

PASTEL

COLLEGE BOUND

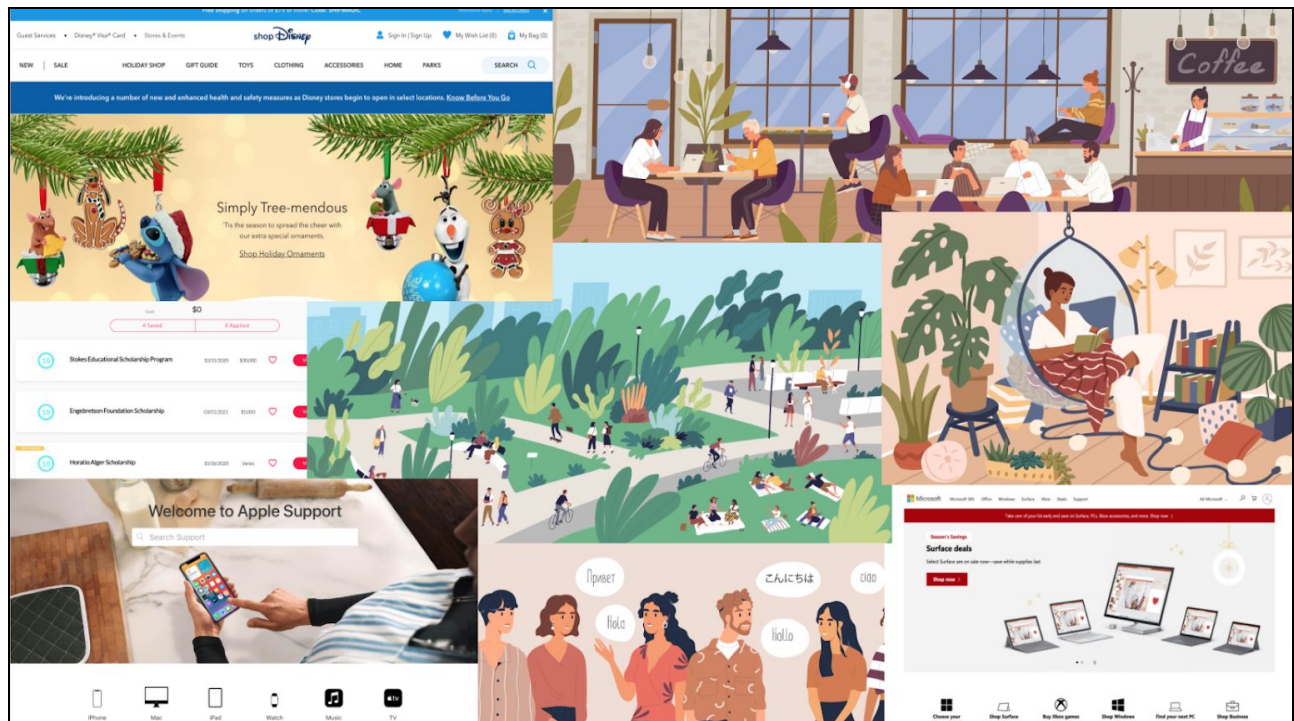
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INSPIRATION

Keeping our users in mind, we wanted the designs to be simple and accessible. Overall, all the possible designs of the site had to be easily navigable. We were inspired by websites that had completely different designs, as some of them were cleaner, minimalist, and more streamlined, while others were less streamlined, but had more information. Overall, we tried to find a balance between these two concepts, and we want our final design for the class to be a mix. In the different designs, we allowed navigation either by icons, sequential indicators, or a more traditional website design with a fixed navigation bar. Additionally, we found a stock illustrator artist whose work we really admired, and we used their artwork in all our designs to cultivate a cohesive and welcoming look and feel.

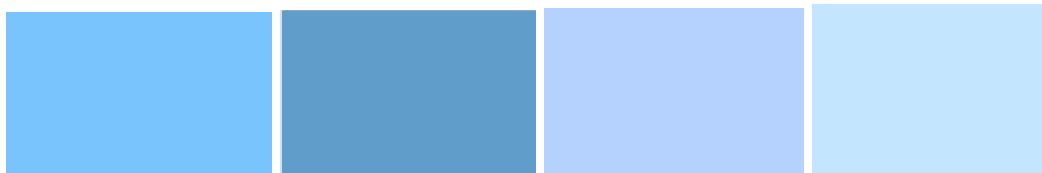
MOODBOARD



COLOR SELECTION

Overall, we knew we wanted College Bound to have a blue theme. The color blue is associated with being calm and relaxed, and as applying to colleges is often very stressful, we wanted to create a calming environment for our users. Over the course of creating our designs, we went through many different shades of blue. Below are examples of the different shades we cycled through before specifically deciding on two shades of blue - a main shade and a complementary shade to go with it.

