

I wish to forward a few concerns I have regarding the shift from the original UP Open University “Student Portal” site to the new UP SAIS system. This happening at a crucial time, the enrolment period for 1st Trimester AY 2015-2016. One main criticism I have is the sudden phasing out of the previous system at a time when the new one is experiencing teething issues.

I would like to explain these concerns and will attach screenshots to illustrate.

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General concerns and queries	Email: helpdesk@up.edu.ph

WELCOME
to the
STUDENT ACADEMIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

User ID:

Password:

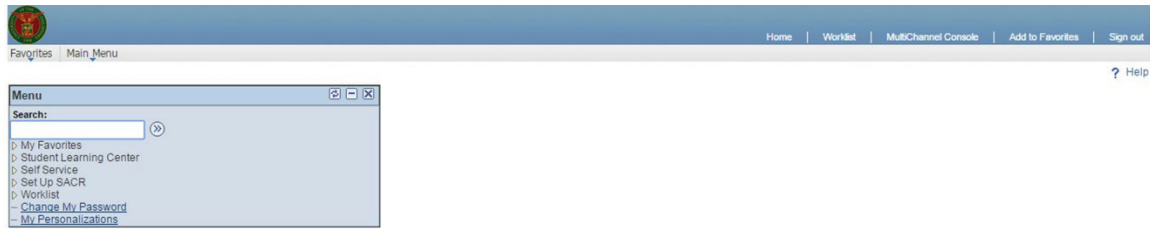
Sign In

Data migration is currently ongoing. Grades for SAIS are for reference purposes only.

First is the homepage, so far, so good. It is a bit minimalist but okay, aesthetics isn't that big of a concern. But look at the lower left corner :

Data migration is currently ongoing. Grades for SAIS are for reference purposes only.

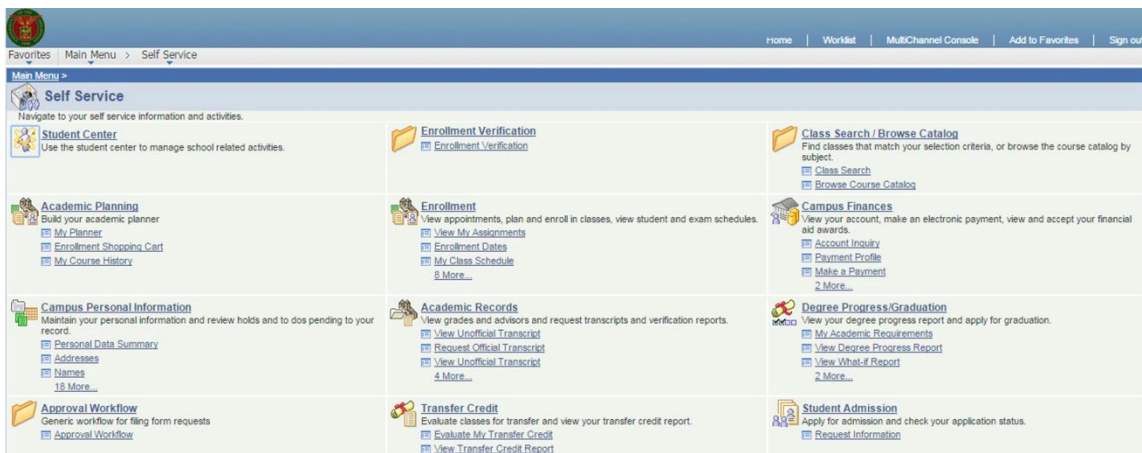
After logging in I discover that my records are currently unavailable in the new system as it's going through Data Migration. Will this take weeks, months or years? I don't know. The only thing I am thankful for is that my page on the original system is still operable so I can check the subjects I took there as well as my grades. I will have to reference the old site to do procedures on the new system that is facing teething issues.



This is the homepage after logging in. The options are not very intuitive. I see many features that were not on the original site but as of yet most can't be utilized.

