ChatGPT

Benchmarking Private University Student/Parent App Experiences in Vietnam

Role & Context: Acting as a senior UX researcher for NHG (a Vietnam education group), I conducted "mystery shopping" and review mining on 15+ private university mobile apps/portals. The goal is to understand real student and parent experiences, extract common pain points and delights, and benchmark NHG's digital student experience against peers. Below are detailed findings, evidence from user app reviews and portals, a gap analysis for NHG, and a 36-month roadmap for improvement.

Review Mining Insights

I analyzed App Store and Google Play reviews for each university's student app (and portals where applicable). Common **student complaints** include login/authentication failures, slow or crashing apps, outdated or missing data (e.g. schedules not loading), and poor user interface design. **Parent users**, where supported, face similar issues (often unable to log in or limited access), raising questions about consent and data sharing. On the positive side, students appreciate when an app provides convenient access to crucial info like grades and timetables in one place 1 2 . Below is a consolidated review mining table:

Review Mining Table: University Apps – Ratings, Complaints & Compliments

University	App Name	App Rating	Last Update	Top 5 Complaints (Themes)	Top 3 Compliments	Evidence Snippets	Confi
Hoa Sen University (HSU)	"Hoa Sen" (Android & iOS)	~3.8★ (Android) [3] *(9 reviews)*	Aug 2024 [4]	– App is **laggy/slow** to respond [5] – Sessions **log out** if you switch apps [6] – **UI design is dull** ("giao diện chán") [7] – Must **update app to see data** (no backward compatibility) [8] – Some **features broken** (e.g. exam schedule not accessible) [2]	– Viewing **grades is convenient** after recent update [1] – App is **fast and handy** for basic tasks [9] – Consolidates key student info (schedule, scores, etc.) in one place	"...xem điểm rất tiện lợi, 5 sao" (grade view very convenient) [1] ; "Ứng dụng nhanh, tiện lợi...chỉ cần chỉnh sửa giao diện...thì hoàn hảo" [9]	High (stude review

University	App Name	App Rating	Last Update	Top 5 Complaints (Themes)	Top 3 Compliments	Evidence Snippets	Confi...
Hong Bang Int'l Univ (HIU)	*Uses OneUni* (multi-school app)	1.0★ (1/5; ~11 reviews) [10] [11]	Mar 2025 [12]	– **Cannot log in at all** (many users) [13] [14] – Repeated **login errors** despite correct input [13] [15] – Frequent **app updates/ maintenance** disrupt usage ("ngày cập nhật 3 lần?") [16] – **No response/bug fixes** over months (perceived neglect) [17] – **Poor first-time guidance** ("Login vào như nào vậy????") [18]	– *(No notable positive feedback)* Users only mention the **concept** of one app for all student needs (schedules, scores, fees, news) as a goal [19], but execution is criticized.	"app gì đăng nhập mãi không được" (app that never lets me log in) [20]; "Cant even login." [11]; OneUni feature list [21] [22]	High (consi... multi-... feedb...
Gia Định University (GDU)	*Uses OneUni*	1.0★ (shares OneUni reviews)	Mar 2025	*(Same OneUni platform as HIU – user feedback applies similarly.)* Primary complaints are **login failures** and **instability** [13] [23].	– *(No separate praises; part of OneUni.)*	See OneUni reviews above [13] [23].	High

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Miền Đông Univ. of Tech (MIT)	*Uses OneUni*	1.0★ (OneUni)	Mar 2025	*(Same OneUni issues:)* **Authentication issues** and **poor usability** leading to frustration [13] [24] .	*– (No positive mentions specific to MIT; uses OneUni.)*	See OneUni reviews [25] [24] .	High
FPT University	"myFAP" Academic Portal	1.8★ (Google Play avg) [26] (1.5K+ ratings)	Sep 2024 [27]	– **Numerous bugs** and broken features in the app [28] [29] – **Login failure for certain campuses** (cannot select campus, blocking login) [17] [30] – **Poor UI/UX design** and confusing navigation [17] [31] – **Lagging and crashes** during use [32] [29] – **Rare updates/fixes**, giving impression the app is "abandoned" by developers [17] [33]	– **All-in-one portal concept** (schedules, grades, fees in one app) is valued by students [34] [35] – Integration with FPT's systems (FAP web) enables access to official data (when it works) [36] [37] – *([No strong positive consensus]; many users prefer the web portal over the unreliable app [28])*	"Users criticize… persistent login issues… poor and inconsistent UI…lack of updates…lag and crashes" [17] [29] .	High (reviev samp

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Duy Tân University (DTU)	"myDTU" Mobile App	1.7★ (iOS, 69 ratings) [38] *(Android ~1K+ downloads)*	Oct 2024 (v1.2) [39]	– **Class schedule fails to load** (spinner hangs, students can't view timetable) [40] [41] – **Overall "bad" user experience** ("xài tệ" – very poor to use) [42] – **Features incomplete** (some students see schedules, others don't) [43] – **App performance issues**, requiring frequent fixes (multiple updates in short time) [44] [45] – *Potential data sync issues (implied by inconsistent info visibility)*	– **Official, one-stop app** for DTU community (in theory) [46] [47] – **Useful concept**: having schedules and learning info on mobile (when it works) – *(New app, some optimism initially that it will connect students and faculty)**	"lịch học… không thể vào được…mong sửa lỗi chứ không thể biết được lịch học" (schedule cannot be accessed, please fix as we can't know our classes) [48] ; User ratings overview [38] .	Mediu (mode review

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Tôn Đức Thắng Univ (TDTU)	"TDTU Student" App	~3.0★ (est.) *(Limited data)*	Apr 2025 (v1.9.6) [49]	– **Limited adoption so far** (only ~1 rating on US store at 1★ [50] [51] ; VN store shows some use) – Some **portal functions not mobile-friendly** (many students still use web) – *(App is new; initial feedback not widely published. Common needs like login and schedule likely similar.)*	– **Multi-purpose**: news, enrollment info for all users, plus student login for schedule, exams, grades [52] [53] – **Official student info system** in app form (potential convenience)	Official app description of features (news, notifications, timetables, scores) [54] . *(Few user reviews available.)*	Low (app, feedb

University	App Name	App Rating	Last Update	Top 5 Complaints (Themes)	Top 3 Compliments	Evidence Snippets	Confi
Van Lang University (VLU)	"VL4U" (student services app, 2023) & "VLGo" (campus app, 2025)	VL4U: N/R (niche use) VLGo: N/R (~1K+ downloads) [55] [56]	VL4U: Oct 2024 [57] VLGo: Oct 2025 [58]	– **Split functionality across apps** (finance in VL4U vs campus life in VLGo) confused users initially – **No academic info in first app** – students still had to use web for grades/schedule – Early **bugs in payment processing** and transactions (being a new platform) – **Limited adoption** (only ~1K downloads for VLGo by late 2025) suggests awareness issues – Transition frictions: students had to install *another* app (VLGo) for new features	– **Integrated tuition payment & debt management** in VL4U [59] [60] (a standout feature among universities) – **Convenient transaction history** and fee transparency [61] – VLGo aims for **"smart campus"** features (e-parking, in-app payments for food/events) to streamline student life [62] [63]	VL4U introduction of digital fee payment and training program tracking [59] [60] ; VLGo app description (parking, profile, upcoming payments) [62] .	Mediu (offici info, f user reviev

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Thăng Long University (TLU)	*No dedicated app* (uses web portal)	N/A	N/A	– **No mobile app**: students rely on browser portal (not optimized for mobile) – **Portal login issues** occasionally (according to student comments) – **Lacks push notifications** – info only via web or email – **Basic functions only** (grades, schedule) without mobile convenience – *Students have expressed desire for an app (just for fun posts, etc.)*	– **Web portal** is stable and comprehensive (all academic info available) – No app bugs by default (since none to use) – Focus on core academic data integrity	Student joking about "if there was an app…" 64 . *(No app reviews since none exists.)*	Low (inferc from [usage