ITERATIONS OF SHADES OF BLUE



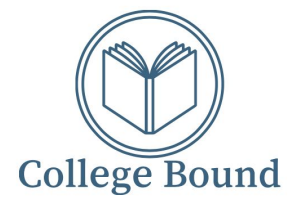
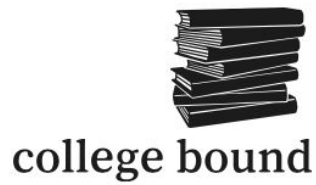
FINAL SHADES OF BLUE



LOGO CREATION

For the logo creation, we went through many different designs. After we chose our specific shades of blue, we knew we wanted to have the words, “College Bound” along with an icon that was relevant. We went through many different icon ideas: our first idea was to have an animal mascot, like a bunny. Bunnies hop and bound around, which is why we chose a bunny in the first place. However, we felt that a bunny was not serious enough, and did not want our users to feel patronized. On the topic of animal mascots, we thought a bee might work better, but ultimately that had the same effect that the bunny did. We thought that maybe a bee flying around a book would work, but that felt too busy, so we decided to have a plain book as our icon. This matched perfectly with College Bound, as books themselves are bound and books correlate to the idea of school and colleges. Once we decided on an icon, next was specifically choosing a font and what the icon would look like. For the font, we knew we wanted it to be clean and easy to read, but with some embellishments, like a serif font of some kind. We went through a few iterations of fonts, but quickly decided on one we liked. As for books, we started off with the idea of having a closed book, but the design didn’t quite work and we felt it was not recognizable enough as a book. Then we moved on to a stack of books, but felt that a stack of books made the logo feel unbalanced. Finally, we decided to look at different iterations of open books. We went through a couple different designs of open books before deciding on an open book with a circle around it. We felt the circle harmonized well with the font, was easy to understand, and would be easily scalable either up or down. After we used the book logo for part of the design process, we felt like it could still be bettered. We had the idea to combine a book and a graduation cap, as graduation is the final goal and we still kept the book motif in that way. Therefore, our final logo design includes a book/graduation cap hybrid.

ITERATIONS OF LOGO DESIGNS



FINAL LOGO DESIGN



College Bound College Bound

DESIGN ONE

DESIGN CHOICES

For the first design, we wanted everything to be very clean, but in a welcoming way. We decided to add a search bar on the homepage, so that if a user wants to search for something specific they are able to. Even if the user does not know which page the information is on, a keyword search will help guide users unfamiliar with the intricacies of college. We broke down the pages into five categories: “Choosing Colleges and Degrees,” “Applying to Colleges,” “Applying to Scholarships,” “Financing Your Education,” and “Finding Emotional Support.” Each subpage includes more icons to click to additional subpages. The subpage holds a general overview of information for that particular topic. If the user wishes for more specific topics they can continue to navigate icons to find the answers they are looking for. This is helpful because it does not overwhelm the user with excessive amounts of text when browsing each page. The information is very categorized to ensure easy focus and concise material. Additionally, there is a hamburger style menu in the corner, to make navigation easier to any of the pages, regardless of what page the user is currently on.

STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES

Strengths:

- Clean design
- Search bar on homepage
- Hamburger menu allows for less clutter
- Icons are virtual representation of categories
- Users can associate sections with icons after extended use

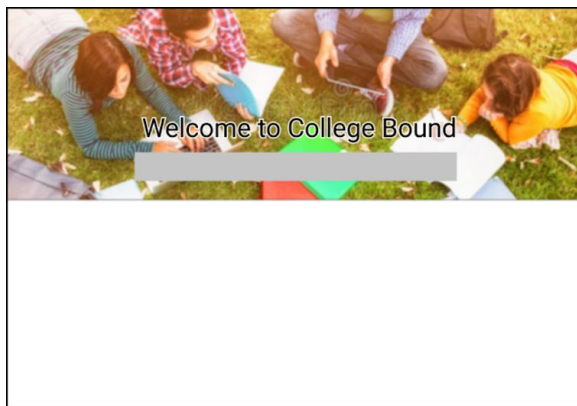
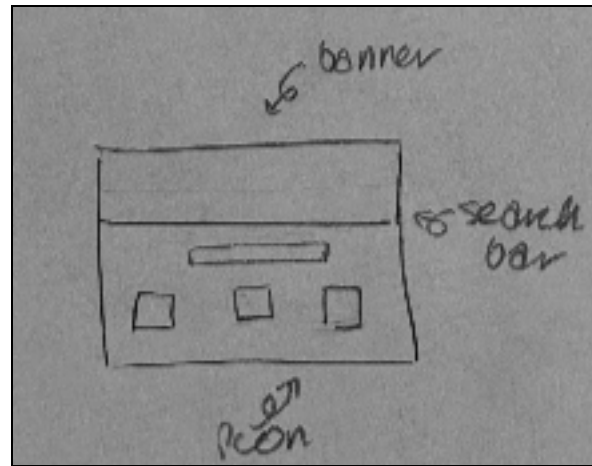
Weaknesses:

- Smaller category text due to the icons
- Hamburger menu might be hard to find for some users
- No preview for secondary subpages
- More clicks needed to access subpages

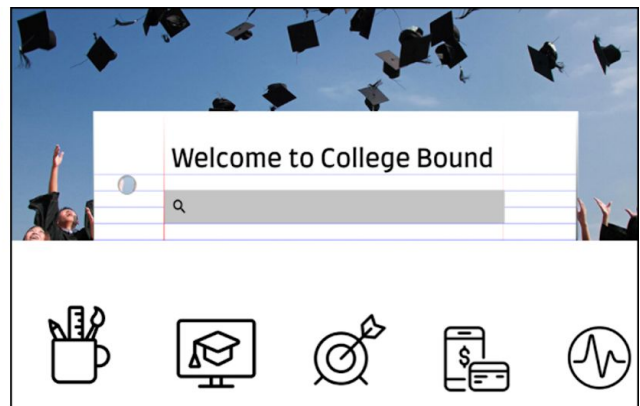
WALKTHROUGH

For this page, we have a homepage and five subpages. To get from the homepage to the subpages, the user clicks on the specific icon/word combo referring to the page they want to go to. Once they are on that subpage, each subpage also has icon/word combos to further click on to get to a secondary subpage (we did not create these pages for the sake of simplicity, but the layout would be mostly the same). This way, every user concern is separated by category and into specific subpages, to keep the information easy to understand and digest. In one of our initial iterations for this page, we did not have a clear way to navigate from page to page, so we added a hamburger style menu to the top left of each subpage. The menu pops up and blurs out the background, keeping separations of concern, and allows the user to navigate to a different subpage or homepage than the one they are currently on.