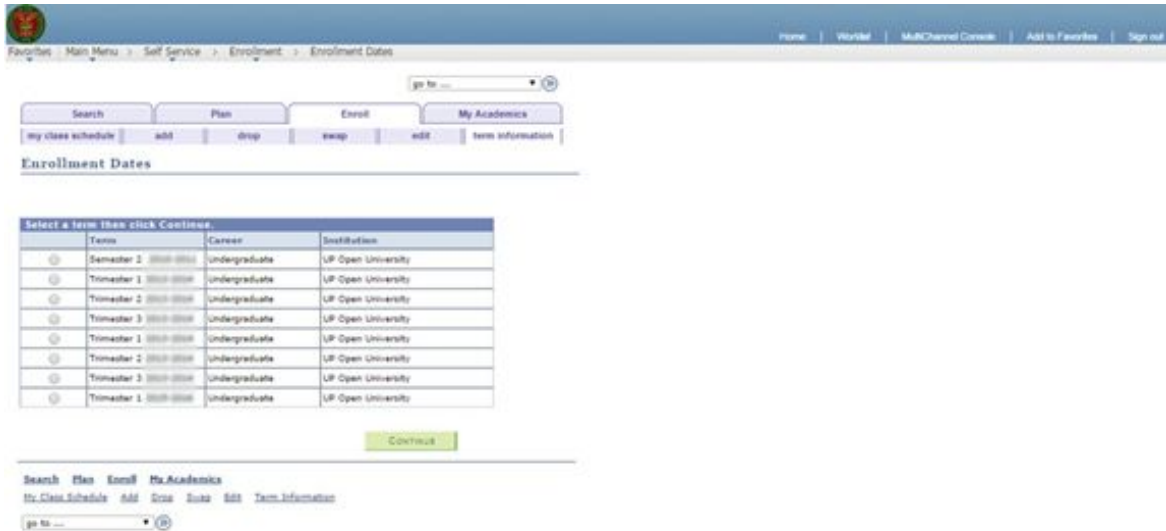
Furthermore there was a pdf published online which can walk you through the enrolment procedure but as of this time of writing it is no longer available. Probably because when I first saw it the interface presented on its illustration was different from the one on the SAIS site. Now there is no absolute step-by-step reference for this new system.

I do remember that the first step involved the "Self Service" Tab so I open that one up :



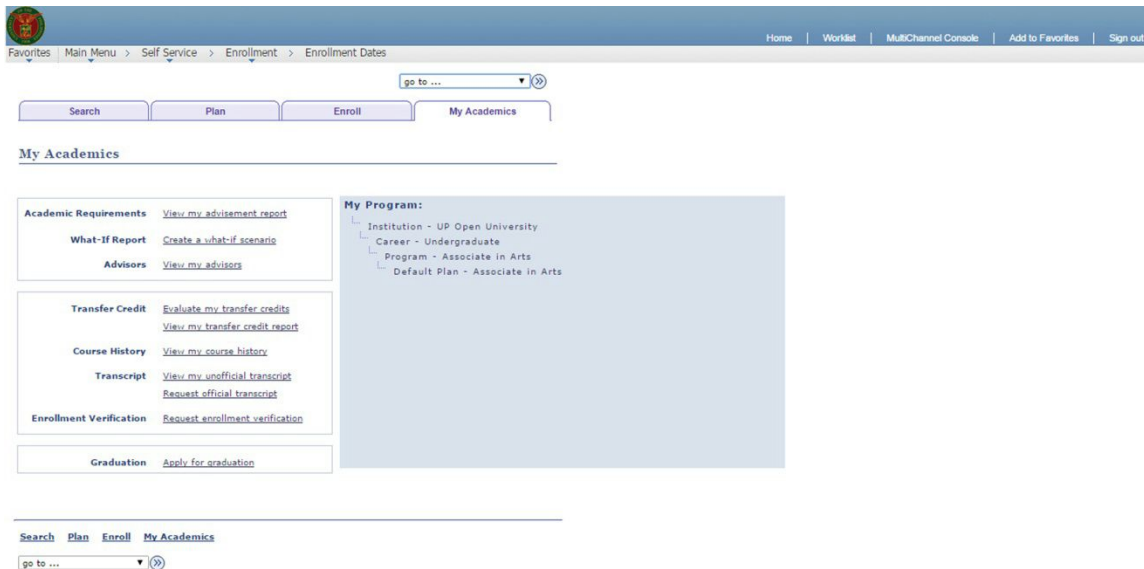
Once again, many features are unutilizable due to teething issues and data migration. It's not at all streamlined to work intuitively if reference materials are not provided for.

I decide to check enrolment dates and it produced this page :



It lists every term I was enrolled in, no dates per se but it does show my subjects after pressing continue.

