To: Dr. O'Quinn, Dr. Morley, Dr. McNeely, Dr. Kirby

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Date: 03-15-17

Subject: Final Project Design

Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to discuss the processes and work concluded by the student team assembled by Dr. Crane for the purpose of redesigning the Sustainability B.S. Capstone Manual. In the following sections, we will detail our design choices, research, and recommendations for moving forward with the project.

It is important to remember that as there is no official manual for this course yet, the materials that we are forwarding on to you represent possible stylistic choices in line with your requests for the future goals of the manual. This is a document design driven class, not content based. As per your directives, the material has been styled in black and white, fonts have been selected that take up less space on the page, a "Draft" watermark has been added, and the whole document has been given a clean, uniform look.

Design Choices

For this project we were tasked with the reduction of confusion experienced by the user as well as adhering to principles that reflect the nature of the Sustainability Program. To that end we opted for a cleaner look which reduced clutter on the page.

Our first step was to delete the border from the page. This freed up room for further design while reducing the amount of ink used per page.

Next we debated upon and chose fonts which could be easily skimmed and are discernible from one another. Specifically, the headings are a sans serif, while the body text is a serif font. This had the result of reducing the number of manual pages used from 13 to 10. This will, of course, change with the final product, but it demonstrates the potential for efficient page use.

The Eastern Washington University logo was removed in favor of the use of the Eastern Eagle logo, also in black and white. This had the benefit of taking up less room on the page, requiring less ink for printing, and still shows ownership of the document.

For the sake of usability we did embolden some minor headings within the document. This was a common issue found during our usability testing with Eastern students which fit our model demographic.

Research and Design Process

Our research methods included conducting an official usability test. To perform the test, we collected five participant users. Users were chosen upon their likelihood to complete similar capstone forms in the near future. For this we selected all EWU students of either Junior or Senior level. Our test time and environment took place between 3:00-5:00 p.m. in Patterson Hall (room 240) on March 2nd. This is a computer classroom, but the computers were not used.

Users were given our manual prototype and allotted 30 minutes to complete five tasks. These tasks included:
1. Find the details of the capstone grading system
2. Find a list of documents you as the student would need to submit to your faculty advisor
3. How many total hours and credits of Capstone must the student finish in order to graduate?
4. Without the use of the TOC, find the answer for: "When is a student eligible for the capstone?"
5. Without the use of the TOC, what are the 3 phases of the course requirements?

The tasks were chosen to evaluate our overall goals and objectives of making the manual easy to navigate and to relieve stress of the user. Users were all able to complete the tasks within 15 minutes of being given the manual.

From our research we learned about areas of the manual that still needed to be readdressed in order to complete our final redesign. Users took issues with Task 5, as many users felt the phases needed to have more emphasis for easier scannability. Other problems faced included lacking the ability to find certain information that was not necessarily clear with the natural hierarchy of the manual. We wanted to ensure the document was easy for users to skim or scan in order to find needed information quickly. Our user feedback was taken into account for our final redesign.

Our group also ensured our style guide was still strictly adhered to throughout the manual. When we reached our final redesign, we made a few changes to font types and indentations. These changes were done in order to take advantage of maximum page space in order to cut down on the amount of page and ink needed to print the document. We felt this was a necessary step for a sustainability program. We also ensured font size and style allowed for the best readability and scannability for the users.

Recommendations

Moving forward with this document, it is intended to be used as an example of what could be, as well as a template as more information and content becomes available for the Sustainability program. As you are aware, the content is borrowed from another major and not applicable to the Sustainability Capstone program. Our template was designed for the sole purpose of enhancing the overall user experience while keeping sustainability in mind. As content is created, it can be placed into the corresponding sections in our inDesign template and then styled appropriately.

The styles for our headings, paragraphs, header, footer, and list items are all premade and accessible in our inDesign file. We recommend to adhere to the style guide for the future content, as it was designed with the purpose to use page space and ink most efficiently, as well as to improve readability and scannability. The inDesign file can easily port to a PDF which can be made available on canvas and downloaded at the student's discretion.

We further recommend separating the manual from the forms that the student will need to fill out. This will benefit the sustainability of the document by allowing the participating students to print only what they have to, in this case a forms packet, rather than having to print out the entire manual and forms.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to read our report and for giving us the opportunity to help influence the design of what will become an important part of the new sustainability program. It is our hope that the work conducted by our team will be beneficial to the program as it matures. Our group made these changes in an effort to create a more efficient document, while strictly adhering to the manual guide we generated within our final version of the Sustainability document. We hope the included recommendations will help you to further add to this manual and create a quality product.