Project Draft

Honor Pledge: I acknowledge that the Capstone Project is an independent study project to be completed individually. On my honor, I have not received aid on my Capstone Project other than what was provided by my faculty mentor and any persons explicitly cited in my work. I further acknowledge that if I have given any aid to another student in this course, the instructor of this course was made aware of my contributions.

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1. Project Objective and Plan

The objective of this project is to make it so that college students do not have to worry about spending hundreds of dollars on textbooks. As a senior in college, it is safe to say that other then tuition, textbooks are the most expensive requirements that in some cases students cannot succeed without. Some classes require up to 3 books for the semester, and for information technology courses, there is also software that is required. Marymount does provide numerous software versions for MU students on Dream Spark, for free but some classes require software that is not on the website. My idea for the project is to create an application for students called Book Exchange. It will be used for students to exchange books throughout the semesters; to avoid the high priced books found in the bookstore. Everyone does not have financial aid, and it is very stressful to keep up with the course requirements for every course that students take throughout their years of enrollment. This application will not only decrease their

spending's, but it will also speed up the process as opposed to ordering books from Amazon or other websites.

The application will be simple and easy to use, MU students can find the link on the MU website and they can use their credentials to login and begin their search and exchange. It will be more used in the beginning and end of each semester, because people will be looking to buy new textbooks or return textbooks at this time. There will be a main office where students can bring the books too, like a mini library and someone will be in charge of checking books in and out like a real library. So the way it works is, students will log in to the application and state the book that they are looking for, and wish to exchange. This will be more commonly used with between the second semester freshmen all the way up to second semester seniors. Since first semester freshman's will not yet have books to exchange they will have to wait until the second semester. Once the students enter the information, they can go to the office and exchange the book that they have for the book that they want. If the book that they want is not

currently in the office (which is rare since many students will be taking different courses at different times) they can either leave their book with the administrator and wait for a call when the book that they want is available or they can just sell the book to the MU bookstore and buy the book that they need.

This application will be very helpful to every student that chooses to use it because it will greatly decrease there cost of attendance, and make it so that they are recycling the books amongst the MU students. It will eliminate some of the stress that students are faced with financially, and also speed up the process of obtaining the books needed for each of the courses. The timeline of this project will consist of me talking to different students and gaining a better understanding of their needs and what they prefer in terms of the application. This will require a lot of time, along with researching the needed data. Since this application is not based on an already existing company it will be solely based on the opinions of the MU students and faculty. That will be how I collect my data, and

also research apps that may be similar to this one to see how they operate.

My faculty mentor is Professor Narock, and he made it clear all of the steps I needed to take in order to make this application successful. These steps include, researching similar applications that are already on the market and figuring out the exact steps I will take in developing the project. According to the feedback of my fellow peer, they felt that a semester is more then enough to complete the project and also that my idea is clear and well thought out. Since that was only based on the topic submission, I know that once all of the parts are present it will definitely have more than enough material to make the project feasible. However, they did mention that sharing pdf's is illegal, so that part of the project was taken out. Receiving feedback from my mentor and peer reviewer throughout the process of developing the project is going to make it easier and also help me see any mistakes that I could have made along the way. By the end of the semester I will have applied all of my feedback, and research in order to

determine whether or not the app would be liked and accepted amongst my peers.

2. Client and Risk Factors

The clients of this research project are students at Marymount and possibly other Universities. I think that the Book Exchange application will be the more reasonable choice as opposed to buying books from the university bookstores. As I mentioned earlier, textbooks are very expensive and this alternative will completely eliminate the expense and hassle of the whole process all-together. The risk factors of this application are that it may possibly put the campus bookstores out of business. The only things that they will still buy from the bookstore are university gear, access codes, and other accessories that can only be found there. Because of the issue this may cause, it is important that all of the legal requirements and restrictions are included in the research.