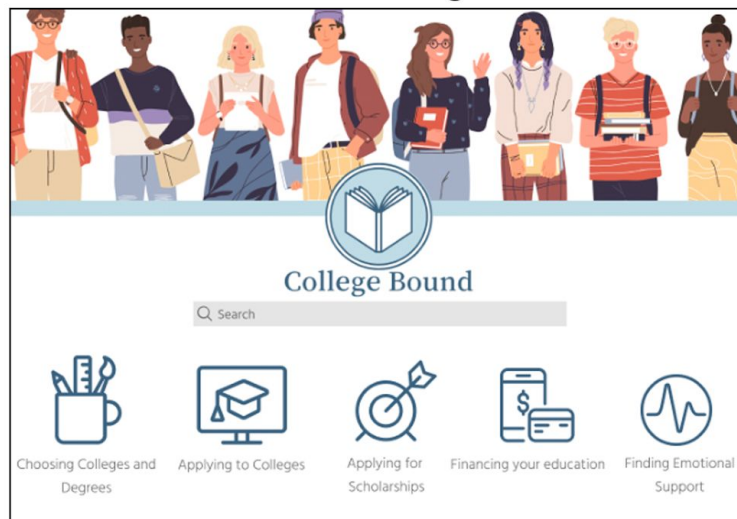
DESIGN ITERATIONS



Design 1 Iteration 1

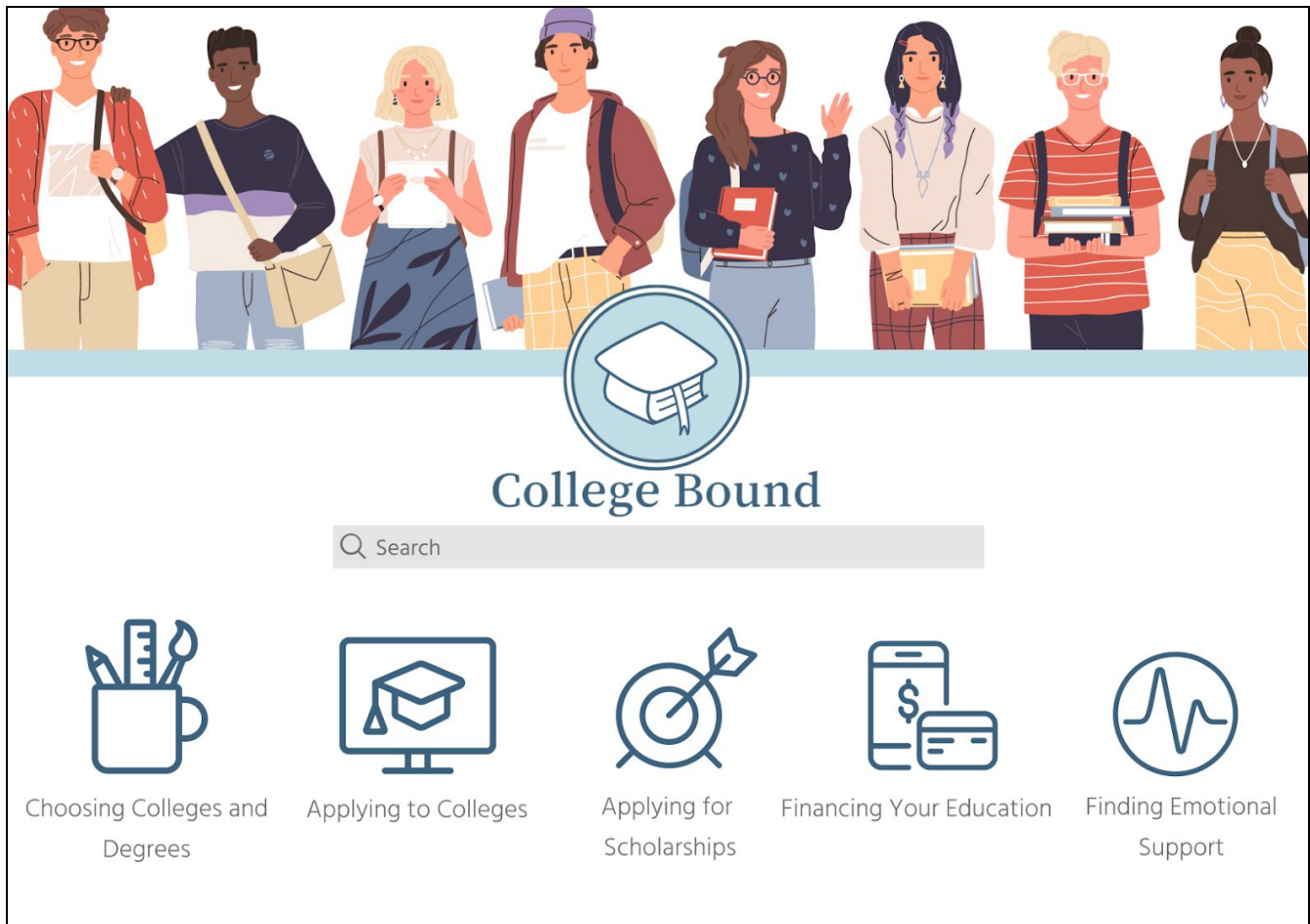


Design 1 Iteration 2

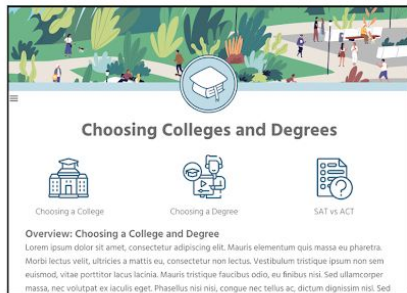


Design 1 Iteration 3

FINAL HOMEPAGE DESIGN



SUBPAGES



Subpage 1



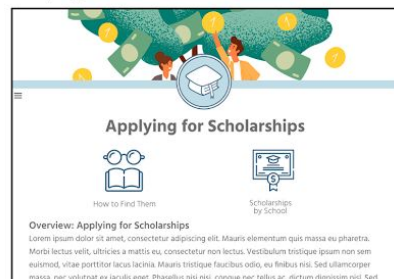
Subpage 1 Navigation



Subpage 2



Subpage 2 Navigation



Subpage 3



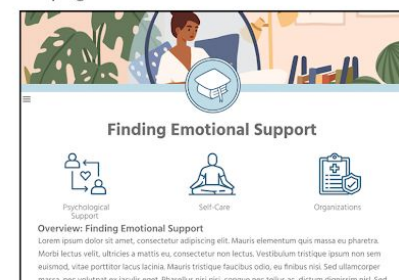
Subpage 3 Navigation



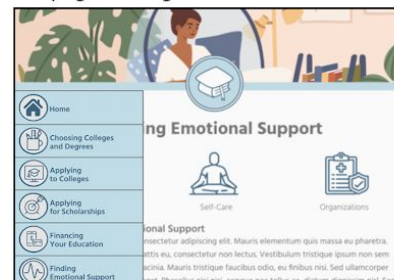
Subpage 4



Subpage 4 Navigation



Subpage 5



Subpage 5 Navigation

DESIGN TWO

DESIGN CHOICES

For the second design, we decided to make a more sequential type design. We made a specific order to finish actions in, and based our design layout upon that. The order is as follows, “1: Choose the Right College and Degree for You,” “2: Learn How to Apply to Colleges,” “3: Learn How to Apply for Scholarships,” “4: Discover Different Ways to Finance Your Education,” and “5: Find Emotional Support in College.” Therefore, for this design it is very easy for users to understand which page to go to first, and what order to complete actions in. This design is simultaneously more simple and more complex than the first design. It is overall more simple as there is less going on, but we chose to use text instead of icons, which made it more complex.

STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES

Strengths:

- No secondary subpages
- Clearly communicates what order to complete actions in
- Navigation menu provides easy access between every page
- Art and colors are pleasing to the eye yet simple and not distracting
- Simple interface to grasp

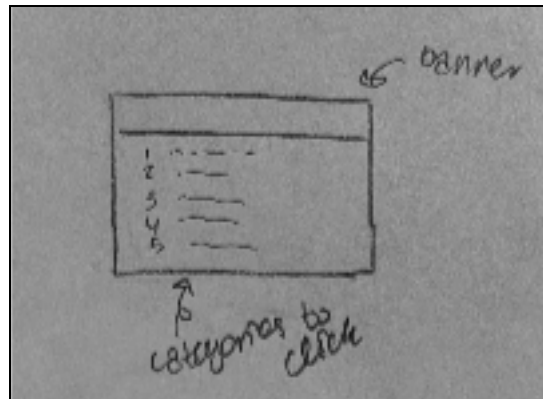
Weaknesses:

- All information has to be included on main category page
- More text heavy than other designs - not as many images
- Process does not necessarily go in sequential order.
- Since the number is covered up when you open the nav menu, users might forget which page they are on (could be fixed with another iteration)
