11/18/13

TA Meeting #1
Team attendance: Deborah, Dwyane (Yi-shiuan, Naim excused by staff)
Minutes by Deborah

Agenda

- Feedback on idea
- Proposed features
        - Students can apply to specific postings
        - Faculty can upload postings, and view applications (will handle contact with the user offline, but should be able to track status - rejected, pending, accepted)
        - Students can write reviews of professors they have UROPed for
                - How to handle verification? Will students want to do this
- What would make this app stand out?
- Feedback on presentation

Minutes

Feedback on idea

- Carolyn
    - Reviews
        - What are the reviews for? Is it for the quality of the specific project, or a review of the supervisor? Probably, the reviews of the supervisor are more useful.
    - Problem statement/goals
        - Make sure you know the problem you're trying to solve. The process to get a UROP has many stages, e.g. contact stage, talking in person, formal application through UROP office on boarding documents.
        - Dwayne: Trying to overcome early stages, linking professor with student
        - Make sure you mention this in the design document.
        - Goals need to be more specific. E.g. instead of "streamlining process", (not able to be benchmarked) say make postings more visible, consistently organized, lowering barrier to entry, make them less intimidating, transparency in which professor to choose, etc.

Proposed features
- Job postings
    - Probably want pre-populated fields of different technologies, languages, super critical to avoid duplication of tags, keep data in consistent format.
    - Look at existing postings, see what information is required for those, UROPS within groups? departments?

- How to deal with experience levels? We could show them a UROP if they match one of the skills.
- Verification
  - Requiring resume upfront seems to be raising the bar, not lowering it
  - How do you tell the person actually did the UROP?
    - Need to figure out how to address
- Tracking of applications
  - Carolyn: This is a hard, non trivial problem. Consider dropping the tracking part, and just allow faculty to followup with students offline. Send a confirmation email though.
  - Idea: Just put in a "Submit resume button"
- Ratings
  - Would be interesting to see distribution of professors UROPs in terms of difficulty, consider aggregating information like this to show to user, even if it won't be available at the beginning when you're system is created.
    - Since professors don't always advertise UROPs, its still useful for the student to know if they're contemplating contacting them. Students want to know if professor was accessible.
  - Need to think carefully about which fields to allow users to rate
  - Anonymity
    - Make it optional.
    - Should professors get to see it?
    - Want to encourage people to post reviews, but want them to be helpful (honest)
      - Need to decide

Scope
- Carolyn: Seems like significant parts, fits with Rails nicely

How to make app stand out
- Front-end polish. Have realistic pre-populated data at demo.
- Link the 2 parts (application and reviews) in an elegant way.
- Consider:
  - "Professors have to make profiles, right? Use a 'Are you this person?' feature. They won't have time to make accounts, so that would interest them in making an account."
  - "Import name of all the Course 6 faculty, make default profiles that they can claim.