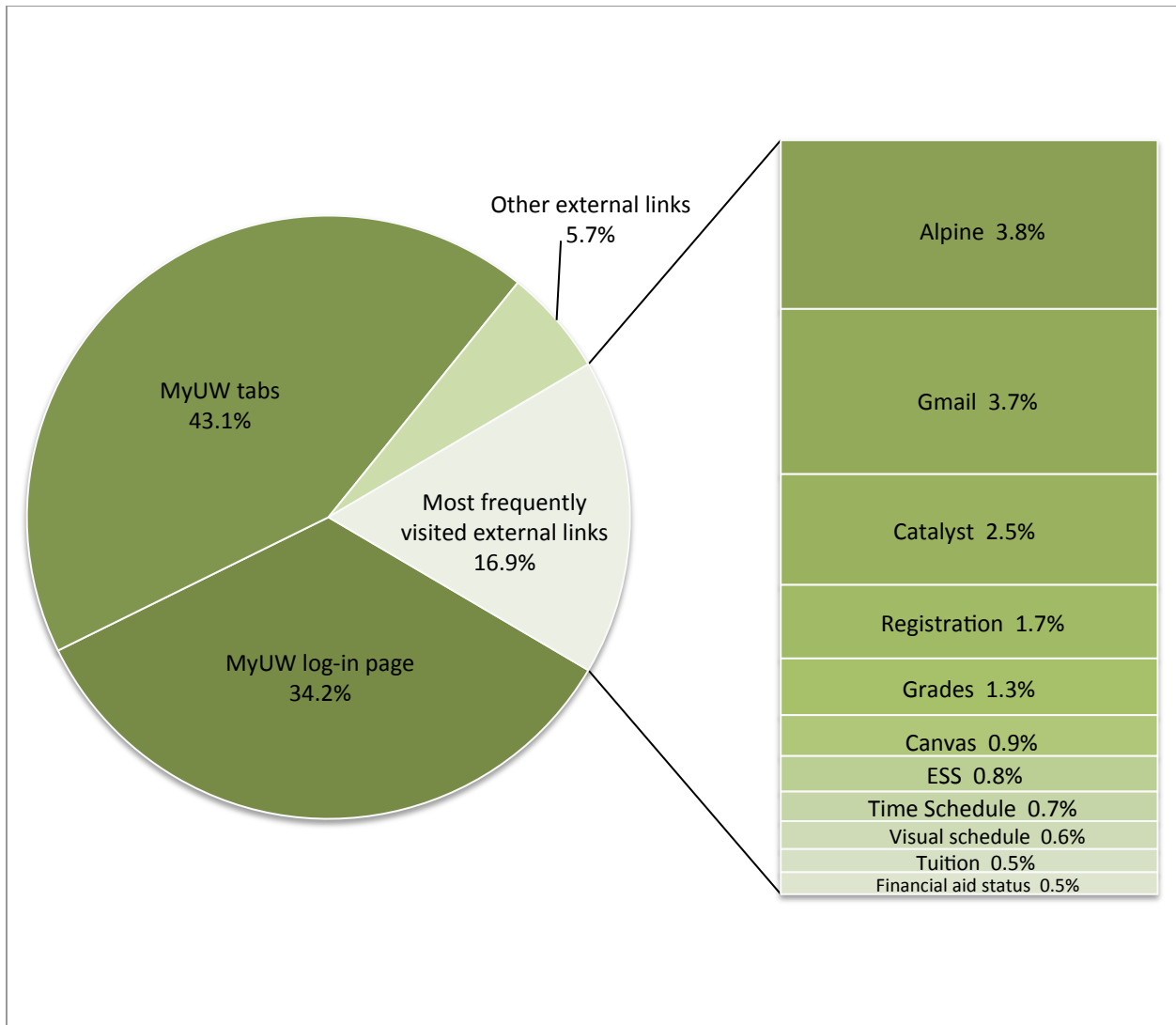
MyUW Search

Users can search MyUW to find specific content. A word cloud presented in Figure 11 displays the most common content that users searched for during the 2012-2013 school year, with the size of the word indicating the frequency of that word being searched. (Similar search terms such as "transcript" and "transcripts" have been combined.)

Figure 11: Common MyUW Search Terms
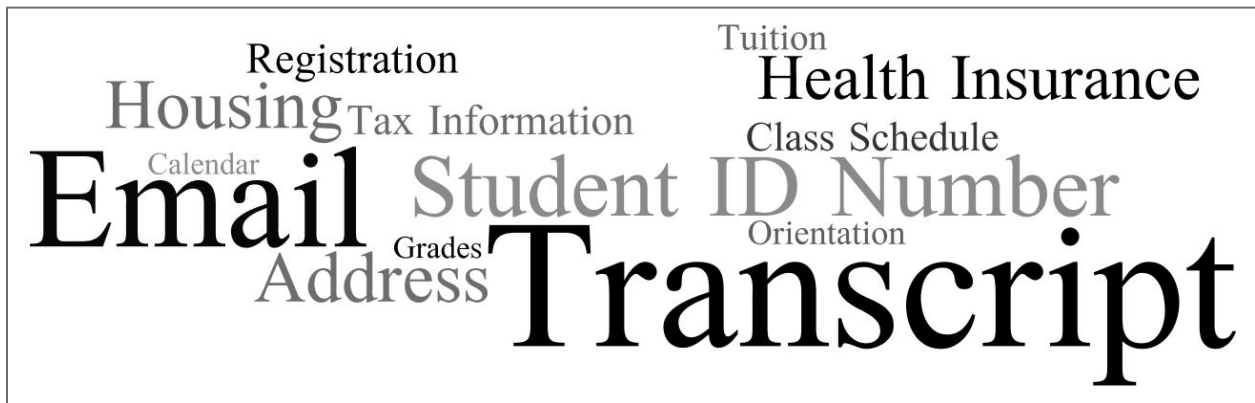
Consistent with Figure 11, the most common information students search for on MyUW is personal content, such as transcript, student ID number, address, class schedule, tuition and email. The second most common group of search terms indicates that students are looking for timely information such as registration, housing, tax information and orientation. The frequency of searches could be related both to how frequently students need information and how difficult that information is to find on MyUW.

Some search terms vary in frequency over the course of the academic year. Figure 12 shows how the frequency of search terms is different between quarters during the academic years for selected search terms. The sizes of the circles indicate the number of times a term (or closely related term) was entered into the MyUW search box.

