

# **W** MY CLUBS CLUBS UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

INFO 360C: Design Thinking

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## **THE PROBLEM**

When incoming students arrive at the University of Washington, they start a long journey of growth and self-discovery both in academia and social capacities. However, while academics is usually the aspect of university life that receives the most attention, campus life and mental and social wellness play a very important role in student performance and overall success. According to Astin (as cited in Feldman, 1994) and Ray and Kafka (2014), those who become more involved in various aspects of college life tend to have better outcomes, both in the short and long terms. A very important and widely popular component of said college life is student organizations (“10 Ways to Get Involved in Student Campus Life”, 2015). These organizations, led by students, centered on a common interest or purpose and regulated by the university authorities, are spaces where students can socialize, establish new friendships, maintain said friendships and explore new interests or paths. The importance of these organizations are emphasized by both Tinto and Astin (as cited in Fischer, 2007), since forging connections to other students and groups on campus is a key to student returning to campus. The lack of these spaces and the social environment and development they provide can result in lack of sense of belonging, poor social and interpersonal skills development and alienation (O’Keefe 2013): problems faced by many universities across the U.S.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance for all university communities to afford students with a rich and diverse variety of student organizations and means to actually reach those organizations and affiliate with them. Currently there is a lack of a cohesive, up-to-date, centralized source of information where students can look up active registered student organizations and their activities at the University of Washington.

At the moment, there are only a few ways for the student community to know about the existence of a student organization and the activities held by them. Said ways are:

- Physical media (i.e posters or fliers) posted or distributed around campus
- Separate mass emails
- Word of mouth
- Facebook groups
- RSO online directory provided by the Student Association Office

Some of these sources, however, are not fully accessible since they assume that the student has already established contact with other students who can provide peer knowledge (word of mouth) or that they already belong or know of a student organization (Facebook groups). Therefore, the only persistently available and accessible source of information for students who want to get involved in organizations on campus is the current RSO online directory. However, this directory faces many challenges:

- *It doesn't contain up-to-date contact information:* contact information for each group in the directory is updated only once a year. If there is a change, students who visit the directory won't be able to reach the group due to outdated contact information.
- *There is no information on actual ongoing or upcoming events or activities:* the current RSO directory only provides basic contact information for each group and nothing on events scheduled. If a student wants to know more about meetings or events scheduled, he or she must contact the group first, which brings us back to the previous issue.

- *It is aesthetically unpleasant and hard to navigate:* the current RSO directory is mainly composed of very small text presented in an unappealing, boring font, no images or very small, low quality ones and an uninviting and very limited color palette. There is no clear organization or information layout. Searching for RSOs does not give the user any filtering or ways to simplify the search or invite the user to explore groups that focus on a given interest.

Therefore, our RSO directory aims to provide a reliable, up-to-date, easy-to-access, and aesthetically pleasant information. This solution will help students to connect with organizations of their liking by providing access to information on any given registered student organization and its events or activities.

## PERSONAS:

### Overview:

The two different personas chosen to give hypothetical test for the design were both made in a way to represent two different ranges of possible users. The first, Sara, is someone who is new to the University of Washington as a whole and would most likely use the application to help her discover new clubs and possibly meet new people. Paul on the other hand is a user who is used to the University of Washington and is even an officer of one club and a member of another. Both of these potential user are cases that fall under the assumptions that application has, yet both have unique enough backgrounds that allow the application to demonstrate its potential within a diverse user population.

### Persona 1:

Sara is an 18 year old freshman student at UW who doesn't use any social media platform (i.e Twitter or Facebook). She loves good food, learning about new cultures and making new friends who could help her practice her recently learned Japanese. She was told by her parents, who are Husky alumni, that since UW is a very big school, joining student clubs could help make the university "feel smaller". She followed their advice and during her first week on campus, she decided to look for clubs focused on Japanese culture. She googled for clubs at UW and was redirected to the RSO online directory where she found the contact information for the Japanese Student

Association. She sent one of the members listed an email and waited for a response. A week passed by but she hasn't heard from them yet.

### **Scenario 1:**

Sara represents a segment of the student body who, prior to coming to the university, does not use social media sites (such as Facebook) where student groups tend to have groups or pages where they can be contacted. Therefore, Sara is only left with the RSO online directory as an option for looking up student organizations. But since this directory does not always contain updated information, she is not able to effectively establish contact with the organization of her choice. Since our application does not only redirects the user to a given organization's Facebook page but also to their website, YouTube channel or Twitter, Sara can easily reach the Japanese Student Association's website and obtain more information on the organization. Also, since the organization's profile page in our application gives her a quick look into what events are hosted, if she decides not to contact them but just attend a meeting, she already has the meeting's time and location information.

