Participant: *Miles P6*

Date: 02/12/2021 @ 1:30 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?  
  *yes I have a number of times actually for 1 and ½ masters degrees and a certification and I plan on using it again to do a master degrees completion program… its always a relearning experience when I use them but generally ive always been able to find the help I need from the department of veteran affairs to get me the help I need. Ive used the top off, the post 9/11 and* … plans on using again later this year – early next year.
  + 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?  
      *I hop on goggle and type in a couple of things that I use for search critera… so my most recent was a graduate program in … so I would hop on google and type in acquisition, masters program, \_\_\_\_, and GI Bill benefit and see what pops up… and from there ill narrow it down. And then I have to see if they actually do accept gi bill benefits because there isn’t always a one stop shop website I can go to to type in I want this degree, a accredited program, and accepts gi bill program so its all ….*
* 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?  
  *no and that’s what drew me in because this is exciting for me if there is a gi bill comparison tool im interested in learnimg more about it.* 
  + 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?  
  
*Okay uh… initially this would imply to me that I have an idea more so based on geographic location or I have an idea based on a specific school that I would like to pursue a degree or certification on…. I guess I could put in my installation in the near box and that will give me schools near that location but my assumption is this will take me to schools that will accept the gi bill as payment.*

**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?  
    
  *IF I knew I was going to Daytona florida, and I knew I wanted to do inperson brick and morter learning chances are I would have done a google search ahead of time and then type in the looking for box the name of school… but realistically if was looking for something within a geographic location I would type that in tehre and im guessing then there is a tool after that search aht will narrow down the distance and if it is completely online (comeback to this in audio)   
    
  yup again, drop down, something within 10 miles of my shouse and then, hmm id refine the search, yes I am taking classes in person, yeah there is lots of uh options on here… my assumption is if I click no for online or in person it will take me to just online degrees… uh 4 years, 2 years… yeah I mean I like this… this enables me to yup, go through and clarify my status as a veteran or not, which of the various gi bill programs I want to use in terms of benefits and okay yeah. I like how it asks me if I want to take classes in person or not, and instutition preferences… can I click on this? Okay doesn’t look like anything is coming but im curious about the employer, im not sure what that refers to off that bat, institution type, is that state vs technical… if it is in fact located in florida, if it isn’t… maybe that is something id want to consider… but if it says level of institution id assume its college vs university vs program.   
    
  warnings and school closings, that is interesting… id assume that’s a red flag, um warnings and school closings, that’s interesting, id want to know who is issuing those warnings and school closings uh or if that’s just a warning that comes from the department of veteran affairs based on the fact that these universities violated the trust of the gi bill… so I like it, im just wondering if tehre is a better way to label it to explain that.*   
    
  *Yeah that’s really interesting, I like that, I think that’s a really good feature, hopefully more people will understand the intent behind that and what its supposed to do.   
    
  okay and I see degrees majors so if I had an idea of what I wanted to study I could type in supply chain management I could go in here  
    
  um and I think once I went through here id go ahead and hit update results and I assume get a list of results … oh so that took me back to the prevous screen*   
    
  \*\* clicks search  
    
  *okay if I were to click on this view details box uh… I guess it would give me more information about the university itself but some nice information to have would be to know if there was a veteran benefits coordinator or point of contact for veterans to reach out to.   
    
  Yeah I can see my tuition and housing benefit here… yeah if I was going there full time… I like this feature here where it says GI Bill students and the Rating, that’s a nice feature… Maybe that’s the sort of thing I was talkigna bout on the previous slide where veterans are able to provide feedback. Um id assume with a Gi bill student population that size a school is able to help me navigate the system… What does the compare do if I click on that?   
    
  - you only served for 2 years. Do these accurately represent?  
  well I guess if I didn’t meet my full enlistment or not eligible for full gi bill id assume I may have to go out of pocket or potentially get a student loan of some kind but there again I think that maybe something that the university would help me figure out and I don’t know that that’s the responsibility of the website to do that for me…   
    
  Looks like these all have the same GI Bill students and rating and tuition look the same so… but that’s probably a prototype thing, maybe the other feedback point would be to have 2 tabs if someone is concerned if its nationally vs regionally   
  but based on the prototype app, its not alphabetical and it doesn’t look like there is any preference given to any of these universities*

**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?
* 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?
* 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?  
  - 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?  
    
  *uh….doesnt look like I can scroll over, I see search employers, don’t know what the other one is… maybe the looking for box I see it says name of institution but maybe if the search is strong enough I can type that in there and it might say name of institution or area of study but its not intuitive for me… im assuming that im only looking for a specific college and it doesn’t allow me to look for a specific degree program.*
* What if I asked you to click refine search  
  *benefit, institution preferences… search a major okay that’s absolutely helpful right rhere… so if there is a way to add that search box to the previous page that would be good. So you could look for school or degree program or geographical location, I think those are the three main buckets that everyone is looking for.*   
    
  *okay I click update results…* okay, and then were yup… my assumption is it’s a pretty specialized degree and that’s why theres only a few results thought it doesn’t really give that feedback in that app that’s just my assumption.

*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?  
  
*So I would want to go to this view details and see if there is a contact listed in there… I like this and okay I like this see 122 ratings by veterans, that gives me an anecdotal first hand of what other veterans experience…* scrolling down page. Okay right here where it says *single point of contact for veterans I assume if I click on that it will direct me to that office and offer a pgone number or email that I can look at…* school locations*.- this is kinda nice that if igives you on and off instillation housing. Yeah so theres an a full lot on here but I have to scroll down quite a bit and it doesn’t stand out amoungst the other hyperlinks… its not easy for me if im quickly clicking through universities. I have to really be paying attention to what Im looking for and id assume*

*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?  
  
*Okay id select these two check boxes and then click compare and hit compare schools… okay there we go okay…* use is scrolling down page*. Hmm okay taps arrow to switch to other school … scrolls down again so this is the stuff that pops the yes and no’s for veteran progams but is there a way to do the summary, like if this was on a laptop would these show up side by side? Because what I have to do is toggle back and forth between the two. Like I see more green here but I don’t immediately when I go here (Scroll back up and swipe to ther school) but a side by side on a single page would be better for me so I don’t know how I would pull it off on a mobile.*

*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?  
  
*yeah so I would have to go back to my original search… um… maybe there is a tab at the bottom that says return to search results that’s quick or if I decide I want to compare mores chools that something can take be back quickly (doesn’t see breadcrumb) because personally I would just click the back arrow in my browser…*

**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?

**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)