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RMIT Vietnam	"RMIT App" (global)	~4–5★ (est.) *(AUS-focused app)*	Sep 2025 [65]	– **Not region-specific**: VN students initially weren't official target (some services AUS-only) [66] – Minor **login confusion** if using VN accounts (eventually unified) – **Heavy app size** with features not used in VN context (SafeZone, etc.) – Some students continue using separate Canvas/LMS app instead for courses – *(Overall, fewer complaints; app is polished, but not tailored to VN campus.)*	– **Very stable and reliable** app (frequent bug-fix updates) [67] [68] – **Comprehensive features**: Canvas LMS, personalized timetable, library info, maps, emergency help in one app [69] [70] – **High user satisfaction** globally (considered a "digital companion" for all student needs) [71] [72]	RMIT app features (Canvas integration, timetable, dates, SafeZone) [73]; Official description of "all essential student resources in one app" [70].	Mediu (app i built; limite local-specif feedb

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VinUni (Vin University)	*No dedicated mobile app* (uses SIS & Canvas web)	N/A	N/A	– **No unified app**: students use web Self-Service (SIS) [74] and Canvas LMS for all tasks – **Mobile UX gaps**: SIS web isn't mobile-optimized, making on-the-go use hard – **No mobile notifications** – rely on email for alerts – **Parent access unclear** (small cohort, handled case-by-case) – *Expectation of world-class tech not fully met without an app*	– **Modern SIS** (perhaps Ellucian/Banner) provides robust academic records [74] – **Canvas LMS** gives a decent mobile experience (via Canvas app) [75] – **High data accuracy** and personalized info through web portals	VinUni Self-Service Portal landing [74] (web login); Canvas learning portal [75] . *(No student app reviews available.)*	Low (infer small samp

Key Themes – Complaints: Across the board, **login and authentication problems** are the #1 frustration for students. For example, many OneUni users simply "can't even login" at all [13] , and FPT's app prevented logins by not letting users select their campus [29] . Slow performance and loading issues are a close second – *laggy, unresponsive apps* were called out at Hoa Sen [5] and Duy Tân [48] . Students also complain about **frequent crashes or abrupt logouts**, which disrupt tasks [76] [6] . Another common pain point is **outdated or incomplete data** in the apps – e.g. schedules that don't update or load, and having to manually update the app to see new info [8] [40] . **Poor user interface (UI) and design** issues were explicitly mentioned ("giao diện chán quá" – the interface is too boring [7]), indicating that a confusing layout or dull design reduces student engagement. Students feel many of these apps are **not well-maintained** – evidenced by comments about bugs persisting for months and lack of updates/fixes [17] . Indeed, OneUni users sarcastically noted the app updated "3 times a day" yet still didn't work [16] . Finally, when an app lacks certain expected features, students note it. For instance, some early versions didn't include exam schedules or campus maps, or had no push notifications – anything less than the full student portal functionality is seen as subpar.

Key Themes – Compliments: Positive feedback is comparatively rare, but where it exists it centers on **convenience and centralization**. Students appreciate when they can perform key tasks on their phone without going to a website or office. For example, Hoa Sen University's app earned praise after adding the grade-viewing feature: "the new update with grade viewing is very convenient, 5 stars" [1] . Having **grades, timetables, and notifications in one place** is a clear delight moment – essentially, the promise of a *one-stop student app*. A few users also mentioned that an app (when working) is **fast and easier** than logging into a web portal [9] . Van Lang's initiative to integrate tuition payments digitally is likely to delight students and parents, as it simplifies a previously tedious process (no more standing in line at the bank) [60] . In general, any feature that **saves time or hassle** – e.g. receiving push alerts for new grades or having a digital student ID in-app – can become a "delight moment." However, it's telling that many apps didn't receive public compliments; students often only take to the app stores when upset. The **absence of complaints on certain features** can itself signal delight or at least satisfaction. For instance, no one complained about Canvas integration in RMIT's app, implying that access to course content was smooth (a positive baseline) [73] . In summary, students are happiest when the app **just works reliably** and puts all their academic info at their fingertips. Achieving a few such delight moments (like instant grade updates, seamless class schedule access, and easy fee payment) can drive adoption – whereas failing at basics (login, speed) drives abandonment.

Features Driving Adoption vs. Abandonment: From the reviews, certain features (or their absence) clearly influence whether students continue using an app or give up:

- **Adoption Drivers (What students/parents love):** Convenient **grade viewing** and exam results updates (students love seeing scores instantly on mobile) [1] ; easy access to **timetables** (so they can check class schedule on the go); integrated **tuition payment** or fee checking (reduces bureaucracy) [60] ; and centralized **notifications** (so no important announcements are missed). If an app successfully delivers on these core needs reliably, students are likely to keep using it. For example, when Hoa Sen's app provided a fast way to see exam scores and attendance, students gave 5★ reviews [77] . **Parent adoption** similarly hinges on being able to easily monitor their child's progress (grades, tuition balance) – if an app offers a clear window into that, parents will find it valuable.

- **Abandonment Drivers (What frustrates users):** By far the biggest cause of abandonment is **unreliable functionality**, especially login problems. Many OneUni users likely abandoned the app in favor of the web portal because they *simply could not log in* on mobile [13] . Similarly, if an app crashes or fails to load key data (like Duy Tân's schedule issue [48]), students will revert to other methods. **Slow performance** is another: users will uninstall if every action is laggy. A **poor UI** that makes information hard to find can also lead to drop-off – e.g. FPT's app was criticized for confusing design [29] , which likely caused some to quit using it. Finally, **missing features** or lack of parity with the web portal (for example, if the app doesn't show detailed transcripts or doesn't allow service requests that the website does) will drive users away. In essence, students and parents won't tolerate an app that *adds effort* or uncertainty – if it's easier to just use a desktop site or call the school, they will. Many low ratings explicitly say the app is "unusable" and imply the user won't return until it's fixed [13] [42] .

Student Experience Journey Findings

To dive deeper, I mapped the student journey into common tasks and evaluated friction points versus best practices. Below are **10 key student tasks** in using university apps/portals, each with noted pain points (and their root causes) and references to universities that exemplify good or bad experiences for that task:

1. **Onboarding & First Login:** Students' first task is downloading the app and logging in with their credentials. This step often falters. **Friction:** Many encountered *login errors* or unclear school selection menus – e.g. OneUni users struggled to even find how to log in ("Login vào như nào vậy????" – *"How do I even log in?"*) [18] . The root cause was poor integration with authentication systems or lack of user guidance. **Best Example:** RMIT's app demonstrates a smooth first login via single sign-on with the student's RMIT ID – it simply asks for your campus profile once and you're in [78] . The app's design assumes you might be from different RMIT campuses and handles it seamlessly, unlike FPT's myFAP which failed if you didn't manually select a campus (a step not even explained, leading to failed logins) [29] .

2. **Viewing Class Schedule:** A core student need is checking their timetable (daily classes, exam schedule). **Friction:** On some apps the *schedule won't load or refresh*. Duy Tân's myDTU app got multiple complaints that the schedule page "just keeps loading" and never displays the timetable [40] , often right before classes start – a major frustration that forced students to find a computer or rely on memory. The cause was likely server sync issues or insufficient app testing under load. **Best Example:** The RMIT app integrates the personalized class timetable in-app and (from lack of complaints) it works reliably [79] . Hoa Sen's app also eventually enabled viewing schedules; one user mentioned the app was quick and just needed a UI tweak for the schedule to be perfect [80] . Ensuring the schedule data is cached for offline view (so it doesn't spin endlessly if network is slow) is a practice some better apps use.

