

Project Documents 1, 2, & 3 (Group Assignment)

1) Group 4 Team Members (onid) / Team Org

- Arthur Liou (lioua) / Leadership
- Becky Chao (chaobe) / Writing
- Peter Nguyen (nguyep2) / User Communication
- Zijij Huang (huangzij) / Visual Design

2) Project Description - [Rate My Professors](#)

2a. This should include a description of this problem as a **USABILITY** problem.

All throughout using RateMyProfessors.com, it becomes painfully clear, even to the average or design unaware user, that RateMyProfessors was patched together with no design sense in mind. For those of us who work professionally in tech or have a sense of interactive and usability design, we wonder if RateMyProfessors ever even hired or used a designer.

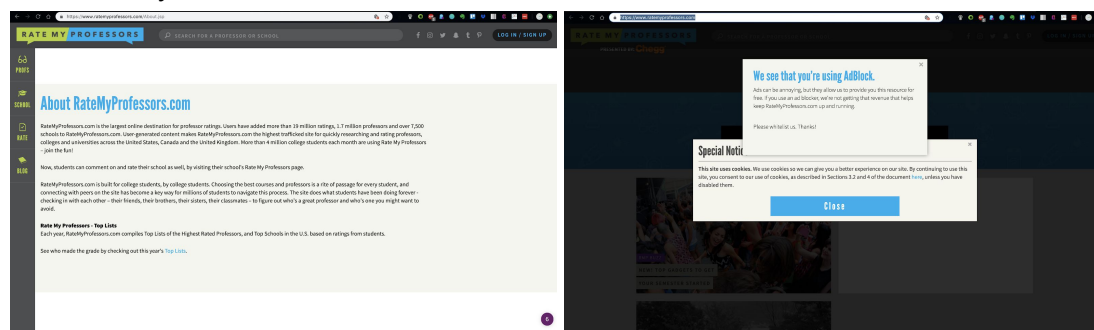
Some of the terms we found aptly describes RateMyProfessors includes: "clunky navigation", "unappealing white space", "sloppy ad placement", and "unresponsive web design" (also will be added below). Some additional impacts it has on usability includes: visibility (of user actions/options), consistency, affordance, lacks empathy, memorability, and satisfaction.

Specific Examples of Usability Issues with Rate My Professors:

Included two screenshots from Rate My Professors. The left is the about page; the right is the first thing I see when I access the page.

When a user, especially one who has never used the site, attempts to view Rate My Professors, it does not seem reasonable to bombard them with two popups that are not related to the website's content. The popups only serve to fulfill the website's own interests, by asking the users to allow advertising without first providing value and then fulfilling their own legal obligation by adding an additional step that users need to bypass to use the site. This impacts visibility, consistency, perhaps a little affordance, definitely lacks empathy, memorability, and satisfaction.

In the about page, from a visual standpoint, the icons and links on the left sidebar are way too small. There's so much white space that is not utilized, a bunch of blank space that can easily be fixed with a focus on usability. This primarily impacts visibility, consistency, and memorability. It can also affect satisfaction



2b. A justification why this is a good/interesting project from the standpoint of there being a reasonable amount of USABILITY work to think about.

Consider how useful this website this is for most of the college students when they pick their classes to register, our project is focusing on make it looks cleaner, easier to use for most of the students, especially for those who don't use computer quite often. We are trying to modify this website more straightforward. Thus, students who have never use the website can easily get access to the rating of the professor of who they desired.

2c. Brief description of the target users.

While our target user is students, there are other user stories we can think about.

- As a student, I would like to find ratings for my professor (or potential professors), find my school, and rate professors.
- As a teacher, I would like to see my own ratings and reviews.
- As a school administrator, I would like to see how my professors are rated.

2d. What potential users will you have access to (being able to talk to potential users is REQUIRED).

We will have access to college students. As the website is geared towards letting college students know about potential professors in advance, having access to this demographic will be particularly useful in determining how to improve the usability of the website.

2e. Reasons you think you are the best team for this, and why you'll be able to complete this before the end of the term.

As current students ourselves, many of us have used RateMyProfessors at one point or another. Some of us have used it very much, while others (like Arthur) have not due to its lack of usability. Individually, we cover a wide range of student personas and stories, with some even across multiple universities, which are useful in understanding that this usability problem is something that persists across user personas from different backgrounds and using different parts of the site. This is one of reasons why we are the best team for this.

Not sure why we need to explain why, but we will complete this before end of term, without reservation and hesitation. From the usability / UX level, we would be able to interview and have access to a variety to student users. From being able to design new prototypes and generate feedback loops that would allow our team to continue to iterate and refine the entire website to the point where RateMyProfessors will start attracting more users instead of pushing them away just based on usability and design alone.

3. "P": predispositions. (From the perspective of factors that could affect USABILITY, what do you know, what do you NOT know?)

What we know	What we don't know
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Clunky navigation” • “Unappealing white space” • “Sloppy ad placement” • “Unresponsive web design” • A large part of the front page is outdated blog posts • The search functionality could be easier to use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What features users want (utility, effectiveness) • What users use the most when looking at the site (utility) • How necessary it is financially to include advertisements • Whether users find what they need in the current website (effectiveness) • How long does it take users to find what they need on the current website (efficiency) • Who are the users (e.g. how many are students, how many are teachers?)

Participation Report

Group Member name	Role	Responsibilities and Assigned tasks	Tasks Completeness Grade*0-5
Arthur Liou	Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing the meetings / creating Canvas Discussion / Google Docs Collaboration • Helping on writing the document • 2a, 2c, 2e 	5
Becky Chao	Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 • Formatting and editing document 	5
Peter Nguyen	User Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing potential users • 2d 	5
Zijing Huang	Visual Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving the idea of how the project is going to be done / brief overall instruction • 2b 	5

Typical length:

- About 1-2 pages for parts #1-#2, and
- two lists with at least 6 non-trivial items in each list for part #3.