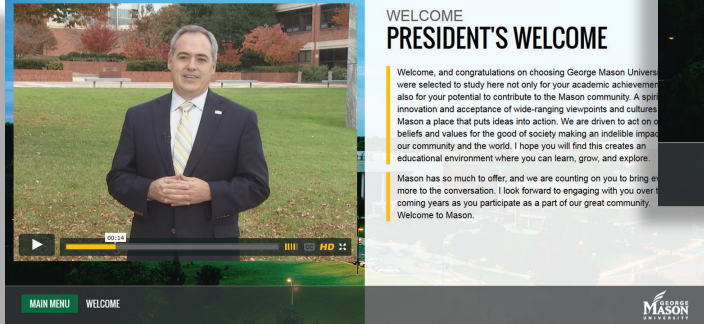
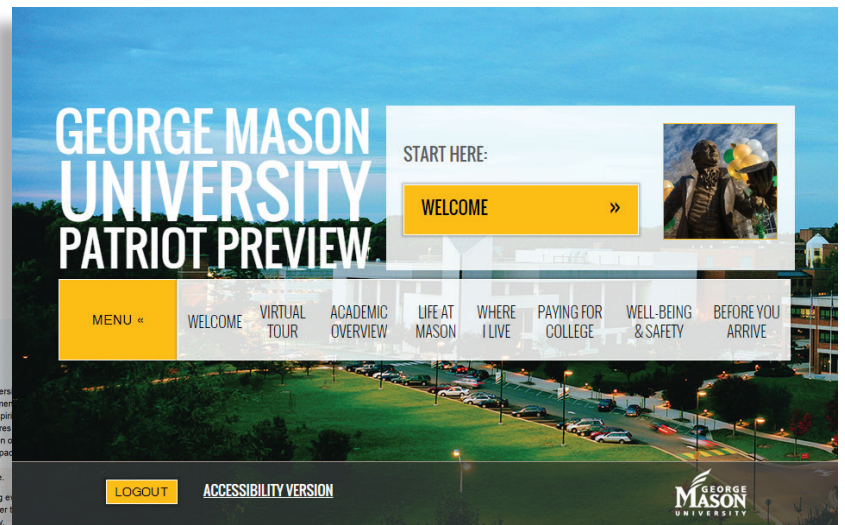


George Mason University

The Patriot Preview Prepares New Students for College Better than Ever.

Case Study



Many schools find that orientation can be overwhelming in terms of pre-event preparation as well as information overload for students who attend. George Mason University met with this popular challenge as well.

Enter - The Patriot Preview

The Patriot Preview was developed by George Mason orientation leaders to better prepare incoming students of all types - freshmen, transfers, international - for a better in person experience. This includes knowing the basics before they come on campus; basics like setting up emails and patriot accounts, so that their on-campus time is better spent.

When George Mason implemented the Patriot Preview, it became apparent right away that the on campus orientation would be more effective. Why?

- ▶ Students came better prepared with questions relevant to their college career goals.
- ▶ Familiarity with the school structure and departments translated into more confidence to get their needs met.
- ▶ Knowing what to expect at the on-site orientation means they are not becoming overwhelmed with information overload.
- ▶ Transfer students have a much better idea of what classes to take, what credits are accepted, and what items to bring to meet with their advisor.

“We can tell that the Patriot Preview brings students to orientation with valuable information already under their belt,” said Rick Gray, Associate Director of Orientation and Family Programs and Services, *“and it has significantly reduced the amount of times that orientation leaders hear . . . ‘I wish I would have known that before coming to orientation!’”*

The Preview Development

The benefits of implementing the Preview are clear. But how did George Mason develop the product?

There was some talk about developing the project in-house with IT staff. But after evaluating their needs, it was determined that they didn't have the infrastructure to build and manage the project. Blackboard would have been too basic - and they wanted something more professional and comprehensive.

They found that Advantage Design Group had the proven experience to provide a customized, engaging experience for students that included video, quizzes, memory return, and tracks by student type so each student receives material specifically relevant to him or her. And, administrators of the Preview are able to track and report on results as well as easily update content as needed.

Administrators also report that the implementation of the Preview has significantly reduced redundant questions. The amount of phone calls coming in to the offices have significantly lessened so that staff can use their time more productively. Finally, students know where to go, what to do - to get through orientation!

Community Reaction and Yield

George Mason already knows that the positive first impression made by the Patriot Preview is a component in their strong matriculation yield of 97 to 99% of students. When asked about the effectiveness of the Preview, Mason is able to report that 86% of the students who went through the Preview felt more prepared, knowing more relevant information about offices and services available, before coming to on-site orientation.

Looking Ahead

George Mason University has developed a great online orientation - but they still want to keep getting better. They plan to embed an assessment into the preview so that students may assess the effectiveness of the preview as soon as they finish - rather than waiting until they

arrive for the on-campus orientation. Also, George Mason University is finding that the Patriot Preview offers great fluidity in that the assessments will show them where students still may feel unprepared after taking it, and with this feedback - improvements can be made. Further - there is even the idea that the preview can lead to better retention.

“We hope this will act as an initial resource that brings students up to speed before they come to campus for orientation, making what they learn at orientation not so overwhelming,” said Sally Lorentson, Director of Orientation at George Mason University. *“We also hope it will be a continuing resource they can go back to, avoiding the Mason Shuffle and going to the right resource from the start. These hurdles are often the things that deter students from Mason.”*

Overall, the George Mason Patriot Preview prepares students for a better in-person experience, significantly improves communications, and saves staff time.

What better reasons could there be for implementing the Patriot Preview!

The collage features three main components:

- Video Quiz:** A video player showing a student with a quiz overlay titled "WHERE I LIVE VIDEO QUIZ". The quiz text reads: "Correct - True, resident advisors and off-campus advisors provide peer-to-peer one-on-one advising support for both on and off campus students." Below the video are two buttons: a green "True" button and a black "False" button.
- Campus Diversity Infographic:** A graphic titled "LIFE AT MASON CAMPUS DIVERSITY". It states: "The student body at George Mason University is among the most diverse in the country, with students from all 50 states and over 120 countries. Our close proximity to the Washington, DC metropolitan area allows us to" (text is partially cut off).
- Navigation Bar:** A yellow bar with an information icon and the text "Learn more about Diversity Offices, Services, and Events". Below it, a list of bullet points is visible:
 - welcoming.
 - The Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Multicultural Education provides cultural heritage programs, multicultural organizations and activities, and assorted training programs.
 - The Office of Lesbian, Gay, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning Resources provides and supports curricular and co-curricular experiences that enhance the health and wellbeing, academic success, and personal development of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and ally students, faculty, staff, alumni and their families and friends. Pride Week is among events each spring.

Advantage Design Group is an award-winning multimedia design and development firm based in Jacksonville, Florida. For nearly 20 years we've helped organizations show their story with a unique balance of creativity and technology. Today, our Advantage Orientation Platform is helping colleges and universities across America reach measurable goals for student orientation, transition, retention and success.

We can do the same for you. Contact us for a demonstration.

AdvantageDesignGroup.com
Student-Orientation.com

6877 Phillips Industrial Blvd
Jacksonville, FL 32256
800.657.1338
info@AdvantageDesignGroup.com



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