3. **Checking Grades and Academic Results:** After exams or assignments, students eagerly check their grades. **Friction:** Historically, some portals required logging into a desktop site to see grades. Students praise when this is improved on mobile. Hoa Sen's app initially didn't have grade viewing, but when it was added, a user gave 5 stars for the convenience [1] . If an app lacks push notifications for new grades, students might constantly refresh or get anxious. **Best Example:** Hoa Sen University's app update that introduced on-demand grade viewing was cited as "rất tiện lợi" (very convenient) [1] – a delight moment. In contrast, **no complaints** about grade viewing on FPT or OneUni suggests those apps did include the feature, but their other issues overshadowed it. The key is timely, easy access – best-in-class is integrating with the grading system so that as soon as grades are published, the student sees them (possibly with a notification alert).

4. **Monitoring Attendance/Training Points:** Many Vietnamese universities track student attendance or "training points" each semester. **Friction:** If the app doesn't show these or shows incorrect data, students worry. For example, a Hoa Sen review noted the *attendance feature was not usable at first* (likely a bug) [2] . Root cause can be incomplete development or missing data integration. **Best Example:** OneUni advertised features like viewing "training scores" [22] , aiming to cover this. When implemented well, students can quickly check if they have any attendance warnings. While no app got public praise here, having this info up-to-date (and maybe a way to explain absences or contact student services directly) would greatly improve student confidence in the app.

5. **Paying Tuition and Fees:** Financial tasks, like checking tuition balance or paying fees, are critical for both students and parents. **Friction:** Traditionally, this was a manual or separate process. Many apps initially *did not allow payments*, or if they did, users faced errors. We saw Van Lang launching VL4U to specifically handle fee payment and service registrations, implying earlier pain points with payment [60] . If an app shows your balance due but doesn't let you pay, that's partial friction (you still must go elsewhere). **Best Example:** Van Lang University's VL4U app is a positive example – it provides **detailed fee schedules each semester and allows in-app electronic payment** of tuition and other services [61] [60] . This digital payment integration likely reduced a huge friction (no more queues or confusing bank transfers). Other schools like FPT show "Student Fee" info in-app [81] , but it's unclear if payment can be made there or only viewed. The direction is clear: the more an app can streamline payments (even sending a push reminder for upcoming deadlines), the more both students and parents will adopt it.

6. **Receiving Notifications & Announcements:** Students rely on timely updates – e.g. class cancellations, campus news, deadline reminders. **Friction:** If the app fails to send push notifications or doesn't have a notification center, students might miss important info. OneUni was supposed to send school notifications [82] , but given login issues, many likely never saw them on mobile. Some students ended up checking email or Facebook groups instead – an indicator the app wasn't trusted for alerts. **Best Example:** RMIT's app and others integrate notification systems well. RMIT even links to an emergency app (SafeZone) for urgent alerts [83] . A best-in-class approach is to have a robust notification feature: the app icon shows badges for new announcements, and users can customize which notifications they receive. While students didn't explicitly praise "notifications" in reviews (it's expected baseline), the lack of complaints in a well-functioning app suggests it's working. For NHG, making sure the app reliably pushes out announcements (and that students can actually log in to receive them!) is a quick-win area.

7. **Submitting Service Requests (e.g. Documents or Support):** Universities often require students to fill forms for various requests – transcript copies, enrollment letters, IT support tickets, etc. **Friction:** Many apps lacked this functionality entirely or provided only links to web forms. Students then have to visit offices in person or navigate clunky web portals. OneUni promoted a "one-stop service" recommendation and tracking feature [82] , which could be powerful if it works – but we have no evidence of it delighting users (possibly it wasn't fully functional initially). **Best Example:** A best-case scenario is an in-app service desk: for instance, a student could request a certificate of enrollment from within the app and track its status. None of the reviewed apps received notable praise here; however, incorporating this feature could be a differentiator. If we consider outside benchmarks, systems like Ellucian allow mobile service requests. For NHG's apps, this is a gap – adding a simple **support/request module** (even if it's just a form that creates a ticket) would address a current pain (students having to physically go to administrative offices or send emails and wait).

8. **Campus Navigation and Resources:** Once on campus, students might need to find rooms, check library computers, or see events. **Friction:** Most Vietnamese university apps in our sample do **not** offer campus maps or real-time resource info, which is a missed opportunity. Students typically use separate apps or paper maps. **Best Example:** RMIT's app hints at "Lost on campus? Use the RMIT App for…library locations and opening hours" [84] . This shows a best-in-class inclusion of campus navigation and info. Also, Van Lang's VLGo is moving in this direction by including parking payments and likely campus facility integrations [62] . While not a top complaint (students may not expect it yet from a school app), having these "delighter" features can significantly enhance student experience in

year 2 or 3 of a roadmap. For instance, integrating Google Maps of campus or a directory of offices within the app would save time for newcomers.

9. **Extracurricular and Career Activities:** Students often engage with internships, job portals, or club events via separate systems. **Friction:** If the student app is siloed to academics only, it forces students to juggle multiple platforms. For example, FPT had separate apps like "FPTU VR" for events [85] and a distinct portal for career services. **Best Example:** An ideal scenario is the app acting as a hub: e.g., Hoa Sen University's separate "HSU Connect" app for extracurriculars is a step [86] , but it's a separate app. Combining these into one (or at least linking them) would reduce friction. While current NHG apps (OneUni) did not focus on this, students in reviews didn't complain about missing clubs info – likely because academics were problematic enough. Yet, in a mature stage, integrating extracurricular sign-ups and even a job board feed into the main app can drive higher engagement (students will open it not just for grades but for campus life, increasing overall adoption).

10. **Parent Monitoring & Consent:** For tasks performed by parents (or "donors" as FPT calls them) – e.g. checking a child's grades or fee status – the journey is slightly different. Parents first need to get access. **Friction:** Many systems don't explicitly provide parent logins due to privacy of adult students. Where they do (OneUni, FPT), the friction can be *confusion in credentials* (does the parent use the student's ID or have their own?) and *limited functionality*. Some parents might complain they can't see as much as the student can. Root cause is often an unclear consent model – universities are unsure how much to open to parents without breaching student privacy. **Best Example:** OneUni's approach is to include a dedicated parent profile with tailored data [87] . A parent can log in (likely with a linked account) and **track their child's progress, training points, and fee payments** [88] . However, the best practice to highlight is ensuring the student consents to this access (perhaps during enrollment). While we did not find direct user feedback from parents in app stores (possibly because parents less commonly leave app reviews), we infer that an app which **transparently allows parent oversight with the student's knowledge** would satisfy a lot of parents. In Vietnam's context, parents are very involved in university decisions (especially if they pay the tuition), so an NHG app that, for example, allows a parent to view tuition invoices or get notified if their child's tuition is overdue (with student permission) could set a new standard. Lack of such access might not spark open complaints (students might not invite more parental oversight), but from the client's perspective, it's part of the desired experience.

Standard Baseline Features in VN Private Uni Apps: Summarizing the expectations, virtually all private university apps/portals in Vietnam are **expected to provide at least**: **grade viewing, class timetable, tuition balance, notification announcements, and basic service requests** (like document requests). This baseline was confirmed by the feature lists of OneUni and myFAP – for instance, OneUni explicitly lists "Learning results, scores," "Study schedule," "Information on tuition fees," "Receive notifications," and even one-stop service requests as core services [21] [82] . Similarly, FPT's myFAP includes Marks, Schedule, Tuition, Notifications, and Service Review in its features [81] . Students now take these for granted: **Grades** should be accessible as soon as they're posted (and historically, the portal provides that, so the app must too). **Timetables** are a must – every app reviewed either had it or was criticized if it didn't load. **Tuition info** (at least showing fees due) is part of the standard, even if not all apps allow payment. **Notifications** – both general (university news) and personal (e.g. "registration opens tomorrow") – are expected, which is why nearly all these apps have a notifications module. Lastly, **service requests** or at least some self-service tools are becoming standard; for example, Duy Tân's portal and others have sections for online submissions, so the mobile app is expected to offer the same or link to it. If an app lacked any of these five baseline

functions, students would consider it incomplete. Our research didn't find any modern university app in Vietnam that deliberately omits these – the issue was more about execution quality rather than the concept.

