# SCO Migration: School Resources Discussion Script

October 10, 2019

### Welcome and Opening Remarks (5 minutes)

[When the participant is ready, the moderator will begin the session with the following introduction.]

Thanks for joining us today! My name is [Theresa], and I also have two colleagues on the line, Amy and Cindy. We work with the Education & Training group at the Veterans Administration and we're in the midst of redesigning the School Resources section of the VA website. As we update pages on the site, we to share the designs with people in sessions like this to be sure the contain all of the necessary information and are easy to use.

We’re looking for your impressions on what aspects of the website work well and where we might make improvements to make things even easier for school certifying officials & administrators.

Before we start, I’d like to mention a few logistical details:

* The most important thing for you to know for today is that we’re not testing your knowlege or ability, we’re interested in understanding how well the pages meet the needs of school administrators.  
  As our focus is on the design of the webpage, there are no wrong answers. The more you say about what you see and whether it works for you, the better info we have to work with as we wrap up the design process.
* Our goal is to be sure this content meets the needs of school officials and administrators, so we are interested in hearing your honest opinions. You are welcome to express any opinions you wish. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas and welcome your feedback.
* If for any reason you want to pause or stop the session at any time, just let me know. I'll be happy to do so.
* By testing the site thoroughly, we hope to ensure that it’s written in a thoughtful way and gives school officials quick access to information they need to help their military-connected students.
* Do you have any questions so far?
* Lastly, we generally record sessions, in case we need to confirm that we have captured your opinions accurately.

Are you comfortable if I record the audio as we talk today?

Great! I'm going to turn on screen and audio recording now. Once it's on, I'll ask again, as we like to have your verbal consent

[The meeting host will begin audio and screen recording.]

Have you participated in usability testing before? [Respond… Y: How’d that go? N: No problem. ]

### Warm-up Questions (5 minutes)

Before we look at the website, let’s start with a few warm-up questions.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Be sure we have this info…

* How long have they been SCO? About 3.5 years.
* How many GI Bill students are at their school? There are 10 of us.
* Possibly: How many people supporting military-connected students at their school?

GENERAL WARM UPS

1. Have you visited the School Administrators pages in the Education & Training section of benefits.va.gov before? Yes, I have.
2. How often do you visit these pages? About once every 3 months or so.
3. What type of info are you looking for when you go there? Just for any new updates to the benefits, basically. If a student says about a new update or change, I’ll just verify or confirm it on the page.
4. Is there any content you wish were available on the site? Also, I’ve looked up information on foreign schools for students, just any kind of insight that I can gain has been very helpful.   
   T: do you do that on the CT?  
   Yes.

Okay, let's go ahead and walk through a few scenarios.

#### Think Aloud

While you are going through the site, we ask that you please think aloud and vocalize your thoughts and decisions. The more you say about what you are thinking and wondering, the more we’ll learn. We are interested in your first reaction, as well as what you are thinking as you engage with the content. Sharing your thoughts aloud may seem strange at first, but it helps us understand what you are thinking and give us valuable information.

#### Prototype

Today we’ll be working with a prototype, not a real website. We create mock-ups like these to be sure we have everything right before we code the actual website. You may notice only certain links have been activated. If you get to one of those links, no worries. We’ll just mention it’s not active yet and may ask what you thought would happen when you clicked it.

[ Start participants on VA.gov homepage.]

### Scenario #1 (5 minutes) FINDING SCO HANDBOOK

Let’s start off with one of the most important tasks. Could you use this prototype to show me how you’d go about getting to the SCO Handbook on the VA website?

As you go about finding it, please talk aloud and let us know what you are thinking.

Observe…

* How do they attempt to find the school Resources page?
* How do they get to SCO Page?
* Can they quickly find SCO Handbook?

After the participant has found the required training or given up on the task.

Notes:

[He looked around on the page, not sure what to do] Can you click on “View payment history”? Can you click on that?

[on edu page]

T: Does the language of this section make sense to you? “School adminsntrators”

Yeah, probably school certifying official or school certifying staff.

### Follow up questions

* How easy or difficult would you say that was?
* What are your impressions of that process?
* How do you typically get to that site?
* What’s it like for you to get the info you need from that website?

Notes:

T: [led him to sco page] Any idea where we could find the sco handbook?

Yeah, it’s pretty easy to find, well-labeled.

### Scenario #2 (10 minutes) FINDING REQUIRED TRAINING

As part of the Colmery Act, we understand that SCOs at schools with 20 or more GI Bill students will need to complete additional training this year.

Let’s say you'd like to complete your training for the year. Using the site, please walk us through how you’d go about finding the training that’s required for SCOs this year.

Please talk aloud and let us know what you are thinking.

Observe…

* How do they get to required training once they’re on the page? (Jump links vs. Scroll)

Notes:

It would probably be here, training and guides. [clicked on t&g jump link, then on 2019 training link] That was very easy to find.

T: how might you go back to what you were just looking at?

I’d probably go to Education and Training, then School Resources [left nav menu for benefits.va.gov]

### Follow up questions

* How did you think that process went?
* How easy or difficult was it to find the training you needed?

Notes:

T: we’ll have to go back to that other page that we were looking at initially.

[he started navigating back to va.gov using the nav menu, went to “About GI Bill benefits”

T: what are you looking for there?   
I’m looking for School certifying official, school official…

T: I’m going to jump us back to this page right here [sco page]

### Scenario #3 (5 minutes) FINDING INFO ON AN UPCOMING WEBINARS

Let’s say your colleague has signed up for an online session offered by the VA's Education Services group. You are are interested in staying up to date regarding recent changes, as well. Using the site, how would you go about signing up to attend the same session in December?

