**Estimate Your Benefits Usability Testing Discussion Guide - Desktop Assistive Tech**

**P1 – Russell Jamison (Magnifier)**

**Intro - 5 minutes**

Thanks for joining us today! My name is Amy and I also have some colleagues on the line observing and taking notes. Today we're going to take a look at the GI Bill Comparison Tool. Specifically, we're looking at how to calculate your GI Bill benefits for institutions and programs within the Comparison Tool.

Before we get started, a few things I want to mention:

* This entire session should take about 50 minutes. I don't want to keep you much longer than that, so I may occasionally prompt you with the next question or topic.
* During this session, we want to hear your honest opinions. We're not testing your ability. We just want to improve these tools to better meet Veteran's needs. I won't be offended by any opinions you express and 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 the screen and audio as we talk today? We use the recordings to confirm that we have captured your opinions accurately. The recordings are deleted after we finish analysis, and none of your comments will be attributed to you directly.

* If yes: Great - thank you. Once I start recording, I'll ask again so we have your audible confirmation.
* If no: Ok. My team will just observe and take notes as we go.

Start recording.

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

**Setting up Screen reader & Sharing**

For our next step, I'd like you to share your screen and screen reader audio with me.

In Zoom, can you select the Share button? On this screen, let's go with the default sharing selection.

There's a checkbox on this Share Screen that says "Share computer sound." This will let us hear your screen reader. Can you make sure that it's checked and select "Share"?

* Confirm that the screen reader is audible.
* Confirm that screensharing works. If it doesn't work immediately, suggest they restart the screen reader (order of operations isn't typically isn't critical)

**Checklist for Screen Reader Participants**

* Are you using a computer or mobile phone during our session today?
* Computer: Mac or Windows? Phone: iOS or Android?
* What browser are you using today?
* Are you using a screen magnifier today?
* Do you have the latest version of Zoom (4.3.1) installed? Check under Zoom > About.
* Which screen reader are you using today?
* Are you wearing headphones today? If so, would it be possible for you to take them off and use your computer or mobile audio? I'm asking so that I can hear your screen reader during the session.
* Would you mind setting your screen reader to its default speed? We want to accurately hear and record what you’re experiencing on VA.gov.
* Do you know your screen reader's verbosity setting? High, medium, low? Is that your standard setting (or do you tend to change it depending on what you're working with)?

**Warm-up Questions - 5 minutes**

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

Magnifier – Dizaul brand. It has a foldable board that helps you adjust angle. Physical device.

1. Are you currently using or have you ever used your GI Bill education benefits?
   1. I have used and will use some in just a little bit. Used most of it in 2012-2014 to get a Master’s degree in certifications. I’ll use the rest of it for PhD work.

* (If applicable) When did you start school? Where are you going to school?
  + UNC – Wilmighton campus

1. How did you (or would you) find out what benefits VA provides for your education and housing?
   1. Originally when I was on active duty. I married a veteran and had her benefits. When my daughter was born, I was particularly interested in Post 9/11. Wanted to transfer my benefits to her. I retired too early to send those benefits to my daughter. I wasn’t happy about and was griping about it to my boss and he suggested I use it. He told me when you go, they pay a living stipend. And I told him that I didn’t need taxpayers paying my mortgage. And he said I was the stupidest person he knew and didn’t’ know why they had hired me. He said I could go to school and bank the extra money to send my daughter to college. So I did use all of it and some left over…hoping that someone will come in and re-write it so I could transfer it to my daughter, but not optimistic about that.
2. Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before?
   1. Yes, I’ve used it. I’m trying to remember. There are different tools online. I came in in 82. The VEAP was you put in some and the US puts in a few bucks. It wasn’t really worth it. They transformed VEAP into a Montgomery Bill too and you had to make some decision points – certain elections. Generally the Comparison tools I’ve used are fairly decent. I think first you try and make sure you’re getting the best coverage for what you’re looking for. I need to know the dollar amount and time frame under which I’m operating. A true comparison tool does both – but that becomes onerous. Under 9/11 if you fail or don’t pass a course, you’re going to pay the VA back for out-of-state tuition. That’s important to know. When my wife found out, she was like you better go upstairs and start studying harder. There’s so much detail in some of these programs – unless there is some sort of AI, it’s difficult to figure out how to build one.

* If yes, fantastic!
  + When do you think the last time you used it was?
  + What were you looking for?
  + Do you recall how you first learned about it?
* If no, no worries. We're checking that out today and always appreciate getting a fresh perspective on it.

Okay. Now I'd like you to open a new browser window or tab.

I have a website I want you to visit - I can send you the link via chat in Zoom or I can spell out the URL - which would you prefer?

* [**https://bit.ly/2XFnKix**](https://bit.ly/2XFnKix)

As you work through the task, if you have any comments or questions, feel free to let us know.

**First Task: Calculate Benefits at School / IHL - 15 minutes**

You are considering attending **UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY** for data science. You want to know what costs - including tuition, fees, that kind of thing - are covered under the Post 9/11 GI Bill. How would you use the Comparison Tool to find out what benefits you would receive if you were going to attend University of California-Berkeley?

Getting PhD in education. Well uhh..knowing me, I probably would have tried to find the program and cost of what I wanted. So it says “Learn about education programs and compare benefits by school”. So I should just come here. I’m going to assume I don’t need to have another school’s website open. So I’m going to drill straight into your dropdowns. I do like to see what my options are. You are pre-populating what I’ll probably pick…but I’m a bit OCD. Opened all three dropdowns. For cumulative…that’s a lot. 36 months is predominantly what I’m going to look at. Type of institution schools. Changed to In person and online

Typed in CALSTATE BERKELY…retyped calif…huh, I guess I’m messing up, I don’t see Berkeley…finished California state university…no results.