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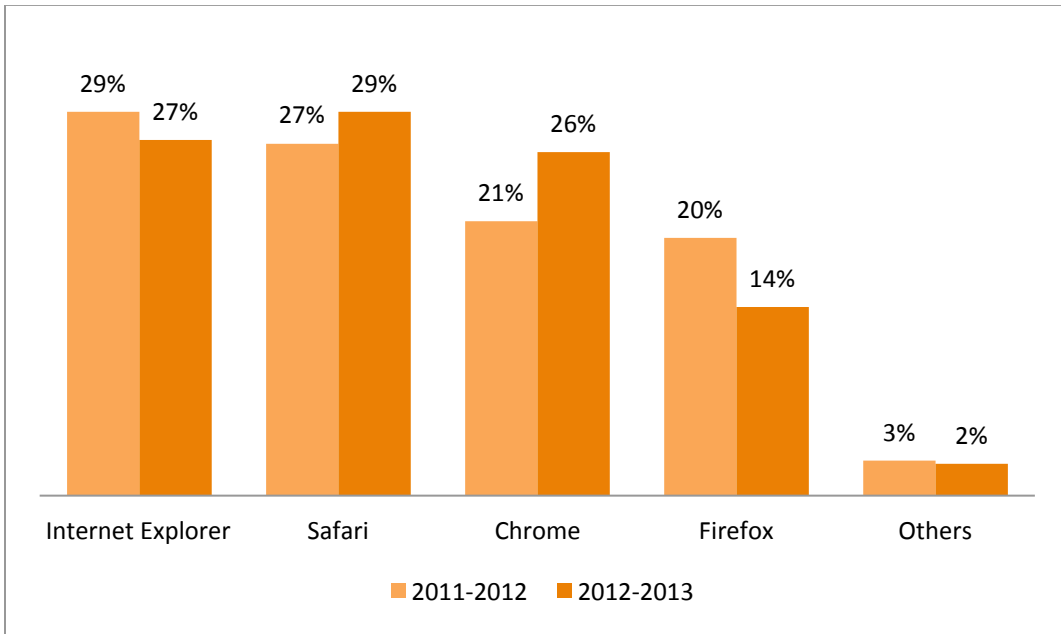**Figure 12: Quarterly Trends in MyUW Search Terms**
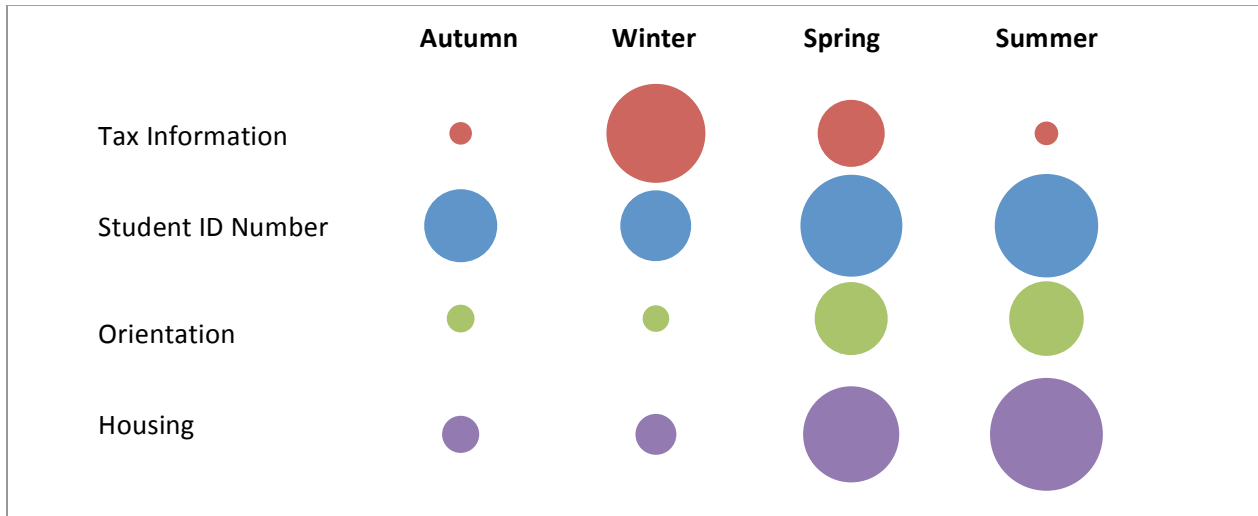
Tax information is searched for most frequently in Winter and Spring quarters, the periods just before tax filings are due. Orientation, Housing and Student ID number searches all increase during the Spring and Summer quarters, likely corresponding to newly admitted students searching for this information.

These search data indicate some of the resources that students need on MyUW, and when. The data can be used to identify which resources should be made more accessible, as well as when students place the highest priority on finding certain resources.

Technology

MyUW users access MyUW using a wide range of technology platforms and devices. However, there are several changes in technology usage trends. Figure 13 shows an increase in visits via Safari and Chrome browsers and a decrease in visits via Internet Explorer and Firefox browsers. As a result, Safari has become the most common browser used to access MyUW, unseating Internet Explorer from the previous year.

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Figure 13: Browser Usage

Bar chart showing browser usage for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013:
- Internet Explorer: 29% (2011-2012), 27% (2012-2013)
- Safari: 27% (2011-2012), 29% (2012-2013)
- Chrome: 21% (2011-2012), 26% (2012-2013)
- Firefox: 20% (2011-2012), 14% (2012-2013)
- Others: 3% (2011-2012), 2% (2012-2013)

Windows continues to be the most common operating system used to access MyUW; however, the mobile operating systems (such as iOS and Android) have gained more popularity over the past year (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Operating Systems

Bar chart showing operating systems for 2011-2012 and 2012-2013:
- Windows: 59.3% (2011-2012), 56.1% (2012-2013)
- Mac OS: 32.0% (2011-2012), 33.3% (2012-2013)
- Mobile OS: 3.9% (2011-2012), 9.9% (2012-2013)
- Others: 4.8% (2011-2012), 0.8% (2012-2013)

