Participant: *Amie*

Date: 07/23/2021 @ 02:15 pm **Conversation Guide for GIBCT Profile Page Testing**

**Moderator logistics**

*Use*[*#feedback-backchannel*](https://dsva.slack.com/messages/C40B45NJK/details/)*in Slack for real-time feedback from observers.*

*Mute your Slack notifications*

*Before the session, send out the*[*observer instructions*](https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/platform/research/during-research/howto-observer-instructions.md)*to your observers (Slackbot will do this for you if you type "observer instructions" into*[*#feedback-backchannel*](https://dsva.slack.com/channels/feedback-backchannel)*).*

*In the Attendees section, make sure everyone except the participant is on mute.*

*In the Audio section, click the drop-down arrow and make sure "Play Entry/Exit Chimes" is unchecked*

*Check your [screensharing setup] and share permissions for participants.*

*When the participant is ready, begin the session with the following intro*

**Intro - 5 minutes**

Thanks for joining us today! My name is Jen and I also have some colleagues on the line observing and taking notes. Today we're going to talk about discovering information about schools on the GI Bill Comparison Tool.

Before we start, a few things I want to mention:

* **This entire session should take about 45 minutes.** I want to be sure not to keep you much longer, so I may occasionally prompt you with the next question or topic.
* **In this session, we want to hear your honest opinions.** We are not testing your ability. We just want to improve these tools to better meet Veteran's needs. I will not be offended by any opinions you express, and I welcome your feedback.
* **If for any reason and at any time you want to stop the session, please let me know.**
* **Are you comfortable if I record my screen and audio as we talk today?** We use the recordings to confirm that we have captured your opinions accurately. The recordings are destroyed after we complete analysis, and none of your comments will be attributed to you directly.
  + If yes: **Once I start recording, I am going to confirm that you are ok with me recording this session once more.**

*Start recording.*

* **I have started recording**. I'd like to confirm: Are you comfortable if I record my screen and the audio as we talk today?

**Warm-up Questions - 5 minutes**

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

* What is your military status (e.g. Veteran, child, spouse)?  
  *my husband is medically retired*
  + If Veteran, which branch of service?  
    *army*
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits?  
  *no ma'am*
  + If yes, which benefit are you using? When did you start school?
  + If no, do you plan on using your benefits in the near future? - Which benefit? Where are you in the school selection process?  
    *yes our son is a junior so we are looking into the benefits for him for the um… I forgot what its called now… its just but we are looking forward to using them in the next two years…. I cant 35… something 35. Chapter 35*
* Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before?  
  no ma'am
  + If yes, what did you use it for?

**First Task: Notre Dame - 15 minutes**

You've been interested in going back to school to study **Statistics**. A friend of yours recommended **University of Notre Dame** in **Notre Dame, Indiana** to you. How would you use the Comparison Tool to determine if **University of Notre Dame** would be a good fit for you?  
  
*I would type in ‘university of notre dame’ into the search by name. I would pick the first one (from the auto complete selections) then I would hit search.  
  
hmm well uh… (on search results page) I would click on the… in the first box, on the first one where it says notre dame Indiana. I would click on the purple university of notre dame heading. And then I would click on the learn more… uh first of all I would have to figure out if my uh… scores or my GPA was good enough for this schools so I don’t even know. I wont have to figure that out first but assuming I already did that then I would hit the learn more about the GI bill students. Okay im reading that now. Okay so lets close that. Click the x. Then I would put, I would go down to calculate your benefits… what is your military status… im assuming that If I was helping or if this was my husband was doing this He would click veteran and then uh… oh if my son was doing it uh… I don’t really know now… it says what is your military status so that has to be the person using the calculator so that would be veteran…. And then I would click the next one… post 911 gi thing. And then cumulative post 9-11 active duty service. I would do service connected discharge 100%. Then I would put no and select update benefits.   
  