### **Persona 2:**

Paul is in his junior year at the University of Washington and is currently majoring in Electrical Engineering. He also has been very involved in his school's community through some clubs. Paul is the President for the school's League of Legends club. The club is very popular with both students attending the university as well as some outside, boasting a very high member population. The club (called the Union of Purple Caster Minions, or UW PCM) requires 20-30 club officers to help keep things running smoothly. Additionally, Paul is also a member of the Kendo club. Between attending practices and competitions for Kendo and trying to get members to be more active in events for UW PCM, Paul needs something to help him stay organized and be more effective at running UW PCM.

### **Scenario 2:**

Currently, the only way to tell the members of UW PCM of upcoming events is via the Facebook group. This would be effective if a large portion of the club did not mute notifications in the group. The reason behind members muting notifications is simply

because of the amount of people in the group. The posts can become annoying for members to constantly get notified about. The UW Clubs application will allow Paul to provide members of the club information about upcoming events without all of the extra notifications that members may not care about. Additionally, Paul is able to keep track of the events in the Kendo club easily, as well as any other clubs he wishes to join.

## SCOPE

The scope of this project was difficult for our group to come to a consensus on. There are so many issues with the current system that each time we came up with a certain set of parameters, questions seemed to arise about other aspects of the problem. After careful deliberation we decided that we wanted a scope that only dealt with the the actual events and finding clubs. With it being so easy for scope creep to happen we needed to refer back to what was inside and outside of our scope.

### In Scope

#### 1. Directory of all the Clubs

With this design we did want a system that a user could easily browse through all of the different clubs that are offered at the University of Washington.

#### 2. Notification and List of all Club Events

This design will encompass a feature that will allow user to see all of the different clubs' hosted events, and be notified of them. This will also allow a user to see all the clubs future events that they may want to attend.

#### 3. Synchronization with Facebook and Phone calendar.

The design will outline the functionality of being able to synchronize with Facebook's calendar to allow a user to connect through the Facebook group of the club and the events they create there. The user will also have an ability to sync their phone's calendar to the application so that all of their schedule can be up to date in an easy to access place.

#### **4. Profile Making Ability**

The design will also feature an ability of the user to create a profile that allows them to see the clubs and events that they are following.

#### **5. Subscription to Events and Clubs**

There will be a system that will allow users to subscribe or follow the different clubs or activities that interest them. Along with that they will have the power to decide which clubs or events can send them notifications.

#### **6. Link to Club Web Page**

With the directory there will be a system that can send the user to the club's full information page. There will not be extensive data about the club hosted within the application.

#### **7. Search and Filter System within Directory**

There must be some system that allows the user to narrow down the clubs that they want to look at. We envision some sort of filter or search function integrated within the application.

#### **8. Sign in with UW NetID**

The design is one where in order to access it you must sign in with a UW NetID to authenticate the user as a UW student.

#### **9. Single touch application**

The design allows for people to use the interface through a single touch interface, this means that there will be no multiple or advanced touch processes that a user can enact.

#### **10. Minimalistic Style**

The minimalism used in the style of the design was meant to decrease possible confusion or distractions from the design's purpose. It also has the effect of increasing usability for color blind people for the colors all have different tones that differentiate them.

## Out of Scope

### 1. Full Club information

The design will not include a full club profile, this will be hosted on another system most likely on the club's own website.

### 2. Adding and Managing Clubs

Our design will not describe the process for adding and managing the clubs and events. Our focus was primarily on those members of the clubs who wanted to know about the different events and not how those events were added or managed, which would most likely be done with another system.

### 3. Process that Synchronization occurs

Our design will not include the actual way that the application will synchronize with Facebook for many applications already do that and it is not necessary to create a new system.

### 4. Officer related task

The design is not meant to encompass anything that may be related to officer's talking with one another or other duties that they may need to do. It is purely a system meant for the majority of members and non-members.

### 5. Stand Alone System

Our design will not be its own standalone application. It is meant to be used in conjunction with Facebook and other scheduling and social systems that may be synchronized through a user's phone.

### 6. New Social System

The design is not meant to be a new social system for clubs at the University of Washington. This means that there will be no chat systems or friend and profile linking.