- Having the hamburger menu is not super clear and probably is not the best form of navigation.

WALKTHROUGH

For this design, we have a homepage and five subpages. This specific design does not have any secondary subpages, so all information relating to each category is on one subpage instead of multiple. From the homepage, the user is able to click anywhere within the gray outlines to go to that corresponding subpage. Then from each of the subpages, there is a hamburger style menu in the top left corner that allows users to go back home or to any of the other numbered subpages from the specific page they are on.

DESIGN ITERATIONS



Design 2 Iteration 1

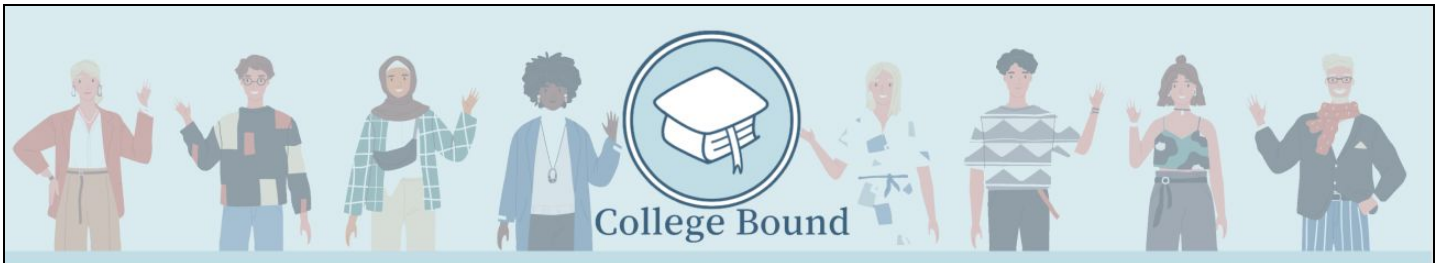


Design 2 Iteration 2



Design 2 Iteration 3

FINAL HOMEPAGE DESIGN



1

Choose the Right College and Degree for You

2

Learn How to Apply to Colleges

3

Learn How to Apply for Scholarships

4

Discover Different Ways to Finance Your Education

5

Find Emotional Support in College

SUBPAGES



Subpage 1



Subpage 2



Subpage 3



Subpage 4



Subpage 5



Subpage 1 Navigation



Subpage 2 Navigation



Subpage 3 Navigation



Subpage 4 Navigation



Subpage 5 Navigation

DESIGN THREE

DESIGN CHOICES

For the third design, we decided to go with a more traditional website design. We made a visual menu that can be seen without clicking on an additional button, unlike the other two designs with the hamburger style menu. For this design, you are able to access any of the subpages from any of the pages whatsoever due to the menu design. As compared to the first design, the only way to access the secondary subpages is through the specific head category page, whereas with this design the secondary subpages are accessible at all times. We also added a section to feature articles on the homepage, which makes this website design more relevant, visual, and informative compared to the other two designs.

STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES

Strengths:

- Clear navigation tabs
- Traditional website layout, will provide users with familiarity
- Drop down menu does not obstruct page, can still view material when navigating
- Articles on the first page provide current news about school
- Arrows to easily preview articles instead of having to change pages each time

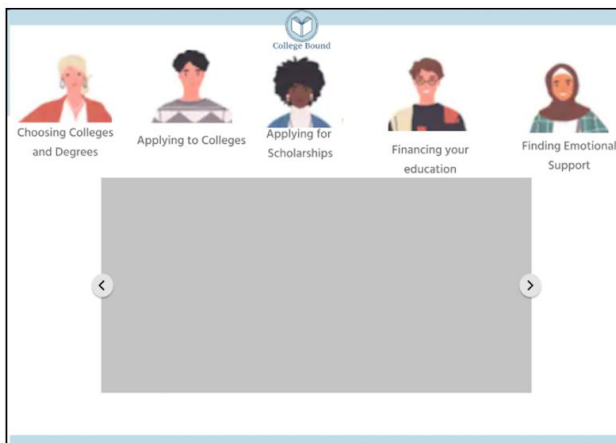
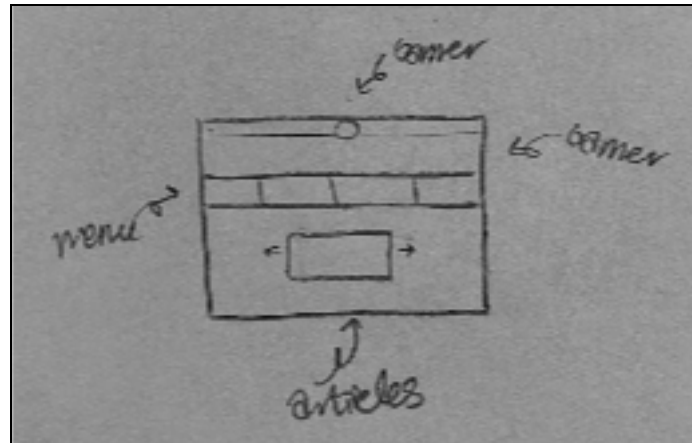
Weaknesses:

- Although clicking on the banner is an easy way to get back to the homepage, it is not as intuitive as the drop down menus (could be fixed with another iteration)
- No overview page of each big topic
- Menu buttons are a bit small
- The logo is not as noticeable as the other designs

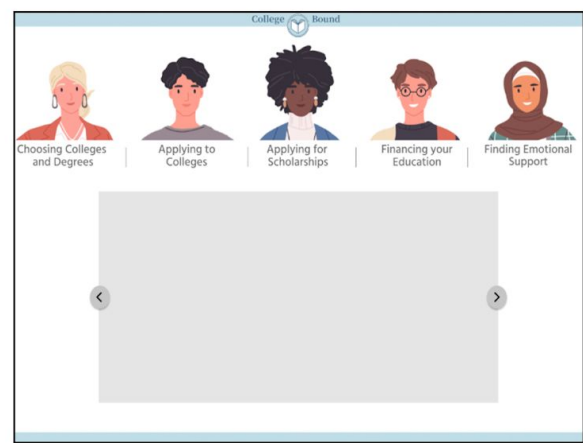
WALKTHROUGH

For this design, we have one homepage with a changing article section, and five implemented subpages (this design has more subpages but we only implemented one of each category for the sake of simplicity - the layout would be mostly the same). Each page has a menu that is always visible at the top, broken up by category. When you click on a specific category it expands to show all the subpages associated with said category. This design does not have a clear way to get home, so we made it so that if a user clicks on the banner at the top, it takes them back to the homepage. In the future, we would like to change the menu banner to include a home button in the corner. Additionally, once the user is on the homepage, they are able to click through a cycle of topical articles on relevant topics by using the arrow buttons on the right and left side of the article container. Overall, this design allows the user to access absolutely any subpage from any other page, and still has information broken down by category.

