**Problem Statement**

Our application, Foo-D-Mah, addresses the challenges of finding dining options that truly reflect personal preferences, dietary restrictions, and real-time restaurant data. Popular food-ordering and review platforms frequently rely on generalized, advertiser-driven recommendations that fail to account for specific eating patterns and diets. This often requires users to perform an exhaustive amount of screen operations such as querying through extensive menus, crowded review sections, and even come across outdated information regarding restaurant and menu item details which lead to decision fatigue. By integrating user-specific dietary needs, real-time social media data, and streamlined restaurant reviews, Foo-d-Mah aims to be a comprehensive solution that reduces guesswork, provides clarity, and personalized dining recommendations for differing lifestyles.

In refining our designs for Milestone 2, the interface and user flows were updated to better guide users through discovery while also emphasizing personal dietary accommodations, community-driven insights, and relevant details such as operating hours or cuisines. Our core goal remains: reducing confusion, increasing trust, and simplifying the overall experience of finding new, appealing, and diet-friendly dining options.

**Solution Approach**

Our group implemented a number of approaches in order to tackle the problems stated above.

* **Updated Onboarding Flow**: We refined the preference setup for users to get clearer instructions and interactive guidance for specifying allergies, dietary restrictions, cuisine, and restaurant preferences.
* **Streamlined Restaurant Discovery**: A new “Discover” tab suggests restaurants to users using updated filters, dietary restrictions and allergies compatibility indicated by the user which performs recommendations based on crowdsourced user-verified data for accurate restaurant food quality, wait times, and opening hours for the restaurant.
* **Enhanced Reviews & Social Integration**: We introduced a cohesive review page layout that highlights both user and community feedback, enabling quick scanning of key information such as portion sizes and dietary compliance based on user experience.
* **Dynamic Settings Page**: Our reorganized settings page splits personalization options into logical groups such as dietary restrictions and allergies which prevents users from scrolling through excessively long lists.
* **Icons and Cues for Actions**: We implemented consistent use of icons and short textual cues following Nielsen’s Heuristic Evaluation principles (Nielsen, 1995) with more emphasis on gestures like swiping and toggling favorites.

**Major Changes Between Milestones 2 & 3**

Between Milestone 2 and Milestone 3, our team focused on improving user feedback and personalization control. One key enhancement was adding interactive feedback when users click or unclick dietary restriction options. Previously, users were unsure if their selections had been registered. Now, immediate visual and icon-based confirmation (such as checkmarks or color highlights) reinforces that their preferences and being saved and applied.

We also introduced a more functional profile toggle feature. Users can now access and adjust their profile settings with greater ease, enabling actions such as turning off optional tracking, enabling notifications, or revisiting privacy preferences. These refinements support tasks like customizing dietary filters (vegetarian, peanut-free, gluten-free) and managing privacy-related settings more intuitively.

**Changes to Prototype Design**

The design changes made since Milestone 2 directly support a smoother user experience and task completion. The personalization page was enhanced to provide click-feedback mechanisms, ensuring that when users select or deselect dietary restrictions, there’s immediate and clear feedback. This change was driven by user testing, where participants expressed uncertainty about whether their selections were applied.

Additionally, the account/profile section was improved to better support privacy and notification management. Icons were added to aid navigation, and the layout was reorganized for quicker access to settings. These updates significantly improved the completion rate and speed of tasks like adjusting dietary needs, finding cuisine-specific restaurants like Chinese food, and managing lists (e.g., picks, ignored, explored, and collections).

These design refinements were guided by user feedback and helped create a more responsive and accessible user interface aligned with real-world usage patterns**.**

**Task Modifications**

As part of our refinement process, we reviewed the core tasks our app supports and made minor but impactful changes to reflect both user feedback and usability insights:

* Task simplification: Based on user testing observations, we reduced the number of steps required to modify dietary preferences and toggle privacy settings. The goal was to minimize confusion for users who may be less familiar with food or tech platforms.
* Enhanced Discover Flow: The discovery task now prioritizes presenting nearby results that meet all user dietary requirements, improving real-life relevance.
* Collections Feature Update: We refined the “collections” flow so users can now more easily toggle between cuisine-based lists and saved picks, allowing quicker access when revisiting restaurants.

These task modifications were designed to make real-time use easier, particularly in spontaneous situations such as dining with friends or choosing among last-minute options.

**Competitor Reanalysis**

In Milestone 1, we analyzed apps like Yelp, GrubHub, and DoorDash as major competitors. While these apps offer food discovery and filtering tools, they fall short in a few key areas that Foo-D-Mah addresses.

Compared to Yelp, Foo-D-Mah provides significantly more options for dietary personalization, including support for specific diets and allergy combinations (e.g., gluten-free + halal). Yelp’s filters are broader and are often dependent on user-submitted tags, which are inconsistent.

Compared to Grubhub, which focuses mainly on ordering and delivery, Foo-D-Mah targets the in-person dining experience and discovery phase, integrating real-time data (e.g., operating hours, wait times) more effectively for any type of plans.

Finally, compared to DoorDash, Foo-D-Mah offers a more proactive discovery experience rather than just food delivery. While DoorDash allows basic filtering for cuisines and dietary tags during ordering, Foo-D-Mah focuses on helping users find restaurants based on verified dietary compatibility and community reviews before they even reach the ordering stage. Our app also emphasizes real-time data about dining locations, operating hours, and social factors like wait times — elements that DoorDash only partially addresses.

Overall, Foo-D-Mah stands out by offering:

* Faster task completion (e.g., fewer clicks to find compliant restaurants).
* More inclusive user profiles and tasks.
* Community-centered design that incorporates visual cues and clear indicators for dietary compliance.

**References**

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Various websites & mobile applications for design inspirations, including but not limited to Yelp, Grubhub, Spotify, Tinder.

Team 6. *Milestone 1 Submission.* 2025, University of Minnesota.

### Link to your final app

<https://www.figma.com/proto/vQjtalb6AOn9q6bJFsGARj/Milestone-2?node-id=17-697&p=f&t=jAfTs9GUlXioLEQR-1&scaling=scale-down&content-scaling=fixed&page-id=0%3A1&starting-point-node-id=17%3A697>