### 7. Voice Functions

Our design does not have an audio function that will allow people to use hands free systems or to use the system without sight

### 8. In Application Calendar

Due to the design being one that is not a standalone there is no need for the system to generate its own calendar and should instead use the phones provided one.

### **9. Usable Outside of University of Washington**

Our design is one that is only focused on clubs and activities hosted by the students of the University of Washington. Any aspect that deals with people outside of the UW will be considered outside of the scope of this design

### **10. Past Events**

This design is one that will only focus on current or future events. Anything that deals with events that have already happened or even something encompassing the total number of events a club has hosted will not be integrated within the design.

### **11. Voice Functions**

Our design does not have an audio function that will allow people to use hands free systems or to use the system without sight

### **12. Specifics of Facebook Syncing**

Due to so many different systems allowing users to synchronize their applications to Facebook we have decided that there was no need to redesign this system, and will leave its implementation up to the developers. This will allow them to decide which current method would best fit the design proposed.

### **13. Notification Generation**

The envisaged system for generating notifications for events is one that would be implemented on the back end of the application, thus the design specification should not include any information about the actual generation of new notifications.

## **ASSUMPTIONS**

When looking at the problem that our design was meant to account for, it would be impossible for the design to accommodate every single person that this problem encompasses. The first major assumption for this design is that the user is a UW student. Due to the fact that the verification is done through the UW netID a person must be a student. This had the advantage of regulating who could actually use the application as well as not forcing the user to create another account that they would have to remember the information for. The problem for this is that because it is dependant on the UW NetID and if that system is ever down a user cannot get on their profile. Another assumption made about

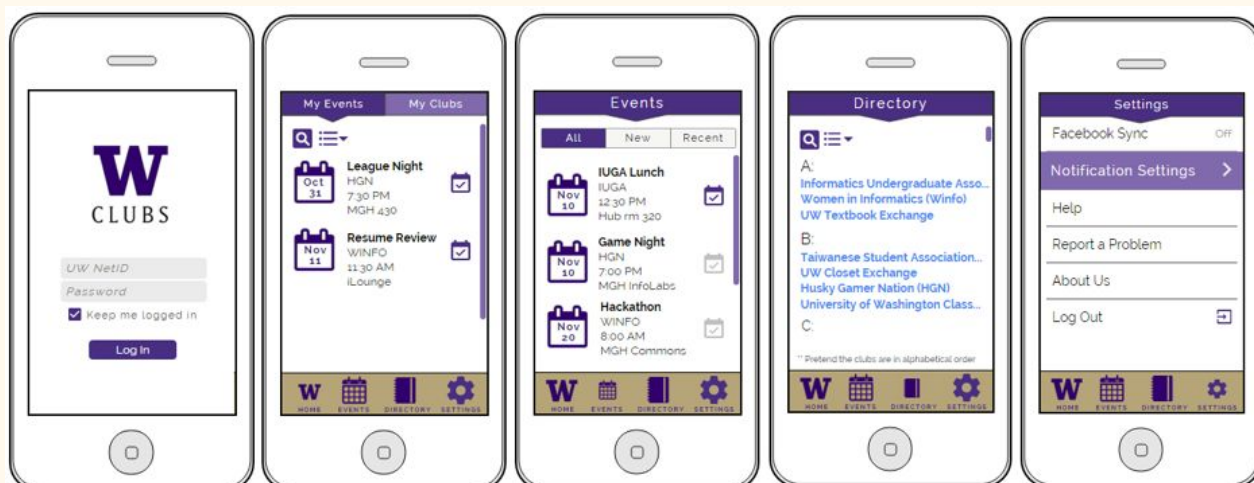


the user is that they have a mobile device. Therefore, this application is assumed to be developed for Android and iOS mobile devices which should cover the majority of mobile device users. With the design being something that is supposed to be minimalistic and used more as a plug in for the UW club directory and Facebook, the decision was made to make it only as a mobile application. This limits any user to being someone who already has a mobile device for this design, for the design itself is not something that would be a driving force behind a person choosing to buy a smartphone or tablet. This decision came about due to the presence of the UW's own directory and that was already filling the need of an online system. It would have also been impractical to design a system for both a web service and a mobile application. The final primary assumption made by this design is that the user is someone who is able to use touch devices efficiently. While there are no intricate gestures or input needed to run the device it still needs the use of a finger sized object to traverse through the UI. The design is not one that will allow ease of use for a user who does not have at least one finger that will easily interact with touch devices.