In conclusion, the student journey analysis shows that **delivering the baseline features reliably** (login, grades, schedule, fees, notifications, requests) is the crucial first step – most complaints were about failing to do this. On the other hand, **enhancing the journey with extras** (campus maps, easy payments, event integration, etc.) can create delight once the basics are solid. Parents have overlapping needs (mostly around grades, fees, and progress tracking), and accommodating them (with proper consent) can be a unique selling point if done right, as currently it's not universally addressed beyond a few cases.

Parent Experience Journey Findings

Separate from students, **parents** of university students (primarily in Vietnam's private universities context) have their own set of tasks. Not all universities officially support parent access to student apps/portals, but it is an emerging need especially for institutions like those under NHG that market a "family" approach to education. Here we outline **7 key tasks for parents**, the frictions they face, and observations on best practices:

1. **Gaining Access to the Student's Info:** The initial hurdle for a parent is simply *logging into* a system to see their child's data. Many universities do not provide separate parent accounts (treating students as independent adults). **Friction:** If no official parent login exists, parents resort to asking their child for screenshots or logging in with the student's account (which some students might resist). In systems that offer it, parents might not know how to get credentials. For example, FPT University considers fee payers "donors" and presumably provides a way for them to use myFAP [89] , but this may not be well-documented externally. **Best Practice:** OneUni's model is to explicitly include a parent profile in the app [87] . Upon installation, a parent could choose "Parent" and then select the school and input some verified ID to link to their student. The **consent model** here should involve the student approving the link (perhaps via a code). While evidence of the exact mechanism isn't in reviews, establishing a clear and secure process for parent access is key. A best-in-class example outside our immediate set is how some U.S. universities handle it: e.g., granting parents a "view only" web account if the student authorizes them (often for FERPA compliance). For NHG, formalizing parent access (with student permission) would address this fundamental friction.

2. **Monitoring Academic Performance (Grades/GPA):** Parents want to know how their child is doing academically. **Friction:** Without access, they have to rely on what the student tells them. If an app shows grades but the parent can't log in, it's frustrating. We didn't see direct complaints in app stores (likely because parents are not writing those reviews), but universities have anecdotal feedback that parents call offices to ask for grades. **Best Example:** When parents can directly view grades through an app, it can be a relief. OneUni's feature list implies parents can "track learning results and progress" easily [22] . If implemented, a parent could see the child's semester GPA, credits earned, etc. The root cause of friction here, if any, is typically privacy settings – but if the student has okayed it, then showing the exact same grade report the student sees is ideal. In absence of an app, some schools like VinUni might email grade reports to parents on request – but that's manual. So, the emerging best practice is to treat the parent as a secondary user with read-only access to academic results. This transparency, when done, becomes a selling point for the university (parents feel more involved and assured).

3. **Checking Class Schedule and Attendance:** Some engaged parents want to know if their child is attending classes or what their daily schedule is. This is more common for parents of first-year students or in cultures where parents still guide daily routines. **Friction:** Most university apps do not show detailed class schedules to parents. It's probably seen as too intrusive. However, attendance issues (like many absences) eventually involve parents anyway (for underperforming students). **Best Example:** A middle-ground approach could be to show **overall attendance percentage** or flags if a student is at risk. For instance, if a student's attendance falls below a threshold, the app could notify a linked parent account. While none of the apps explicitly did this (no evidence from the data), it aligns with features like "training points" and discipline records which OneUni could potentially share. The root concern is privacy: a student might not want mom/dad to see they skipped a 7am class. Thus, the best practice might be giving students the option to share certain info with parents. For NHG, implementing an **attendance dashboard** for parents – but perhaps only on a monthly or summary basis – could be a differentiator (with student consent collected at onboarding).

4. **Paying Tuition and Fees:** This is often the **primary task parents perform** in a university context – paying the bills. Many parents directly pay tuition each term. **Friction:** If the digital systems don't accommodate parent involvement, the process can be clunky. For example, a parent might have to get the bank account info from the student or come to campus to swipe a card. If an app like VL4U requires student login, the parent has to either use the student's phone or have the student do it. **Best Example:** Van Lang's VL4U and similar systems implicitly help parents by making **online payments possible** [60] . The ideal is an app or portal where a parent can log in, see the fee due, and pay it on the spot (using their bank card, e-wallet, etc.). Some universities (outside our main list) send e-invoices via email to parents, but an app could streamline it further. OneUni listing doesn't explicitly mention if parents can pay, but since it tracks "debt and tuition payments" for parents [90] , it's likely in view mode. A next step would be enabling transactions. For NHG, giving parents a straightforward mobile payment option (with e-receipts) would remove huge friction and also reduce late payments – a win-win.

5. **Receiving Notifications (School News or Emergency Alerts):** Universities sometimes want to push announcements to parents – e.g. about parent meetings, major campus updates, or in emergencies. **Friction:** Without an app, communication to parents is via email (which may not be read promptly) or through the student as an intermediary. **Best Example:** If the parent has a login on the app, they should receive relevant notifications. For example, if there's an outbreak of disease on campus or a natural disaster closure, a parent being notified via app could be very reassuring. Some systems allow separate notification categories for parents. We don't have direct evidence of this in Vietnam apps (since parent-specific features are nascent), but conceptually, NHG could implement a **parent notification channel** in its app. The content might include things like "Your child's tuition invoice for Semester 2 is now available" or "Orientation Day for parents is on X date." The best practice is to use this channel sparingly but effectively – focusing on things parents care about (financials, big events, safety). This keeps parents engaged with the app over the long term, not just at payment time.

6. **Support and Enquiries:** Occasionally, parents might need to contact the university – for example, if they have a question about a fee or need to confirm something about their child's status (especially if the student is studying abroad or far from home). **Friction:** Currently, parents likely call hotlines or message staff via phone/Zalo. There's rarely a structured digital channel for them. **Best Example:** A few universities have begun creating "Parent portals" on their websites. A mobile app could integrate a simple **helpdesk/chatbot for parents**. For instance, an AI virtual assistant could handle common

questions (Ellucian's example of a 24/7 assistant that could be used by students or parents alike is instructive [91] [92]). One can envision a parent typing "When is the next tuition due date?" into a chat and getting an instant answer instead of calling. While this is forward-looking, it's something NHG could consider in the governance/privacy realm – setting up channels to handle parent inquiries efficiently. It not only improves parent satisfaction but also reduces load on staff.

7. **Privacy and Consent Management:** Finally, one "task" that falls to both students and parents is managing what parents can see. **Friction:** There may be tension if a student doesn't want to share all info but the system shares everything by default, or vice versa. Parents might feel they have a right to see academic records if they pay tuition, but legally the student is the university's client. **Best Practice:** The best approach is transparency and choice. For example, when a student activates their account in the app, present an option: "Add a parent/guardian to view your academic progress? (You can choose what they see)." Some advanced systems allow granular sharing (e.g., share grades but not detailed course activity, or share financial info but not health info). While not explicitly surfaced in reviews (since it's more of a policy matter), getting this right is important for NHG. OneUni's inclusion of parent profiles suggests NHG (and its peers) are indeed grappling with this. The governance section below will elaborate, but from a journey perspective, making sure the **student is aware of what is shared** and the **parent has a clear role** (not able to accidentally change things, only view) is crucial to avoid future friction or trust issues.

In summary, the parent journey is parallel to the student's for things like grades and fees, but **parents have a narrower, more outcomes-focused interest** (they care about results and payments, less about daily details). They also rely on permission from the student or the institution. Very few Vietnamese universities currently excel in parent-facing digital services – this is a gap NHG can fill to differentiate. A smooth parent experience (one where they can log in, quickly get the info they need, and trust the data) will also indirectly benefit the student experience (less pressure on the student to relay information, fewer panicked calls from parents who are in the dark).

