The Borne Collective
NKUNet Vision Statement

Revision History

Version	Date	Description	Author
Inception Draft	Feb 19, 2017	First draft to be refined primarily during elaboration	Corey Shrader
Revision 1	Mar 17, 2017	Small update based on feedback from Inception Phase deliverables	Nathen Lyman
Revision 2	April 16, 2017	Small update based on feedback from Iteration 1 deliverables	Nick Borne

Introduction

We hope to create an educational social network for NKU students that allows for easy communication across campus, knowledge and resource sharing, and class organization.

Positioning

Problem Statement

Currently, students and professors are forced to communicate primarily via email-- which isn't really designed for back-and-forth group conversation-- or Blackboard-- which is more for class assignments and announcements. NKU lacks an integrated interface for sharing ideas outside of isolated class environments and without the clunkiness of email.

Product Position Statement

The social network is designed for students to ask questions of other students and faculty regarding coursework and other university-related topics. NKUNet will feature a forum-based interface complete with threads and the ability to upvote/downvote comments, user profiles with calculated reputations, and pages for class information and schedules. This is different from sites like Facebook or StackOverflow in that it is designed specifically for universities, focuses on education, and is forum-oriented rather than a scrolling feed. The intention is that each class will have its own forum, allowing students to collaborate and professors to monitor their activity. The students can then use these forums to ask each other questions, then professors or students can provide answers.

A clear competitor to a site such as this is Schoology, which is a social network often used by grade schools and high schools. Ours will be designed for a university environment, hence the ability to view course schedules and locations of courses. There will be less emphasis on submitting assignments and posting pictures/links, and more on asking questions about class topics. This feature could be fleshed out more in a post-production update however.

Stakeholder Descriptions

Stakeholder (Non-User) Summary

Professor McCord (Customer) wants to see a product that meets the requirements and functions smoothly.

User Summary

- Students need a way to communicate and have questions answered
- Faculty need a way to help answer student questions
- Registrars need to be able to manage the users and classes
- Administrators need to be able to manage the system

Key High-Level Goals and Problems of the Stakeholders

High-Level Goal	Priority	Problems and Concerns	Current Solutions
Easy communication between students and faculty across campus	High	Avoiding the shortfalls of email and Blackboard Ensuring ease of use and incentive for students	Use a forum to post questions and answers Incentivize use with personalized profiles and reputation system
Different privilege levels for users to complete various actions	High	Students and faculty need to be distinct from each other Users can't delete posts/edit users	System checks for user role before allowing action
Thread/Post voting system (Reputation System)	High	System not purely based on total votes that shows relevant, popular threads/posts higher up. De-incentivising malicious use of the	Upvote totals and how much time has passed. (Non discussed yet)

		voting system	

User-Level Goals

- Student: post questions, answer questions, upvote/downvote answers, view profiles, view classes, edit their post (maybe)
- Faculty: post questions, answer questions, upvote/downvote answers, view profiles, view classes
- Registrar: update users via CSV, add user, edit user, delete user in database
- Administrator: edit post, remove post, add user, edit user, delete user

User Environment

The interface will be accessed via a web browser, with the potential for a mobile app in the future. Webpage should scale well for mobile for users who choose not to use a dedicated app then.

Product Overview

Product Perspective

The interface will be hosted on a server and accessible over the internet. Students and faculty can log in with their school ID's either from campus computers or their personal computers/devices. User interface will be clean and easy to navigate. Basic systems for the user and faculty will be appropriately placed.

Summary of Benefits

Supporting Feature	Stakeholder Benefit
Search capability	Easy navigation to topics of interest and previously viewed questions/answers
Notifications for answered questions, replies, upvotes and downvotes	Will allow for faster communication because users will be notified when others interact with their posts
Edit/Delete Posts	(Potentially Admin only function) Convenient way to fix post errors and keep forums clean and on topic for an overall productive environment.

Assumptions and Dependencies

We can assume class registration and assignment management will be done externally, so this site will be only for discussion. Site will rely on those external systems for any needed relating information.The site will depend on students and faculty having internet access and actively using the software for it to function according to the product vision.

Licensing and Installation

There will be no need for a license or copyright as this is a class project, and installation is somewhat irrelevant because the site is on the internet. A web browser would be required to use the system instead.

Summary of System Features

- Logging in and logging out
- Post questions and answers
- Upvote/downvote answers
- View classes
- View user profiles (admin)
- Modification of posts and threads (admin)

Other Requirements and Constraints

The application must be written with Ruby on Rails, deployed using Heroku, and finished by the end of the semester. Development will be iterative, with a fully functional site submitted each week with additional features. The site must start with at least one administrator who can begin adding registrars.