**GIBCT Colmery Act Sec 107 Veteran Discussion Script**

*July 24, 2019*

**Welcome and Opening Remarks (5 minutes)**

*[When the participant is ready, the moderator will begin the session with the following introduction.]*

Thanks for joining us today! My name is [name], and I also have two colleagues on the line, Amy and Cindy. They are observing and taking notes. We work with a team at the VA that is enhancing the VA.gov website and we're interested in speaking with you today about the GI Bill Comparison Tool.

The GI Bill comparison tool allows Veterans to learn about education programs and compare benefits by school. We’d like your thoughts on what aspects of the website work well and where we might make improvements to make things even easier for Veterans.

Before we start, I’d like to mention a few things:

* We are interested in hearing your honest opinions. We are in no way testing your knowledge or ability. Our goal is to be sure that application meets Veterans’ needs. You are welcome to express any opinions you wish. We welcome your feedback and look forward to hearing your thoughts and ideas.
* By testing the site thoroughly, we hope to ensure that it’s written in a thoughtful way and gives Veterans all of the information they need to make informed decisions.
* If for any reason you want to pause or stop the session at any time, just let me know. I'd be happy to do so.
* Do you have any questions so far?
* Lastly, we generally record sessions, in case we need to confirm that we have captured your opinions accurately.

Are you comfortable if I record the audio as we talk today?

Great! I'm going to turn on screen and audio recording now. Once it's on, I'll ask again, as we like to have your verbal consent

[The meeting host will begin audio and screen recording.]

Are you comfortable if we record the audio and screen movements today?

**Warm-up Questions (5 minutes)**

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

1. Have you used VA Education benefits in the past, or are you interessted in using them in the future?
2. Have you used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before? If yes, what was your experience?
3. What factors are most important to you as you compare schools or institutions? Price and the quality of education

Okay, let's go ahead and walk through a few scenarios.

**Think Aloud**

While you are going through the site, we ask that you please think aloud and vocalize your thoughts and decisions. The more you say about what you are thinking and wondering, the more we’ll learn. We are interested in your first reaction to each page, as well as what you are thinking as you engage with each page. If you have questions about what information needs to go in a particular field, it’s likely that many other Veterans will too. Sharing your thoughts aloud may seem strange at first, but it helps us understand what you are thinking and give us valuable information.

**Prototype**

Okay, now we're going to look at the va.gov website and walk through a few scenarios. All of the sceanrios we look at are going to focus on housing allowance benefits. So while there will be a lot of interesting information on the screen, we're really going to focus in on determining housing allowance.

Just so you know, this is a prototype, rather than a real website. We create mock-ups like these and share them with Veterans in sessions like this to be sure we have everything right before we code the actual website. You'll notice that only certain links have been activated and you’ll not need to enter any data. When you click a field, text will appear automatically.

<https://bahdigital.invisionapp.com/share/EXIAAV8QGY3#/screens/296016673>

**Scenario #1 (10 minutes)**

Let's say you're interested in going to the University of California at Davis. Using the GI Bill Comparison Tool, how would you determine how much money you'd receive to help pay your rent while taking classes at the University of California at Davis?

Please talk aloud and let us know what you are thinking as you explore the site.

At first going into the comparison tool, I can see, cumulative post-9/11 active duty service… I’m actually kind of confused. Oh, you want to see how much active duty service I have.

I’m looking on the right here and I can see there’s a couple of tools that are intuitive and perfect.

I’m going to click search schools. Ok, so I can see that it has brought up all the search results for university of California, so that’s great. So I’m looking for Davis. So as far as monthly housing, assuming that this is going to be my, ok, you get the yearly, and you get the monthly. So housing is $2121. Is that what we’re looking for? It was very quick. I can tell you that I’ve gone on other comparison tools before, sorry—not other comparison tools. I’ve gone on other tools to find my bah. It’s involved finding the schools, zip code first, going back to the other school, pasting that in to the search field, scrolling down to the list to find E5 with dependent. So that’s quite a bit of a lot of work to do and this was very quick. Boom, boom!

T: thoughts on why schools are blue? I don’t know exactly why, but it’s good on the eyes.

So it looks like I could click either view details or university of California. Does it matter which one I click?

