Participant: Rebecca

Date: 05/26/2021 @ 09:00 am

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)?  
  spouse, husband is army
  + If Veteran, which branch of service?
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits?
  + If yes, which benefit are you using?  
    ch 35
    - When did you start school? Where did you go?  
      community college in northwest Indiana… id tech
  + 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?

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

* You've recently moved to **Raleigh, NC**. 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?  
    
  *It seems like I could do either way so either search by name or click on location and type it in there… (types in Raleigh, NC in the text field within 50 miles) and then I would look and see for the university… I cant see everything here but I would just go through and … I don’t know why these aren’t in A B C order? I would expect these to be in A B C order… I don’t know what these letters mean.*   
    
  (goes to search by name and types in ECPI University) okay so theres 19 of them and I would just

**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?  
  um I think I should have just searched by name first and not by location because I mean I probably could have found it eventually but searching the actual name of the collge was the quickest and easiest way to do it.
* 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?  
  *um if I went the second way a 1 if I did it the location way, a 3 it was more confusing doing the location search because when I first pull it up and see its not in alphabetical order Its just… its too much. I didn’t understand what all the little letters were on the map like what they represtend like is it location or how many people are in the campus… I don’t know it was confusing to me.*
* What do you think of these cards?  
  *That’s pretty cool that this information is in there for Gi Bill students, you can see how many peers are in your similar situation… I think that’s good.*
* *Do you think these numbers are accurate to your situation?  
  no because I get a stipend I don’t get this.. It can go for housing it can go for anything its not just housing and I get it every month when I’m in school*
* *Do you think you could taylor those numbers to your situation. This kind of thing (benefits) I don’t know if you put that on this kind of site because no matter where im at its always going to be the same.*

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

* How would you find schools in Raleigh with a commute of 15 minutes or less?  
  *(returns to location search, clicks refine search scrolls down) im not sure how I would do that because I don’t have a um… (scrolls up and selects within 5 mile) hmm you know what that didn’t… im still at 66 results so… I don’t know how I would do that honestly.*
* *If you were on google how would you go about this  
  I would literally type in google within 15 minutes of downtown Raleigh.*
* *What if your zip code was 27601  
  (user types raligh, nc 2760) ah so right there then… it narrows it down to 7*
* *(updating top section for personal situation) Okay so id say spouse, no and dependents educational assistance… and click update results… um or not.. I don’t think its letting me do that… maybe I need to broaden my milage.*
* *Is there anything you don’t see that you expect to see?*

**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?  
  I think it went good once you gave me the zip code, once you gave me the zip code it went vary well.
* 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?  
  um I would say a 1.
* 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**

* You've looked at training opportunities in **raliegn** and **durum** 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 **raliegh** and **durum**?  
  *um can you put in more than one location at a time I wonder… lets see… is it durham? Okay (types in “duraham, NC and Raleigh, NC” Oh it did let me put in two locations… okay user scrolls… um I don’t know if would do anything with the milage on this… how far apart are those two? Because I know when I looked up Raleigh before it had 66 options but now its just showing me 36… im not sure actually… its showing me a lot in durham so maybe its not showing me anything in…. what is the compare here? Maybe I could click that and then search something in raliegh… I think this is just showing me durham because im not srue how you could do two different locations… I guess I could essentially just search for north Carolina but then that would give me a whole lot of schools if I did that. But maybe I could do two separate searches since there is a comparison button… so I could click that and then start a new search and select another one… im not srue if it would allow me to do that? I think it. Would show me this information side by side with another college im looking at in another location to see the housing and tuition at each campus.*

*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)