## DESIGN SPECIFICATION

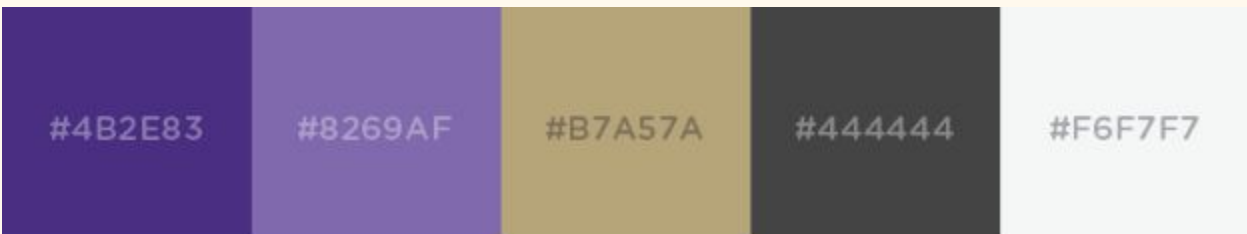
The goal of the overarching design of our application was to provide users with the familiar UW look but with a modern, clean feel. One of the first considerations was the color palette. We decided on using many of the current University of Washington branding colors. This way it is easy for users to know that it is a UW affiliated application at a glance. The font is meant to help keep the screens looking sleek and enforce readability. Since mobile screens are smaller, it is important for users to be able to read the information on the screen. Raleway was the chosen font because it was easy to read on the screen without the outdated feel of a font like Times New Roman.

Our design counts the following five main screens: *Log In*, *Profile (My Events & My Clubs)*, *Events*, *Directory* and *Settings*.



Our design decisions, rationale behind them and interactivity and linking included will be explained in detail for each screen in the upcoming section.

**Color Palette:** For the application, we decided to incorporate the pre-existing UW color scheme (Figure 0) in order to establish the UW identity and association.



**Figure 0** Color Palette

**Rationale:** We chose this very minimalistic and simple color palette to keep the login screen clean and simple. Also, allowing the logo and sign in button to have a stronger, deeper color such as purple gives it an extra layer of emphasis and helps illustrate the purpose of this page within the UW community.

### Screen 1: Log In

1. **Login Display Layout:** It is the gateway for our application and the first screen (Figure 1.1) that users will see upon first opening the application. This is where our user validation process is executed, which is facilitated by the UW NetID currently given out by the UW to students, faculty and staff.

**Rationale:** Logging in using the user's existing UW NetID is very helpful to both keep the login options simple and also to add an extra layer of security by only allowing UW staff, faculty, and students to access club activity within the university.



**Figure 1.1** Login Screen

2. **The Logo:** (Figure 1.2) We chose to represent the university by only including the purple W, currently used by the UW's official website and include the word clubs below it.



**Figure 1.2** *My Clubs Logo*

*Rationale:* The goal of this logo was to be clear and concise, allowing the user to know what application they are using at a glance and what it is related to. It also helps to show our application's association with the University of Washington and our focus on clubs.

3. ***“Keep me logged in” Checkbox:*** (Figure 1.3) We have included a “Keep me logged in” checkbox below the input form provided to the user for credential verification.

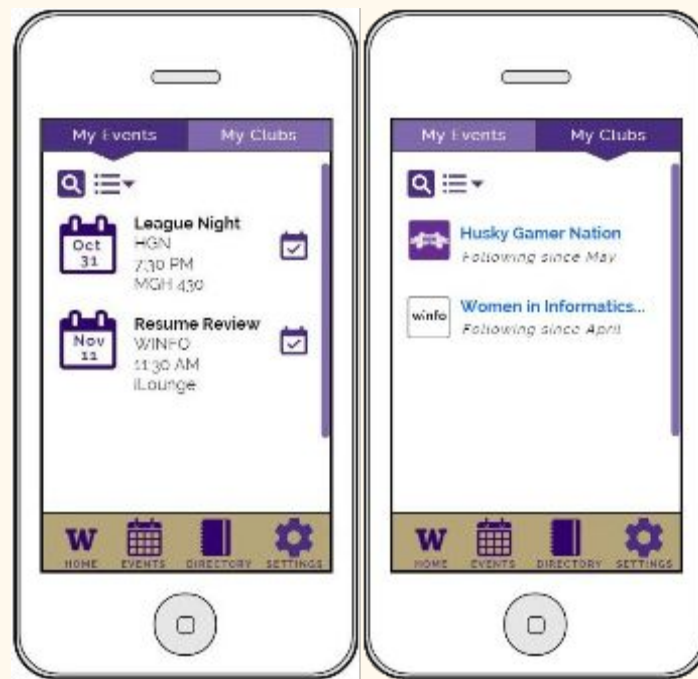
 A login form with a light gray background. It contains two input fields: 'UW NetID' and 'Password', both with light gray placeholder text. Below these fields is a checkbox with a purple checkmark and the text 'Keep me logged in'. At the bottom of the form is a purple button with the text 'Log In' in white.

