**Conversation Guide for GIBCT Profile Page Testing**

**P4 - Hank**

**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 Marine
  + If Veteran, which branch of service?
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits? Yes
  + If yes, which benefit are you using? When did you start school? Post 9/11. I’m using it currently, coming to end of benefits, may be switching to article 31. Started in 2012. I was taking primarily business courses. Benefits expire at the end of this year and a 4 month semester that I’m registered for right now.
  + 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? No
  + 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?

Seems to be pretty clear cut – I’d like to put my school name. The print is really small in this box…I almost have to put my glasses on.

There’s saddleback college and shows me what the tuition is and the number of GI Bill students. So what I’m trying to do is give me the option of putting in another school name. Would I put it up here? It looks like the only thing that makes sense. Typed in mira and selected the autocomplete. Looks like a got a side by side there. There’s miracosta and other schools that aren’t relevant to me. Clicked compare on miracosta (also have saddleback selected). I was hoping that by checking the box, I would get a side by side. I would imagine if I wanted to just see

Clicked Miracosta college.

I’m just trying to evaluate what’s there. 748 GI Bill students, so it’s more than saddleback. Certificate program, public school. Suburban locale..and website for me to get more information. I’m interested in see what’s down there. I’m looking at benefits per term, that’s all helpful information. I was hoping to get the information of the schools side by side, but I couldn’t get that to work.

I would want to know its location, the distance it is in this area. There is a significant difference in the housing allowance for zip code, that information is always helpful. I don’t think what the GI Bill pays the school is really different. Obviously I would be interested in the courses offered. I could go to the school’s website so that’s helpful.

I think the most helpful information is the certificate program and then down below the estimated benefits, that’s all helpful information. Particularly the benefits per term. And then the…all the stuff that’s shown, school costs and calendar, learning format and location is all of value and interest (but not opening them). I’m just looking at the additional information right now. It’s telling me it doesn’t have a Yellow ribbon program. It’s telling me it doesn’t have a VRRAP program. This info telling me to contact the SCO is helpful. I know for my school sometimes I need to contact the SCO to ask questions. Seems to be information rich. Because I’m sharing the screen, your screen is a bit compressed, so it’s like a 2/3rds screen. I need to scroll down to see what else is on the page. For me this wouldn’t be that relevant because I’m an active student. In terms of applying for Veterans benefits, that’s already done. What’s interesting “Find out how to apply CH31” that’s helpful and CH36, it really doesn’t jump out. Until recently I really didn’t know what these want. This info may be helpful to new students, but not for me. A decision with consequences….that’s good and helpful info. For me, I would probably try to get a VA counselor to help me if I were a new student.

Looking at student complaints…so I think that’s interesting. Student complaints. It seems like its not a problem at the school ( only 1 or 2) I didn’t know Miracosta had 2 campuses, ,but I do now and that the housing is different for the two campuses. The tool must have a pretty good database to be bringing up this much info on the school. I’m familiar with CareerScope. I’ve used that in the past.

I like to explore that…can I press the learn more (for single point of contact)? Opened it and closed it. I’m a bit confused…I was expecting to get to the single point of contact and this just seems to be a definition of it. I was interested in the actual name and contact information. I see the certifying officer. It’d be helpful if there was an email or a phone number for that. Institution codes, not sure how much I would use those. Looks like I’m at the bottom of the page, I’m going to scroll to the top.

**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?

**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 was pleased with info it provided. The next step would be to go to the school’s website. I would explore the classes, schedule, online or hybrid courses with the COVID situation.
* 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 think I just do it by the expectation of it being a comparison tool. And how to use that box right there (compare). Otherwise just trying to compare miracosta and saddleback and now if I wanted to do the same thing for saddleback. It’s just kind of confusing…I don’t know. My expectation was to be able to check that box, be prompted to enter saddleback and be able to do the side by side comparison of the two schools.
* Where expect it? I’d look to see if the box reappeared to enter in another school, but now I’m not seeing that. So I’m just left in confusion…opened compare drawer. I just clicked that compare institution box to see if that would help me, so I see miracosta. You can compare 2 to 3 institutions. Clicked Compare. I hit compare there and I just have miracosta again…so removed miracosta. Clicked Return to search to add to see if it will prompt me.
* Typed in saddleback (erroneous characters)…before I click search, even though I removed it. Miracosta College and community education pops up there (is there from prior searches). So there’s saddleback…reopend drawer (and miracosta is there). I’m clicking in the boxes (in the compare drawer).
* Got to comparison – and this I like. That’s all good information. Payments made. You can see it’s a dramatic difference between miracosta and saddleback. No complaints at saddleback. I really like that comparison, was just not
* 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**?

**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? 5 – very hard

**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!