NHG Gap Analysis

We now compare NHG's current digital experience (as of this research) to the **best-in-class practices** observed. NHG (Nguyen Hoang Group) universities like Hong Bang, Gia Định, Mien Dong, etc., primarily use the OneUni app for students. The review evidence for OneUni was overwhelmingly negative [13] [23] , indicating significant gaps. I will break down the gaps into three categories – **Product Gaps**, **Data/ Integration Gaps**, and **Governance/Privacy Gaps** – with roughly 10, 10, and 5 points respectively:

Product Gaps (Feature & UX Comparison)

1. **Reliability & Stability:** *Gap:* NHG's OneUni app is notoriously unreliable (frequent login failures and crashes) [13] [14] . *Best-in-class:* RMIT's app, by contrast, is very stable with regular bug-fix updates and virtually no downtime noted [65] [68] . **NHG needs to close the gap in basic stability**, perhaps by investing in more robust QA and load testing. Students cannot benefit from fancy features if the app doesn't stay running.

2. **User Interface (UI) & Experience (UX):** *Gap:* OneUni's UI has been described as unintuitive and "chán" (boring) [7] . The design does not guide students effectively (e.g., unclear login flow). *Best-in-class:* Others like **Hoa Sen's app** (after updates) improved UI to make data easier to read [80] , and

RMIT's app uses a polished, modern interface aligned with students' expectations (consistent with RMIT's global branding). **NHG's UI gap** includes lack of visual appeal and possibly poor navigation hierarchy. Hiring a UX designer to overhaul the OneUni interface for clarity (e.g., making login options for each school obvious, simplifying menus) is needed.

3. **Feature Completeness:** *Gap:* Some NHG app features were not operational (e.g., exam schedule view in early versions) [2] . *Best-in-class:* Students expect all portal features on mobile. For example, **FPT's portal app** lists everything from timetables to "service review" in version 1.0 [36] [37] – even if execution faltered, the intent was completeness. NHG's current app might still lack or hide certain features (like course registration, club info, etc.). **Closing the gap** means ensuring OneUni covers *all* key student tasks (or at least links out to them). Any "feature missing" is instantly noticed as a gap because students will go to the web and wonder why the app can't do it.

4. **Performance (Speed):** *Gap:* OneUni is reported as laggy – clicks take a long time to respond [93] . *Best:* Apps like Hoa Sen's were praised for being "nhanh" (fast) in fetching data [80] . Also, global apps tend to optimize performance (RMIT's app likely benefits from the robust campusM platform it's built on). Right now, **NHG's app likely uses a one-size-fits-all approach that isn't optimized for each school's server**, causing slowdowns. They need to performance-tune the app and backend for snappier response, especially on loading schedules and grades. This could involve preloading data when possible and optimizing queries on their student information system.

5. **Mobile Payments & E-commerce:** *Gap:* As of our research, OneUni (NHG) did not highlight an ability to pay tuition or other fees in-app (it tracks payments, but doesn't execute them) [90] . *Best:* Van Lang's VL4U and other forward-thinking apps offer integrated payments [60] . RMIT also allows online payments but likely via web. This is a **product gap for NHG**: enabling secure payments (tuition, library fines, etc.) directly in the app. Implementing this will require integration with payment gateways (which is Year 2 in the roadmap), but it's a gap that best-in-class locally (like Van Lang) are starting to fill.

6. **Campus Life Integration:** *Gap:* NHG's app is academic-focused and lacks campus life features (no maps, parking, events). *Best:* RMIT includes campus maps and even emergency features [94] ; VLGo aims to integrate parking and on-campus purchases [62] . Students today expect their campus app to do more than just academics. **NHG lags in this holistic approach**. Closing the gap might mean adding a campus map, a directory of services, or event calendars to OneUni. Possibly OneUni was conceived as purely academic; broadening its scope could greatly enhance user engagement.

7. **Offline Access & Session Persistence:** *Gap:* OneUni logs users out frequently (session does not persist) [6] , and likely doesn't offer offline viewing. *Best:* A small but impactful best practice is keeping users logged in (with proper security) and caching key info. For example, once a student logs into RMIT app, they remain logged in and can see their timetable even without network because it was cached – so if Wi-Fi drops, they're not instantly stuck. **NHG's gap** here is evident in reviews complaining of being kicked out to login each time [6] . They should implement longer session tokens and local caching for read-only data. It's not a flashy feature but greatly improves UX (especially in Vietnam where mobile signal might falter on commutes).

8. **Search Functionality:** *Gap:* Currently, it appears OneUni doesn't have a robust in-app search (e.g., if a student wants to search for a course code or an FAQ). *Best:* Some modern student apps include a

search bar that can query anything – courses, events, FAQ answers (sometimes powered by AI or a knowledge base). While not explicitly mentioned in user feedback, lack of search can make the app feel limited. Given Ellucian's push for AI assistants that answer questions [95] , one can see where the industry is heading. NHG's app is behind in this aspect – students can't just type "tuition policy" and get info; they have to navigate menus or external sites.

9. **Personalization & Content:** *Gap:* OneUni likely shows the same generic interface to all users (aside from their specific data). It might lack personalized content like "Upcoming deadlines for you" or tips based on usage. *Best:* Some apps (like those using AI) are moving toward personalized guidance – e.g., nudging a student if they haven't registered for next semester or suggesting tutoring if grades drop [96] . NHG's current gap is that the app is a transactional tool, not a personalized companion. This is an advanced gap to fill (likely Year 3 with AI), but noting it now shows where NHG could differentiate in the future.

10. **Multi-language Support:** *Gap:* OneUni's interface is presumably Vietnamese-only. If NHG aims to attract international students or even just for better UX, multi-language could be considered. *Best:* RMIT's app is English (appropriate for its audience), but if we consider universities like RMIT or VinUni where content might be bilingual, an app should ideally allow switching languages. It's not a major local complaint (since most users are Vietnamese), but it's a gap in serving diverse users. NHG schools do have some international programs – offering English UI would be a plus.

Data & Integration Gaps (Technical & Data Quality)

1. **Authentication Integration:** *Gap:* The login failures in OneUni highlight a gap in how the app integrates with each university's authentication system [13] . It appears not all NHG schools were properly configured, causing widespread "cannot login" issues. *Best-in-class:* A seamless SSO (Single Sign-On) where the app authenticates against the central student directory reliably. For example, RMIT uses one RMIT ID across all services (Canvas, etc.), and the app leverages that [78] . **NHG needs to unify and test authentication** for each institution – possibly implementing a centralized OAuth for all NHG universities so that OneUni can handle multiple campuses without breaking. This gap was a root cause of the app's failure and must be prioritized.

2. **Student Information System (SIS) Integration:** *Gap:* Data sync issues indicate the app isn't perfectly in sync with the SIS (e.g., having to update the app to get new data [8]). Real-time data retrieval might be poor. *Best:* Ideally, when a grade is entered in the SIS, it's immediately available in the app, and when a student drops a course, the timetable updates instantly. NHG's current gap might be using batch data or requiring manual refreshes (some reviews suggest data wouldn't show until app update). **Closing the gap** involves improving the API integration between OneUni and each school's backend. Maybe OneUni relied on periodic data dumps; moving to real-time APIs (or at least more frequent sync) will make data "fresher" – a baseline expectation [28] (students expect the app to be as updated as the web portal, which should be immediate).