**Figure 1.3** *Keep me logged in*

*Rationale:* The Keep me Logged In feature allows users to stay logged, therefore removing the repetitiveness of having to log into to the application each time they wish to use it.

## Screen 2: My Events

4. ***My Events and My Clubs Top Navigation Bar:*** Two tabs at the top of our screen (Figure 2.1) form a navigation bar that divide the screen into two main sections: My Events and My Clubs.

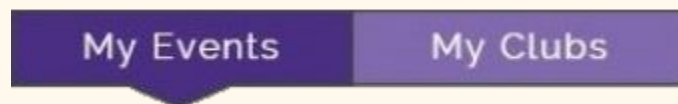


**Figure 2.1** *My Events and My Clubs Top Navigation Bar*

*Rationale:* These two tabs comprise and convey the core purpose of our application: allow the user to keep track of events he or she will attend and centralize the information output by the clubs he or she is affiliated to. It also helps us to keep our screen clean and very organized.

5. **Top Navigation Bar's Feedback Delivery Method:** The darker tab (Figure 2.2) signifies that the user is on the current tab while the lighter one is a tab that they can

**Figure 2.2** *Top Navigation Bar's Feedback Delivery Method*



open.

*Rationale:* This provides a concise way for users to remember what page they are on also shows them the other pages that are available.

6. **Bottom Navigation Bar:** We have included a simple navigation bar (Figure 2.3) with four different buttons at the bottom of our screen.



**Figure 2.3** *Bottom Navigation Bar with Labels*

*Rationale:* The navigation bar at the bottom of the screen was kept as simple as possible and with straightforward icons for it to be easy to access, easy to use and intuitive for users. The ‘W’ logo will bring the user back to their unique profile. The calendar logo displays events of all clubs a user is subscribed to. Then there is the directory icon which provides users with a browsing feature that allows them to search all the clubs that UW has. Lastly, the settings icon gives users some customization settings such as Facebook syncing and notification settings.

7. **Labels for the Bottom Navigation Bar:** Small captions (Figure 2.3) have been added under each icon included in the bottom Navigation bar.

*Rationale:* These captions add another layer of clarification by explaining the purpose of each button found in the navigation bar. Therefore, even users who are not familiar with the application’s environment can enjoy a better navigation experience when using our app.

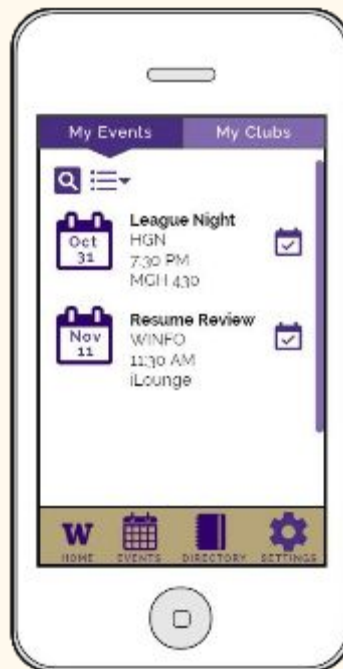
8. **Bottom Navigation Bar’s Feedback Delivery Method:** To give users feedback and an indicator of what part of the application they are currently viewing, clicking on an icon will make it smaller (Figure 2.4).

**Figure 2.4** *Bottom Navigation Bar’s Feedback Delivery Method*



*Rationale:* This is to emulate the feeling of a button being pressed down while the user is viewing a certain page. The change in the visual element will help the user keep track of what part of the application they are in.

9. **List of Events:** We provide a top to bottom list of events (Figure 2.5), each showing date, time, host, location and RSVP status in the My Events section. The default ordering is by date.



**Figure 2.5** List of Events in MyEvents Tab

*Rationale:* These events show the users the most relevant information for a given event they are attending or not. We chose the list format because it fits our screen nicely and also resembles the layout of a pen-and-paper planner.

10. **RSVP Button:** A button in the form of a calendar with a check mark inside (Figure 2.6) is included for each event listed in the My Events section.