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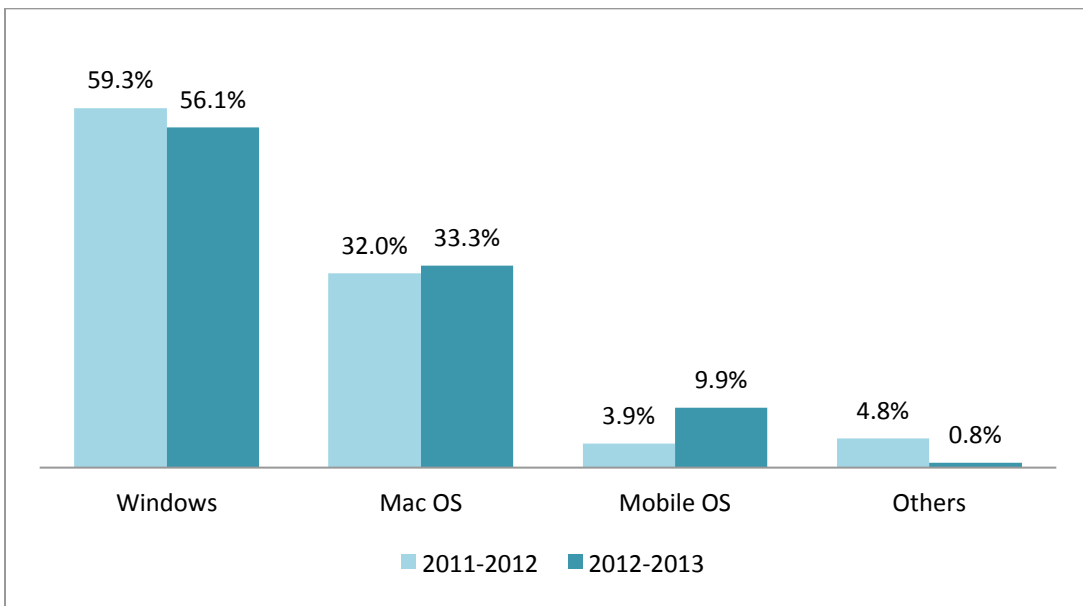
MyUW users use a variety of mobile devices to access MyUW. Mobile devices include mobile phones, handheld devices and tablets. The proportion of mobile access to MyUW has increased over the past year, across all types of mobile devices (Figure 15). All mobile access to MyUW has increased to 11% of all MyUW visits in the Summer quarter 2013 (Figure 16). Interestingly, the use of tablet to access MyUW has increased significantly, from 0.38% in Autumn 2011 to 3.46% in Summer 2013.

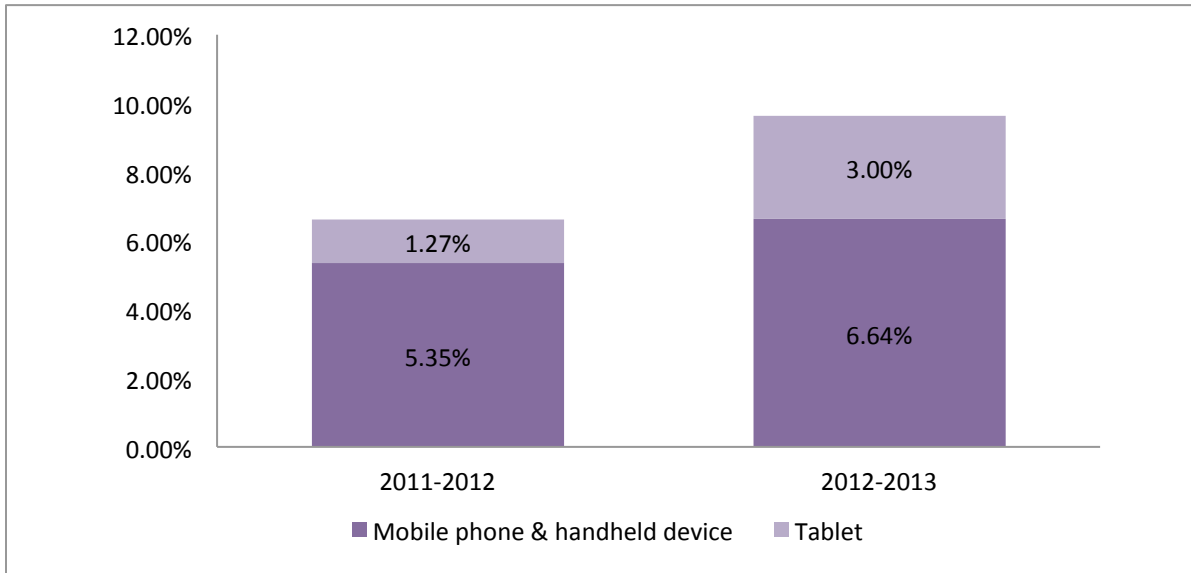**Figure 15: Annual Changes in Mobile Access to MyUW Full Site**

Figure 16: Quarterly Changes in Mobile Access to MyUW Full Site

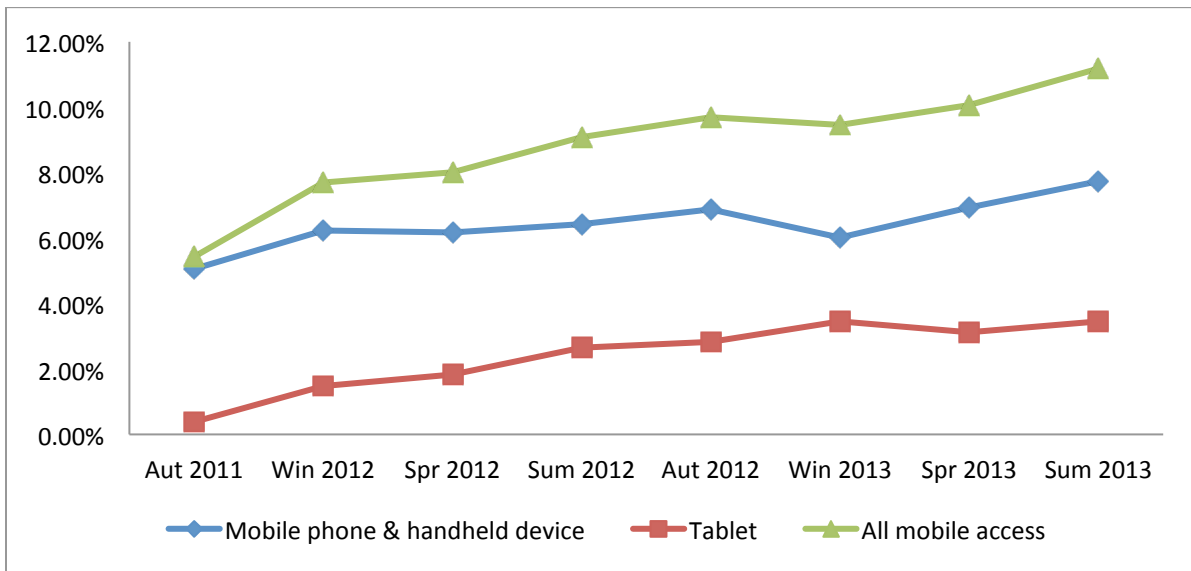INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
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Figure 17 shows that at the beginnings and ends of quarters, a greater proportion of visits access MyUW from a mobile device, with a corresponding drop observed in access from a desktop computer or a laptop. On the first day of the quarter, there are approximately twice as many visits from desktop computers than on other days. There are four to eight times as many visits from mobile devices as on other days. Overall, these technology usage data indicate that mobile access to MyUW continues to increase.