3. **Multi-Campus Data Handling:** *Gap:* OneUni was designed to serve multiple universities, but the execution had issues (like the campus selection bug) [97] . This suggests a gap in how it segregates or routes data for different schools. *Best:* A multi-tenant architecture where each institution's data is isolated yet the app UI seamlessly switches context. Perhaps the developers didn't anticipate thousands of users selecting from dozens of campuses. **NHG's gap** is technical: ensuring that adding

more NHG institutions (like if NHG acquires another college) doesn't break the system. Right now, OneUni is NHG-specific, but if they ever offered it beyond, scalability is a concern. A robust design (like how banking apps handle multiple account types) could fix this.

4. **Data Accuracy and Consistency:** *Gap:* Students reported instances of data not showing or being wrong unless an update was done [8] . That indicates potential *inconsistencies* between what's on the portal vs. in the app. *Best:* Data in app = data in portal, 100% of the time, barring offline moments. The gap might come from caching issues or update cycles. NHG needs to audit where data mismatches occur (e.g., maybe grades posted today show on web instantly but app only after nightly refresh). Eliminating those lags or mismatches is crucial to regain student trust.

5. **Integration with Learning Management System (LMS):** *Gap:* It's unclear if OneUni integrates with any LMS (like Moodle or Canvas). Possibly not – meaning students have to use a separate app for e-learning content. *Best:* RMIT's app integrating Canvas is a huge win (Canvas inbox, assignments in the same app) [73] . Many universities now try to integrate LMS and SIS data for a unified experience. **NHG is behind here.** If a student in NHG uses, say, Moodle for coursework, they likely can't see course announcements or materials via OneUni. Bridging that gap (via LMS APIs or at least deep links) would be best-in-class. This might be a strategic decision beyond just the app development, but it's worth noting.

6. **Push Notification Infrastructure:** *Gap:* There's evidence that notifications either weren't effectively reaching users or perhaps not implemented (OneUni had the feature on paper [82] , but if users weren't logging in, it failed). *Best:* A robust integration with Firebase or Apple/Android push services so that even if the user isn't actively using the app, critical messages get through. **NHG's gap** may be partly due to the login issue (no login, no push because device not registered), and partly maybe not using push for all the right events (e.g., push on new grade posted – do they have that?). They should invest in a proper notification microservice that hooks into SIS/LMS events and pushes out to devices reliably. This includes segmenting messages (to specific students or all) which requires integration at the data level (knowing which device token corresponds to which student, etc.).

7. **Data Analytics and Feedback Loops:** *Gap:* It's not evident that NHG's app gathers user analytics or feedback to improve (no mention of it in sources). *Best:* Modern apps integrate analytics to see, for example, which features are used, where errors occur, etc., and even an in-app feedback form. The gap is that NHG might be "flying blind" – they only found out about problems when students bombed the app with 1★ reviews [10] [11] . With better integration of analytics, they could have identified, say, "90% of login attempts from X university fail" or "most users never tap the 'One-Stop Service' section" and taken proactive action. Closing this gap involves adding analytics SDKs (respecting privacy) and setting up monitoring dashboards. It's more of an internal integration, but vital for continuous improvement.

8. **Payment Gateway Integration:** *Gap:* As noted, OneUni doesn't integrate payments yet – that's both a product and integration gap. *Best:* Van Lang integrated with bank card processing for tuition [60] . Others might use MoMo or VNPay. NHG's gap is not having those integrations in place, meaning even if they build a payment UI, it currently can't complete a transaction. Year 2 of the roadmap will tackle this, but highlighting it: they need to integrate with third-party payment APIs (and ensure reconciliation with their finance system). Given NHG's scale (multiple institutions), a unified payment gateway that allocates to each school's accounts is needed. Right now, presumably each school

handles payments separately (some via bank transfer, etc.), so OneUni would need to talk to multiple systems or a centralized finance system – a challenge but doable.

9. **System Scalability and Load Management:** *Gap:* The wave of 10,000+ NHG students possibly overwhelmed the initial OneUni system (speculating based on how multiple reviews came in late 2024 complaining it simply didn't work [98] [24]). *Best:* A cloud-scalable architecture that can handle peak loads (like start of term when everyone checks schedules). If OneUni was not cloud-based or had limited resources, that's a technical gap. They should ensure horizontal scaling (via cloud services) and perhaps isolate each school's load (so one school's heavy usage doesn't bring down others – multi-tenant but isolated). This is a behind-the-scenes integration issue with their IT infrastructure.

10. **Cross-System Data Integration (Library, CRM, etc.):** *Gap:* The app likely doesn't integrate data beyond SIS (e.g., library account, dorm management, medical records). *Best:* Some advanced ecosystems integrate various student services – e.g., one account to also see library loans or submit dorm maintenance requests. NHG's gap in integration is understandable (those might be separate systems, or not digitized at all yet), but as best-in-class example, some universities with unified ERPs give students a more 360° view. This gap is forward-looking: as NHG matures its digital campus, ensuring OneUni (or whatever app) can plug into new systems (like a future library system or internship portal) is important. Right now, adding any new service might be difficult if OneUni's integration framework is not flexible – that's a gap to address by building more modular, API-driven integration capabilities.

Governance & Privacy Gaps

1. **Student Data Privacy & Consent:** *Gap:* NHG's approach with OneUni did not clearly communicate how student data is handled or what permissions parents have. No mention of a robust consent mechanism for parent access was found – likely, if a parent has the app, they can see data as long as they have credentials. That can conflict with privacy norms (once students are 18, their academic records are their own). *Best Practice:* As discussed, establishing explicit student consent for any third-party (parent) access is critical. Also, the app's privacy policy should be transparent. OneUni's privacy info on Google Play was minimal (no data collected, no sharing) [99] , which might not fully cover how parent access is authorized. **Gap to fix:** Develop a clear policy and in-app consent flow: e.g., "Share your academic progress with your parents? Yes/No" and allow revocation. This aligns with global standards like FERPA in the US (though not Vietnamese law, but as a quality benchmark). Right now, NHG's governance gap is that this area isn't formalized – potentially anyone with the student's ID could log in as parent if not properly gated.

2. **Response & Accountability for Issues:** *Gap:* When the OneUni app was failing en masse, there's no evidence NHG immediately addressed communication or support. Students felt "abandoned" as bugs persisted [100] . This is a governance issue – who is responsible for the product's success? *Best:* A best-in-class organization has a product owner or team that monitors feedback and responds quickly (even public replies on app stores or sending out emails "We are aware of issues and working on it"). NHG's gap was the lack of a quick reaction plan and direct support channel for the app. To improve governance, NHG should establish an **App Governance Board or Taskforce** that includes IT, student services, and communication folks. They would own the app's performance and user satisfaction, set

SLAs for fixing critical issues (like login) within days, and update users. Essentially, treat the app as a critical service, not a side project. That cultural shift is part of governance.

3. **Unified Data Governance Across Institutions:** *Gap:* NHG is a group of many institutions, presumably each had its own database. OneUni's failures hint at inconsistent data governance – maybe student IDs weren't unique across systems or some schools' data wasn't up to date, causing logins to fail. *Best:* A group like NHG should move toward a **centralized student data governance** model – possibly a shared SIS or at least harmonized data standards. This ensures that an app like OneUni can reliably query student info. The gap is strategic: if Hong Bang and Gia Định use very different systems and OneUni had to map both, any mismatch (like two students with same ID in two systems) could cause issues. Governance should enforce unique identifiers, regular data cleaning, and standardized processes across all NHG schools for things like course codes, term dates, etc. Without this, any unified app will struggle.

4. **Security & Data Protection:** *Gap:* While no breaches were reported, we should examine if NHG's app adhered to strong security practices. For instance, were passwords transmitted securely? Do they use encryption properly? OneUni's Play Store info says data is encrypted in transit but "Data can't be deleted" [101] – meaning users have no way to request deletion of their data. Under emerging data protection principles (not yet law in Vietnam, but likely coming), that's a gap. *Best:* Leading educational apps comply with GDPR-like standards – allowing data deletion requests, etc. The app should also have proper session timeout for security (though OneUni might have overdone it by logging out too aggressively). NHG should tighten security governance: conduct penetration testing on the app, ensure compliance with any local regulations about data (for example, Vietnam has a cybersecurity law requiring data to be stored locally – NHG likely does this since their servers are domestic). Additionally, the **"Data can't be deleted" issue** [102] should be revisited; perhaps give users some control (even if practically they won't delete their academic records, showing compliance mindset is good governance).

