collegevine

Prioritizing career readiness in a demand-driven market

How the University of Colorado Colorado Springs is using AI agents to expand career services without increasing the cost



University of Colorado
Colorado Springs

AI on campus

UCCS started with a practical challenge: grow the top of the enrollment funnel while keeping admissions staffing flat.

Within six months, the two agents shared a knowledge ecosystem, and the campus began imagining new ways AI could support staff, students, and faculty.



AI RECRUITER

Clawdia

Personalized outreach to prospective students, from first inquiry to enrollment, later expanded into transcript review.



CAMPUS CONCIERGE

Lydie

Reduces administrative burden and support advising. Her knowledge vault grew into 24/7 multilingual answers for students, parents, alumni, and the wider campus community.

THE PROBLEM

Higher education is facing a shift from demand-driven to supply-driven

For the first time in history, the supply of higher education opportunities has outpaced student demand. UCCS needed to think differently about how it attracts, serves, and supports students.

Students, families, employers, and policymakers all raised their expectations, and the value of a degree is increasingly tied to long-term outcomes.

01

Students and families chose on outcomes

They asked: How will this degree help me? What careers will it create? Will I be prepared for the workforce?

02

Career readiness identified as a core goal in strategic enrollment plan

Colorado had advanced policies on concurrent enrollment, workforce readiness, and college affordability.

03

Resource-constrained, couldn't grow the Career Center to serve 100% of students

Demand for career support was growing while resources were not, and UCCS wasn't in a position to add career center staff.

LYDIE TEXTED STUDENTS WHO DROPPED BEFORE THE TERM TO ASK WHY

Career readiness aids retention

39%
of students replied

>50%
of replies gave clear explanations

100%
of replies routed back to advising

UCCS learned that a large number of students who had enrolled for fall dropped before the term began, so Lydie texted them to ask why.

Over half of replies gave clear explanations, citing work schedules, affordability, and other barriers, and every reply was routed back to advising and financial aid. It showed UCCS could intervene with students using timely information.

Meet Journey, the career services agent

UCCS wanted to expand access to career services without dramatically expanding the cost.

Journey began with one simple question: how do we help students get from where they are today to where they want to be tomorrow? She acts as a guide that can take an initial pass, so counselors can focus on high-impact work.

3 main jobs

Help desk, resume review, mock interviews



"We wanted career support to be easier to access, and wanted students engaging with career planning much earlier in their academic career."

Wendi Clouse, Ph.D., Chief Strategy, Analytics, and Enrollment Officer, UCCS



Embedding services earlier in the student journey

Journey is built into the Gateway Program Seminar, UCCS's first-year experience course, so students use her for resume development and review from the minute they enter college.

Career services have often been something students discover between junior year and the panic right before or after graduation. Starting in the first year helps students engage with career planning before they need it.

Mock interviews

Available 24/7. Journey calls when the student is ready, then texts a coaching summary and points them to a career coach.

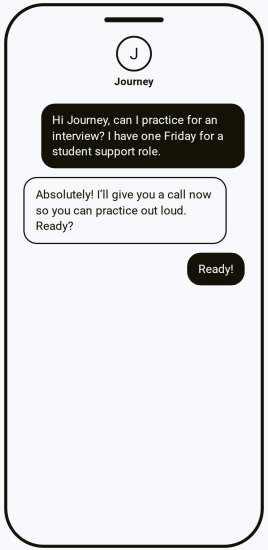
Resume review

An initial pass for every student in the Gateway Program Seminar, so counselors can focus on high-impact work.

A mock interview, from start to finish

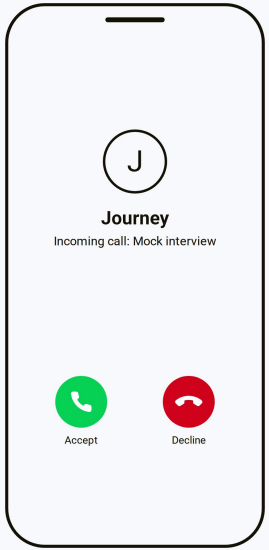
1. Ask

A student texts Journey that they want to practice. She collects the role and any questions they want to rehearse.



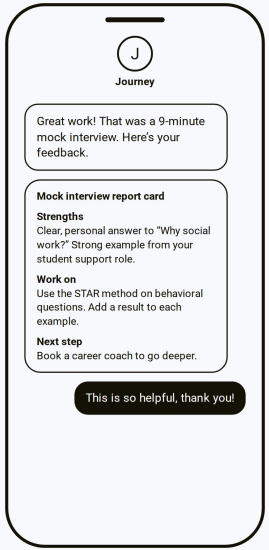
2. Call

When the student says they're ready, at any hour, Journey calls and runs the mock interview out loud.