Okay so then over here… I have to scroll around on my phone… so it tells me what we could get or what he could get and hten I would go to the school costs and calendar… okay so that uh… I would see all that… um and then I would go to um… hmm… scholarships and other va funding because that’s not… okay so no… well.. my son will get chapter 35 benefits but I don’t know hwat that is so I guess he would put that there or whatever amount he would get for scholarships, lets just put $10,000 and update benefits to see how much more… So its gonna cost $20,000 then I would say ‘son, I don’t know about this’ so then… is there somewhere you can scroll down, is there some options to save this or something? Okay… um… is there somewhere to put this in a or if I want to save this to compare to another school? I would expect it to be in this… where this… where the amounts are listed the tuition and everything, in that box, ‘save this information’ or ‘save this for later’ okay keep scrolling down… oh now I see at the bottom It says ‘compare institutions zero of 3’ click the arrow there. Oh wait now I remember if you go back to search I would click the compare button right there on the bottom… okay so now its got that on there. So then you would pick another school I guess… which my son wants to go to MIT or Berkley so I would type that in right there… Yes so then I would click the compare for MIT and then I would click on the purple header and fill in the benefits amount here… oh so its already all filled out so I guess it already tells me the tuition and everything okay so scroll down through the whole page so I don’t miss anything…. Okay so then I would find out if youre eligible for va education benefits… I guess I probably should have done that first… over here on the left, survivers and dependents benefits… okay so uh I know we are eligible for this because we got a letter so I know that we are… okay so click off of that. Um… okay and then I guess…. What document information we need to apply, tells you what you need… blah blah blah and hten I would go to apply for education benefits if I was decided. Lets click on that. Okay… Find out if youre eligible, gather the documents bellow…   
  
for looking for a school for my son, MIT is his top choice and Berkley is his second so those are the two I would be looking into for him. My top choice would be a school that’s closer to us but that’s not his top choice. He pretty much knows where he wants to go, so its just comparing the tuition and stuff.. He wants a school that is very good for engineering, so those are his top picks. So is it feasible that he will get into MIT, probably not but could he get into Berkley, probably, he only got a 28 on his last ACT so he has a ways to go. Okay so lets hit the compare button.  
  
Okay so we would be looking at this (the comparison page) scroll some more… and hten compare everything um… and the tuition is about the same on those um… the out of pocket is only a 2,000 difference so I mean… I see where it says highlight differences… I guess we could do that… okay… and check out that… I don’t care if he gets credit for military training because I hope he doesn’t join the military. So… were the um… Where it says GI Bill students… can you click on that on the left? Where does the Asterix take you. Well im wondering that’s how many studentst they accept GI bill students or is that how many they currently have. Im guessing that’s how many students they have since all the other information on the page is current, like the tuition and all of htat.   
  
And the location is current, I mean like… I don’t really know I mean I would like to know what that Asterix means by that GI bill.*what would you do at this point?  
*is there a way to print this? Id expect somewhere up there where it says reading list, that it would say print page. I would like to print it but that’s just me because I like to have things in paper. Okay so then what would I do after this? I guess I would go back to the home home… up there at the left click the blue home right there… and um… I guess I would go down to education again and then apply for education benefits.*if you wanted to see the difference between the schools we just looked at and berkely how would you do that?  
 *I would search berkely… not Berkley city college, the first one…. Mmm nope that’s not it, its in California… so I would try search by location I guess and type in California right there… I guess? Go to filter your results… um I don’t really know hwat city that’s in ma’am because I would have to go to the google and find out… im going to google that really quick. I would type in whatever city Berkley is in. Okay so its in well lets just got back to search by name and put in berkely university of California… okay right there that first one lets click the compare and then click the blue bar at the bottom and compare and then this would be this… (comparison page)  
  
okay and it says there is no out of pocket expense so… that’s where hes going ha! If I said my son is going to that school I would not use the VA website I would go to the Berkley website but I guess you could click the school name and some stuff would pop up. Okay so then you can click right there where it says* [*www.berkely.edu*](http://www.berkely.edu) *lets go right there to get more information on Berkley. Okay lets see it says 557, oh so maybe that’s how many GI bill students they can accept because the other page had said 400. SO maybe they accet 557 but only 400 got in. so its looking even better to go there. Okay the next thing I want to do is apply for my benefits.*

