Comparative Analysis

   The first app that I chose to analyze was Yik Yak. It's interface and target audience is similar to how I want my app to work, but Yik Yak always gets filled with negative, political, or just outright annoying posts. It also somewhat encourages these comments with the "Yakarma" aspect and upvotes and downvotes. I wouldn't want my app to work that way with some people getting treated better or more popular because their posts were more interesting or funny or something like that. It's general scrolling interface is fairly similar to how I'd want my app to be organized, but instead of having the entirety of the Davis campus posting on one forum, I'd want it to be divided by majors or classes so students with specific questions can ask them to other students who either already took the class or are currently enrolled.
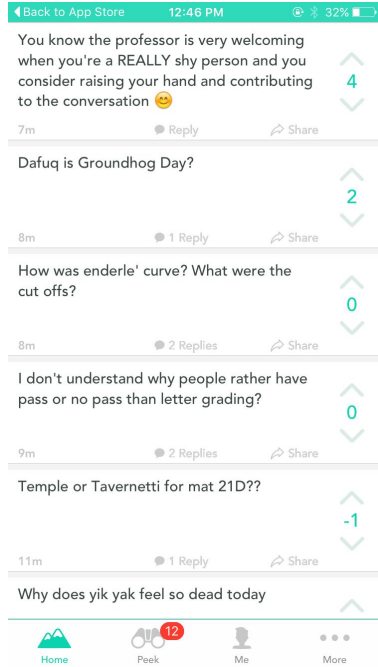
   As I said earlier, I'd want my target audience to be limited to people either in a particular major or class to ask more experienced undergrads about their experiences, study habits or just how they got through the class. Yik Yak's audience is the whole Davis campus community, which is a very large audience that could feel daunting to some students who are looking for a positive community to help them get through a class. I was thinking that for each class or major that I make a forum for, I could make forums for class help and for emotional/stress help too.

   One other similarity between my idea and Yik Yak is the idea of complete and total anonymity. This is how Yik Yak became such a big deal, and how it gave people a place to vent their frustrations without being personally judged by friends. Yik Yak's main goal was to "make the world a smaller place" by creating a forum to post shared experiences that bring communities closer, even though all the posts are anonymous. I think this works for and against Yik Yak in a lot of ways, mainly that it gives people a place to share their experiences to people around them but also gives rude people a place to be heard.
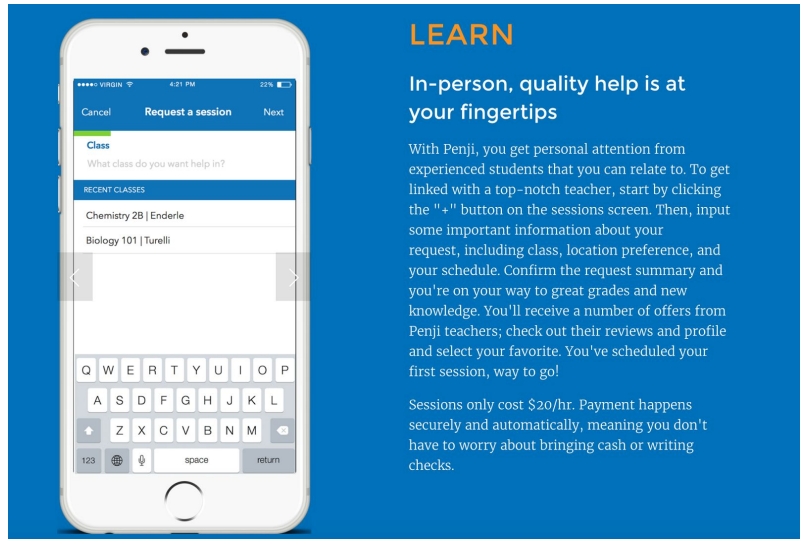
   The other app I chose to analyze was Penji, an app for connecting students in need of tutors with other students who apply to be tutors. From my understanding of the app, you look for tutors under your class, or the tutors look for students who match what material they can teach them and then you connect and set a time and place to meet. This combines my idea to find help from other students in similar classes, but it monetizes it, and only connects students rather than allowing them a place to vent their frustrations.

   In terms of the interaction, Penji seems to be limited to another scrolling interface where the user can scroll through and look for tutors/tutees that meet their criteria. There are subheads where you can organize your upcoming meetings, but other than that the interaction seems very minimal, as this app is structured to get students to meet with real tutors.

   The interfaces for both apps are both designed well with minimal design and simplistic designs. While Yik Yak focuses more on user to user interfaces, with the ability to scroll through the communities Yak's about their day, Penji puts more emphasis on real world meetings in order to promote learning. Both of these apps have aspects that I want to utilize in my design for my app, but they also have their own particular drawbacks.

Yik Yak

Penji

LEARN

In-person, quality help is at your fingertips

With Penji, you get personal attention from experienced students that you can relate to. To get linked with a top-notch teacher, start by clicking the "+" button on the sessions screen. Then, input some important information about your request, including class, location preference, and your schedule. Confirm the request summary and you're on your way to great grades and new knowledge. You'll receive a number of offers from Penji teachers; check out their reviews and profile and select your favorite. You've scheduled your first session, way to go!

Sessions only cost $20/hr. Payment happens securely and automatically, meaning you don't have to worry about bringing cash or writing checks.