Figure 17: Device Type Usage Trends

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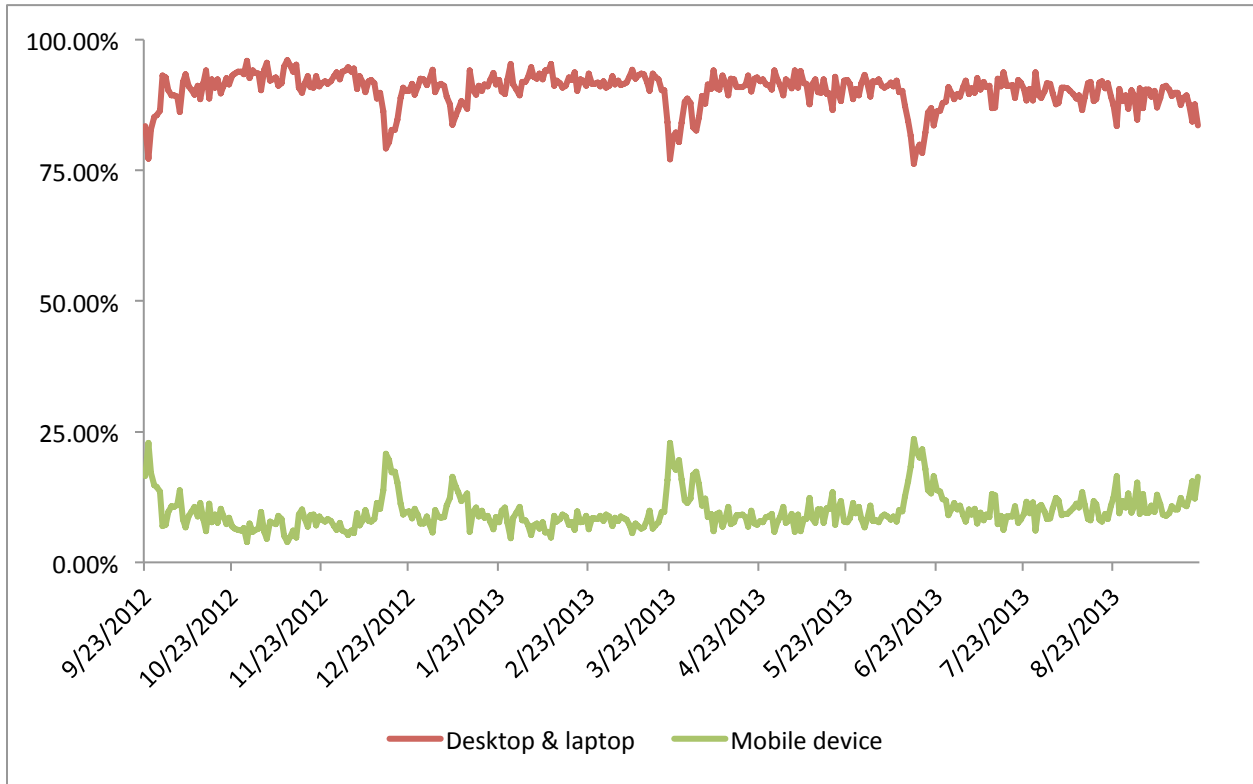
MyUW Mobile Usage

Site Visits and Page Views

MyUW Mobile was released on October 23, 2012, allowing students to use a mobile-friendly version of MyUW to access their course schedule, course websites, instructor contact information, classroom location, textbook information and most visited links. The second release of MyUW Mobile, on January 8, 2013, added functions that enabled students to connect to their Canvas course sites, check their Husky Card and dining balances and add funds, view their final exam schedules and view course information for the future quarters.

From its release to the end of academic year 2012-2013, MyUW Mobile was visited 1,318,092 times, with a total of 1,543,560 page views. Overall usage patterns of MyUW Mobile are very similar to those of MyUW full site, with a large spike on the first day of the quarter and higher usage on weekdays than on weekends (Table 3). Spring 2013 data is displayed in Figure 18 as an example of quarterly usage trends, as it was the first quarter in which all features were present the entire quarter. Similar to MyUW full site, MyUW Mobile has high usage during the beginning and the end of the quarter. However, there is no distinct increase in usage around the registration period. This suggests that students are less likely to use MyUW Mobile to support their registration tasks.

Table 3: MyUW Mobile Quarterly Visit Data

Quarter	Total Visits	1st day of quarter	Weekday Average	Weekend Average
Autumn 2012*	263,769	N/A	3,996	1,659
Winter 2013	418,155	24,369	5,142	1,803
Spring 2013	393,773	25,259	4,858	1,779
Summer 2013	242,395	8,228	2,647	1,281

Note: No data exists for the first day of Autumn quarter because MyUW Mobile was not launched until October 23. Weekday and Weekend Averages for Autumn quarter exclude the days prior to MyUW Mobile's launch. "Weekday Average" represents the average number of visits on a "typical" weekday during the quarter, when classes are meeting on their regular schedule and it is not the first day of the quarter. "Weekend Average" is the average number of visits on Saturdays and Sundays after the first day of classes and before the last day of classes.

