Participant: Lucas

Date: 06/16/2021 @ 2:15 pm

Note:

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

**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 looking for schools on the GI Bill Comparison Tool.

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

* **This entire session should take about 45 minutes.** I want to be sure not to keep you much longer, 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 Veteran's needs. I will not be offended by any opinions you express, and I welcome your feedback.
* [IF APPROPRIATE:] **You'll be interacting with a prototypes and a demo tool.** This is a demo tool that may not function exactly the way you expect. Some areas of the prototype will be clickable, and some will not. Since it's a demo, none of your actions will affect your actual VA information or benefits.
* **If for any reason and at any time you want to stop the session, please let me know.**
* **Are you comfortable if I record my screen and audio as we talk today?** We use the recordings to confirm that we have captured your opinions accurately. The recordings are destroyed after we complete analysis, and none of your comments will be attributed to you directly.
  + 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 - 5 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)?  
  I am the son of a disabled, retired veteran.
  + If Veteran, which branch of service?
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits?  
  yes it is currently in the process of being used but it has yet to get back to me for the first term. (went to school for 1 semester but payment has not yet gone through)
  + If yes, which benefit are you using?  
      
    I believe its chapter 35… I started fall last year and I still have yet to get payment back for that.  
    I’m studying for my associates transfer for computer science.  
    - When did you start school?
  + 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?  
  *uh enough to get me started so I could at least have a computer science degree so I may go after what I wish to pick. I wanted to start with associates and then transfer to bachelors degree later for computer science. I only really considered \_\_\_ in the event that chapter 35 didn’t work correctly it was the closest and cheapest.*
  + Do you remember any of the schools you were considering?
* Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before?
  + If yes, what did you use it for?

**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 would go to location… can I access that? Clicks location… okay yup search my area (types mcminnville Oregon) scrolls through search results. Since most of these are not yet rated I cant base my choice off that reliably at all… I was looking at school rating first because I want it to be a highly rated one for my bachelors however seeing that the ratings system doesn’t seem to be functioning yet I cant base it off of that. The more students that are there I would probably look at that more. Like.. western Oregon university… id probably copy that one down and then search through the others… Oh hey I see refine my search, okay that makes things a lot easier… I would also look for the 100% in state tuition (closes filters and opens update tuition and housing estimates) ah okay this one… um because im using ch 35 this is very confusing because I don’t have a full understanding of chapter 35 well I put the military status as child but that didn’t change the gi bill benefit.   
    
  I don’t have a way to search by the type of school id like to go to which is a tech school so that makes it very hard to find the right school.   
    
  I would like to choose what degree I’m going after and then filter out the ones that are not highly recommended in that area. There is no way for me to search the degree im looking ofr.   
    
  the main issue im having is the school ratings there is no information.*

**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?  
  Pretty poorly it just didn’t give me enough information to actually choose a school, it only told me how much youre going to pay and how many people go here… after that it didn’t really tell me anything.
* 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?
* 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 - 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?  
   *The main thing I’m looking at with these is having it help me with the type of the uh… highlighting differences that helps! Having it collapse if there is nothing different in there then that would be nice so I can see what the differences are without having to scroll through*

**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?
* 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?  
  *a 1 or a 2 .. probably a 2*
* 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! - 5 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?  
    
  *clicks remove and clicks return to search to add. Types in Harvard… clicks the compare checkbox on the first one and selects compare again and selects highlight differences… id like to have a little more detail like possibly some of the information that’s specific to Harvard compared to the others*

**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?
* 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?

**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!

**Sample Conversation Guides *(note: these links point to resources in the va.gov-team GitHub repo)***

* [Scheduling Accessibility and Usability Study: Complex Recruit, Highly Variable based on User Profile](https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/health-care/appointments/research/2017-studies/access-usability/access-usability-conversation-guide.md)
* [Veteran ID Card Discovery Interview](https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/veteran-id-cards/research/discovery/discovery-conversation-guide.md)