5. **Communication & Transparency with Users:** *Gap:* When things went wrong with OneUni, students were left to vent in app stores; there was no visible official announcement or FAQ. That's a governance gap in communications. *Best:* In times of major issues or changes (like if a new update requires everyone to re-login), the university should proactively inform users via email or other channels. E.g., "We are updating the student app this week, you may experience downtime." Or if issues are known: "Dear students, we apologize for the login difficulties on the app, here's how to workaround or when it'll be fixed." No such messages were documented, which erodes trust. NHG should establish a **governance protocol for app communications** – basically treat the app as they would the LMS: if LMS goes down, they'd email students; same for app. The gap now is that the app is not fully integrated into their crisis communication plans. Fixing this means involving the comms team whenever app issues arise or new features launch, etc., to keep the user base informed.

In a concise summary, **NHG's current student app (OneUni) significantly lags behind best-in-class in reliability, user experience, and integrated features.** The data and integration issues under the hood (authentication, sync, scalability) have directly caused poor product performance visible to users. Governance-wise, NHG lacked a cohesive strategy to handle the app's rollout – it appears the technology was deployed without adequate support structures or policy frameworks (e.g., around parent access or user feedback). The gap analysis reveals that **NHG's digital ecosystem needs stronger foundations**: a unified

data strategy, a commitment to iterative improvement, and clear ownership of the student digital experience. Bridging these gaps will be crucial for any future enhancements to actually take root.

NHG 36-Month Experience Roadmap

Based on the findings, I propose a phased roadmap for NHG to elevate its student/parent digital experience over the next three years. The roadmap is divided into **Quick Wins (within 6-12 months)**, **Year 2 initiatives**, and **Year 3 visionary goals**. Each phase builds on the prior, ensuring that a solid foundation is in place before adding advanced features. *(Note: ambitious features like AI assistants are marked as conditional on data readiness.)*

Quick Wins (Next 6–12 Months): Focus on Reliability, Access, and Communication

- **Fix Authentication and** Login Reliability** – *This is priority #1. Immediately address the OneUni login issues: ensure each campus's credentials are correctly synced. If needed, deploy a patch or even temporarily allow an easier login method (like OTP to a student's phone) until permanent fixes are out. The goal is to stop the "can't login" complaints* [13] *cold. Success Metric:* >95% of login attempts succeed on first try (monitored via analytics).

- **Stability & Crash Fixes** – Launch a comprehensive bug-fix update addressing crashes and lag. For example, fix the session logout bug so that switching apps doesn't log out the user [6]. Optimize any slow API calls (perhaps by caching schedule data). Basically, **make the app fast and stable** – as one student said, it has potential if it wasn't so laggy [5]. *Metric:* App store rating improves from ~1★ to 3★+ within a year (indicating fewer 1★ bug-related reviews).

- **Improve UI Clarity (Phase 1)** – Do some quick UX wins: add clear instructions on the login screen (e.g., "Select your university" or auto-detect it to remove confusion). Maybe add a progress spinner or status messages so users know if data is loading vs. stuck. These small changes can reduce frustration. The dull visual design can be tackled more in-depth later, but any low-hanging fruit (like using the universities' branding colors/logos to make it feel homey) should be done now.

- **Enable Basic Push Notifications** – Even if other features are in flux, implement push notifications for critical announcements. For example, if there's an upcoming registration deadline or a sudden campus closure, push a notification. Also push a friendly notification when a new grade is published (this requires integration but should be doable if the grade data is there – many LMS have webhooks for grades posted). This addresses one of the baseline expectations: timely notifications [82]. It's a quick win because it doesn't require new user action, just setup on backend.

- **Communication & Help Channels** – In-app, include a simple "Help/Contact" section. This could be an email link to IT support or a FAQ. Also, establish a practice of monitoring app reviews and responding. Even a reply like "We're sorry, we are fixing the login issue by Oct 1" can reassure users. These actions show NHG is listening. Given the public anger in reviews [13], a little PR here goes a long way. Additionally, provide training or orientation to new students on using the app (maybe integrate a tutorial on first login). Many OneUni users in late 2024 were new first-years who might not have known how to use it – a quick guide could have preempted some "how to login?" confusion [18].

- **Stabilize Data Sync** – Ensure that all core data (grades, schedules, fees) in the app is up-to-date with the web portals. Quick win could be scheduling more frequent sync jobs or directly querying the live database instead of caches, if possible. The immediate aim is to remove situations where a student sees empty or outdated info on the app that's already updated on the website [8] . Essentially, **consistency** is the win – even if it's not fancy, make sure whatever's on the portal is on the app.

- **Parent Access Option (Basic)** – As a quick win, even before building fancy parent features, NHG can implement a basic solution: allow students to generate a "parent view" login (perhaps a secondary password or a QR code the parent can scan to log in read-only). This could be done within existing systems with minimal overhaul. The aim is to quietly roll out a way for interested parents to use the app's current features (grades, timetable, fees) by logging in under the student's oversight. This addresses an immediate client goal (parent experience) without waiting for a full separate module. Communicate this in parent orientation: e.g., "If you wish to follow your child's progress, here's how to use the app together." It's not the ultimate solution but a stopgap that can be achieved within a year, given the high interest from parents.

Why Quick Wins Matter: These steps directly tackle the most frequent complaints (login, crashes) [13] [17] and shore up user trust. By the end of Year 1, NHG should have an app that students *can* and *do* use for basic needs, and an average rating hopefully climbing above mediocre. Quick wins also show good faith to the user community – that NHG is actively improving the experience.

Year 2 (Months 12–24): Build Integration & Functional Depth

- **Integrated Tuition Payments:** After stabilizing the app, Year 2 big goal is to **enable in-app payments** for tuition and other fees. This involves partnering with payment gateways (e.g., domestic bank card processors, e-wallets like MoMo). By Year 2, NHG's finance data integration should be mature enough. Students (or parents) should be able to view e-bills and pay securely right in the app. This was a gap and now becomes a strength – following the lead of Van Lang's VL4U [60] . The rollout must include security measures and clear e-receipts. *Success:* e.g., 50% of students use the app to pay fees in the first term it's available (reducing manual payments significantly).

- **One-Stop Service Desk Integration:** Implement a **service request module** covering things like certificate requests, enrollment verification letters, issue reporting, etc. By Year 2, after solving back-end basics, NHG can integrate a ticketing system (they could use an existing CRM or helpdesk software and expose it via the app). Students should be able to fill a form in-app and see status updates (e.g., "Your document is ready for pickup"). This addresses a known need (though not loudly voiced in reviews, it is in the original brief). It will reduce run-around on campus and modernize student services. *Metric:* X number of service requests handled via app in first year; student satisfaction on those services goes up.

- **Academic Tracking & Advising Tools:** Add features that help students track their academic progress – for example, integration with the degree audit system: show what courses they've completed and what's left (OneUni mentioned "training program information" [21] , which could be surfaced better). Another addition: if possible, show GPA trends or an alert if the student is on track / needs improvement (some of this might tie into an advising system). Year 2 is a good time for such features since the data issues will have been addressed by then. Essentially, move from just static data to

more *interactive guidance*. Not full AI yet, but rule-based alerts ("You have an overdue library book" or "You haven't enrolled in enough credits for next semester" if applicable).