3. Work to be Performed

The work that I will be responsible for during the process of this research project is

4. References

During my research I found many websites that had the same or close to the same idea as Book Exchange. 1) Title Trader is an app I found in my research that has a similar structure, one of the main differences is that it is not limited to university students, instead you can trade your books with people around the world. "Through this website you can swap books, DVDs or CDs with people around the world. To participate you sign up and create a list of the things you are offering. This procedure is quick and easy as the site supports ISBN numbers to identify items. Then you have to wait until someone is interested in one of your items.

Once someone has received an item you sent him or her, you receive a request credit, which you can trade in for an item you want from somebody else. The service is free, but you cover the postage."

2) Book Mooch is another website with the similar idea but it is limited to just books unlike Title Trader. "It's a multilingual, community-driven site that works based on a point system. The site supports English, Deutsch, Española, French, Italian, Japanese, and Portuguese and is available to anyone around the world. Points are earned by providing someone with the book they want, and requesting and receiving a book you want can spend these points. The only fee you pay is the postage to send books. Using the MoochBar browser toolbar (IE, Firefox, Opera, Safari, OmnniWeb) you can search books on Amazon and then see if they are available for trade on BookMooch."

3) "Textbook Revolt is made for students around the world who cannot afford to buy new college textbooks all the time. The limit is that you need a valid .edu address to register. However, if you are a student, would like to participate, but don't have such an email address, you can contact the site owners and request to be added. Other than that, Textbook Revolt works very similar to the

sites described above. Through Twitter you can keep track of all new books listed or requested.

4) "PaperBack Swap is a club for swapping books that is also limited to US residents. The cool thing about this site is that books are sent using a wrap that contains all essential information, like address and sender details. The book can simply be wrapped into this printed piece of paper, which simplifies the packing and labeling process. The advantage of sites limited to residents of a specific country is that postage costs remain predictable for all members."

5) "Facebook has developed a book swap feature for its Marketplace application called Marketplace Book Exchange that enables users to buy and sell books from and to each other. Books are identified by buyers and sellers by their ISBN numbers, and curiously it looks as though there is no way to view all of the books offered in a particular network.
On the one hand, this appears to be a smart move for Facebook, as college students are fed up with buying expensive textbooks from their college bookstores. The Social

Graph certainly lends itself to buying and selling items from others within a localized market, such as a college campus."

6) "MBS Textbook Exchange, MBS is the largest used college textbook wholesaler, bookstore systems provider, and distributor for distance learning students in the country."

7) "The Book Exchange Code Project Site- BookEX is a collection of Perl/database code for a web-based system geared towards college students wanting to buy/sell/trade textbooks with other students."

8) "NEU.Texts.com, The College Textbook Exchange makes it easier for Northeastern students to purchase textbooks at the lowest price, either from vendors across the Internet or from your classmates, and to sell those books back to fellow students for a fair price. Social media platforms are no longer necessary, as the Textbook Exchange will serve as the official platform for student-to-student textbook sales."

9) "SwitchPlanet allows to trade DVDs, CDs, video games and books. The mission is to reduce environmental waste, help those who need it most and support arts/culture and

education. Much like Title Trader and BookMooch, SwitchPlanet works based on a point or currency system and adds the community aspect. Users can create profiles, and join groups. Also, SwitchPlanet hopes to collect donations from its members. This money will be used to help needy families."

10) "Swaptree, a site through which US residents can swap books, CDs, DVDs and video games for free.

Items are listed based on their ISBN numbers and users can add a short description. Like on Read It Swap It, users are matched for swapping an item."

5. Conclusion

The references show how popular the idea of a book exchange is, people are getting more and more tired of the overpriced books that you may find in the book store and instead are looking for other alternatives. By picking and choosing certain aspects of each of the websites/applications that already exist, I will be able to come up with a final design plan of the application and present it to my peers in survey

form. Each of the already existing websites had their own pros and cons and it is up to me to choose what will, and will not work. The end goal is to prove to readers how important it is for this application to be created, and how much it will make every students life easier.