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**CS422**

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### **Methods**

For our project CourseScope which requires us to understand UIC students’ course-planning needs, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 4 participants. Before each interview, I shared a consent form that explained the study’s purpose, procedures, voluntary nature, and confidentiality protections. All participants provided consent. All 4 of them agreed to take notes of the interview .

I held all the interviews in person. Each interview lasted about 10–15 minutes. The question route began broadly by asking participants how they currently plan courses, then moving forward to knowing about what tools they use, challenges faced, and desired improvements.

During the interview, I took notes of responses and broke them into unitized segments. I then applied grounded theory coding to identify recurring themes (such as prerequisite confusion, scheduling stress, and desire for grade for the particular professor). Each theme was supported with direct participant quotes.

### **Participants**

I interviewed 4 current UIC undergraduates. They represented a range of majors, years, and demographics.

* **P01:** Male, 22, Asian, senior in Computer Science with minor in finance, commuter.
* **P02:** Male, 21, Asian, senior in Entrepreneurship, lives near campus.
* **P03:** Male, 20, Asian, junior in IDS, lives near campus.
* **P04:** Male, 20, Asian, junior in IDS with concentration in Business analytics, lives near campus.

### **Findings – Data Analysis (Coding)**

**Code 1: Difficulty tracking prerequisites**

* “I always need like two tabs to open an audit, and rate my professor just to figure out what I can actually take.” (P01)
* “I registered for a management course once and only later realized it required another class I didn’t finish yet. I had to drop it.” (P02)

**Code 2: Frustration with registration and availability**

* “By the time my window opens, the classes I need are full, and then I worry about finding substitutes.” (P02)
* “Last semester I had to waitlist two required IDS classes, which stressed me out all summer.” (P03)

**Code 3: Desire for professor/grade information**

* “RateMyProfessor helps with knowing about the professor, but also checks the grade distribution to see how the previous class had performed.” (P04)
* “If I could see both who teaches it and past grade data in one place, that would save me hours.” (P01)

### **Requirements Statements**

Using the user story format:

1. As a student, I want the system to show only courses I am eligible for so that I don’t waste time on ineligible classes.
2. As a student, I want to make sure that courseload is not so heavy while being a full-time student
3. As a student, I want to compare professors' grade distributions so that I can choose the section that best fits my learning goals.
4. As a senior, I want to mark priority classes so that I stay on track for graduation.
5. As a student, checking through all the different tools can be hectic and confusing sometimes, having it to minimal can be really helpful.

### **Personas**

**Persona 1: Daksh S.**

* **Details:** 22, Asian, senior, Computer Science major, commuter.
* **Background:** Balances study and extra curricular academic projects.
* **Goals:** Needs to stay on track with core engineering requirements and avoid overloading semesters and graduate on time with the minor.
* **Issues:** Confused between which classes to take for gen-ed and technical electives.
* **Resources used:** Uses audit and checks with friends before registering but still prefers taking challenging and useful courses

**Persona 2: Rudra.**

* **Details:** 21,Asian, junior,Entrepreneurship major, lives near campus.
* **Background:** Balances heavy course load with on-campus lifeguard job.
* **Goals:** Needs to stay on track with core engineering requirements and avoid overloading semesters.
* **Issues:** Registration windows mean desired sections often fill before he can register and sometimes due to his major he cannot find a particular class offered in the semester.
* **Resources used:** Keeps Google calendar for schedule; uses RateMyProfessor for professor ratings.

### **Scenario**

Daksh opens the CourseScope web app to plan his Spring 2026 semester. As a Computer Science major with a Finance minor, he needs to balance his technical elective courses with his finance electives. He selects both programs in the app, checks off completed courses, and the system automatically filters out ineligible options. The filtered list displays remaining CS tech electives and Finance minor classes that meet his prerequisites. Daksh selects CS 411 and FIN 320 , but the app immediately flags a time conflict between the two sections. He switches to an alternate FIN 320 section that fits his schedule. Next, Daksh compares grade distributions for two CS 411 professors and picks the one with a better prior success rate. He marks both courses as “priority” and exports his plan to his Google Calendar. The system confirms that he’s fulfilling requirements for both programs and staying on track for graduation. Feeling confident, Daksh can finalize his plan, knowing he won’t face prerequisite issues or scheduling overlaps when actually registering for the Spring 2026.