BSOE Undergraduate Website

Furious Slugs (Group 24)

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High Fidelity Prototype:
https://xd.adobe.com/view/556923c0-1ff5-4a57-7971-6f88da0f99d4-2358/?fullscreen

Top Tasks:

- Task #1 - Undergraduate UCSC student looking up required classes for respective majors.
  - From the homepage, go onto ‘Programs’ to look up respective major.
- Task #2 - New undergraduate UCSC student looking to get involved in engineering projects.
  - From the homepage, go onto ‘Social’ to view the latest engineering news.
  - From the homepage, go onto ‘About’ to view the information about BSOE

Executive Summary

Our mission is to improve the BSOE Undergraduate website. Most students are aware of the BSOE homepage, but often choose to Google search their query because the website is difficult to navigate. *The participants interviewed in our study found the BSOE website to be "cluttered". For our UX Design project, we have created a high fidelity prototype website that is much simpler in design and emphasizes responsiveness and efficiency for our users. With this prototype, we provide a simple approach to address the needs of the users by keeping the design simple and easy to operate. This enhances efficiency of use, and adds a certain amount of stability to the platform.*

Context

- Through our UX Design Research studies, some of the aspects we wanted to focus on was cleaning up the website by having the homepage redirect you to either a student or faculty homepage. This way users can have information that assists in their needs by prioritizing the information on the website to have information on academics and departments shown as the primary interface. In the ladder part of the website you can also find social and/or newsletter information.
- Because of this, our team found that the tasks that should be most addressed were:
    - #1 - Undergraduate UCSC student looking up required classes for respective majors.
    - #2 - New undergraduate UCSC student looking to get involved in engineering projects.
- We studied a total of 20 users in our research. Most of these users were BSOE Undergraduates, however, other users were also examined so as to provide additional perspectives.

UX Design Issues

Design Issue #1 - Severity: 3

- Faculty and student information are competing for user attention, creating an undesirable **signal-to-noise ratio** for all users.
  - *“The home page seems a bit cluttered with too much information/pictures. The spacing is different as you read down the page making it hard for the eyes to find what’s important. It reminds me of those fake news sites that have a ton of ads all over the page.” - #JTang*

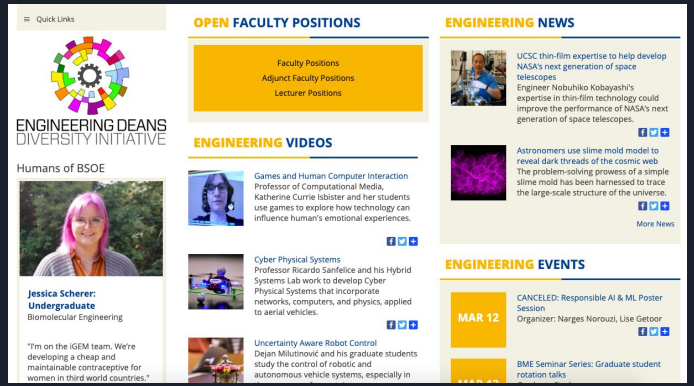
Design Issue #2 - Severity: 3

- The website informational hierarchy is poorly organized and **internally inconsistent**, with no rules to govern how the page navigation is laid out.
  - *“There are cool pictures, tweets about the school, and engineering news, however, I don't really care about these things and would rather have more important content displayed on the homepage.” - #JYu*

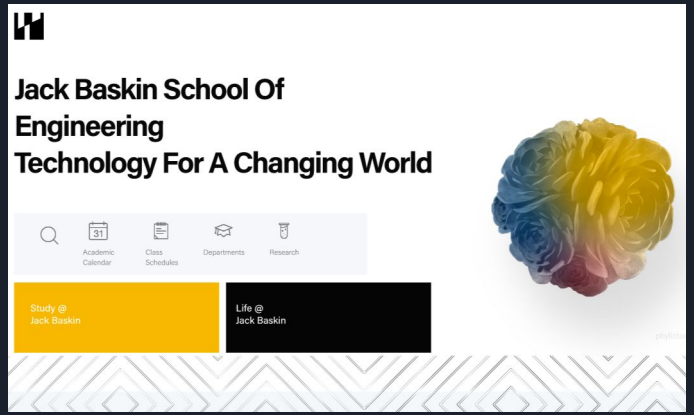
UX Design Recommendations

- Clean up the website by separating the information for student and faculty. Individuals that access the website will most likely be one or the other, making navigation of this merged info unnecessarily inefficient.