**Figure 2.6** RSVP Button

*Rationale:* This button is very similar to the one already used by Facebook to invite users to RSVP to an event. Therefore, it will be very easy for our users that also use Facebook to adapt to our system for RSVP handling. And for those who are not Facebook users yet, getting used to this system will be simple because a calendar is a universal symbol for scheduling.

- 11. Eliminating an Event:** When a user clicks on the calendar icon with the check mark, the event is marked as “Not Attending” and the event is deleted from the My Events list (Figure 2.7).



**Figure 2.7** Eliminating an Event

*Rationale:* A check mark is a universal symbol that conveys a “yes, this is mine” or “yes, this pertains me” message which fits nicely with the idea of RSVPing to an

event. Eliminating the events that will not be attended from this view allows users to only track those that will be attended.

### Screen 3: My Clubs

- 12. List of Subscribed Clubs:** The user's followed clubs are shown in a top to bottom list in alphabetical order (Figure 3.1). Each element contains a small logo and a phrase stating since when the user is following said club. The list elements are ordered from the most recent to the oldest.

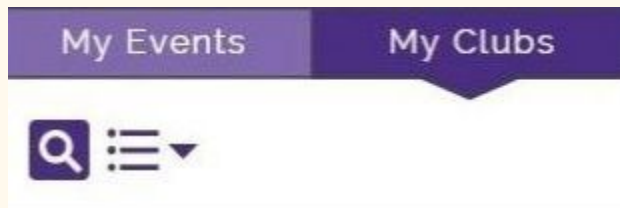


**Figure 3.1** List of Subscribed Clubs in the My Clubs tab

*Rationale:* A list format helps users visualize data easily. We included a logo so that users will be able to recognize each club followed, even without assimilating any of the remaining information found in the text provided. The ordering provided helps the user to visualize for how long he or she has been a member of a given club.



13. **Search Tools:** A set of search tools (Figure 3.2) has been included in the top left corner of the My Events section. It includes a magnifying glass and a hamburger menu.



**Figure 3.2** Search Tools

*Rationale:* There will be times when the users will want to filter their own events, looking for a particular one. We provide several different filters to accommodate search needs and styles. While the search bar allows a very general or very specific search dictated by the user, the hamburger menu will allow the user to choose or browse clubs by a certain category. With these tools we aim to make searching a very agile process.

14. **Search Bar:** We have included a button with a magnifying glass (Figure 3.3) on the top left corner of the My Clubs section. When clicked, a full size search bar appears on top of the list of clubs and the magnifying glass' opacity is decreased.



**Figure 3.3** Search Bar

*Rationale:* We have provided the users with a search bar to allow them to quickly look for a particular club within their My Clubs list. In this larger search bar the text typed in by the user becomes more visible.

**15. *Hamburger Menu:*** We have included a hamburger menu (Figure 3.4) with categories on the top left corner of the My Clubs section. When clicked a drop down menu containing all available categories appear.