Observe…

* How do they return to the School Resources page when they’re done with the task?
* What’s their reaction to SCO sub-content?
* How would you return to the page we were on previously

Notes:

Oh, yeah. Upcoming events. [clicked on jump link]

T: you’re welcome to use the arrows if it’s jumping around on you.

It might be training and guides. Let me go back to that. [he went to essentials section in T&G, then glossed over Upcoming Events, and scrolled down to Other Resources for Students]

You want me to find training that’s being scheduled? Like a webinar?

T: yeah, totally. I was just trying not to use the word. Where would you find the webinar?

Ah, training webinars, right there.

T: how was that to find?

I had to get my bearings. I had to glance over it.

### Follow up questions

* How did you think that went?
* How would you typically learn about a new VA programs?

Notes:

### Scenario #4 (5 minutes) FINDING INFO ON THE STEM PROGRAM

Have any of the students at your school asked about the new STEM scholarship? [respond to their input]

Let’s say one of your students is nearing the end of his GI Bill entitlement and is interested in applying for the STEM Scholarship. Using the site, How would you find information on who is eligible to participate in the STEM program?

Observe…

* How do they get back to the School Resources page when they’re done with the task?

Notes:

Can you scroll down a little bit?

T: can you scroll using your arrows?

Yeah. [started looking around, stopped at policies and procedure, located stem in learn about gi bill section] Oh, here it is. STEM.

T: how would you navigate to that page we were just looking at?

I could use the back arrow.

### Follow up questions

* How did you think that went?
* How would you typically learn about a new VA program like the Nourse STEM Scholarship?

Notes:

T: what would you expect to see if we opened up that gray box?

That might be any kind of updates like the Colmery act, I guess stem would be in there. anything could be in there, the gi bill, maybe an faq section.

### Scenario #5 (5 minutes) HOUSING CALCULATION CHANGES

Usind the site, Where would you look to learn more about recent changes to the housing calculation?

Observe…

* Are there multiple sections that might contain this information?

Notes:

Oh, the housing calculation. Can you scroll down?

T: yeah.

Probably would be… where’s that updates section at? Like see Latest announcements from the VA.

T: ok, good. That’s a very reasonable place to look for it.

### Follow up questions

* How did you think that went?

Notes:

### Scenario #6 (10 minutes) FINDING RESOURCES FOR MILITARY-CONNECTED STUDENTS

We’ve frequently heard that SCOs help military-connected students in many ways beyond certifying their enrollment. Does that ring true for you? [respond to their input… ]

Let’s say a student asks what scholarships they may be able to obtain to help with educational expenses. Where would you go to find information that might help them?

NOTE: this task will take them off the prototype to a page like [*https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/non\_va\_resources.asp#financial\_aid*](https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/non_va_resources.asp#financial_aid) When they’ve gotten there OR you’ve confirmed they are where they think they should be:

That was great info. Now, could you show me how you would locate Employment Assistance information?

Observe…

* What’s their reaction to being directed to content on a different page / in a different template?
* How do they try to get back to the School Resources page?

Notes:

Oh, Scholarships and financial aid right here.

T: what are your thoughts on finding that information?

Perfect.

### Follow up questions

* What are your thoughts on finding information for military-connected students within this school officials-oriented section?
* What were your thoughts about ending up on a “different site” (or whatever term they use if they comment on it) when you clicked on the Scholarships & Financial Aid link?

Notes:

### Post-Task Interview (10 minutes)

Thank you! That’s it for the tasks. How’d you think that went?

* What are your thoughts on whether you’d be able to find information you need on a site like this?
* What are your thoughts on the order of the sections (Key Resources, Announcements, Training, Upcoming Events, Policies and Procedures, Resources for students)? Which sections would you access most frequently?
* How could this page be more beneficial to SCOs or school administrators?
* How likely or unlikely would you be to refer other school officials to content like this?
* IF they have experience with or recall working with the current School Resources pages, ask how they think the version they just tried out compares to the current one.

ASK FOR QUESTIONS FROM TEAM.

* Do you have any other thoughts or comments you'd like to share?

Notes:

The only think I would add is probably make the lettering a little bigger. It’s big down here, but it’s small down here, maybe the next big font size? [upcoming events].

T: Oh, I could proably make it bigger [she made the screen bigger]

Oh, there you go. Much better.

Overall, it flows well. [3:54]

T: what about the order of the things on the page?

That seems fine. I don’t think there’s an issue with that. They’re all pretty easy to get to. The format’s fine.

T: any questions from A and C?

A: we came across some items that are called informational letters. Have you ever come across or are you familiar with the term informational letters?

No, I have not.

A: [gives explanation about informational letters] we weren’t sure if SCOs were sure what informational letters were.

I haven’t ever heard of that, but we do get a monthly update from our elr that she may summarize some of those upcoming events, changes, what’s coming up for us that we should pay attention to in the next 30 days. She may get them, and summarize that information there, but I’ve never been sent an informational letter.

A: ok, great. Thank you. If you were doing your normal day to day work… and you were using the regular site that you typically used to get to that, how would you normally get there?

I just go through va.gov and I just click through until I get to the education and benefits section.

A: do you have it bookmarked.

Yes, I do.

A: you don’t use it very often you just type it in your browser?

Yes, I do.

A: do you go to va.gov and search for the handbook there?

I have it on my own desktop.

A: how would you go to required training?

That one I go to this homepage, the benefits gi bill homepage. I would go to that page [benefits.va.gov] and then go to school administrators, click on that, and then training, then webinars.

A: so if it’s stuff for students you’re looking in va.gov and if it’s stuff for you, you’re looking in benefits.va.gov.

### Thank-You and Closing

Thank you for spending time with us today and sharing your thoughts. That was such great information. This will help us make an even better site for school officials. We really appreciate your help!