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Figure 18: Visits to MyUW Mobile (Spring 2013)
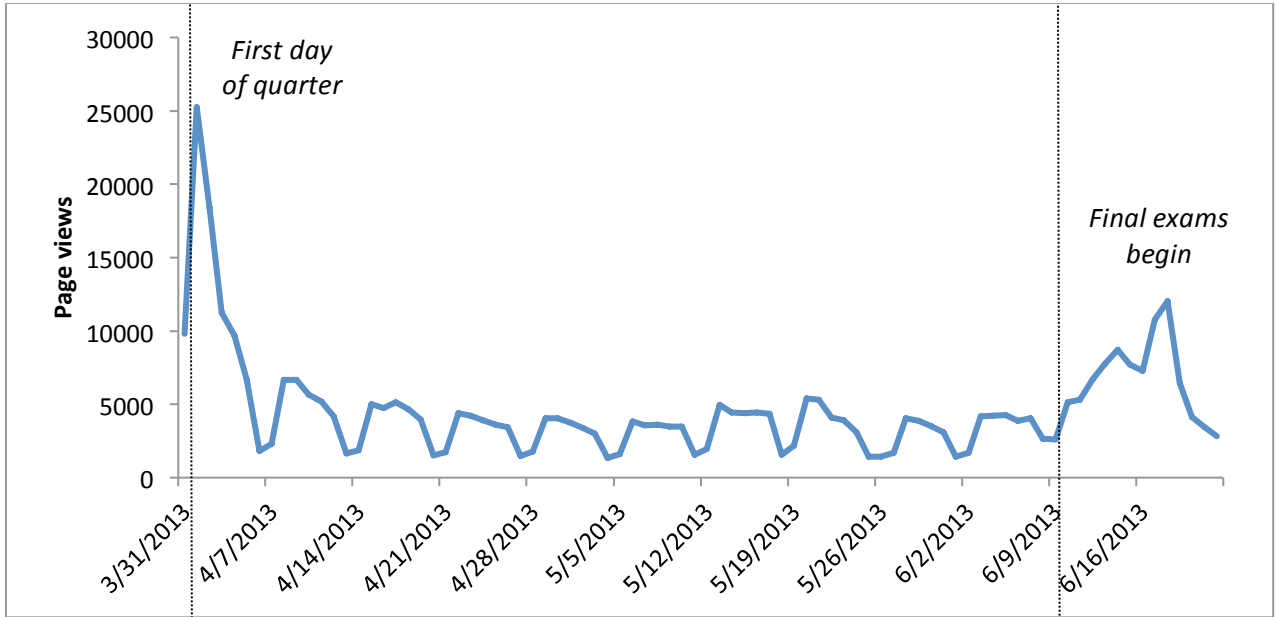
Users

An average of 36,473 unique NetIDs logged into MyUW Mobile per quarter, including undergraduate and graduate students from all three campuses and the UW PCE programs. The majority (87%) of page views come from undergraduate students (Figure 19).

Figure 19: MyUW Mobile Page Views by Student Affiliations
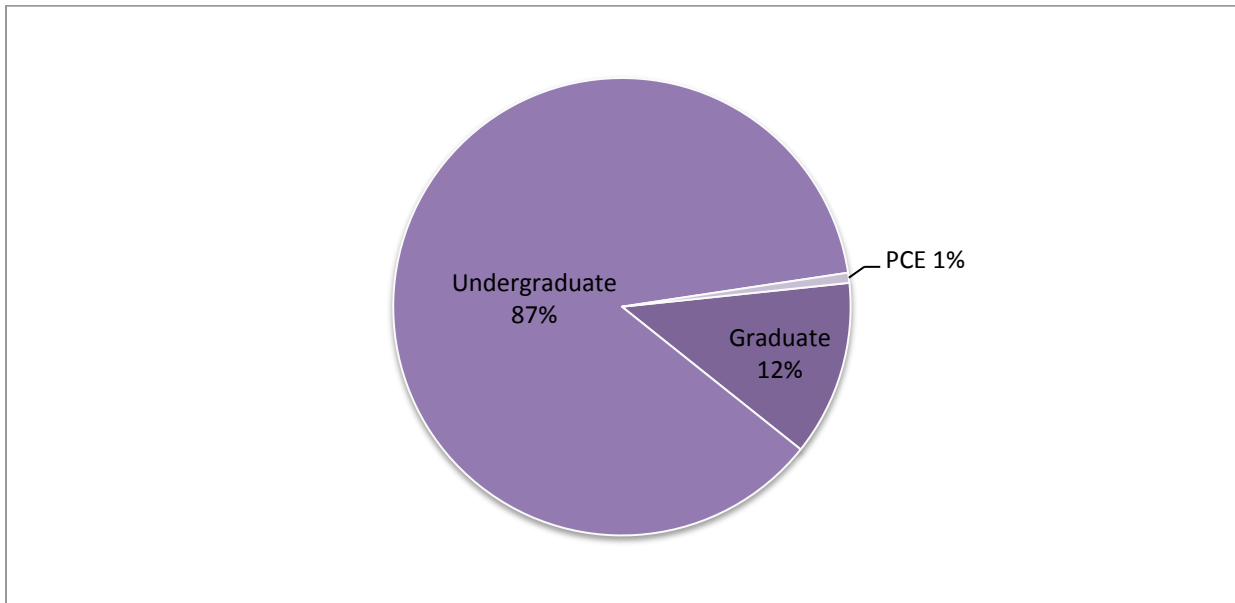
Content Usage