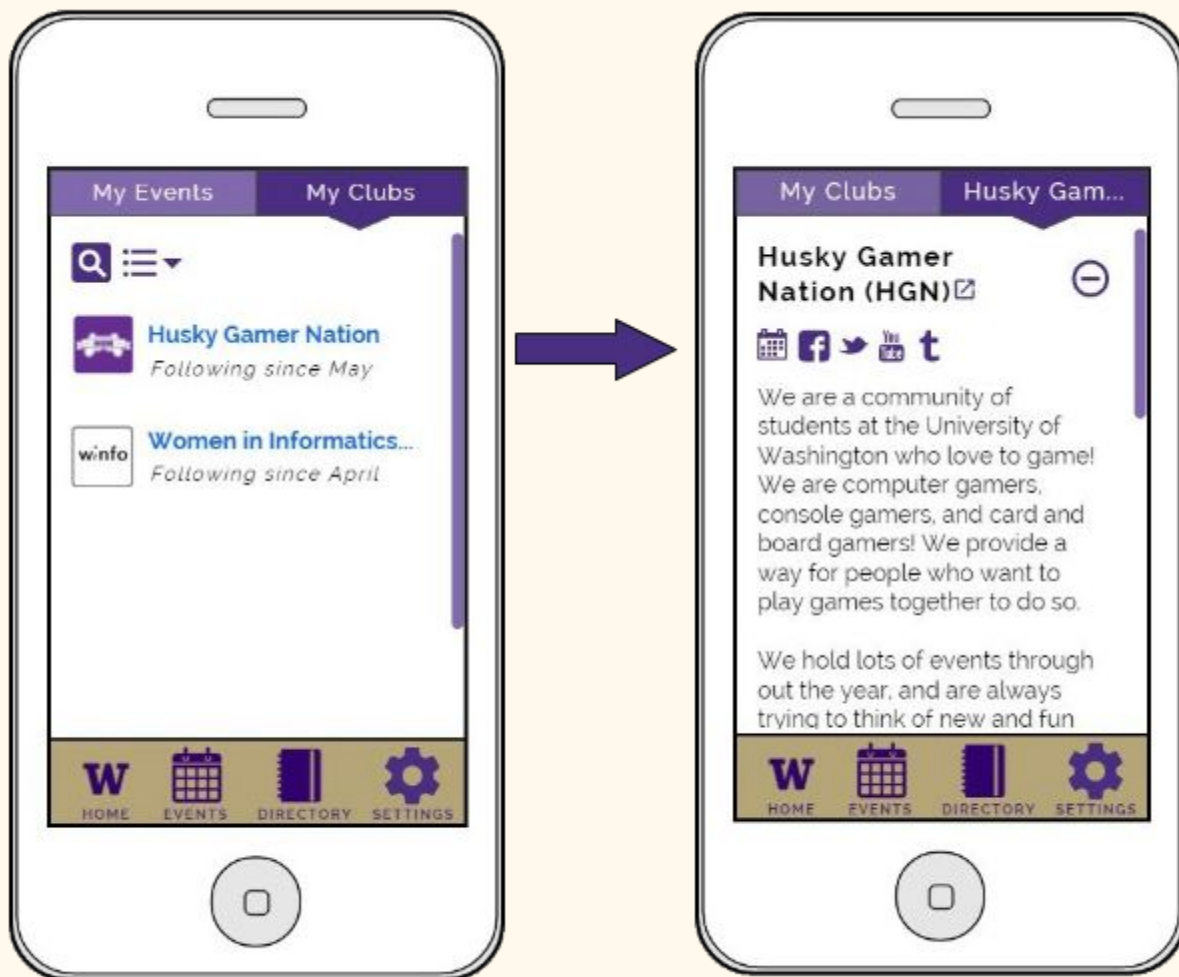


**Figure 3.4** *Hamburger Menu*

*Rationale:* We included this menu to allow users to find a given club, within their personal list, based on its category, which could be sports, arts, music, etc.

**16. *Hyperlinked Club's Name:*** The names of the clubs are listed as hyperlinks that take the user to a given club's profile page (Figure 3.5) where information and links to social media are found.

*Rationale:* There will be cases when users will like to easily access one of their club's profile pages and be redirected to the club's website or social media sites.



**Figure 3.5** Hyperlinked Club's Name in the My Clubs Tab

#### Screen 4: Subscribed Club's Profile Page

**17. *Subscribe Button*:** The circular button with a minus symbol (Figure 4.1) has been included to the right of the name of each club on the club's profile page. When a club is listed under the My Clubs list, the button has a minus symbol to indicate it could be *subtracted* or in this case, eliminated from said list. We chose this symbol because the concept of subtracting can be assumed to be universal and also because it is small yet visible enough to draw the user to it and cue him or her into clicking it and deleting the club if needed.



**Figure 4.1** *Subscribe Button (Changes symbols after a user has joined the club)*

*Rationale:* We decided to include a circular button with an X inside because this has become a widely known symbol for deleting or removing an object in any interface

- 18. Top Navigation Bar:** Two tabs at the top of our screen form a navigation bar (Figure 4.2) that divide the screen into two main sections: My Clubs and Current Club (any given name).

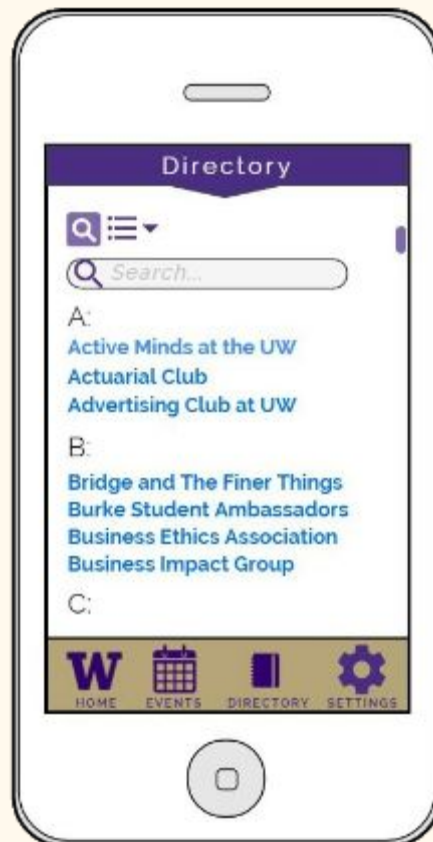


**Figure 4.2** *Directory Top Navigation Bar*

*Rationale:* Since this top navigation bar only appears when a given club has already been added to the “My Clubs” list, returning to the My Clubs list after reviewing said club’s profile or managing it is the most obvious action for users.

