Participant: Yolanda

Date: 05/25/2021 @ 02:14 pm

Note:

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

**Moderator logistics**

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

*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]*

*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 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)?  
  *honorably discharged verteran*
  + If Veteran, which branch of service?  
    *navy*
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits?  
  yes I used my GI bill benefits for school and my medical benefit… specifically I am not sure… (does post 9/11 or ch 33 ring a bell?) Uh… post 9/11. I started school in 2008 and I studied phycology at st… university.
  + If yes, which benefit are you using?
    - When did you start school? Where did you go?
  + If no, do you plan on using your benefits in the near future?
    - Which benefit?
    - Where are you in the school selection process?
* Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before?
  + If yes, what did you use it for?

**Initial Take - 2 minutes**

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?  
user looks up a school she was interested in… yale and clicks on view details

**First Task: Find a Campus - 5 minutes**

* You've recently moved to **San Antonio, Texas**. Prior to moving, you took a few classes at **ECPI University** and you want to see if there is a campus in your area. How would you use the Comparison Tool to determine if **ECPI University** has a campus in your area?  
    
  *(clicks search by location and types in san Antonio scrolls down… doesn’t see results and click search by name. tpyes in ecpi, clicks refine your search and updates state to Texas and clicks update results)*

**Things to watch for:**

* Which search option does the user attempt to use (name or location)?
* Does the participant use the autocomplete?
* Does the user attempt to search/filter results?

**Upon task completion:**

* How did you think that went?  
  *I think it went well but I think it should be one step so rather than clicking between search by name and search by location just to have one input box for both.*
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of seeing if ECPI had a campus in your area?  
  *Id say 1.*
* What do you think of these cards?  
  I think this is good but I think we should have a search for schools that are regionally vs nationally accredited, if that was in the filters that would be helpful… (clicks refine search) yeah so I see it doesn’t give you that information and especially for veterans its important to know the level that its accredited, I can see that its offered here but there’s a lot of moving around that’s involved (in the military) and accreditation type (Regional vs national) is important for that.  
    
  and cautionary warnings… are there certain things that would automatically add an institution to that list? Like a shooting…  
    
  I would add demographics to these filters because a lack of diversity or lack of opportunity for people in minority groups is important to a lot of people. I think a lot of people are looking for that. I also think a lot of people are looking for childcare and I think a lot of schools do offer that.  
    
  Looking at the numbers here… do these numbers look accurate to your particular situation?   
  *… when it says school ratings how are the schools rated (first instinct…) well I would think realistically when it comes to job placement that’s what I would think they would be rated on in a perfect world but im guessing its number of graduates or test scores but you don’t do standardized testing in college.*

**Second Task: Location Search - 15 minutes**

* How would you find schools in Raleigh with a commute of 15 minutes or less?  
    
  *okay so I would type in the zip code and (clicks drop down… long pause) I think I could select 25 miles and get there in 20 minutes but if not I guess I would select 5 miles which I know I could do within 20 minutes.   
    
  Okay since this one says 100% in state I would take that into consideration, I would also look at Gi Bill students I think that’s helpful… I see this school has less Gi Bill students than San Antonio college which says to me they are familiar with the schedules and the way life works for service members and veterans SO I am more inclined to go to a school that has a higher number of GI Bill students.  
    
  I think I would add a 10 mile selection to the radius drop down since thats a wide stretch.*

**Things to watch for:**

* What search criteria format does the participant use (city, "city, state", "use my current location" etc)?
* Does the participant use the autocomplete?
* Does the user notice the "Update housing and tuition" accordion?
* Does the user interact with the filters?

**Upon task completion:**

* How did 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 finding on-the-job training in Austin?  
  *I would rate it a 3 because the distance is here but theres no time factor like… for example Zillow… it would tell you how long it will take you to commute from your new home to your job and you can even put in your work address.*
* What do you think of how results are displayed?
* How do you think the search results were sorted?
* What information would be important to you if you were choosing where to take training?
* What types of education options do you think you can find on the Comparison Tool?
* Do you think these benefit estimates are correct for your situation?
* Was there any other information you were expecting to see?

**Third Task: Map Utilization - 5 minutes**

* Do you ever use maps?  
  *yes, I’m usually looking at distance and commutes*
* *I like the waze app.*
* *Google usually has really fast results, pictures, and more than one route, and tells me what’s nearby like ‘papa johns pizza near me’ and with waze… waze gives you real time directions and routes you around traffic.*
* You've looked at training opportunities in **Austin** and **San Antonio** separately, but want to see all of those results at the same time. Could you talk me through how you would use the Comparison Tool to see all the training opportunities offered in both **San Antonio** and **Austin**?

*Prompt* Let's say when you performed this search, there were a lot of results. What factors would be important to you in narrowing down your search to find the right place for you?

* Would you be able to narrow down your results here on the tool?

**Things to watch for:**

* How does the user expand/interact with the map?
* Does the user try to enter any additional search criteria into the search fields?

**Upon task completion:**

* What do you think of how the map showed your results?
* What do you think of the filters offered? Which ones would you use? Are there any you wouldn't use?
* For you personally, how far would you be willing to commute to go to school?

**Alternate Questions**

* When you are conducting searches online, do you ever use the map functionality?
* If yes, what are you typically looking for?
* Which sites are you visiting?
* What do you like about those sites? Any frustrations?

**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)