**Conversation Guide for GIBCT Profile Page Testing**

**P1 - Cheryl**

**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.

Have you done usability testing before?

If No – I’m going to put a couple scenarios in front of you and ask you to do some tasks on a website we’re working on. As you’re going through the tasks, we ask if you can “think aloud” – tell us what you’re seeing, what you’re looking for and any other thoughts that come to mind as you’re interacting with the site.

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

* **This entire session should take about 45 minutes.** I do want to be respectful of your time, 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 just to make sure that we captured your opinions accurately. After that, the recordings are destroyed - usually within a week or two.
  + 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)? Retired military
  + If Veteran, which branch of service? US Army
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits? Currently using
  + If yes, which benefit are you using? When did you start school? Post 9/11 GI Bill…2014, I have one semester. Art. Bachelor’s Printmaking and sculpture
  + If no, do you plan on using your benefits in the near future? - Which benefit? Where are you in the school selection process?
* Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before? I have not.
  + If yes, what did you use it for?

**Initial Take - 2 minutes**

I’m going to start sharing my screen.

This is the GI Bill Comparison Tool, which allows you to see what education benefits you can receive at various institutions. Do you have any initial thoughts or questions before we get started?

**Wow…it says my school is not yet rated which is interesting…University of Arizona. That’s cool…this is cool.**

**It seems extremely straightforward**

**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?

Typed Notre Dame added…University to front. I would probably look up others too. That’s the beauty of it…when I look at this, I would probably use this in concert with maybe regular Google search. This tells me specifically about the school’s their GI Bill friendliness…so how much they’re going to pay for tuition…does it tell you anywhere if it’s a Yellow Ribbon school…opened cautionary warning….oh wow cautionary warning

Opened profile page

I kind of thought I would see the first little thing…like a yellow banner or Yellow Ribbon. If not that then in the second page because that’s where it shows benefits.

Estimated benefits per term…are those estimated benefits going to cover all my tuition…oh, there I see it. Out of pocket tuition…oh of course pays 25k….because GI Bill pays state fees and not private…so somewhere in there I would expect it to say Yellow Ribbon.

I had a couple people market themselves as Yellow Ribbon

On this page,

Yellow ribbon program – I see it! Put it in yellow or something. That’s pretty cool. I had to look around for it. What a disappointment they aren’t a Yellow Ribbon school.

Here’s a question, is there a way to search for…so this is just for colleges, not graduate or undergradate. So I would have to use this in concert for my eligibility. Am I looking for a grad program versus an undergrad program. It’s not a standalone tool. It has all you need for GI Bill

This is really simple and really straightforward. Does it have foreign schools or just US schools?

Went to search by location. Typed to London England and got no results…tried again with autocomplete…

Searched Tahoe California…ah……scrolled down (footer came up. Well that’s interesting…I know there’s something in Tahoe…but it doesn’t seem to be coming up. Typed Incline Village, Nevada…ah Sierra Nevada College…32 students…out of pocket tuition…and Yellow Ribbon yes. This is very cool.

How much would it cover? I would expect it to cover out of pocket tuition? Clicked Learn more on Yellow Ribbon program. Clicked Visit Yellow Ribbon tool…find a Yellow ribbon school.

Went to Yellow ribbon tool….pays remaining tuition, this is great. Wasn’t that hard to find.

What info would you be looking for? Now that you mention that…if I was going back for a graduate program…there isn’t much on this website that would be different than what I was looking for a graduate program. If I was looking on graduae…I would go to alternate websites…to see if my undergraduate degree would apply…which don’t see like parts of this website. If there’s something in a college, I can’t think of anything where the GI Bill would