[on profile page] Total breakdown, WOW. This is good information that you’re not going to find anywhere else. This is the only way that you’re going to find this information. Trust me because I’ve searched for this.

[he was prompted to explore the calculator fields] As far as, wow [looks at student outcomes] Do I have to do any work here? You guys did it all. Can I just say this really quickly? What ends up happening, I know that getting out of the military and finding an educational institution to go to is kind of a [. ] process [9:11] Education was a really big deal for me because it was really going to control my future. SO this information is a godsend. I can literally type in something and boom, it has all this information that I spent weeks trying to find.

All of these things that are asked, I see the reason why they’re being asked and I understand them clearly of why they’re being asked. So, this would be really cool, if, as soon as I typed something in here, it would reflect over here [gray panel].

[After the particpant has explored the calculator fields and benefits panel]

**Potential Probing Questions**

1. What are your first impressions of the process of determining your benefits?
2. What aspect of the page or the process might other Veterans find confusing or unclear? Why?
3. [If calculator fields were not used] Is there a way to make the estimate even more specific to your particular situation? [If calculator fields were used] What would make the process of refining the benefits estimate easier?
4. Would you expect to receive the same benefits if you were to attend University of California in another city?

**Scenario #2 (10 minutes)**

Let say you're interested in checking out University of California at Irvine. Using the site, how would you determine how much housing allowance you'd receive if you attended UC Irvine?

[he went back to search results and looked at the card]

**Potential Probing Questions**

1. [If the participant navigates to UC Irvinte via the Search Results Page or search box] Is there a way to access the UC Irvine page from the School Profile page?
2. What are your thoughts on the School locations section?
3. Why do you imagine that some are nested under others?
4. What benefit do you see in having a list like this?

**Scenario #3 (10 minutes)**

Let say most of your classess at UC Davis will be held across town at the UC Davis Technlogy Center. Using the site, how would you determine what amount of housing you'd receive?

Ok, so I would initially click here [davis] and I would scroll down. You said if I wanted to take classes online? [T: at the technology center]. Ok, so I’m scrolling down. I can clearly see [ in school locations] that it will be 2997 [? 9:17]

[T prompted him to find another way in calculator fields]

[T guided him to the question]Ok, where wil you be taking classes? At an extension campus. I would see here in that dropdown. [ he explored dropdown and selected tech center] When this is selected there should be some kind of conformation, like a button. I don’t know if anything changed up here [gray panel] I think the only thing about that I would change, but if this, see I know because I used to be IT because I know having something like this floating would be a little bit laborious. It would be cool to see it floating, but I know everybody’s computer is different, not everybody can handle it.

*[After the participant has explored the prototype and shared thoughts aloud ]*

**Potential Probing Questions**

1. [If they use the campus calculator field] What are your thoughts on the question on the left ("Will the majority of your classes be on the main campus?")? [If they use the School Locations list] On this page, is there a way to make the benefits panel at the top update to show this housing amount?
2. What would you expect to happen if you selected "Other..."?
3. What would make the process of selecting a campus easier?
4. What is the difference between the short list in the drop-down and the longer list at the bottom?

**Scenario #4 (10 minutes)**

Let say you heard that the UC is offering a new cybersecurity program in Riverside, CA. The program is brand new, in fact, the first class of students to attend the program will start in September. Using the site, how would you determine what amount of housing you'd receive while taking classes in Riverside, CA?

[he found and selected “Other”. ] Ok, so I would find out the zip code. [T how would you find out the zip code] [T how have you found zip codes in the past?] Going to google. If I did find it, I would put it in that location. You know what, a simple confirmation box would be great.

**Potential Probing Questions**

1. What thoughts do you have on the process of determing your housing allowance for a location that is not in the list? [9:26]

A: earlier you mentioned finding other places to search for school information. What are those? It literally has been a simple google search, typing in bah rates. [He also read school reviews]…For me, I already had a goal in mind, something that I was definitely looking at for sure.

[107 tooltip] oh, very self explanatory. I’m glad that’s there. I would have clicked on it. Had I been doing this on my own, I would have gravitated there.

*[After the participant has explored the prototype and shared thoughts aloud ]*

**Thank-You and Closing**

*[The moderator concludes each session by thanking the participant for their time and for offering his/her opinions and suggestions.]*

Thank you very much for taking the time to give us your feedback today. We really appreciate your help!