**Conversation Guide Template for GI Bill Comparison Tool Compare Functionality**

**P4 - Jennifer**

**Moderator logistics**

*Use*[*#feedback-backchannel*](https://dsva.slack.com/messages/C40B45NJK/details/)*in Slack for real-time feedback from observers.*

*Mute your Slack notifications*

*Before the session, send out the*[*observer instructions*](https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/platform/research/during-research/howto-observer-instructions.md)*to your observers (Slackbot will do this for you if you type "observer instructions" into*[*#feedback-backchannel*](https://dsva.slack.com/channels/feedback-backchannel)*).*

*In the Attendees section, make sure everyone except the participant is on mute.*

*In the Audio section, click the drop-down arrow and make sure "Play Entry/Exit Chimes" is unchecked*

*Check your [screensharing setup] and share permissions for participants.*

*When the participant is ready, begin the session with the following intro*

**Intro - 5 minutes**

Thanks for joining us today! My name is Jen and I also have some colleagues on the line observing and taking notes. Today we're going to talk about finding and comparing schools on the GI Bill Comparison Tool.

Have you done usability testing before?

If No – I’m going to put a couple scenarios in front of you and ask you to do some tasks on a website we’re working on. As you’re going through the tasks, we ask if you can “think aloud” – tell us what you’re seeing, what you’re looking for and any other thoughts that come to mind as you’re interacting with the site.

Before we start, a few things I want to mention:

* **This entire session should take about 45 minutes.** I do want to be respectful of your time, so I may occasionally prompt you with the next question or topic.
* **In this session, we want to hear your honest opinions.** We are not testing your ability. We just want to improve these tools to better meet the needs of our users. I will not be offended by any opinions you express, and any feedback you provide will be really helpful to us.
* **If for any reason and at any time you want to stop the session, please let me know.**
* **With your permission, I would like to record my screen and audio as we talk today.** We use the recordings just to make sure that we captured your opinions accurately. After that, the recordings are destroyed - usually within a week or two.
  + If yes: **Once I start recording, I am going to confirm that you are ok with me recording this session once more.**

*Start recording.*

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

**Warm-up Questions - X minutes**

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

* What is your military status (e.g. Veteran, child, spouse)? 100% VA disability, Veteran
  + If Veteran, which branch of service? Army
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits? I’m actually going to school for criminology. I’ve been doing that for years.
  + If yes, which benefit are you using? It’s actually funded through the state.
    - When did you start school? 2012
  + If no, do you plan on using your benefits in the near future?
    - Which benefit? Where are you in the school selection process?
* When you first decided to go back to school, what factors were important to you in picking school options? Making sure they had online options. That was mostly it.
  + Do you remember any of the schools you were considering? Everest Univeristy, ASU, southern new Hampshire. Everest – my best fit. Because there was more variety in courses
* Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before? No
  + If yes, what did you use it for?

**Initial Take - 2 minutes**

I’m going to start sharing my screen.

~~So you know – the website you’ll be interacting with is still under development, so the site may not function like you expect it to. If that happens (like if you click on something and nothing happens), I may ask you what you expected to see. Sound okay?~~

This is the GI Bill Comparison Tool, which allows you to see what education benefits you can receive at various institutions. Do you have any initial thoughts or questions before we get started?

No, not yet

**First Task: Finding schools - 5 minutes**

* Let's travel back in time and say you found the GI Bill Comparison Tool when you were first exploring schools. Could you show me how you'd use the Comparison Tool to learn about schools you might be interested in attending?
* I’d go to search by location…I’d want something probably close to me., 06781…that’s a zip code. Hit enter. Wow…okay…let’s try, a different way…maybe if I try Connecticut…misspelled, but found it. W instead of e. Was scrolling down. Would be better if you had a listing that kept going…you should have a listing so I can keep going down this list instead of having to click on them. This is a pain having to do this. Yeah, this is a pain seriously.
* I’m looking for Yale right now. There Yale New Haven…no…I’ll just take anything right now…I’ll just click here. Opened profile. It even has student complaints in the last….that’s one of the first things I’d be going to. You should have a thing that should pop up to say what the problem was. Saying what the issue was.
* Info – I see the name of school, distance…I’d rather see the names of the school instead of all these dots and stuff. I’d be a lot easier. See names of schools as long as I can go to that school and click on it to see more about the school. Like when I click hre I can see
* What information – certification, courses they’ll cover, degree they’ll cover, definitely how much they’re going to pay, housing stipend and stuff like that.

**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? The way I did it was great, the way this wasn’t. I was able to go online and it popped up a list of courses that were there. It was on the VRRAP site at the time.
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of finding schools on the Comparison Tool? I’d give it a 3 because you can look at the state but you have to click on each single one to see…it’s easier to see the name so I can scroll down and you can have the letter pop up next to it. Like right here A…that would be a lot easier.
* Can you talk to me about the school cards you see here?

**Second Task: Comparing schools - 20 minutes**

* Let's say you want to get a better idea of the differences between the schools you're considering. How would you use the Comparison Tool to determine which school would be the best option for you?
* I’d click this…Profile page…I’d be easier if it popped up over here. So I can right click on it and open link in a new tab…if it would stay up. I would look for those schools. It gives me the name but it doesn’t give me what I want. It’s not the best way to do it.
* I see the update tuition and housing…refine your search…I see the compare button too. Clicked compare on 2 of them…compare and then…and hit 3rd compare. Where am I supposed to go when I hit all the compares? Found bar at bottom…clicked Compare. I see you can do it that way…your estimated totals. That’s kind of cool..that’s kind of a good thing right there. I’d give that a 5. School ratings is a big one. Money. I want to see what programs I want, which one is better. That would be the biggest one for me.
* Find the best one? Which one was online, more attended. Different hours…visit each and every school website.
* Not important? Scrolled to the bottom…I think they’re all pretty important actually.
* Missing? A way to be able to do a screenshot so they can keep it in the file…say if it came down to a couple schools. Save the page and check it out at a later time. You have to do a screenshot or do a new tab to keep this and keep the page…otherwise you have to make a new tab and check out different schools. So keeps a history.
* What do you think of these schools? I’d probably pick Manchester….certificate programs aren’t for me. If it’s online how long the program is for
* Accreditation is of course.

**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? It would be a lot easier if you could scroll down the list. It would be easier to have a list that keeps going
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of comparing schools on the Comparison Tool? The way I would give it at 3….but like this, I’d give it a 2 because I’d rather have the schools on top of one another
* 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! - X minutes**

* 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?
* Search by name …typed Harvard
* Tried to hit compare, but already has 3 schools in list….not disabled. I see the amounts and the region but I can’t see…
* If its not letting me compare…I’d have to go to search by location and then compare at that point.
* Compare at least 4 to 5 schools.
* I’m looking for a place to say that I can search for other ones…I can probably remove one of these.
* It’s not bringing me back to the top
* Numbers accurate? Yes – that sounds about right.
* If not correct, what would you do? I’d contact the school first or whoever I could contact…see if there’s anyone I could acontact.

**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? It was okay but you had to figure out where the compare button was
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of adding Harvard Law School to your school comparison? It wasn’t hard for me, but very hard for others 4
* For the benefit estimates you see here, do you believe these are accurate for your situation?

**Thank-You and Closing - X 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, well thank you so much again, and enjoy the rest of your day!