**Things to watch for:**

* What type(s) of search does the user conduct?
* Does the user notice the jumplinks?
* Does the user click the jumplinks?
* Does the user notice the Compare functionality?
* Does the user notice the religious affiliation in the heading?

**Upon task completion:**

* How do you think that went?
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of finding more information about University of Notre Dame?
* What types of information would be important to you in looking for a school?

**Second Task: Covering Expenses - 10 minutes**

You've noticed that the GI Bill won't fully cover the tuition at **University of Notre Dame**. You've heard that some schools offer the Yellow Ribbon program, which offers additional financial assistance to GI Bill beneficiaries. How would you use the Comparison Tool to see if **University of Notre Dame** offers the Yellow Ribbon program?  
  
*okay lets go to search by location, notre dame, Indiana and put 50 miles and hten filter results and I would look on there for something that said religion or something like that… religious affiliation maybe. Okay update results. Okay so… that’s the um… okay so theres 13 I guess.. is that right? Well it says showing 13 search results, I mean that’s what it says so im assuming if you scroll down theres 13. So there is quite a few so then um… I would look at the purple heading where it says the school and the religion. I would pick the one that has our religion or the religion he is interested in studying… is there a way to put that in the filter section? Like the religion he wants, so if I only want to filter by a type of religion like roman catholic? So there’s not or at least I don’t see it… Well yeah I think that should be under religious affiliation, there should be a sub group that has the available ones listed. If you can only compare 3 at a time so if there is 13 results and im interested in a specific religion it would be quicker to just pick that one religion.*

Follow-up: Do you think you would be eligible for the program? If so, how much of the remaining expenses do you think would be covered?

**Things to watch for:**

* Where does the user look to find the Yellow Ribbon program?
* Does the user see the Yellow Ribbon program listed under EYB?
* Does the user find the Yellow Ribbon calculation in EYB?

**Upon task completion:**

* How do you think that went?
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of discovering what financial assistance is offered by University of Notre Dame?
* If you finished researching University of Notre Dame and thought the school was the right fit for you, what would be your next step?

**Third Task: Compare Religious Schools - 10 minutes**

* You're interested in taking a few classes on religion and you're curious what schools in the **Notre Dame** area might have a religious affiliation. You know that **University of Notre Dame** is a Roman Catholic institution. How would you use the Comparison Tool to find schools in **Notre Dame, IN** that have a religious affiliation and see how they compare against **University of Notre Dame**?

**Things to watch for:**

* Where on the tool does the user go to find religious schools?
* Does the user see/say anything about the religious affilation in the header?

**Upon task completion:**

* How do you think that went?
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of comparing schools with religious affiliations?

**Thank-You and Closing - X minutes**

Well we really appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts with us today. Your feedback is so helpful to us as we continue to work on the site and make sure it really works for Veterans.

Thanks! Lastly, do you know any other Veterans, caregivers, or service members who might be willing to participate in a future user research session? If Yes: Thank you! I'll have our team send you an email with a little blurb that you can pass along.

Great, well thank you so much again, and enjoy the rest of your day!

**Sample Conversation Guides *(note: these links point to resources in the va.gov-team GitHub repo)***

* [Scheduling Accessibility and Usability Study: Complex Recruit, Highly Variable based on User Profile](https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/health-care/appointments/research/2017-studies/access-usability/access-usability-conversation-guide.md)
* [Veteran ID Card Discovery Interview](https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/veteran-id-cards/research/discovery/discovery-conversation-guide.md)