Information on page – seeing a summary of that college…the real basics, the number of GI Bill students which is interesting. The real basics about that school…its 4 year, town, small…then I calculate my benefits…which comes up automatically? Opened scholarships and VA funding…kicker bonus? I don’t even know what that is…oh, that’s after my time. They didn’t have kicker bonus when I retired. What my estimated benefits are ….a lot of housing allowance. Tution policy, protection against late payments….scrolled to cautionary information..0 student complaints, wow. This is a good summary…this is one of the better websites I’ve seen at the VA. I do have one…single point of contact for Veterans….do you have the Veterans office? That would be really helpful…I found in doing my own research not knowing about this website, I would go to the college website and have to sort through the Veteran assistant office and sometimes that’s easy and sometimes its not. And those are the invaluable people who can talk me thorugh how you sign up and what they do, how they assist you…that has consequences as far as enrolling in a program. When I looked at retiring and going back for a art degree…I was looking for a high class 4 year program and I ended up going for a 2 year degree because the veteran office was so helpful and thorough and explain how I could do a 2 year and transition to a 4 year. I mean the Veteran Assistant offices are key to decisions on how to sign up and enroll. I would suggest on this that somewhere down on the bottom, you put contact information and put something about their Veteran assistance office. That should be the first place that Veteran people go. This looks like what I’m looking for…they’ll

Never clicked jumplinks

**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? I think this is great. Really good information and not overkill. And I like that you have cautionary information. That is really cool. I haven’t had any negative experiences or the ones I’ve attended, but I’ve read about colleges that take advantage of Veterans. I think you’ve got good information without too much.
* 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? 2, I don’t know if you can put….foreign schools in here somewhere…I’ve seen some…nah, I’m thinking of doing a grad program in England. That might be much
* 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?

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**?
* I have no idea….search by name, search by location. I guess you’d do a location search. 14 results for South Bend but it only gives me one…clicked a tag..and accidentally opened filters. Clicked Religious affiliation. Well that wasn’t too hard…seemed like a odd thing to put.
* Where is Notre Dame…I know its in South Bend….it says its in Notre Dame instead of South Bend, that’s a little weird.
* I have no idea….
* Keyword search – put in religious affiliation…I guess if you put in different things
* Clicked Use my location
* Typed in Phoenix Arizona…and filter your results….Unclicked OJT and
* Clicked B to bring it up. Unchecked Yellow rRibbon program…why is it only showing me 4 results…but it only shows me one…There’s a Christian university…so I don’t know how it filters for religious affiliation because I know that Grand Canyon university…
* Searched by name for Grand Canyon University…with no results….I don’t know why it didn’t show up….then it appeared. When you say religious affiliation, it might have a program on religion….because Grand Canyon is a religiously affiliated school. So I’m not sure what religious affiliation means.
* Prompted to compare – I’d probably do a couple filters…about the only way I could think that you could filter is search by location or search by the filter…or by filtering results…which would be kind of difficult. I’d have to specifically be looking for schools in the area…I guess I could look at schools by state. I’d not sure what that does for me. (She’s not clicking update on the filters). If I was comparing schools, I’d want to compare schools that have the training programs that I want. This doesn’t necessarily give me that option. So I’d probably know those schools and I’d want to compare them by GI Bill benefits. Pays max benefits and is accredited. Your school mission…I don’t know why. Are those popular searches cause there’s so many other things to search for. Those 3 don’t have a lot to do with GI Bill.
* Clicked compare for Arizona State Tempe…
* Put in university of Arizona in search by name, but corrected..clicked compare on University of Arizona….scrolled to the bottom and clicked Next…
* I have two selected and I want to compare…found the comparison bar….that was not as easy as some of the other stuff.. Accreditation, how many students, type of school…school, that doesn’t tell me anything…specialized mission, estimated benefits….housing allowance….that’s a little harder to do. If I can do it, then someone who is younger can do it…VET TEC programs…principles of excellence. Oh priority enrollment, that’s cool…some offer in-state tuition automatically if you’re a Veteran. Like in Texas = in-state tuition. Same in Arizona…that might be something to add, other than that

**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? It’s okay. I’m not…I guess, I’m not sure if comparing schools like this really gives me anything (me personally) because I would have researched the schools and see if they had paid all the benefits. A comparison of what the GI Bill pays. What matters is if I have to pay anything out of pocket. I like the academics, the school complaints, that’s great I wouldn’t have even thought of that…don’t know what principles of excellence is. Priority enrollment is nice. I never even realized you get that at some schools…
* 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? 2.5

Uses a mac

VA website has made light year strides in the

**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!