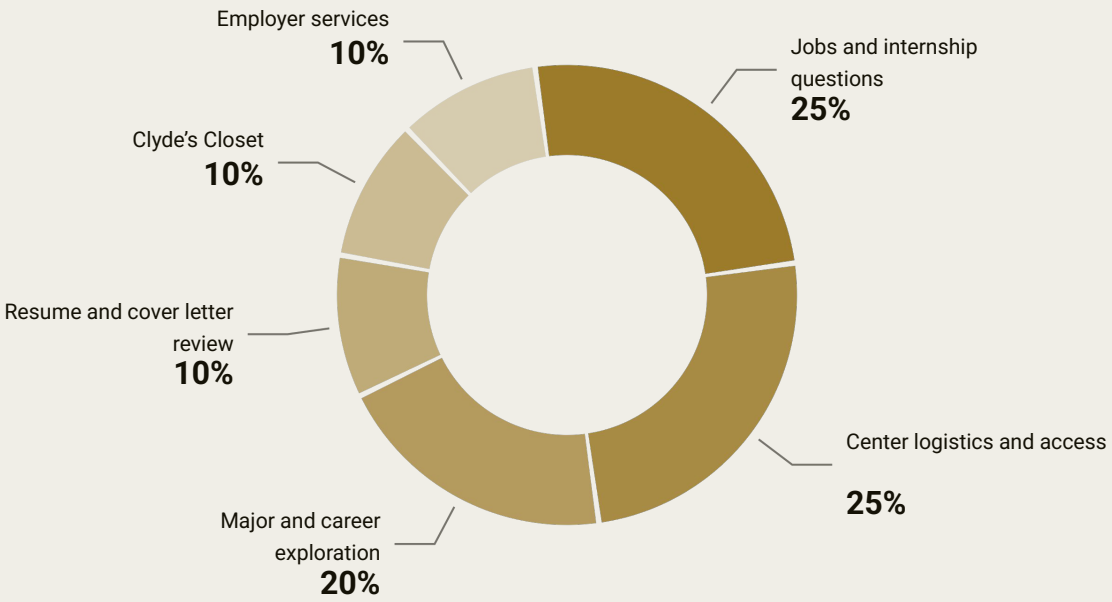
3. Feedback

She texts feedback on each answer, then points the student to a career coach to work on soft skills.



Top use cases

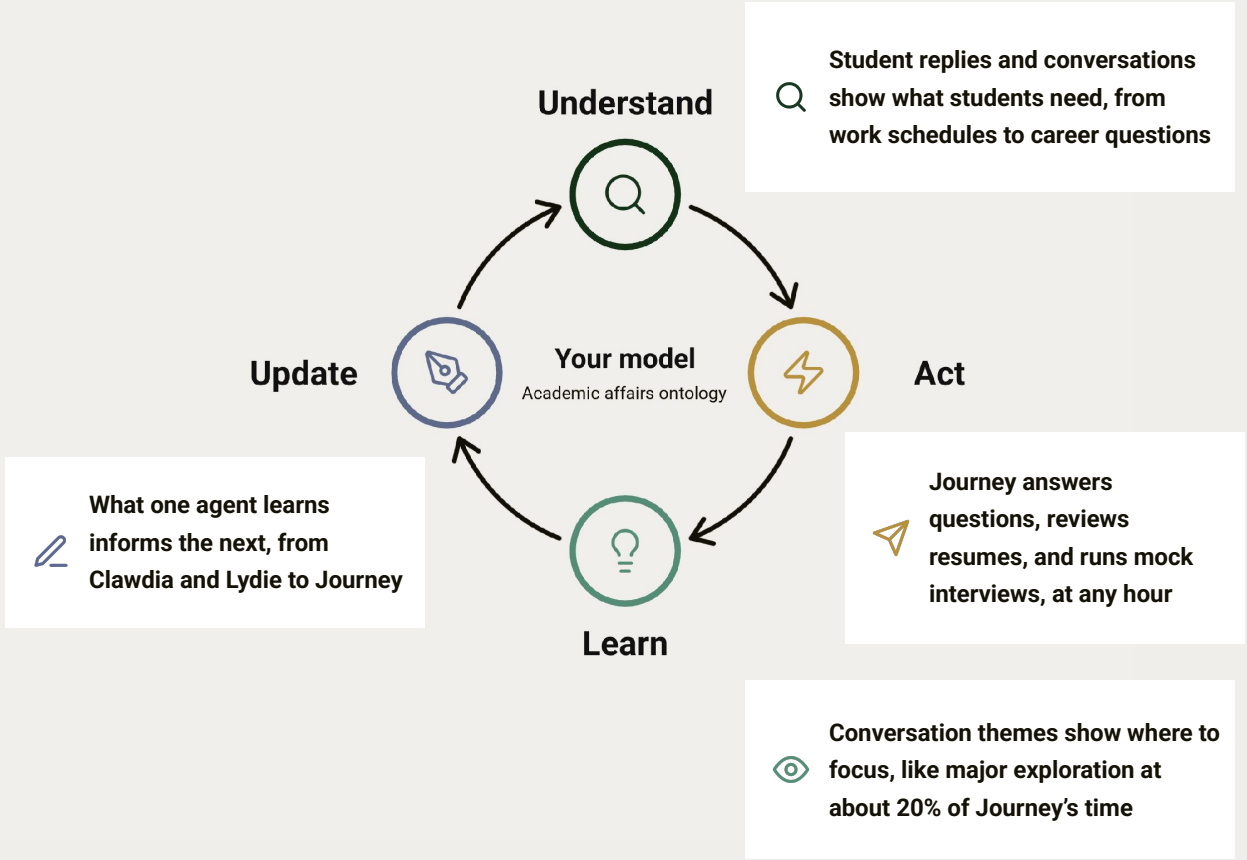
Share of Journey conversations



THE PLATFORM BEHIND JOURNEY

One connected view of your academic affairs operations

An academic affairs ontology is one shared model of the academic side of the institution. Existing and new agents contribute information to the model and produce even stronger outcomes.



A student-first approach to solving problems

The use of AI is additive: it handles repetitive, scalable work so staff can focus on the high-touch work humans do best.

01

Start with the student

The strategic enrollment plan committee began with student need, then asked whether technology could help.

02

Identify the challenge

How do we expand access to career services without dramatically expanding the cost?

03

Focus on the outcome

Are more students supported, engaged, persisting toward graduation, and prepared for what's ahead?



"We start with the student, we identify the challenge, and then we focus relentlessly on outcomes."

Wendi Clouse, Ph.D., Chief Strategy, Analytics, and Enrollment Officer, UCCS