Prompted university of californi…clicked option. So…clicked View details. It looks like I’ve got the right school. I go for details…that seems intuitive. I’m going to back off for a second. Back to SRP…looking through filters. Quite frankly I don’t know why there would be warnings or school closings. This portion on the screen, I wouldn’t have even gone too..back to View details. 518 students, that’s helpful. I’m assuming what’s on the right, Estimate your Benefits is based on what I’ve already put in. If I change something (changed Cumulative to Purple Heart), I would expect to see the change on the side. I’m expecting a change to immediately happen. Wow, that’s uh…I didn’t realize they were getting that kind of money. Did you use your Post 9/11 tuition before? So I clicked yes…scrolled down and saw Calculate button..Ah. So I didn’t see a change with that. Clicked Learn more under that question. Huh, interesting. Good to know. Alright. Yeah, I was thinking here if I was Purple Heart service…it says it’s 100% service so it’s the same. Change to 6 months…If I’m only getting 50%, I’d expect it to frontload at a single rate. I’m assuming X number of dollars will give me a single year. I’m expecting Year 2 or Year 3, it would drop to 0. Clicked Learn more for Tuition and fees…oh yeah, that’s not what I was expecting to see. If I was going for a particular program, I’d want to see if for a particular program. If I was going for Bachelor’s, Master’s, etc. If it was Master’s, I’d want to see it for a 2 year layout. I don’t want to believe I’m going to get the $12000 for the next two years, if I actually won’t. [I don’t think he’s hitting the Calculate button].

Opened Learning format and schedule…Opened Scholarships and funding. Opened Learning format and schedule [Screen jumped out of view when clicking Learning format and so he opened accordion] Under summary, it says 4 year program. Is there a way to change this? If I’m interested in a Master’s degree program. I guess About your school? Yeah, you got me on that one [not sure how to change to Master’s].

Opened Scholarships and funding. Clicked Learn more on Yellow Ribbon.

*Potential prompt:* Let’s say you received $3000 from your local Rotary Club to help fund your education. How would you go about factoring in that money?

I’d assume I’d entered it here in scholarships. Typed $3000. I assume I don’t have to do decimal. Clicked Calculate. Ehhh…scrolling down to Estimated benefits per term. I’m trying to figure out….I didn’t see where it adjusted. Maybe highlight in red what has changed? Line out the new number and put the new number? That’s a good question. What did change?

I’m not going to notice subtle changes. Maybe make it in a green and make it pop

Magnifier – platform made of wood – on one side it has a 3D Fresnel. A way of cutting a lens, it amplifies light. Same you would find on a lighthouse. On other side is a precut section of wood that allows you the backstop to put it on the device. It magnifies the whole screen and can adjust how far it is from the screen. Works for multiple devices

I wouldn’t put you on the edge of the Likert scale because I had some problems. For me it was where can I afford to go and not where do I want to go.

Things to watch for:

* How does the user select the school (School name or View Details)?
* Where does the user initially look for their benefit information?
* How often and after what actions are users viewing “Estimate your benefits” panel to track changes there?

Accordions

* Does the user engage with the accordions without prompting?
* Which accordions does the user open?
* When making changes to inputs located in several accordions, do users go back and check previous accordions to see if changes are holding?

Calculate button

* Do users click calculate for every accordion or just once after all changes are made?
* When users click Calculate, do they notice which values have changed?
* When do users expect re-calculations to occur (as they are making them or after clicking Calculate)?
* Assistive: How well can users navigate the EYB section using assistive devices?
* Assistive: Are there any parts of the interface that the user struggles with (e.g. accessing any inputs, movement of the focus, opening accordions, etc.)?
* Assistive: What do users think of the process of making selections and recalculating? What are user thoughts on the bottom sheet (e.g. helpful, obstructive, indifferent)?

**Upon completion of task:**

* How did you think that went?
* Were you able to find what you were looking for? Did it seem like anything was missing?
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very hard and 5 is very easy, how would you rate this task?
* Do you have any questions about the benefits you would receive at this school?

**Accordions:** Let's take a look at the Estimate Your Benefits part of the page.

* What did you think of the accordions (Your benefits, Learning format and schedule, Scholarships and other funding)?
* What did you think of how the questions were grouped together?
* When you were clicking through the accordions, what did you think about how they opened and closed?

**Second Task: OJT or VET TEC - 10 minutes**

OJT - A friend of yours told you that **RAGING WIRE DATA CENTER in Sacramento, CA** provides on-the-job training for Veterans in data science. Can you find that data center and let me know what benefits you would receive if you trained with this employer?

VET TEC - A friend of yours told you that **GALVANIZE INC** is a VET TEC training provider with a program in San Francisco, CA for data science. Can you find that provider and let me know what benefits you would receive if you took this program?

Things to watch for:

* How does the user navigate to this program/employer?
* What, if any, fields do they change within the EYB section?
* How often and after what actions are users viewing “Estimate your benefits” panel to track changes there?

**Upon completion of task:**

* How did you think that went?
* What did you think of this information versus University of California?
* Were you able to find what you were looking for? Was anything missing?
* Do you have any questions about the benefits you would receive at this school?
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very hard and 5 is very easy, how would you rate this task?

**Post-Task Interview - 5 minutes**

Those were all the tasks I had for you today.

* Do you have general thoughts or feedback on the Comparison Tool that you’d like to share?
* Any questions for me?
* I want to give a chance to the other people on the line to ask a question.

**Thank-You and Closing - 3 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, thanks so much and enjoy the rest of your day!