## Screen 5: Directory

**19. Alphabetical Display:** For the initial display of the directory (Figure 5.1), we decided to present the clubs to the users in alphabetical order. The search feature and hamburger menu have similar functionality as the one in the user's unique profile.



**Figure 5.1** Alphabetical Display for the *Directory*

*Rationale:* The alphabetical display was the most intuitive layout for users to browse at first glance. The search feature and hamburger category filter were added for more user flexibility when browsing through the clubs. It also maintained consistency with the My Events and My Club pages.

**20. Error Handling:** User feedback is important and therefore, when a user searches for a club that does not exist, a message will appear (Figure 5.2) on the screen informing the user.

*Rationale:* Rather than displaying no results when the value the user input returns no results, an error message will appear. This is to provide the user with feedback that the app is not still searching, but has yielded no results.

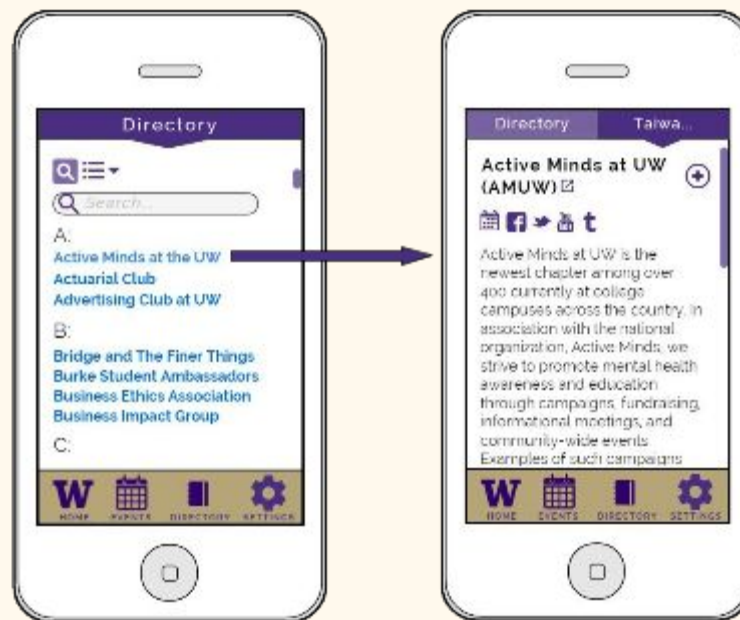


**Figure 5.3** Directory Error Handling  
(search yields no results)

## Screen 6: Search Result

**21. Detailed Club:** Clicking on a club from the directory will bring the user to the club's detailed page (Figure 6.1). It provides the user with the full name of the club as well as the acronym. Next to the club's name is the quick subscribe button that allows users to add the club to their profile to keep track of events. Below are the social media links that open the respective application (such as Facebook) or the phone's web browser. The club's website is also linked from the main title of the screen. Additionally, there is a description of the club pulled from the club's Facebook page,

website, or provided when the clubs join the app.



**Figure 6.1** Detailed Club (concise information of the club is given to the user)

*Rationale:* The layout of the detailed club page was designed to minimize the time it took for users to get the information they needed. The most important layout was placed at the top, with items with decreasing importance shown later on.

## Screen 7: Settings

**22. Notification Settings:** Clicking on the gear icon, with the 'settings' label will bring the user to a menu where they will be allowed to change the volume of alerts they receive (Figure 7.1). This will allow a user to regulate the number of notifications that they receive in order to not be overwhelmed.

*Rationale:* Based on the number of clubs and events a user is subscribed to, there could be multiple updates a week, day, or even hour. This can become tedious for anyone and could potentially make it so those updates become meaningless and ignored. With the ability to regulate the number of updates one receives it allows the user to space out the notifications into manageable chunks.



**Figure 7.1** *Settings and Notification Settings*



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