Before: News, videos, events, and open faculty positions - why does a student care?



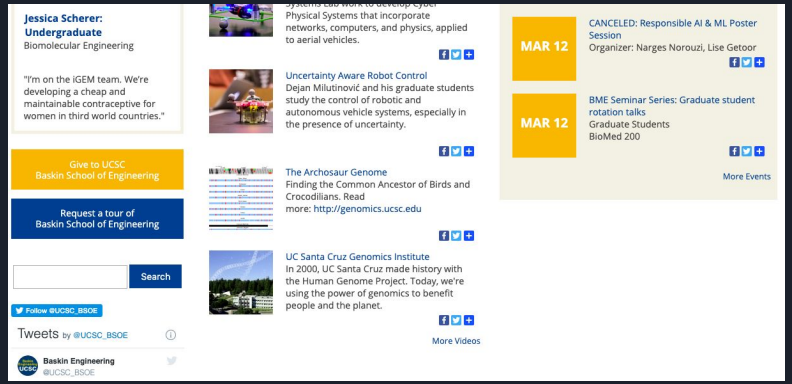
After: Info not only organized more efficiently, but no mix of faculty/student info (student page)



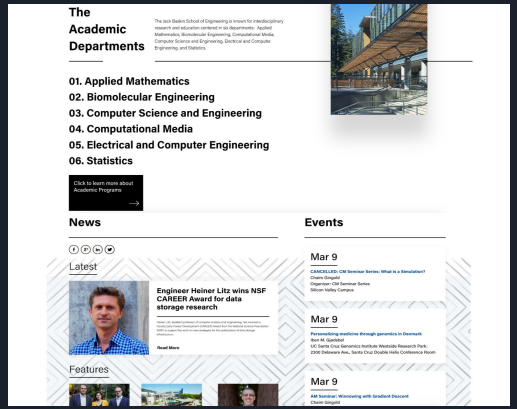
UX Design Recommendations

- Academics and department info should be shown to the user first, while more social and/or newsletter information should be shown afterwards, considering the academic nature of the website

Before: Home page was a melting pot for info - open jobs, tweets, tours, donations, etc.



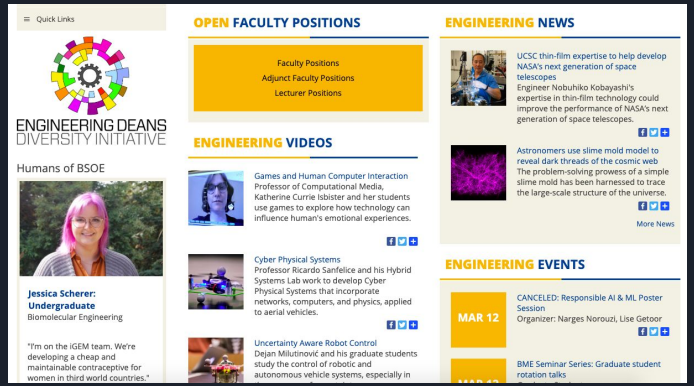
After: Academic info shown first while other info is not visible unless you scroll down



UX Design Recommendations

- We want a simplified approach to addressing the needs of not only students/faculty but also the general public. Keeping a simple minimalist design makes the website easier to operate and minimizes frustration

Before: Info organized in columns which is inefficient for reading and is visually cluttered



After: Adopted a minimalist design while organizing info into rows to make reading easier on the user