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News

UC Davis grads' Web site helps students pick classes

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Siscast.com, an online tool that helps college students pick a convenient class schedule, has been launched for Sacramento State students to use.

Unsatisfied with online worksheets such as CasperWeb, Siscast Founders Sean Regan and Arjan Dehar, both UC Davis graduates, wanted an easier way to deal with the task of creating a class schedule.

"CasperWeb, from what I saw, looks like it was useful in the 1980s, 1990s," Dehar said. "This is the 21st century, we should have computers to do all the dirty work."

Problems students are facing with CasperWeb include limited operating hours and the difficulty of finding available classes said Kenny Trung, a senior and business major.

"It was pretty hard scheduling classes with so few classes and so many people," Trung said. "Back when I was a sophomore and junior, it was super hard getting classes."

The Web site can help college students by generating multiple class schedules that best fits the students' schedule.

Students just need to enter the classes they wish to take, and the Web site even allows students to omit times in the day in which they do not wish to take classes.

With Siscast, students can also search for required and recommended textbooks for classes, maintain an online schedule, find other registered users who are taking the same courses and look at teacher ratings.

Possible new features include the use of Siscast to plan out a student's entire college career years in advance.

Linh Phan, a junior accounting major, was interested in the launch of Siscast at Sac State. "It sounds like it can be very helpful," Phan said.

Siscast was originally launched in the fall of 2003 at Davis, and has served around 6,000 Davis students every quarter since its implementation, according to the Siscast Web site.

"Most of our messages at first were about bugs in the program, but after a while we were getting a lot of positive feedback from students," Dehar said.

Regan graduated with a degree in computer science and Dehar graduated with a degree in computer engineering, according to a Siscast press release. The pair graduated in June 2005.

Regan and Dehar are working to expand Siscast throughout the United States and may possibly license out the online tool to universities.

Other colleges that use Siscast include San Diego State, San Jose State, UC Irvine, UCLA, Ohio State, University of Texas, University of Puget Sound and University of Washington.

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