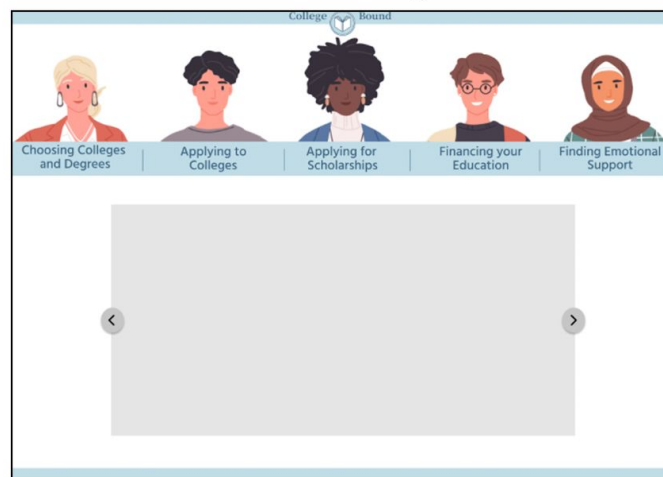
DESIGN ITERATIONS



Design 3 Iteration 1

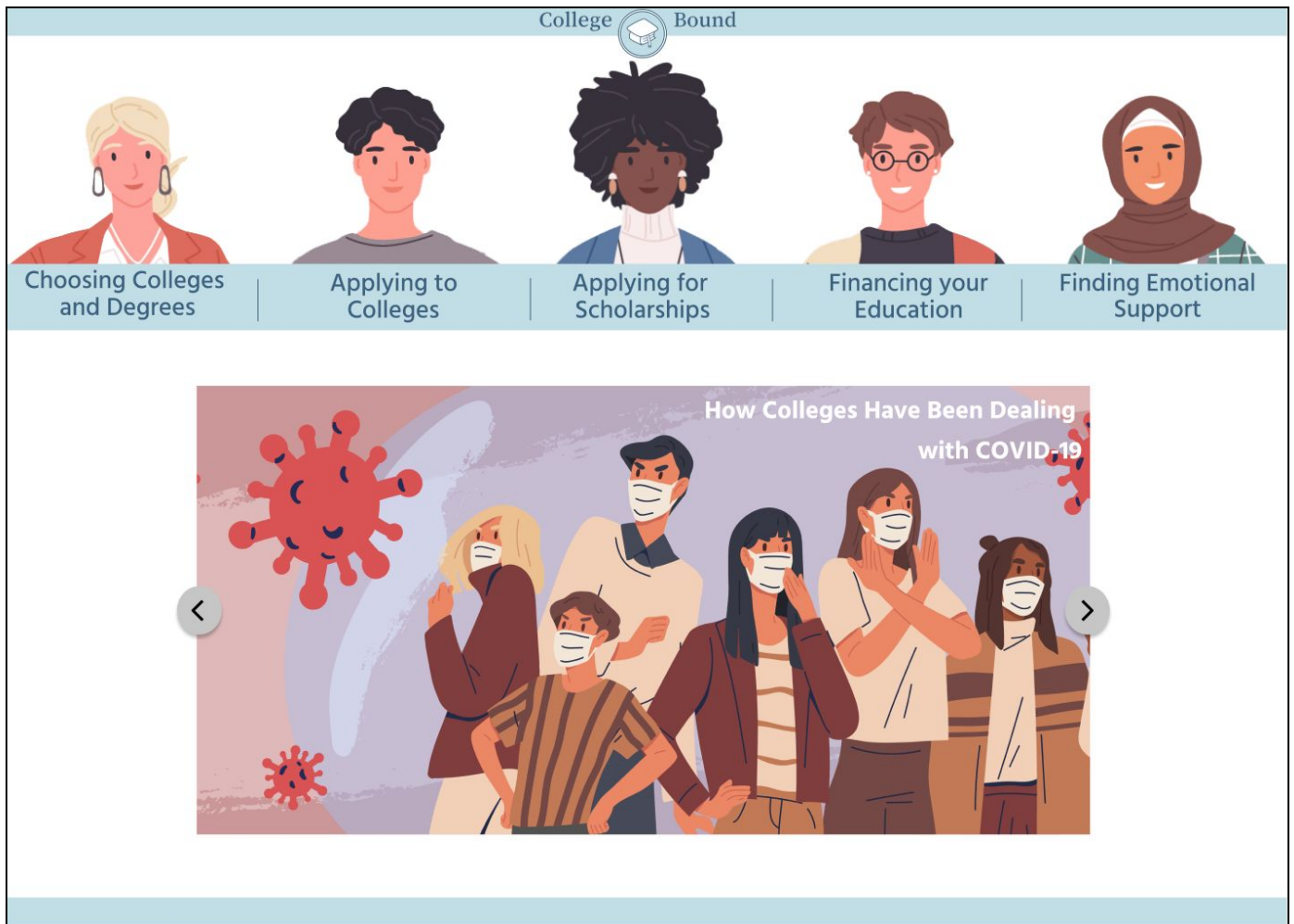


Design 3 Iteration 2



Design 3 Iteration 3

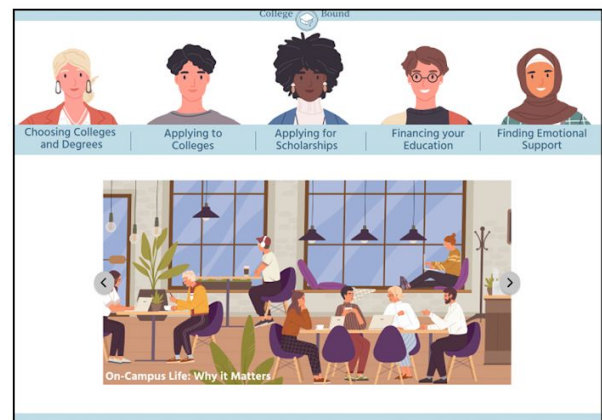
FINAL HOMEPAGE DESIGN



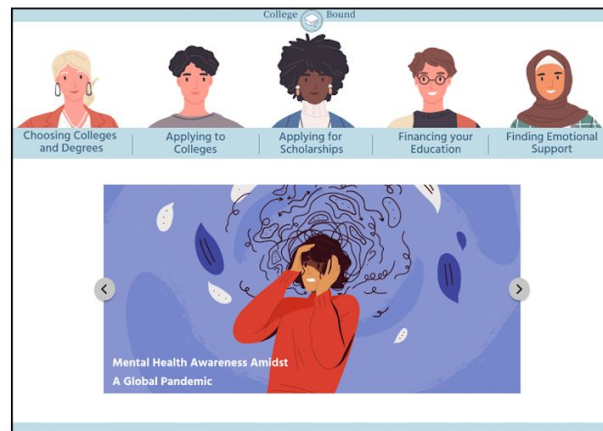
HOMEPAGE ARTICLE DESIGNS



Design 3 Homepage Article 1



Design 3 Homepage Article 2

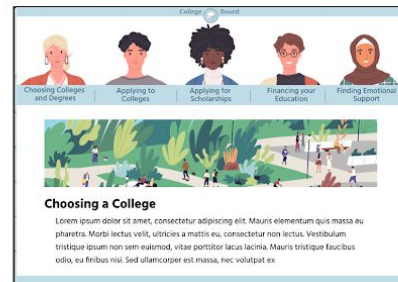


Design 3 Homepage Article 3

SUBPAGES



