Leveraging AI Chatbots for Student Success at Georgia State University

Scott Burke, Associate Vice President for Admissions and Housing
Lindsey Fifield, Project Director, Retention Chatbot
Enrollment trending in the wrong direction

Desire to text message students

Unsure of how to begin the conversation

We’re doing it #thestateway
Meet Pounce

Reminders
Guided Tutorials
Surveys
Targeted Human Support

We’re doing it #thestateway
Designing 100+ Campaigns For Enrollment

- Registration for upcoming semester
- FAFSA submission/verification, accepting loans, paying tuition bill
- Enrollment reminders
- Declaring a major/seeing an advisor
- Study Abroad Opportunities
- Housing deposits & applications
- Immunization records submission
- Placement test information
- Planning for transportation
- Graduation
- Career Services
185,211 total messages (RCT)

1.5 million
Currently

90% of students engaged

63% of students engaged in 3 or more sessions
Admission → Retention
Barriers to Retention

Complete your FAFSA!
PAY your balance!
REGISTER for classes!
See your ADVISOR!
Apply for GRADUATION!
Campus Collaboration

We’re doing it #thestateway
Retention Chatbot Campaigns

Hey First Name! I see you’re registered for a tough Pysc course. Attending Supplemental Instruction (SI) can definitely help!

Don’t let this course get the best of you. Learn specific study skills that can help you with this course. Visit bit.ly/gsu_si for into & times. You got this!

Hey First Name! Just a reminder your 20/21 FAFSA has been selected for verification.

Check your PAWS account ASAP to see what documents you need to submit to financial aid. If you need help set up a virtual apt with the Student Fin Mgt Center bit.ly/finaid_virtual

Hi First Name! My friends in Fin. Aid told me your FAFSA is incomplete due to an error on your app. You should have an email from FAFSA with what you need to do.

This needs to be complete to be eligible for $ To fix this, see bit.ly/fafsa.gov if you have questions or need help, submit a Panther Answer Case here bit.ly/panther_answer_ticket
Dear Jacqueline,

Financial aid is awarded based on the courses that apply toward your program of study. Our records indicate that you are enrolled in one or more courses in the Spring 2020 term that are not required for your program of study. At this time, we estimate that you will have a balance due as a result of your financial aid award being reduced in the Spring 2020 term.

It’s important that you resolve this matter quickly.

We are looking forward to assisting you with resolving this financial aid concern.

Please open a Panther Answer Ticket and we will respond with your courses that are impacted and potential next steps.

Select Financial Aid
Select CPOS

For more information visit our site: Course Program of Study
Personalized - Early Alert Nudges

Hi [First Name], Looks like you might need some help in one of your classes. 😞 Your academic coach can help! 💡 bit.ly/academic_coach

Are you ready to meet with 🍀 Samia, your academic coach & make a plan? (REPLY Y/N)

Y Yes

Sweet! Your Academic Coach Samia will reach out to you ASAP to finalize your appt. 🎯 🎯 bit.ly/academic_coach

N No

Ok.... Coaching can be VERY helpful!! In the meantime, meet with your prof. to discuss how you’re doing in your classes. 🎯 🎯 bit.ly/academic_coach

Mentions the Academic Coach by name
Differences between treatment and control group are shown in parentheses.

- Resolving Holds (22%)
- Early Registration (10%)
- Reducing withdrawals for students with a balance (50%)
- Engaging with Financial Aid (33%)
Covid-19 Response – Critical Communication

Housing Extension Campaign 3.12.21

3,616
Students Reached

15%
Response Rate

2 hours

26%
Action Rate

Hi [First Name], GSU is cancelling classes from March 16-29. Housing residents will need to depart campus by 5pm Fri, March 13.

It is VERY important that you check your GSU email for more detailed information and updates. If you need more time there is a "Request to Remain on Campus Form". Do you need to complete the extension form? (Reply Y/N)

Y Yes

Visit bit.ly/gsuhousing_ext for the request form. The form must be completed by Friday March 13th at 5pm.