The majority (approximately 80%) of MyUW Mobile page views are of the course list page (the main page) and the course detail page, which contain information about course times and locations, as well as links to course websites and other resources (Figure 20). The most commonly accessed content other than those two course pages are: the visual schedule; future quarter information; external resources (via MyLinks page); course Web site; and textbooks (Figure 21). The most frequently visited links in MyLinks are UW Gmail, Grade Report, Catalyst, Canvas and Time Schedules while the least visited links are the Faculty/Staff Directory, UW Outlook, Financial Aid Status and Libraries (Figure 22). The data suggest that a lot of resources on MyUW Mobile are infrequently utilized, perhaps because students either do not find them useful or do not realize they are available on MyUW Mobile.
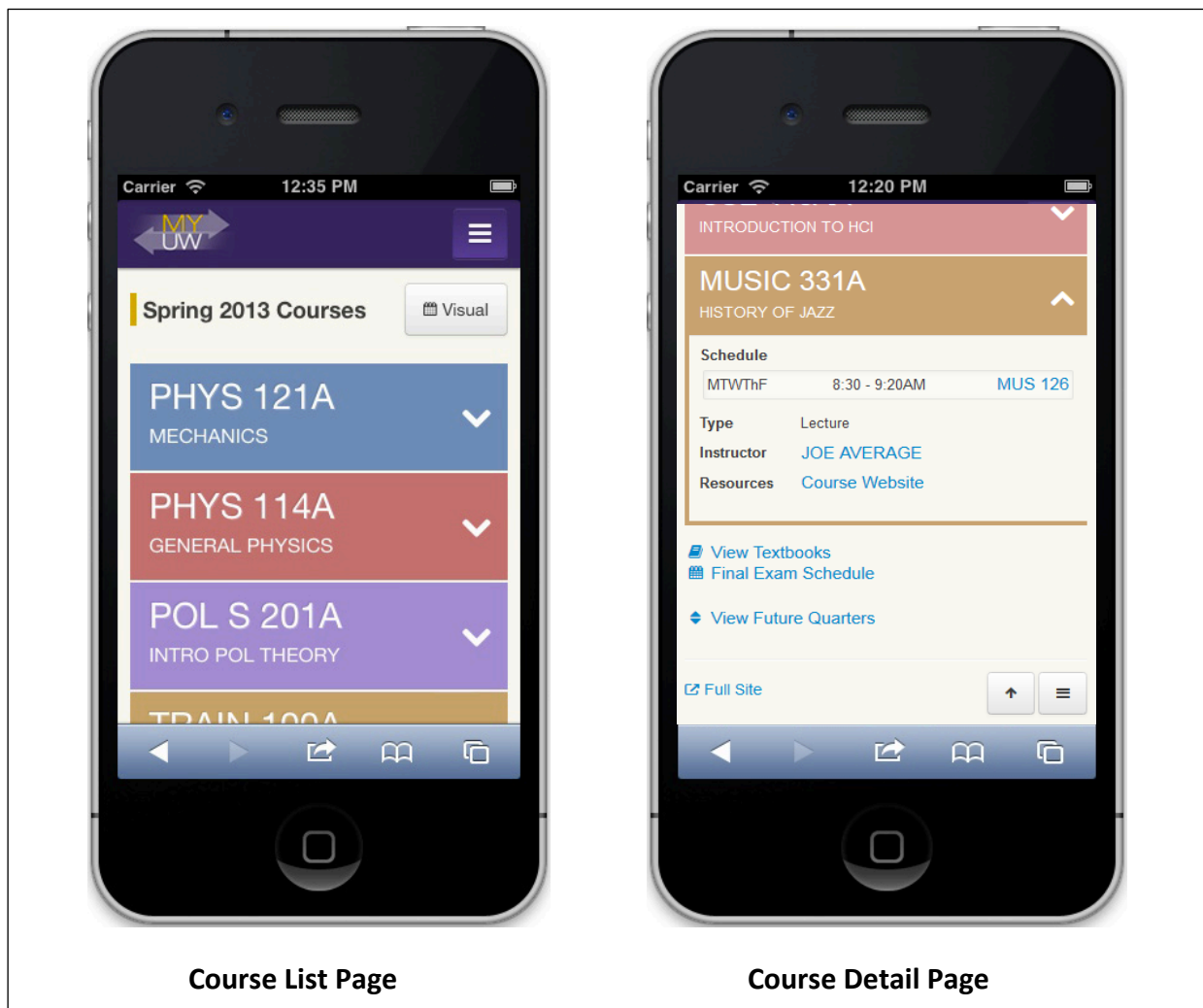
Figure 20: Course Pages

Course List Page   **Course Detail Page**

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Figure 21: MyUW Mobile Content Usage (Page views)

Visual Schedule	148,153
Future quarter information	126,896
External resources (via My Links)	125,982
Course Web site link	91,426
Textbooks	71,288
Final Exams	30,566
Class Location Map	26,620
Financial Balances	15,534
Instructor Information	5,773
Others	2,182

Figure 22: MyLinks Usage

Catalyst Web Tools 19%
Canvas LMS 5%
Time Schedules 3%
Tuition Statement 3%
Grade Report 21%
Other 8%
UW Gmail 41%

DARS 2%
Registration 2%
ESS 1%
Husky Card Account 1%
Campus Maps 1%
Financial Aid Status 0.5%
Libraries 0.5%
UW Outlook Live 0.1%
Directory 0.04%