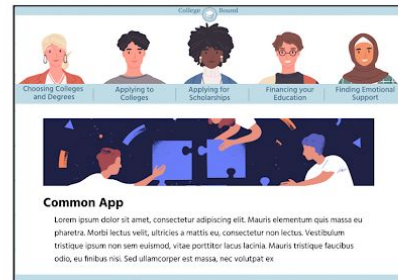
Navigation to Subpage 1



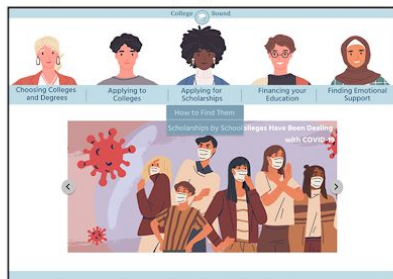
Subpage 1 Option 1



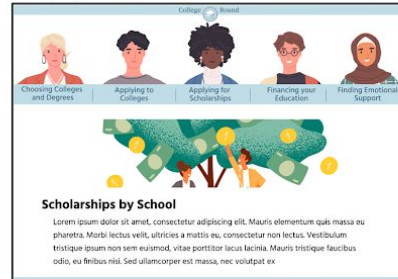
Navigation to Subpage 2



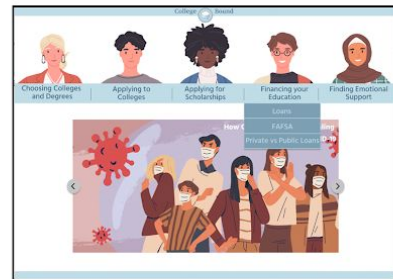
Subpage 2 Option 1



Navigation to Subpage 3



Subpage 3 Option 2



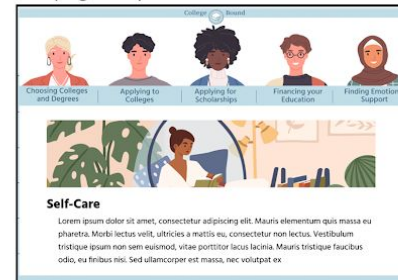
Navigation to Subpage 4



Subpage 4 Option 2



Navigation to Subpage 5



Subpage 5 Option 2