N No

Thanks for letting us know. Please be sure to take any important belongings including any material you will need once classes resume. You will not have access to the residential facilities during this closure.
Covid-19 Response – Critical Communication

Housing Move-Out Campaign 3.19.21

3,688 Students Reached

46% Response Rate

24 hours

Hi First Name! You should have received an email from GSU Housing with new move out instructions. Could you confirm what your housing plans are this semester? (Reply 1, 2, 3)

[1]: I plan to move out of GSU Housing
[2]: I need an extension to move out after March 29th
[3]: I need to remain in housing this semester

1. I plan to move out of GSU Housing

Many of the standard move out procedures have been changed in light of the current situation. Have you signed up for a move out time? (Reply Y/N)

- Y Yes
  
  Great! Many things about move out are adjusted this go around. Make sure to read and follow the updated instructions in your GSU email.

- N No
  
  Please check your GSU email and sign up ASAP. Many things about move out are adjusted this go around. Make sure to read and follow the updated instructions in your GSU email.

2. I need an extension to move out after March 29th
Covid-19 Response – Critical Communication

Sent March 23 – during 2-week closure

- Immediately relevant to students
- 10,140 clicks on refund information
- Average click rate in a typical campaign is under 100

Sent March 25 – during 2-week closure

- Direct
- 3,040 clicks on “Online Checklist”
- 722 clicks on “Keep Learning”
- Average click rate in a typical campaign is under 100

Hi [First Name] 🧑‍🏫 GSU will provide a refund of 40% for certain campus services that are discontinued for the remainder of the semester. For more info visit bit.ly/GSU_C19Refunds

Hey Panthers! We’re excited to have you back in class on Monday! Visit bit.ly/GSUonlinechecklist to make sure you’re ready to Keep Learning online!

For even more resources on how to set up for online learning success visit bit.ly/GSUKeepLearning
Covid-19 Response – Resources

Technology Needs 3.27.21

10,008 Students Reached

23% Response Rate

830 clicks

98% Login Rate

Hey [First Name] 😊 Is your gear & internet connection ready to go for your online classes? (REPLY Y/N)

Y Yes

Great! 🙌 Login to icollege to make sure you can see all your courses. Contact the IT Service Desk bit.ly/GSU-TechSupport or call 📞 404-413-4357 for help.

N No

Visit our Keep Learning site 📱 bit.ly/gsu_remoteresources to receive details about resources like internet connection + tech for students.
Covid-19 Response – Course Modality

7.8.20 Course Modality Campaign

Received Message: 16,245
Response Rate: 53%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>% of Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Person</td>
<td>1,519</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>4,527</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blended</td>
<td>2,576</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8,622</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hey Panthers, Pounce here 🎉 We're hard at work prepping for fall semester but want to hear from you.

Which learning environment would you feel most comfortable with for your fall courses?

1. In Person - as much as possible
2. Online - as much as possible
3. Blended - mix of in person and online

Got it! 🙌 Thanks for your feedback. Visit bit.ly/gsu_stayinformed for the most updated campus plans!
Chatbot Scope and Projects

- Admissions
  - Bachelor Students
  - Associate Students
- Retention
  - Bachelor Students: 22K
  - Associate Students
- Retention
  - Academic Course Nudging
  - RCT – Scale
    - Summer 2021
    - Fall 2021
- Web-bots/ Bot Collaboration
- Admissions/ Retention
  - Online Programs
- Admissions/ Retention
  - Graduate Students

We’re doing it #thestateway
Three Takeaways

1. Targeted, relevant messages make the highest impact on students

2. Speak to students in ways that are timely and said in a way that lets them hear

3. Use language that is relevant to students - needs to sound like a text, not an email (abbreviations, emoji)
Resources

Chat with Pounce in Admissions
https://admissions.gsu.edu/bachelors-degree/apply/high-school/

June 2020 White Paper
https://www.edworkingpapers.com/ai20-242
Questions
16,228 Messages to the Bot
*outside of campaigns

5,357 Distinct Users

*student engagement reflects messages received outside of campaigns
College Related Messages

College Category Breakdown (Top 5) | Messages | % Total
--- | --- | ---
Academics | 2,385 | 36%
Financial Aid | 1,487 | 22%
Billing | 843 | 13%
Student Services | 502 | 8%
Campus Life | 595 | 9%
Directions | 223 | 3%
Total | 6,035 | 91%