**Estimate Your Benefits Usability Testing Discussion Guide - Standard Desktop**

**P6 – Henry Shelby**

**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?

**Warm-up Questions - 5 minutes**

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

1. Are you currently using or have you ever used your GI Bill education benefits?
   1. Located in Brunswick, GA. Was in Marine Corp, then Army National Guard
   2. Currently using

* (If applicable) When did you start school? Where are you going to school?
  + September or October of last year (2019). I am doing online at DeVry University. Yes – I was taking classes online before coronavirus

1. How did you (or would you) find out what benefits VA provides for your education and housing?
   1. I didn’t know how much it was. I had used it in Louisiana. I want to say it was the BAH…I don’t think I had any problems with anything.
2. Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before?
   1. Negative

* 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.

For our session today, I'm going to give you a couple tasks to do online. While you're going through them, it would be really helpful if you'd think aloud - kind of like you'd do if you were talking to yourself. We are interested in your first reactions, what you're thinking & wondering as you go through the process. The more you say about what you are thinking and wondering, the more we’ll learn.

When you think aloud, it helps us understand what works well and where we might want to make improvements to make things even easier. If you have questions, it’s likely that many other Veterans will, as well, so feel free to ask them along the way.

I'm going to give you control of my screen & mouse. I'll pass control to you and you should receive a message that prompts you to control the screen.

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

You are considering attending **UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY** for data science and want to know what costs (including tuition, fees, etc.) 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 attending University of California-Berkeley?

Typed uc Berkeley…got no results…capitalized UC and the B. added “college California” to the search. Still no results. Searched College of UC Berkeley California. Wanted to change Country and State…not options. Typed University of California…there it is at the bottom. Clicked option. Oh wow…wish I was getting that BAH. Programs…was that Student Vet Group. Clicked it. Clicked school name. Well that’s pretty nice right there. I mean the actual setup…that’s pretty nice. I wish I had known about…I’m looking at Your estimated benefits…yeah, that’s pretty, that’s pretty neat. Ok..Learning format and schedule..Yep and click Calculate benefits. Didn’t notice anything change. Well I would have used it if I had known about it. The only thing I would have liked…when I went back to find the school. Yeah, with UC Berkeley, kind of have a comparison thing (searching). A broader..like I was searching UC Berkeley…that search could be broader.

The about this school – I don’t know what that is. I mean is that about the school? Everything else is pretty plain. I would click on it…I would be curious just to see what it was. Yeah, in-state yeah…so yeah, I’m from CA so I’m in-state. It’s not saying much about the school. I thought it was going to be specific information about UC Berkeley. I understand why it wouldn’t be with the generalization of the website, but it’s not what I expected. I’m thinking that in-state means I’m from CA. As far as Your benefits, I think that’s a little redundant. It looks like the same thing as the other side (benefits panel) because it looks like it’d be the same thing. I wouldn’t click on it. Would open Learning format and schedule. Why Learn more? It’s just another step. I really just like the streamlined process. If we could get something more streamlined. A lot of the veterans, I’m about to be 50 next month.

Benefits – I like it as far as breaking it out for me and explaining it. I would pretty much skim until I get to the meat of the subject. I like it. Everything is right in front of you.

When searching for schools, that was the only thing (problem). If I’d known about it, I’d have used it, but I didn’t know about it. I would give it a 4 – would give it a 5 except for that one issue (searching).

I have that Montgomery GI Bill. If there was a place for me to calculate that, go into that one. Once my Post 9/11 runs out I can use the rest of my Montgomery GI Bill. I would like to enter that in. If you can add that in.

From what I’m looking at now, I don’t think there’s a way to look at Montgomery GI Bill. I would assume there is other benefits I can go to, to add in that estimation. Can you add like…so we have like the 9/11, can we include the Montgomery Bill into that calculation. Opened Which GI Bill, changed to Montgomery and click Calculate benefits. If I can use that in conjunction or right after. I don’t know if anything changed…no, If I used my GI Montgomery Bill, how much would I have left to cover. Maybe for Post graduate studies and stuff like that.

I would talk to the Jay N- (School certifying official).

It don’t really give me anything. So it seems kind of extra (about your school). Yeah, I don’t like that task bar. I like the scholarships and funding. If you can factor that in, great. Learning format and schedule, I don’t know. I’d think I’d get the veterans office to handle that. I like it. I would have used it. I’m kind of disappointed not to use it.

Normally, I’d just hit the Back button. I’d scroll to the top to see if there’s a button that would allow me to go back. I would click on home…uhh…I mean pretty much at this point, I would be done. If you could get this to talk to that VA rep’s computer, it would be awesome. Click GI Bill Comparison Tool (to get back).

*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?

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? No
* Which accordions does the user open? Scholarships – only when prompted
* 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)?

**Upon completion of task:**

* How did you think that went?
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very hard and 5 is very easy, how would you rate this task?
* Were you able to find what you were looking for? Did it seem like anything was missing?
* 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: Ivy League school - 10 minutes**

You know that the Post 9/11 GI Bill covers Ivy League schools like Brown University, Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Princeton. Let's say you wanted to know what costs would be covered at one of those schools. Pick an Ivy League school of your choice and see what benefits you would receive at that institution.

Things to watch for:

* How often and after what actions are users viewing “Estimate your benefits” panel to track changes there?

Upon completion of the task:

* How do the benefits at this school compare to what you'd get at UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY?

**Third 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?

Clicked VET TEC providers. Search schools. Ah man, look at that. That’s lovely. Oh this is lovely. Scroll down…we couldn’t search that in cities on the left. I would search San Francisco…searched. There it is right on the top. I would click that. Wow..oh yeah. Uh..this is approved programs. I like it the way it is – only because I don’t have any experience with the VET TEC program. Is there any way to link it to Galvanize? I see the phone number. I assume it would direct me to the right person. Phone calls are reserved for after the initial meeting.

I would do it the same way as the GI Bill. I would assume I could use the GI Bill to calculate it. Can you just apply from this here page? Click on the Galvanize logo where you can directly apply to that program or with that company. (clicked website). I would expect this website to be the main focus of the VET TEC program. We get distracted easily. I think we know that answer…wasn’t there $12000 for tuition? What I want to know is if VET TEC covers all of it…I’d do it just like GI Bill.

Prompted to go back – and scroll down

Oh yeah, that’s cool. Just like that. Your estimated benefits…I got the tuition and fees, what the VA provides, okay. Shoot I might want to go work on that. So I know Reactors is okay. I know they collide particles at high speeds. I want to do that program – sign me up! The only thing I’d be interested in is Vocational Rehabilitation. Now you have to stop the GI Bill to use that. Now I qualify for Rehab, but I have to stop my GI Bill. A phone call here, a phone call there. Maybe even applying for it. A Voc-Rehab calculator.

Shown Rehab on Landing page - See, it’s going to take you to a different site?

Education Journey – talked to school rep to figure out what benefits he was receiving.

Just a bunch of checkmarks for out-processing

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/Ivy League school?
* 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?

**Fourth Task: Benefits Change - 5 minutes (Optional)**

You recently found out that you are eligible for the **Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment** GI Bill. You are curious how your benefits with this bill would compare to the Post 9/11 GI Bill. How would you go about changing your GI Bill selection within the Comparison Tool?

Things to watch for:

* Where do users try to change their benefit?
* Do users realize they can change “Your benefits” values on Search Results page?

**Upon completion of task:**

* 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 are all the tasks I have 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 chanced 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!