

Wizard of Oz Study Results: Team 17 - [Sabita Kumari, Mansi Negi, Manasa Pavushetty, Anish Christo Pius]

1. User Journeys

Emma's Journey with Academia:

Emma, facing challenges in networking and managing deadlines in her new academic environment, found the Academia app's scheduling feature highly useful. However, she desired more robust networking functionalities to connect with peers within her field. Her journey illustrates the importance of both efficient task management and peer connection in enhancing academic experience.

Mia's Productive Leap:

From Beijing to the U.S., Mia's transition was smoothed by the Academia app's scheduling and collaboration tools. The app not only helped her manage her time across time zones but also enabled her to build a diverse professional network, showcasing the app's potential in fostering global academic collaboration.

Ethan's Specialized Community Engagement:

Ethan's frustration with the lack of specialized cybersecurity study groups was alleviated by joining the Academia app. His successful discovery and participation in these groups highlight the app's capability to cater to niche academic interests, significantly enriching his academic journey.

Lucas's Research and Collaboration Enhancement:

Lucas, a PhD candidate overwhelmed by his responsibilities, integrated the Academia app into his workflow for better task management and research collaboration. The app proved instrumental in streamlining his schedules and connecting with fellow researchers, emphasizing the app's utility in academic research and collaboration.

2. Task Descriptions

Intro to App & Request to think aloud:

"Welcome to our 'Wizard of Oz' study. Allow me to introduce our platform, 'Academia'. Designed as a comprehensive hub for students, Academia offers a seamless experience for managing coursework, including access to lectures, notes, and quizzes. Additionally, it harnesses AI capabilities to generate supplementary materials such as notes and quizzes. Users also have the opportunity to connect with peers, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Academia boasts several features, including task and schedule management tailored to individual availabilities. Throughout this study, we will provide you with wireframes and prompts to interact with our platform. Our goal is to gather insights into usability and visual design, seeking your valuable feedback to refine and enhance our platform. Your input will be instrumental in shaping the future iterations of Academia. Let's embark on this journey together."

Participants were then asked to perform the tasks designed to test the Academia app's core functionalities, including:

- Organizing notes and accessing AI created summarized notes.
- Creating and viewing schedules and receiving reminders for tasks.
- taking graded quizzes and practicing with AI-generated quizzes based on notes.
- Connecting with peers and other students for discussions and study sessions.

These tasks aimed to assess the app's usability in facilitating academic organization, collaboration, and personalized learning.

3. Think Aloud Summary

Joy Points:

- "I like the profile page. It looks like it has everything the website intends to perform"
- Participants found the app straightforward and easy to navigate from the profile page.
- "The AI generated notes from all students and AI quizzes will be amazing to practice for finals"-
The AI quiz generation and AI note-generation features were particularly appreciated for enhancing study efficiency.
- "Nice feature to integrate chatting with peers and study groups within an academic website"-
Overall features inclusion was appreciated.

Pain Points:

- "I think it would be better to add some signifiers and affordances to get to the next lecture"
- Some participants experienced confusion with certain icons.
- "I think you should add buttons for dropdowns"- There were suggestions for more intuitive button designs and clearer labeling.
- "It doesn't look like I can add a task by myself. I would like to personalize my reminders and sort them according to my priorities"- Tasks and reminders need to be edited to make it feel more personalized.

4. Interview Results

Feedback revealed a desire for:

- Improved visibility and functionality of buttons.
- Enhanced communication features, like group messaging and clearer community engagement options.
- Additional personalization in scheduling and reminders.
- Participants appreciated the app's design and ease of navigation, emphasizing the potential of the quiz and community features.
- One participant wanted a feature where they could see their personal highest score for a quiz and also the class highest score.
- Another participant wanted a 'mega quiz' for a particular (or set of) topics to further hone the user's knowledge.
- There is a requirement to add the sorting feature to communities by latest events and by upcoming events.

5. App Changes Based on Feedback

Based on the study, the following changes are proposed:

- Revise UI elements for clarity and intuitiveness.
- Add more icons (such as dropdown buttons, scroll bars, etc.)
- Add reminders on the profile page.
- Try to combine the communities and chatting feature to a single page.
- Enhance the notification system from reminders for better user engagement and personalization.
- Allow users to add/edit reminders from schedule
- Introduce group messaging and more flexible scheduling options.
- Expand personalization features for academic and networking activities.

This report encapsulates the comprehensive usability study conducted using the Wizard of Oz method, showcasing critical insights and feedback from participants. The findings will guide the refinement of the Academia app, ensuring it meets the diverse needs of its academic user base.