

## Heuristic Evaluation Report: University Website

### Phase 8: Heuristic Evaluation

#### 1. Visibility of System Status

- **Compliance:** The system provides feedback to users for every action, such as loading indicators, confirmation messages, and real-time notifications.
- **Examples:**
  - Viewing grades: A "Loading" spinner is displayed while retrieving the data.
  - Subscribing to department updates: A success message appears after saving preferences.
- **Problems Identified:** Delays in displaying grades might cause confusion about whether the system is working.
- **Proposed Solutions:**
  - Add a progress bar for actions taking more than a few seconds.
  - Display a message explaining potential delays due to server load.
- **Improvement Plan:** These changes will reassure users and maintain their confidence in the system's responsiveness.

#### 2. Match Between System and the Real World

- **Compliance:** The interface uses clear language and logical workflows familiar to university students and faculty.
- **Examples:**
  - Grade viewing uses terms like "Semester," "Subjects," and "Final Scores."
  - Announcements are organized chronologically, reflecting real-world expectations.
- **Problems Identified:** Some icons (e.g., a bell for announcements) might not be universally understood.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Add tooltips explaining icon functions.
- **Improvement Plan:** Improved clarity ensures all users, regardless of prior experience, can navigate the system effectively.

### 3. User Control and Freedom

- **Compliance:** Users can undo or cancel actions such as editing preferences or posting feedback.
- **Examples:**
  - Feedback forms include a "Cancel" button.
  - Notifications have an option to unsubscribe.
- **Problems Identified:** The system lacks an "Undo" feature for accidental grade requests.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Introduce an "Undo Last Action" option.
- **Improvement Plan:** Users will feel more in control and confident when interacting with the system.

### 4. Consistency and Standards

- **Compliance:** The website adheres to standard design patterns and conventions.
- **Examples:**
  - Toggle buttons for enabling/disabling notifications are consistent across all pages.
  - Forms have uniform layouts, ensuring predictability.
- **Problems Identified:** Variations in button colors between pages might confuse users.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Ensure uniformity in color schemes and typography.
- **Improvement Plan:** Consistent design reduces cognitive load and enhances user satisfaction.

### 5. Error Prevention

- **Compliance:** The system includes mechanisms to minimize errors.
- **Examples:**
  - Prevents submission of incomplete forms by highlighting required fields.

- Confirms actions like unsubscribing from notifications.
- **Problems Identified:** Lack of pre-filled suggestions in complex forms increases the chance of user errors.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Introduce auto-fill and dropdown suggestions where applicable.
- **Improvement Plan:** These enhancements will significantly reduce user frustration.

## 6. Recognition Rather Than Recall

- **Compliance:** The system minimizes memory load by presenting options and clear navigation paths.
- **Examples:**
  - Visible menu options for "Grades," "Announcements," and "Preferences."
  - Breadcrumb navigation helps users track their location on the site.
- **Problems Identified:** Some users might struggle to locate less-used features like archived notifications.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Add a dedicated "Search" function for all pages.
- **Improvement Plan:** Enhanced discoverability will simplify navigation for all users.

## 7. Flexibility and Efficiency of Use

- **Compliance:** The website accommodates both novice and experienced users.
- **Examples:**
  - Quick access links for commonly used features like grade viewing.
  - Keyboard shortcuts for navigating sections.
- **Problems Identified:** Limited customization options for dashboard widgets.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Allow users to rearrange and customize dashboard elements.
- **Improvement Plan:** Personalization will make the interface more engaging and efficient for frequent users.

## 8. Aesthetic and Minimalist Design

- **Compliance:** The design focuses on simplicity, displaying only relevant information.
- **Examples:**
  - The dashboard highlights recent grades and important announcements.
  - Notifications are categorized to reduce clutter.
- **Problems Identified:** Overloaded announcement cards with unnecessary details.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Use expandable cards for detailed views.
- **Improvement Plan:** A cleaner design will reduce distractions and enhance focus.

## 9. Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors

- **Compliance:** Clear error messages guide users when issues arise.
- **Examples:**
  - Invalid login attempts display “Incorrect username or password.”
  - Failed form submissions highlight specific errors.
- **Problems Identified:** Some error messages are too generic (e.g., “Something went wrong”).
- **Proposed Solutions:** Write actionable error messages with troubleshooting steps.
- **Improvement Plan:** Users will resolve issues faster, improving their overall experience.

## 10. Help and Documentation

- **Compliance:** The system provides guidance for complex tasks.
- **Examples:**
  - FAQs for grade-related queries.
  - Tooltips explaining notification settings.

- **Problems Identified:** Lack of a centralized help section.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Create a searchable help center accessible from the dashboard.
- **Improvement Plan:** Easy access to support will empower users to resolve issues independently.

### **Outcome and Planned Improvements**

- **Strengths:** The interface excels in simplicity, consistency, and providing real-time feedback.
- **Critical Problems:** Inconsistent visuals, limited error prevention, and insufficient help resources.
- **Proposed Solutions:** Address design inconsistencies, enhance error messages, and add customization options.
- **User Experience Improvements:**
  - Improved navigation and feedback mechanisms.
  - Enhanced personalization for efficient task completion.