Participant: *Erin (P4)*

Date: Wed. Feb. 10th 2021 @ 12:45 pm

**Discussion Guide for CT Redesign for Search, Compare and Initial Profile Page**

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

**Mobile Sharing setup**

For iPhone:

* Tap ‘Share content’ (Green button at bottom middle of the screen) If you can’t see the zoom menu, tap anywhere on your screen once ant it should appear.
* Tap on Screen
* Tap Zoom
* Tap start broadcast. After a count of 3, the entire device screen will be shared into the meeting
* Tap the red bar at the top of your screen when you are ready to end the share
* Send prototype link to them via chat

IF THEY CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT They can tap "share content" then tap "web URL" and just enter in VA.gov For troubleshooting screen sharing in iOS, reference the Zoom documentation here <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005890803-iOS-Screen-Sharing>

**Intro - 5 minutes**

Thanks for joining us today! My name is Amy and I also have some colleagues on the line observing and taking notes. Today we're going to talk about searching and comparing 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.
* **You'll be interacting with a prototype 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.

* Are you currently using or have you ever used your education benefits?  
  *currently using the 9/11 gi bill. I started in September 2020. Its sort of an extension program… because I wasn’t… (audio cutting out) A certificate program through a college extension for now.   
    
  I wanted to find a school in oceanography, but I also am interested in accounting because it makes more sense with what I am interested in moving forward in life.   
    
  maybe this is just the program, but I am being penalized for not attending classes in person during the pandemic.   
    
  I used the tool to look at whats available for where we are considering moving in the past. And to see what colleges are available near me.* 
  + 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?
* When you were first looking for schools, how did you go about finding potential options? What was important to you?
* Have you ever used the GI Bill Comparison Tool before?
  + If yes, what did you use it for?

**Initial Take - 5 minutes**

This is the GI Bill Comparison Tool, which allows you to see the benefits you can receive at various schools. Can you tell me what your initial thoughts are when you see this page? What do you think you can do here?

**First Task: Radius from Location - 10 minutes**

* Let's say you aren't sure what you want to major in, but you're moving to **Daytona, Florida** and want to find a school within 10 miles of your location because you don't want a long commute. How would you use the Comparison Tool to find schools that are within that driving distance?
* *I would type the location and select the radius, um I don’t know if you can change the location radius to something closer or farther, I personally like schools that are a little closer… and im ready to hit search.*  
    
  *okay so I like that it tells me how many schools there are… um… (scrolling down page) I like to see that they are different kinds of schools and I can see that they are accredited that’s good to know. The only thing I don’t see and I don’t know if they are there is community colleges…*
* *How might you find a community college?*
* *um… im looking in the refine search, I guess the id check just the 2 year institution… I don’t know what that warning and school closings means. But id uncheck the 4 years. Um id had to learn more for the warnings in closings is it warnings from the va for not practicing correctly or? Id have to read the learn more to see what that means.*
* *Preference around seeing warnings and school closings?  
  I think if I was looking for a particular school and it had a warning so it didn’t show up well id wonder why but… Id have to read more to see what that’s about.*

**Things to watch for:**

* Where does the user look to enter the search criteria?
* Do they click the search fields?
* What dropdowns (if any) do they open?
* What location format do users say they would input?

**Upon task completion:**

* How did you think that went?
* *Oh it went well, I could easily type my city and state in and choose the commutable distance that would save me all the results.*
* On a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very easy and 5 is very hard, what did you think of finding schools by distance from location?  
  *um… oh 1.*
* Looking at the benefits for these schools, let's say someone had only served in the military for 2 years. Do you think these numbers accurately represent the benefits they would receive?  
  *um for this choice right now its telling me this is the full benefit (reads the disclaimer) BUT. I think if I go into refine estimates, I can adjust the percentage to less… and add in if I didn’t serve the whole time I can put it in there.*   
    
  - If not, how would they go about determining what benefits they would receive?
* How do you think the school search results were sorted?
* Was there any other information you were expecting to see?

**Things to watch for:**

* How does the user try to get back to the home page?

