

Project Milestone 2

“Project Proposal”

For this project milestone, your newfound teams will be honing in on the kind of app you hope to be creating!

I understand that this is still early in the semester, and if you suddenly come up with an idea for a wildly different app down the road, we can definitely talk about it. But your lives will be made easier the closer you stick with the ideas you generate here.

Although you have ultimate decision making power over what your final product is, let me inform you of a few things:

The first is that, throughout this entire semester, I am going to value process over product. That is not to say that I don't expect a completed app at the end of the semester; indeed, I will! However, throughout the semester, you'll be writing and iterating on the design of the project, evolving it based on analyzing similar competitor apps, conducting interviews with stakeholders (i.e., your target demographics), and holding user tests with multiple prototypes. Yes, the app being completed is important, but just as important is that throughout the semester, you critically think about what you learn from each milestone and adapt the design of your app as appropriate.

The second is that I highly encourage you to identify a “local problem” that affects people that you know, or at the very least can gain access to. One way to do this is to think of “broad categories” of things that pertain to your life/the lives of people around you, and then hone in on specifics. Some categories that might affect student lifestyles on campus, for instance, might be:

- *Finding food on campus

- *Traffic/Parking/Transportation on Campus

- *Finding quiet / empty study spaces on Campus

And then to think of a “problem” within that category that you think might be solved with a brilliant app of your own design.

It is **BEST** when that problem isn't a problem of your own imagination, but is something that you have actually observed. E.g., go to the dining hall and people watch. Is there anything happening inefficiently? What do you hear people complain about? And then use those observations to directly inform the high-level goal of your app.

For this project milestone, you don't need to actually speak with anyone. This is just a “fact-finding mission” if you will. Observe the situation and use that to identify the problem you'd like to solve, and begin brainstorming ideas for what your app will do to address it. Again –

expect your design to change throughout the course of the semester! Be as thorough/robust as you can, but be cognizant that as you learn more about both the needs of your stakeholders and the state of your app, that things are likely to change!

For this milestone, please deliver a pdf document with the following:

*The names and e-mail addresses of all of your team members (this will make my life easier if you plan on including this on every assignment).

*1-2 paragraphs describing at a high level “what your app does” This can include (but is by no means limited to) what problems your app is trying to solve, how you expect users to interact with your app, how you want people to feel when they use it (be specific!), or any technical implementation details you anticipate needing to solve. This is also an opportunity to pitch a tentative name for your app (though again, you won’t be beholden to that for the rest of the semester if you’d like to change).

*If you did “watch from afar” to learn about problems as I suggested, please spend 1-2 paragraphs talking about what that process was like. What did you learn? What did you see? What surprised you the most?

*Identify at least three other apps that *already exist* that do *similar things* (but of course, not identical things) to your proposed app. You’ll need to conduct research for this part! Just because you don’t know of anything else that exists off the top of your head doesn’t mean that they don’t exist.

For example, let’s say you wanted to create an app to help tourists to New Orleans find hiking spots and nature destinations. First you would verify if there are any apps out there that do this already. If not, you’d still want to verify if an app similar to what you are thinking exists for some other city, as you might be able to learn from them as well.

Once you’ve identified some of these similar apps, be sure to try them out! Read reviews of them! See what it excels at! See where it falters! The goal of this task is to make sure you have a sense as to what’s already out there, get the gears turning for how you might want to design/structure apps of your own, and to help set you up for success for your third milestone, the competitive analysis).

*Identify at least three stakeholders (or in other words, three members of a “target demographic”) who would benefit from your app. At this point, these should be hypothetical people, but they should be hypothetical people with “real problems” that you believe your app will help them to solve (e.g., “A busy parent who wants to make sure their kids are eating healthy food”, “A commuter who wants to get where they’re going on time while minimizing a carbon footprint”, etc.)

Please submit your proposal document to on Moodle. Only one document per team is necessary!