**Section 103 Usability Testing – Participant 4, Eric Goldman**

**Warm-up Questions - 10 minutes**

Before we look at the website, let’s start with a few warm-up questions.

1. Are you currently using or have you ever used your GI Bill education benefits?
   1. Yes
2. What has been your experience with VA payments to your school?
3. Were you attending classes and receiving education benefits in the fall of 2018?
   1. Yes

* If yes, do you recall if you had any issues with VA late payments to your school?
* If yes, can you tell me a little about what happened?
  + Yeah I remember at some point we didn’t get our money for housing. Regarding that time, I think I got a lump sum for housing a couple months into the semester. Tuition…actually yeah I remember yes, because there was a hold on my account. I had to call the veterans office at the school and they took care of it. It said I hadn’t paid tuition. I let them know of the issue and they took care of it.

1. Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before?
   1. I think years ago – I was just looking at the Yellow Ribbon and things like that. I think I was just browsing the VA website…the 9/11 GI Bill landing page and just found it (CT)
2. Have you ever done Usability Testing before?

**First Task: Find Section 103 - 15 minutes**

* You have a friend who had to take a loan back in 2018 due to late VA payments for schooling. You know that the VA has taken steps to keep this from reoccurring, but that schools may have requirements for you to meet. You’re interested in attending Midland University located in Fremont, Nebraska, how would you use the Comparison Tool to find out what information Midland University requires? (Fail)

Oh…I have no idea. I guess I would type in midland here...typed “midland” clicked Midland University. There it is, in Fremont, NE. I guess I would have to go to View details. Clicked it. Midland…private (school)…scrolling through benefits…There’s a lot of radio buttons (EYB) I don’t know. Hovering over Additional information. Looks like there’s a lot of information here. Scrolling back to the top…yeah, just from this website. I don’t know, maybe I’d go to their website. Looking for something like “documentation”…like I know this person here is the point person between students and VA. So I was thinking it might be around here. I see...”Requires Certificate of Eligibility” but that doesn’t really tell me anything. It says “Protection against late VA payments”…it doesn’t tell me what documents they need. Clicked tuition policy. It seems like this would be the page I would want to be at. There’s a lot of info. I’m off the comparison tool…so I don’t know. Yeah, I just don’t see where it says that on the page. (Easy to difficult) It was difficult.

* You’re interested in attending College of Charleston located in Charleston SC, how would you use the Comparison Tool to find out what information College of Charleston requires?

Typed “college of ch” and clicked option. Clicked view details…VA protection…It says “No information available” I’m reading this alert right now. Okay, that makes sense to me. I didn’t even think about this…about late VA payments. I just assumed the school would take care of it. Even back then, I just assumed the government would make payments at some point and if not, I would just blame the school. I didn’t think about this kind of stuff.

I don’t remember the exact time. I was frustrated, I remember being frustrated. But you talk about the late VA payments to the school, I just went to the veterans office.

Here…they got 4. Something million (in post 9/11). That’s what I like, large military population…it’s guaranteed money for them. Yeah, it wasn’t just me and I knew it wasn’t just me. They’d have to figure this out at the school.

“No information at this school” I probably wouldn’t even think about it. (Would not contact school) I got some emails from the veterans office at the school and I think there was some stuff from student veterans of America. The primary point was the veterans office at the school. Universities are companies, so financial aid and all that. Veterans office says don’t worry about it…it’s all going to work out in the end. It takes time to go through the process. I should have been able to register for classes. That was my biggest hassle because I couldn’t register for classes for the next semester. You know, you have to get into classes or you won’t graduate on time. Veterans office said they would handle it and admissions didn’t. It didn’t raise to the point where I submitted a complaint. I’d probably complain to my wife. Not familiar with the feedback tool. I know who I could complain to. There’s a VA representative on campus.

**Second Task: Section 103 Content - 10 minutes**

* What does “Protection against late VA payments” mean to you?
  + Protection against VA mean?
* Have you heard of a Certificate of Eligibility before? If so, when? Have you submitted one before?
* Do any other questions come to mind about this?

**Third Task: Additional Criteria - 5 minutes**

* You are also interested in attending Chadron University and are curious about their requirements for obtaining protection against late VA payments. Please determine the requirements for this university.

Typed ‘chadrun” backed up to Chad…then clicked Chadron State College. Clicked View details. Scrolled to bottom. COE and additional criteria. Clicked modal. Ok…there you go.

* What do you think “additional criteria” is?
  + I have no idea. Like I don’t. I don’t know what that means. No guesses on what they want there. I wouldn’t even think about that (additional criteria). My school had a hundred page student handbook that probably has the answer. If I really wanted to know, I’d email the school. Like why is that the student’s fault. It doesn’t make any sense. Like the school told me that you can’t enroll because VA hasn’t paid, then we have bigger issues than that. Like they may not have a full time VA person. Someone who does this and other roles on campus. Maybe I’ll call a SCO directly. Clicked Single point of contact…no…clicked tuition policy…oh there’s the website…and navigated to phone number
* How would you go about finding out more information?

**Post-Task Interview - 5 minutes**

* Do you have general thoughts or feedback on the Comparison Tool that you’d like to share?
* We had you look for information on delayed VA payments within the GI Bill Comparison Tool. If this situation arose in real life where do you think you’d look for information on how to deal with this issue?
* Any questions for me?

Additional Questions:

Process?

I like it. It seems like it’s a lot of facts. You can put in a lot of information – who you are. I really like the number of people on campus (Historical information). If you care about the community, you know there are other veterans there. It would be interested to know who lives on campus…I don’t know if that’s something you could find out though.

If issues, arise again?

I would go to the school. I would not go to the VA.

Know what COE is?

Yes

Couldn’t register for classes?

Had financial hold on my classes. It depends on if they would get the funding in time for the registration. I don’t know what happened behind the scenes, but I couldn’t register for classes.

How long before you could register?

Open it 2 weeks early. Took about a week to go through the process. Thankfully I raised enough concern

COE

Turn it in to the school every year, they email it to me. I scan it in to the school.