**Second Task: Degree / Program Search - 10 minutes**

* Let's say you've recently heard of someone who received a Bachelor's in **Citizenship Activities**. You don't know of any schools that offer this program, but are curious about what the program would be about. How would you use the Comparison Tool to see if any schools covered by the GI Bill offer this as a program of study?  
  *well I’d probably check out the degrees and majors… I can see that it says level of degree all, lets change that to bachelors since that’s what I’m looking for and ill type in citizenship activities… I see a drop down for options and ill click the citizenship activities, and I hit apply to see what comes up… okay 3 colleges in different parts of the country showed up.  
    
  that went well. It was a very specific kind of degree so it’s really nice to be able to go and find that. It would be nice with my degree in oceanography to be able to search that. That would be a handy to pull up schools with a masters in oceanography. So, I like it!*

*Prompt* You see that **Indiana University-Bloomington** is highly rated by Veterans. If you wanted to ask a few questions about the school, how would you use the Comparison Tool to find out who to talk to?  
*Um I don’t know what view details has uh I see the ratings from veterans …. Um I’d like to see if that have a student veteran center um… or I can see if my local center has any connections… I would look everywhere. But I may with this took check out the ratings from veterans to see if they are still there or like I said open this view details to see for a student veteran center.  
  
clicks view details  
  
(scrolls down page rather than using sticky header) Okay I see more information on benefits and how much I can get per term. I see veteran programs…* eventually gets to contact details… *scrolls back up. Sees the sticky header again um I know they have the veteran contact on the admin side but im not….*

*Prompt* Where would you go to see how much tuition would be covered at **Indiana University-Bloomington**?

**Things to watch for:**

Part 1

* Where does the user look to enter the field of study?
* Do they click the search fields?
* What dropdowns (if any) do they open?
* Do they open the "Level of degree" dropdown?

Part 2

* Does the user click any of the jumplinks or just scroll?

**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 schools by program of study?
* What do you think of the school cards?
* How do you think the school search results were sorted? (Why were some schools higher or lower on the list?)
* Was there any other information you were expecting to see?

**Third Task: Compare Schools - 15 minutes**

Looking at these search results, let's say you're interested in **University of Massachusetts-Amherst** and **Indiana University-Bloomington**. How would you go about comparing these two schools to see which school would be a better fit for you?  
  
*I would hit compare for both of them and then I see it comes up with compare schools and then I would select view details for both and see what happens… oh I see the Indiana one showed up first… and im scrolling down looking for the compare button… I don’t know. I would hope that clicking that would open Amherst so I could get a side by side of the information.   
  
once user gets to comparison page – hmm okay I see so I needed to hit compare for both schools instead of view details for one school to bring up the page.*

*What do you think of the information on this page?  
Well its giving me what I’m looking for – is it accredited, my benefits per school, the ratings… the veteran programs supported on the campus, um…so I like… it gives me the comparison that way I like it.   
  
Id rate this task a 1 or 2… um I’m using a lot slower computer   
I think it’s really easy to go in start clicking things, figure out what it does and start playing with it. Once I start playing with this it will be very easy to use.*

*Prompt* After looking at these two schools, **University of Massachusetts-Amherst** doesn't look like a good option for you. How would you remove that school from the comparison and add another in its place?

**Things to watch for:**

* Is the user able to successfully add schools to the gutter to compare?
* Is the user able to navigate successfully to the Compare page?
* How does the user try and navigate back to the search results?

**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 comparing schools?
* How many schools would you want to be able to compare at one time?
* What information is important for you to see when comparing schools?
* Was there any other information you were expecting to see on the Compare page?
* Was there any information you didn't think was necessary?
* What did you think of the general layout of the page?

**Post-Task Interview - X minutes**

* Any questions for me?
* How do you think the schools are sorted on this page?  
  *you know, I am not entirely sure… I just thought they came up randomly... if there is a sorting I wouldn’t see it. I think because it only gave me 3 id probably check them all but if it was more maybe its closest to me from just knowing that or I don’t know.*

**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)