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Arizona State University and Amazon bring first-of-its-kind voice technology program to university classrooms and campus

ASU-specific skill for Alexa, a voice-enabled dorm, student skills developers, and voice application development courses included in the program

Tempe, Ariz., August 17, 2017 – Students at Arizona State University this year are taking part in a first-of-its-kind immersive voice technology program on a university campus, with support from the Amazon Alexa team.

As part of the project, students moving into Tooker House, a new state-of-the-art living, learning and working center for engineers, will have a new Amazon Echo Dot and become part of the first voice-enabled, learning-enhanced residential community on a university campus.

In addition, students in ASU's Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering – the largest engineering school in the country with more than 20,000 students – can sign up for courses that teach new concepts focused on building voice user interfaces, including Alexa skills. Incoming freshmen engineering students will be able to build their own Alexa skills and join the growing community of voice developers.

ASU also will introduce an ASU-specific skill for Alexa to enhance the campus experience for students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Anyone with an Alexa-enabled device can use the *A.S.U.* skill to get information about the university and the campus.

"It's about innovation and ensuring our graduates are equipped to play a leadership role as voice-enabled technology becomes part of everyday life in homes, shopping malls, workplaces, and cities," said Kyle Squires, dean of ASU's Fulton Schools of Engineering. "Bringing voice technology into our classrooms and onto our campus reflects our commitment to both the breadth and depth of the student experience at the largest engineering school in the nation."

"We are excited to work with ASU on this program, which will power their voice-enabled residence hall with Alexa and equip students with the in-demand skills they'll need when they graduate," said Steve Rabuchin, Vice President of Amazon Alexa. "The university shares a vision with us for the future of voice, and we believe it's paramount to engage students in a way that sparks their imaginations and inspires them to build the technology of tomorrow."

"With voice-enabled devices becoming more prevalent in our connected world, it only makes sense to bring these capabilities to our campus," says John Rome, ASU's Deputy Chief Information Officer. "By working with Amazon to create the first voice-enabled campus, we're furthering ASU's position as the #1 university in the U.S. for innovation."

The voice program includes:

- Three undergraduate engineering courses this semester incorporating voice user interface development, with a fourth course planned for this spring.
- Voice application development incorporated into the Fulton Schools' signature Capstone and FURI (Fulton Undergraduate Research Initiative) student project programs, as well as its EPICS (Engineering Projects in Community Service) outreach program that pairs students with organizations and people seeking solutions in the community.
- Engineering students can build their own Alexa skills, both independently and in the classroom, using the Alexa Skills Kit (ASK) – a collection of application program interfaces (APIs), tools, documentation and code examples – so they can join the growing community of voice developers.
- Engineering students moving into the new Tooker House residence hall this semester and who choose to participate in the program will receive an Echo Dot.
- The new Alexa skill, *Arizona State University – Events, Hours & Info* (“A.S.U.” for short), designed to enhance the campus experience. Users can ask, for example, “*Alexa, ask A.S.U. what sports events are happening this weekend?*” The Alexa skill is expected to be live August 28.

The voice technology program furthers ASU’s evolution toward a “smart campus,” a vision for a future university setting that combines sensing, connectivity and data analytics to inform decision making, optimize operations and energy efficiency, and create a highly personalized campus experience for every student, professor, staff member and alumnus.

About the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering

The Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, with more than 20,000 enrolled students, is the largest engineering school in the country, offering 39 graduate and 24 undergraduate degree programs.

About the Fulton Schools Residential Community at Tooker House

Tooker House is a newly constructed, 1,600-person co-ed living, learning and working community for undergraduate students in ASU’s Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, named for ASU alumni and long-time supporters Diane and Gary Tooker.

About ASU Foundation

This program is made possible by the ASU Foundation, a private, nonprofit organization that raises, creates and invests resources for the benefit of Arizona State University while advocating for and advancing ASU’s mission and brand (giveto.asu.edu).

About Arizona State University

Arizona State University has developed a new model for the American Research University, creating an institution that is committed to access, excellence and impact. ASU measures itself by those it includes, not by those it excludes. As the prototype for a New American University, ASU pursues research that contributes to the public good, and ASU assumes major responsibility for the economic, social and cultural vitality of the communities that surround it.

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