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

**P4 - Rebecca**

**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.

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.
* **You are free to stop the session at any time. If you would like to do so, 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. **Are you comfortable if I record my screen and audio as we talk today?**
  + 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 get started, let’s start with a few warm-up questions.

* What is your military status (e.g. Veteran, child, spouse)? Husband is retired Army
  + If Veteran, which branch of service?
* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits? Chapter 35 – have been usingthe. Taking semsester off.
  + If yes, which benefit are you using?
    - When did you start school? Where did you go? Started Fall 2018. Business. Community called Ivy 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? 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. Additionally, for one of the tasks in this session, I’ll have you verbally describe to me how you would interact with the site since the functionality isn’t completed yet. 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?

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

* You've recently moved to **Raleigh, North Carolina**. 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?
* I think I could do either way – type in name of college or search location. Or enter in location. Went to location, selected raleigh, nc. Hit search. And I would just look for the university. I can’t see everything here. I would go through and see what’s available here. And these are not in ABC order…for me as a mom, I would want them to be in ABC order. I’m sure there’s something to this madness. Do the letters stand for what this college is. I guess I’m confused what the different letters are for each campus or college. ….ummm….yeah, I would think it would be better if it was in aBC or alphabetical order so I can look up that ECPI and can look and see if there’s one…or if ther’s one in 50 miles.
* I would probably go back…epic no result…clicked ECPI University in dropdown…and I would just…can I put a zip code in there with it? Okay there is one for Raleigh

**Things to watch for:**

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

**Upon task completion:**

* How did you think that went? I think I probably should have just typed in the university first and not the location. I probably would have been able to find it eventually, but searching the actual name was quickest and easiest
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of determining if ECPI University had a campus in Raleigh, NC? The second way is a 1, the first time is a 3. It’s more confusing doing it that way. When I first pulled it up, its not in alphabetical order…it was too much. Obviously you have to list everything there. It would have been better if it was in alphabetical order. I don’t understand what the letters were…if it was location, or how many people were at the campus
* How do you think these results were sorted?
* Search cards – that’s pretty cool. You know how many people are getting the GI Bill. How many peers in your situation….I think what you have ther is good. It gives you the tuition benefit and housing benefit – that’s good to know. It tells you the important thing – the tuition and housing. For me – I don’t get this. I just get a stipend. My stipend it goes for housing or school costs. It goes for once a month.
* For me, for CH35, it’s straight across the board for everyone. It’s 300 a week for everyone. It’s just a straight stipend. I don’t know if you put that on this kind of site.

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

* Since you live in the downtown part of Raleigh, you’d like to keep your commute under 15 minutes. How would you use the Comparison tool to find schools in Raleigh that would have a 15 minute commute? The zip code you live at is 27601.
* Went to downtown part of Raleigh…I’m not sure how I would do that, but within 25 miles will be too far…that didn’t…I’m still at 66 thing (search results). I don’t know how I’d do it.
* On Google…type in universities of raleigh within 15 minutes. What you consider downtown…
* Location search raleigh nc 27601…there narrowed it way down to 7. Within 15 minutes, 25 miles is too much. Within 5 miles.
* Personal commute – I’d be in school full time. I would say within 25 miles personally. 25 miles each way
* *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?
* For me, I would want a school that…I’m not big on big schools. I’d want something that was smaller for me. I’d probably have to view the details on each of these to see how many students attended there. I like smaller numbers in my college classes. Housing is important and your benefits are the same no matter what you choose.
* Opened profile – benefits…wow, there’s a lot of stuff here. I think I would just investigate them. This one doesn’t tell me any school size. Let’s see…ummm…I don’t see anything about what size of campus. I’d put it in Google and see …oh actually, I could click here (website) and see how big a size of campus and classes are.
* Prompted – to narrow options
* Opened refine search…I could put the location. There’s more bullet groups if there was a Student Vet group…didn’t click update. Updated tution and housing…there’s a lot you can do here.
* Prompted to do housing – Spouse. No on spouse. DEA. …accordion didn’t close…maybe because its only within 25 miles I have to broaden it
* Filters – there’s a lot of good information here. I think it looks good…if you’re worried about it being accredited or all girls school. I think the type of institution, on the job training.

**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? For the most part, as long as I had a zip code. It was hard when I didn’t have a zip code. Once you gave me a zip code
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of searching for educational institutions by location? 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 found some good options in Raleigh, NC, but you’ve also heard that Durham, NC has a lot to offer. How would you go about seeing all the educational options in both Raleigh and Durham at the same time?

Can you put in more than one location at a time? Durham, nc and raleigh, nc

I don’t know if I would do the miles or not.

I’m not sure how you would look up two different locations…you could look up NC, but I think that would give you a whole lot of schools. I think it would have to be an independent website…or search engine boxes.

There’s like a comparison button. If you’re able to compare between locations, I think it would show me…you know like the name of the college. The information would be side by side of the other college I was looking at. Compare housing and tuition. I think that what you have hear in search results…I can click on view details and I think what you have here is good information.

*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?
* 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?
* I put down spouse and not deceased so I don’t get tuition….so the housing benefit. I did notice that the tuition benefit went away.

**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!