## P1: Procedure of Needfinding

1. **Who are the end users (audience) of the app you designed prototype for?**

The primary end users of my prototype are students and professors or instructors.

1. **What should you consider for each group of audience for your app?**

For students, a user-friendly interface for accessing course materials, assignments as well as course calendars is paramount.

For instructors, an easy-to-use content management system for uploading course materials and assignments should take precedence. Apart from that, instructors should also be given the ability to track student participation and performance.

1. **Find similar successful apps (minimum 5 apps) for your application, and investigate what users liked or disliked about the application. Mention top five apps almost similar to yours.**

**Google Classroom:** End users seem to like how easy it is to submit their assignments, and its integration and synergy with Google Drive. However, it lacks robust analytics for tracking performance.

**Moodle:** Users of this app are impressed by its nature as an open-source software and its customizability. But many have expressed their frustration with its outdated UI, creating a steep learning curve and a poor user experience as a result.

**Coursera:** Those who like it focus on its beautiful and simplistic UI; however, some users also criticize its hard-to-reach customer service and inconsistent content quality.

**Blackboard:** Users have reported on a comprehensive Learning Management System (LMS) and being a mobile-friendly app. Though it has a somewhat frequent login issues, and notifications can be unreliable too.

**BrightSpace Pulse:** Users have lauded it for its clean UI and ease of navigation. But some features still rely on directing the users to the web browser, resulting in a poor experience by forcing them out of the native environment.

1. **What examples of latent needs can you think of?**

In my opinion, an AI-based study bot that is able to suggest when to review topics based on upcoming deadlines would be really helpful. For professors, maybe some predictive analytics could be used to automatically identify struggling students before they fail so that the professors can take actions accordingly in a timely manner.

1. **What are good ways of finding latent needs?**

* **User Interviews & Surveys:** questions should be measured in such a way as not to come off as biased, the interviewees should also be chosen carefully: people whom the interviewer is not familiar with for the best effect.
* **Competitor Analysis:** examining what similar apps do nicely and what they lack so that I can adopt and improve and perhaps even get inspired by what is done by them.

Personally, I used two methods: **Participant observation** and **survey**

**List of requirements**:

* UI: Ease of navigation, use of palette contrast to mark important areas and draw attention from users.
* Wise use of frames and shapes as well as utilization of icons and logos to produce a more intuitive environment in which users could rely on common sense to go where they need to go.

## P2: Procedure of Competitive Analysis

Top five competitors:

Google Classroom

Moodle

Coursera

BlackBoard

BrightSpace Pulse

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Features | Google Classroom | Moodle | Coursera | BlackBoard | BrightSpace Pulse | Sheridan CourseApp |
| Course Content & Management (10 pt) | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ |
| Assignment Submission (10 pt) | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ |
| Gradebook & Feedback System (9 pt) | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ❌ | ✅ |
| Push Notification & Reminders (9 pt) | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ❌ | ✅ | ✅ |
| Discussion Forums & Collaboration System (8 pt) | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ✅ | ❌ | ✅ |
| UI simplicity & efficiency (10 pt) | ✅ | ❌ | ✅ | ❌ | ✅ | ✅ |

Competitors’ UX/HCI issues:

* Google Classroom: Did not find much on this one.
* Moodle: outdated and clunky UI. Slow performance at times.
* Coursera: course browsing can be bothersome, interactive discussions can be limited.
* BlackBoard: dated UI, login issues.
* BrightSpace Pulse: lacks discussion forums and does not have a detailed gradebook.