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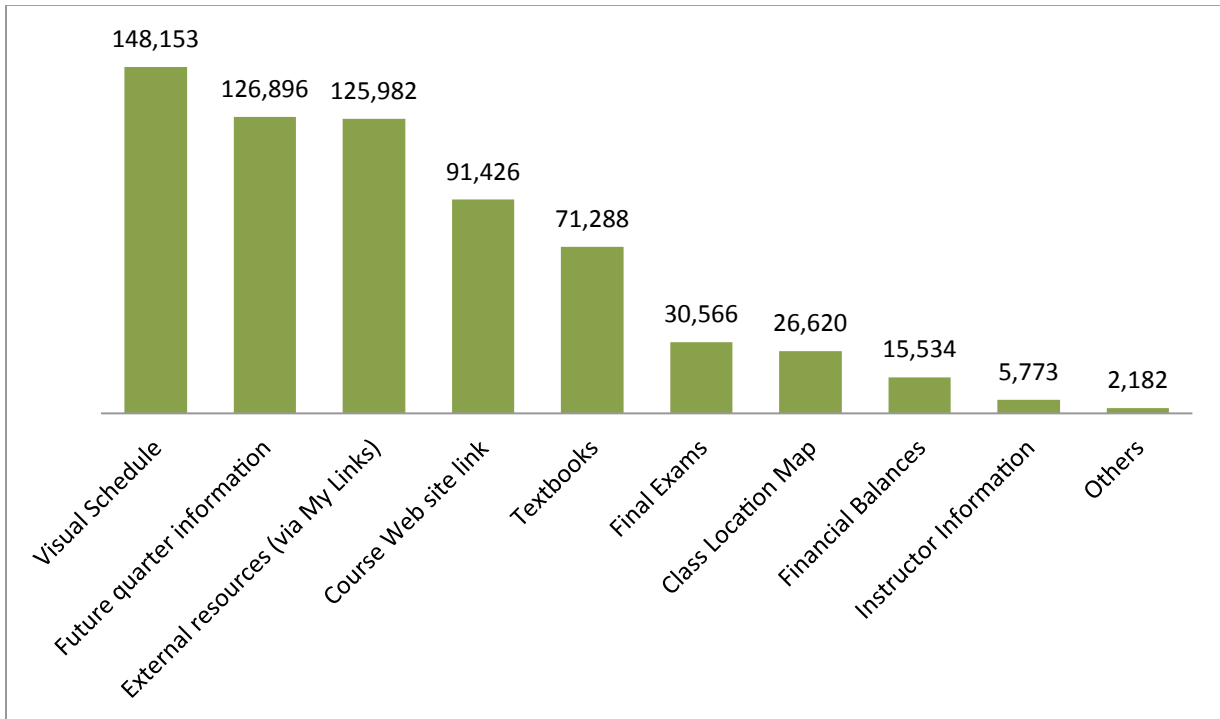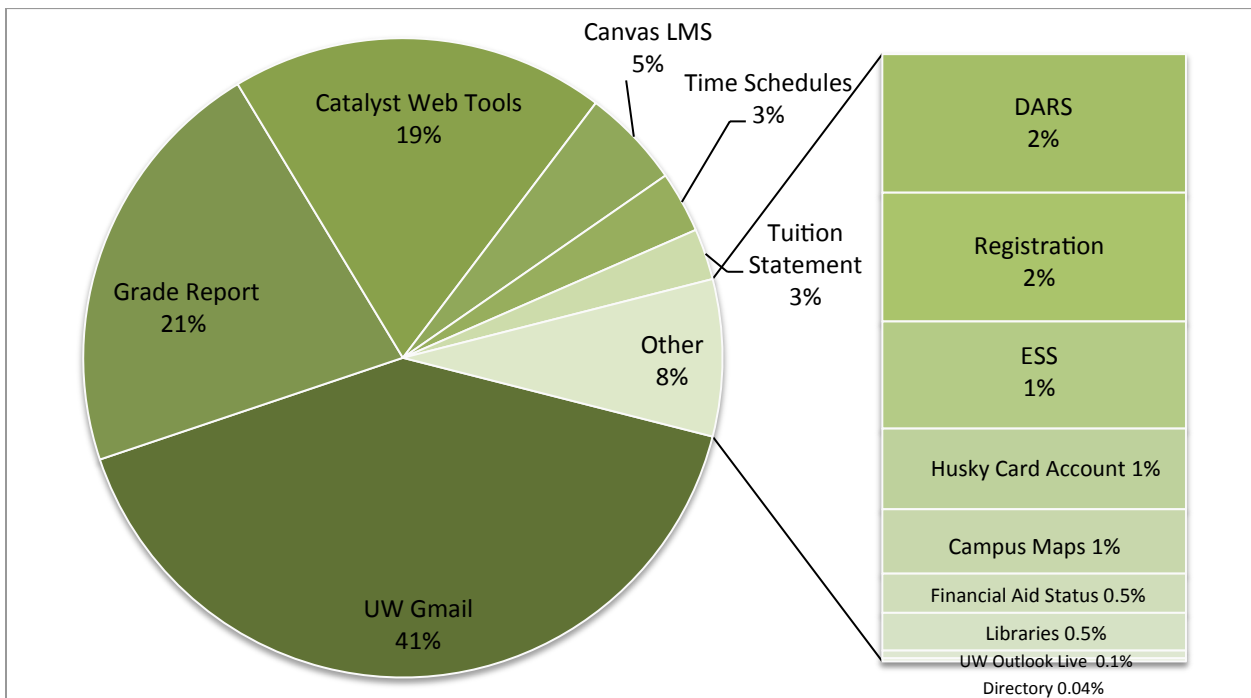
Technology

Approximately two-thirds of the devices used to access MyUW Mobile are Apple-branded devices, primarily iPhones (Figure 23). Other popular mobile devices include Samsung and HTC, with Galaxy S series and Droid devices being the second- and third-most common device types used to access MyUW Mobile. Nine Android devices make up approximately half of all Android visits to MyUW Mobile. Overall, this data indicates that while many users utilize iPhones to access MyUW Mobile, the brands and devices used to access MyUW Mobile vary greatly.