I decided to look up "My Academics" to see what I should enrol for,



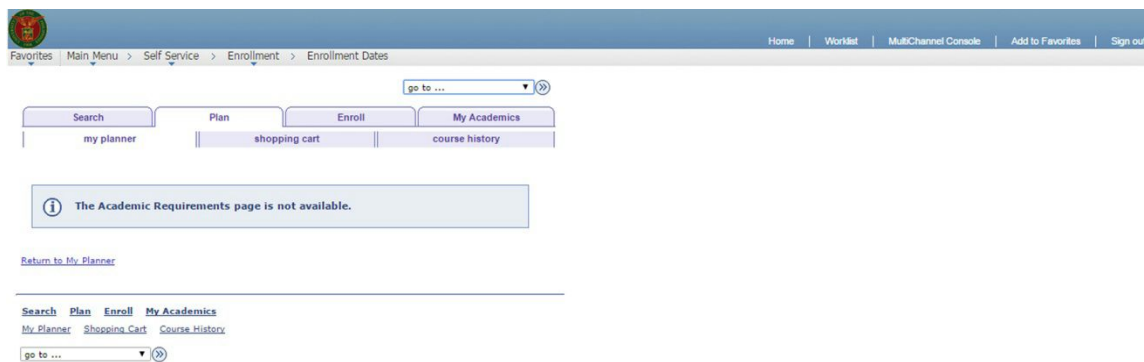
Once again, more non-intuitive, non-utilizable features with no reference materials.

I decide to go to "My Planner" instead to check out what features there can be utilized



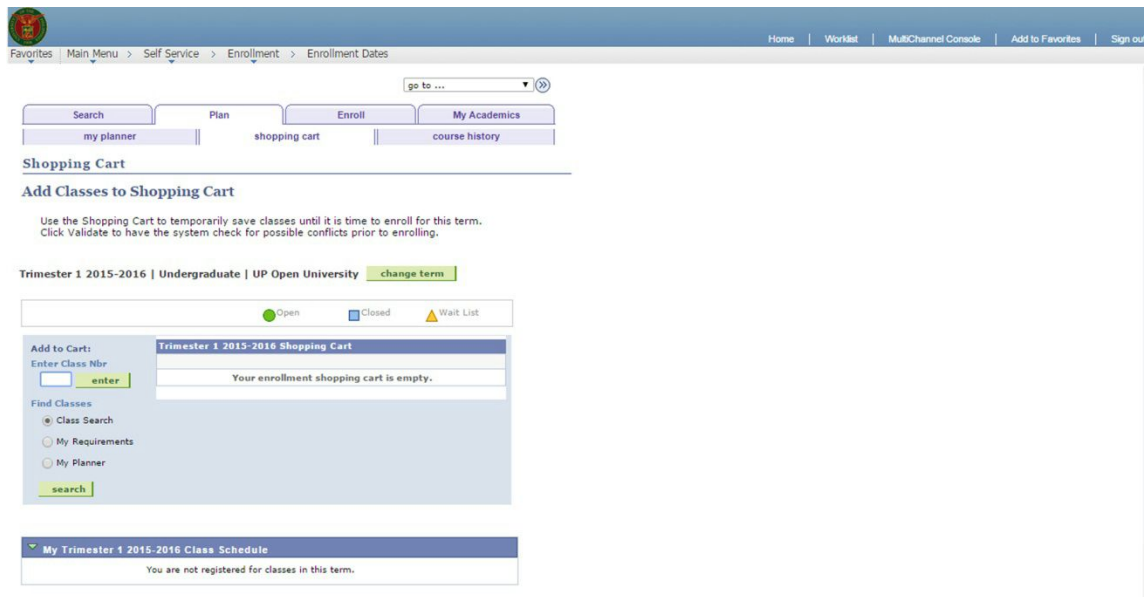
Browsing the course catalogue isn't much help either since it shows all subjects from all courses. Some of them I think aren't even subjects at OU. AND I don't know if this is part of the phasing out of the old system; the page containing all the subject requirements for my course is no longer available as of the time of writing. Even if you show me all the subjects I wouldn't know which I'd need.

And my records aren't available yet :



They haven't been migrated yet. And with no reference as to what I need to take here or in the old system I am working in the dark. It's almost become a joke, I've seen hashtags on social media of those who managed to traverse the enrolment process. I won't mention them for the sake of privacy but they portray a struggle with something very counter-intuitive.

Lastly, something that surprised me :



My enrolment form is now a “Shopping Cart”; I’ll try not to get too political here and some people could indeed compare enrolling subjects with shopping but in my opinion, it is in poor taste and if anything shows a lack of forethought in the design of the site.

To end this I don’t want to say there’s anything INHERENTLY wrong with switching systems, what’s wrong is in the slapdash manner in which it is being done.

The old system (which was simple/streamlined and not broken) is being phased out for a new one that’s completely untested and half-done at a time that can be very inconvenient to the end users. I can understand a dual system, enrol on the old system while the new one is slowly implemented with issues being fixed along the way before it is made the sole system. But this is just crazy.

If any of this is due to commercialization (and I look at it from that point of view), if it wasn’t for the fact that I want to study and I really don’t have a choice I really wouldn’t buy from this shopping website.