**CT Comparison Testing – June 2021**

**Participant # 8 - Melinda**

**Top Findings**

1. Easily finds compare drawer before she selects any tools to compare…
2. Can’t figure out how to get schools into compare drawer at first. Expects there’d be a way to click & drag schools into the drawer OR that she’d be able to initiate a search from the drawer.
3. “I’m not sure how to get school names into the boxes to compare them”
4. Mentions several things not helpful on comparison page: 4-year school isn’t very helpful since I’m looking for a doctorate; Location “City” isn’t helpful because I’m going online; Size of school / “Large” isn’t helpful because I don’t know how big that is.
5. NOTE: Housing allowance on comparison page should note that it’s the in-person rate
6. Most important on comparison page: Money. How much out of pocket. Ratings… not sure what this is based on. If how easy it is to work with VA, that would be helpful.
7. Wants a “key” for the fields on comparison page.
8. “If I want a chart like this to be helpful, I need to know what some of these things actually mean.”
9. Says “highlight differences” isn’t helpful at first but later mentions it’s helping her see differences (“The thing that caught my eye ***because it was highlighted*** was student complaints.”)
10. Mentions schools have a lot of different programs that don’t all cost the same. “It’d be nice to have various programs accounted for.” Doesn’t say that the tuition & fees are for a bachelor’s degree; doesn’t say whether it’s for the full year.
11. A lot of sites have “If you want more information, visit this page”
12. Says “it’s an ok system. It left me with more questions than answers.”

GENERAL

1. Sees “Employer” not sure what that means. “Kind of confused” what that means.
2. Not sure DEA is the benefit she’s looking for in the Military details dropdown… it doesn’t have the right identifying information (acronym, chapter #)

**Research Questions**

**Compare Drawer:**

Do users notice the Comparison drawer?

Is comparison drawer behavior effective when the user conducts multiple searches to select schools?

How many schools do users think they can compare at once?

**Navigation:**

Are users able to easily navigate between the search results, the comparison drawer and the comparison page?

How do users interact with the interface when they need to conduct multiple searches?

Which components/pages do users prefer to use to add or remove schools from the comparison? Are they able to do this effectively?

**Compare page:**

What data fields are users interested in comparing?

Which ones are most important?

Any fields they aren't interested in?

Any additional others they would want to see?

Do users notice the sticky header?

Do users believe the sticky header is useful?

Do users notice the "Highlight differences" functionality?

Do users find the "Highlight differences" functionality useful?

**Warm-up**

* Military status?
  + Spouse & caregiver of 100% disabled Veteran. Army, Navy, National Guard.
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits?
  + Yes, Chapter35, currently getting Doctorate in Nonprofit leadership. Started Jan. 2019
* When you first decided to go back to school, what factors were important to you in picking school options?
  + Went where scholarship money was. Applied for scholarships, when I got one, evaluated whether it was the right one. Walden.
* Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before? Nope.

**First Task: Finding schools**

1. Could you show me how you'd use the Comparison Tool to learn about schools you might be interested in attending?
   * Starts with name search… goes right to Colorado Technical University-Online. (Caution flag!!) Says tuition & housing benefit. Not sure about caution flag… would research that online.
   * Would look at other schools
   * Finds compare drawer before she selects any tools to compare… “I’m not sure how to get school names into the boxes to compare them”
   * Wonders if she can add schools by refining her search. (opens Refine your search).
   * Expects there’d be a way to click & drag schools into the drawer OR that she’d be able to initiate a search from the drawer.
   * Tries another search for Walden University.
   * Sees “Employer” not sure what that means. “Kind of confused” what that means.
   * Hits “compare” for walden university (success) then goes back to original school and clicks “Compare” button.
   * COMPARISON PAGE
     + 4-year school isn’t very helpful since I’m looking for a doctorate
     + Location “City” isn’t helpful because I’m going online
     + Size of school / “Large” isn’t helpful because I don’t know how big that is.
     + Estimated Benefits…
       - Not sure the benefits would be the same for the different programs.
       - NOTE: Housing allowance should be noted (in-person)
     + What’s most important?
       - Money. How much out of pocket.
       - Ratings… not sure what this is based on. If how easy it is to work with VA, that would be helpful. It’d be nice to have a key.
     + “If I want a chart like this to be helpful, I need to know what some of these things actually mean.”
     + A lot of programs in the school, they don’t all cost the same. It’d be nice to have various programs accounted for.
     + Doesn’t say that the tuition & fees are for a bachelor’s degree; doesn’t say whether it’s for the full year.
     + Sees & selects “Highlights differences”… doesn’t think that’s too helpful.
     + The thing that caught my eye ***because it was highlighted*** was student complaints.
     + Might be helpful to have something that you could click on to have information on various Veteran programs.
     + A lot of sites have “If you want more information, visit this page”
     + Think it’s an ok system. It left me with more questions than answers.
     + If I was going to compare schools, would be concerned about the amount of time it took to find compare.
     + It’s a good starting point. It isn’t very cohesive. I’m going to have to go look for more.
     + A key of terminology would make it more helpful; more instruction at the beginning (so you know how to use the tool).
     + Rate comparing: 4. It was hard to figure it out.

**Things to watch for:**

* What type(s) of search does the user conduct?
* Does the user notice the Compare checkbox?

**Upon task completion:**

* How do you think that went?
* 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of finding schools?
* Can you talk to me about the school cards you see here?
* For the benefit estimates you see here, do you believe these are accurate for your situation?

**Second Task: Comparing schools**

* How would you use the Comparison Tool to determine which school would be the best option for you?
  + Now I know after using this a few minutes, I know I’d go look up Harvard.

**Things to watch for:**

* What type(s) of search does the user conduct?
* Does the user notice the Compare drawer?
* Do users notice the sticky header?
* Do users notice the "Highlight differences" functionality?
* Is user able to easily add schools to the compare tray?
* Is the user able to easily navigate to the compare page?

**Upon task completion:**

* How do you think that went?
* 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of comparing schools?
* Looking at the compare page, what do you think of the information you see here? Which ones are most important to you? Is anything missing that would be important to you?
* What do you think of the process of comparing schools?
* What do you think of the "Highlight differences" functionality? Is it useful?

**Third Task: YAY Harvard!**

* You found out that you were accepted into **Harvard**. Even if you don't end up going, you're curious about how **Harvard** stacks up against some of the other schools on your short list. How would you use the Comparison Tool to see how **Harvard** compared to some of your other school options?

Not sure DEA is the benefit she’s looking for… it doesn’t have the right identifying information (acronym, chapter #)

**Things to watch for:**

* *If applicable,* can the user easily remove schools from the comparison?
* Where does the user go to remove schools (compare tray, compare page, search results)?

**Upon task completion:**

* How do you think that went?
* 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of adding Harvard Law School to your school comparison?

**Any other questions?**