Figure 23: Most Common Mobile Devices
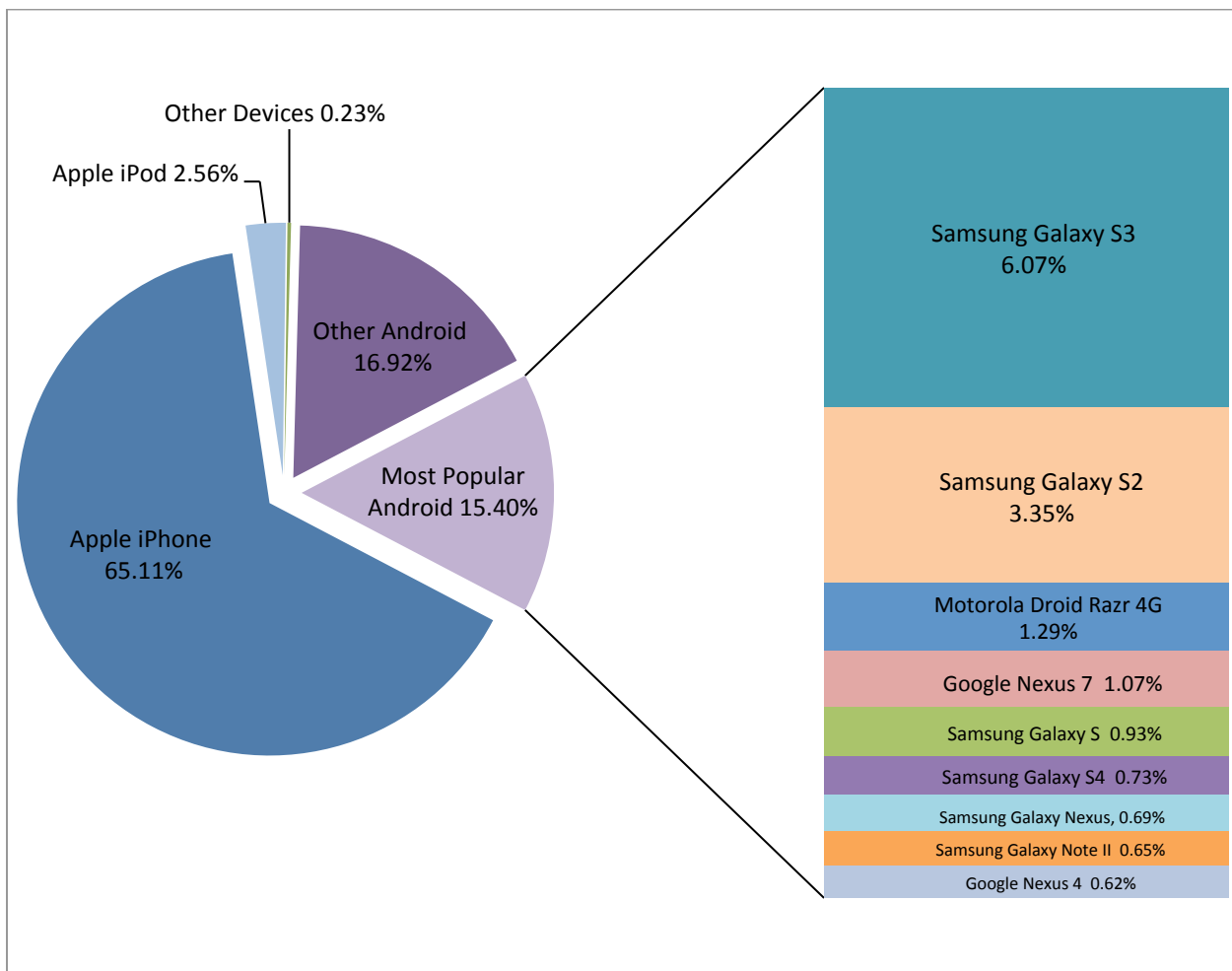
Corresponding with the device usage, the operating system and the browser used by Apple devices such as the iPhone, iPod and iPad, make up approximately two-thirds of all MyUW Mobile visits (Figures 24 and 25). iOS is the most common operating system and Safari is the most common browser used to access MyUW Mobile. The Android operating system and browser make up almost all of the remaining visits. The Android and Chrome browsers, both frequently used by Android devices, make up a total of 36% of all visits.

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Figure 24: Mobile Operating Systems

Android 32.6%
iOS 67.2%
Other 0.2%

Figure 25: Mobile Browsers

Android Browser 23.8%
Safari 62.0%
Chrome 12.1%
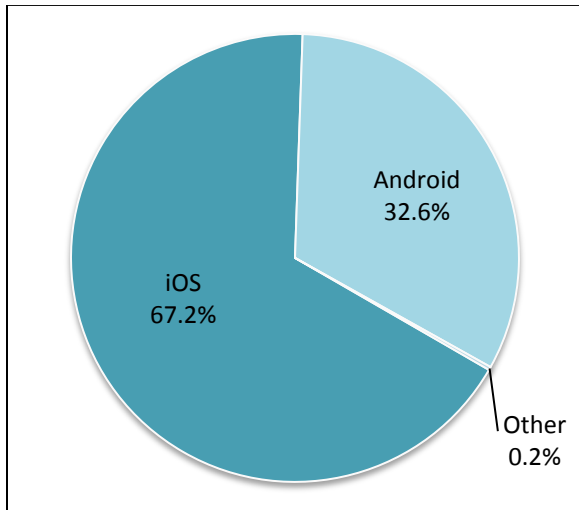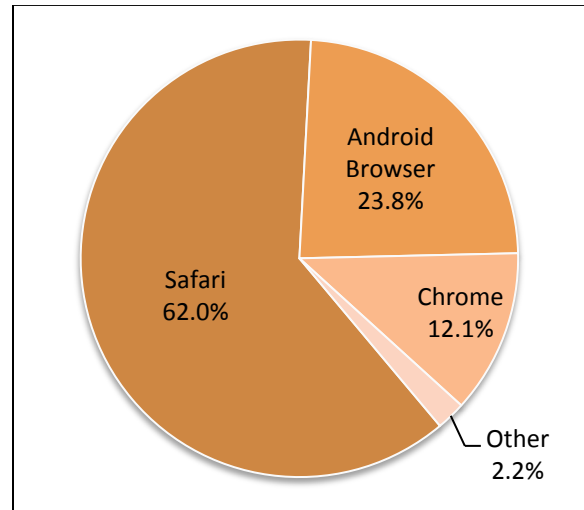Other 2.2%

MyUW Full Site and MyUW Mobile Usage Comparison

Although the MyUW full site and MyUW Mobile greatly differ in the scope of content, they share similar trends in usage. First, both sites have high usage during the first and last weeks of quarters. Second, users use UW Gmail, Grades, Catalyst, Canvas, Time Schedules, and Tuition Statement are the most frequently accessed external resources for both sites. Finally, Safari has become the most popular browser for both the MyUW full site and MyUW Mobile.

Usage of the MyUW full site and MyUW Mobile differs in some regards. First, overall usage of MyUW Mobile is significantly lower than the MyUW full site (approximately 5%). Second, the My MyUW full site sees an increase in usage during registration periods; MyUW Mobile does not.

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Conclusions

MyUW remains an important resource for the UW community, with users from all three campuses and in a variety of roles throughout UW. Students are by far the largest group of MyUW users, and about two-thirds of student users are undergraduate users. Users, particularly students, access MyUW most frequently for academic resources. In addition to the content provided on MyUW, users also visit MyUW as a way of getting to other UW resources such as email, registration, or course websites. As MyUW continues to grow and change, usage data will continue to be a critical information source for improvement planning and service monitoring. Knowledge of usage patterns gives insight into how users will likely use MyUW, which can be used to guide the improvement of the MyUW service as follows:

- Despite the availability of the MyUW Mobile, mobile access to the MyUW full site continues to increase over the previous academic year with a significant increase in the access via tablet devices. Thus, it is important for MyUW to provide information in a mobile-friendly format that works for both mobile phones and tablet devices.
- The content usage data help the MyUW service team identify what resources users need access most frequently; thus, should be easily accessible through MyUW.
- Based on the frequency of search terms, MyUW could reorganize how information is presented in order to make frequently searched for items easier for users to locate.
- The data also demonstrate temporal trends in information seeking behaviors by MyUW users. This information can be used to inform future redesigns of MyUW that prioritize what users seek and provide timely and useful information.

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