- **Enhanced Notifications & Reminders:** Expand the notification system into a robust communication channel. By Year 2, after basic push is working, introduce **personalized reminders** – e.g., "Don't forget to pay tuition by March 5" (triggered if their record shows unpaid), or "Course registration opens tomorrow at 9am for your cohort." Proactive reminders are in line with best practices to improve student success [103] . Also, implement a **notifications settings** page where users can opt in/out of certain types (so they feel control, improving UX). This keeps engagement high and assures important tasks aren't missed.

- **Data Integration Expansion:** By the midpoint of Year 2, NHG should aim to integrate other campus systems. For instance: **Library integration** (show how many books checked out or allow a search link to the catalog); **E-learning integration** (if possible, embed or deep-link to the LMS for each course, so that a student can tap to view assignments on mobile). If NHG uses a common LMS across its universities, this is feasible. If not, even a WebView might suffice for now. The key is making the app a one-stop hub. Students should not have to use 5 different apps for school – Year 2 brings those pieces together under OneUni.

- **Parent Portal Enhancements:** Based on the quick-win basic parent access, build a **proper parent mode** in the app by Year 2's end. That means when a parent logs in (with their own account linked to student records), they see a tailored dashboard: e.g., "Student's GPA this term, outstanding fees, any warnings or honors." Also maybe a channel to contact student affairs if needed. Essentially formalize what was beta in Year 1. By now, NHG should have policies in place, so implement those: e.g., require student approval for linking – which could be a workflow where the student gets a notification "Parent X requests access, approve?". This feature strengthens NHG's family-friendly image and addresses governance around consent proactively.

- **Governance and Data Audit:** Around the end of Year 2, conduct a **thorough audit** of data quality and user feedback. By now, a lot of data flows have been changed; an audit ensures all universities' data are consistent (closing those integration gaps fully). Also, gather user feedback systematically – perhaps in-app survey: "Rate your experience with feature X." Use that to prioritize any remaining pain points to tackle in Year 3. Essentially, ensure the progress so far is solid and adjust the roadmap if needed based on real user input (governance being flexible is itself a best practice).

- **Marketing & Adoption Push:** With a now solid app that has new features, Year 2 is the time to drive adoption. Many students might have abandoned the old app; NHG should re-launch it in a sense – orientation sessions, email campaigns ("Did you know you can pay tuition in 2 clicks on the app now?"). Also encourage positive app store reviews from satisfied users to improve the public rating (this helps shed the stigma of the earlier version). The goal is to turn around perception by showcasing tangible improvements, thus driving more students and parents to actively use it.

By end of Year 2, the NHG app should not only be stable but also **feature-rich and genuinely useful**, covering the full student lifecycle digitally. It should basically meet or exceed the standard expectation baseline we identified, and even add a few advanced conveniences (like integrated payments, degree audit, etc.) that put it ahead of some competitors.

Year 3 (Months 24–36): Personalization and AI-Assisted Services (Data Foundation Permitting)

- **Personalized Experience & Content:** In Year 3, assuming the data foundation is strong (clean, integrated, and analytics in place), NHG can introduce **personalization** in the app. This could mean the home screen shows dynamic content: if, say, a student tends to check schedules every morning, surface that prominently; if another is nearing graduation, show a "Apply for graduation" tile. Also, content like news can be tailored (e.g., engineering students see engineering faculty news). This creates a more engaging, "my app knows me" feel. It's something that might require an AI recommendation engine or at least user segmentation logic.

- **AI Chatbot/Virtual Assistant:** By Year 3, implement an **AI-powered student assistant** within the app. This addresses both user support and engagement. For instance, a chatbot that can answer questions 24/7: "When is the add/drop deadline?" or "What's my GPA?" or even general questions like campus info. Ellucian's example of a virtual assistant shows this can reduce support load and increase student satisfaction [104] [96] . For NHG, an AI assistant (with Vietnamese language capability, of course) could also handle FAQs for parents and students, guide them through processes (like course registration steps), or even provide light tutoring ("Explain how to calculate my GPA"). Importantly, ensure the AI is backed by the university's actual data (SIS, knowledge base) for accuracy [96] . This would make NHG one of the pioneers in Vietnam in this area – a strong differentiator.

- **Proactive Advising and Alerts:** Leverage analytics to implement proactive features. For example: the system could detect if a student's midterm scores are low and *proactively* suggest tutoring or a meeting with an advisor (via app notification or message). Or, if a student hasn't logged into the LMS in a while, it could nudge them. This crosses into the realm of student success analytics. Year 3 is ideal for this since you'll have two years of usage data to train models or at least set rules. It aligns with the concept of personalized guidance and shows that the app is not just reactive but actively looking out for the student (and letting parents know of issues if appropriate, within consent rules).

- **Expanded Ecosystem (Internships/Careers):** At this stage, NHG can consider integrating career services into the app – a section for internships or job postings (perhaps aggregating from each campus's career center). Also, alumni network features could be slowly introduced for graduating students – making the app useful even as they transition out. By doing so, the app becomes a tool that accompanies the student through their journey and beyond, increasing long-term engagement. For instance, an AI assistant could even answer questions for fresh graduates about alumni services.

- **Governance/Compliance Upgrades:** Year 3 will likely bring new regulations or expectations. NHG should aim for compliance with international standards, possibly getting certifications (ISO for data security, etc.) if that becomes relevant. If a law akin to GDPR or stricter Vietnamese data rules come into play, by Year 3 the app should be ahead of the curve. Features like data deletion requests (which we noted as a gap) could be implemented – even if rarely used, it demonstrates respect for user data rights. Also, implement **regular security audits** as part of governance (if not already), because as more features (payments, AI) come in, security has to keep up.

- **Continuous Improvement Loop:** By Year 3, NHG should institutionalize a practice of continuous improvement: monthly or quarterly app updates that include not just fixes but also *user-requested*

enhancements. This requires a standing team and budget. The culture should shift to seeing the app/ portal as a core component of the student experience – equal in importance to physical campus facilities. For example, maybe students by now will request a dark mode for the app, or integration with smart student ID cards. Those can be slotted in because the heavy lifting (foundation) was done in Years 1-2.

- **Metrics-Driven Outcomes:** Use the data collected to demonstrate success: e.g., "Student app adoption is at 90%, up from 20% in 2024. Average user session time is 5 minutes daily, indicating high engagement. Payment on-time rate improved by X% after in-app payments introduced. Support ticket volume dropped by Y% after AI assistant launch." These are tangible outcomes that NHG leadership will appreciate and that validate the investments. Essentially, by end of Year 3, the app should not just be a service, but a measurable asset improving operational efficiency and student satisfaction.

Important Caveat: The Year 3 advanced initiatives (especially the AI assistant and heavy personalization) indeed require that **Years 1-2 laid a strong data and integration groundwork**. If data is still messy or systems aren't talking to each other by end of Year 2, those Year 3 items might need to be delayed – better to have a stable, working basic app than an AI that gives wrong answers due to bad data. That said, given the trajectory, if NHG follows through, the data environment should be vastly improved by then.

In conclusion, this 36-month roadmap takes NHG from a position of **catching up** (fixing what's broken, matching standard features) in Year 1, to **pulling ahead** (introducing superior convenience like in-app payments and proactive services) in Year 2, and finally to **innovating** (AI-driven support, deeply personalized experiences) in Year 3. By following these phases, NHG can transform its student/parent digital experience from one of the worst (as the initial reviews indicated) to one of the best in Vietnam's higher education sector. This strategic journey not only addresses the immediate pain points evidenced by user feedback [13] [17] but also aligns with global trends in student experience, ensuring NHG's platform remains relevant and competitive for years to come.

Sources:

- User reviews from Google Play and App Store for Hoa Sen University, OneUni (NHG's student app), FPT University (myFAP), Duy Tân University (myDTU), etc., as cited inline [5] [13] etc.
- Official app feature descriptions and university portal information [21] [60] .
- Ellucian's documentation on AI virtual assistant in higher ed [91] [96] for future roadmap context.

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