**STEM Usability Testing Discussion Guide - Round 2**

**P1 – Rachel Carlson**

**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 take a look at the application for a new scholarship for Post-9/11 GI Bill beneficiaries.

Before we get started, a few things I want to mention:

* This entire session should take about 30 minutes. I don't want to keep you much longer than that, so I may occasionally prompt you with the next question or topic.
* During this session, we want to hear your honest opinions. We're not testing your ability. We just want to improve these tools to better meet Veteran's needs. I won't be offended by any opinions you express and welcome your feedback.
* If for any reason and at any time you want to stop the session, please let me know.

We will be working in a prototype so some functionality will not work as expected. For example, when you click on a field, an answer or selection may pre-populate or alternatively, you may click on something and nothing may happen. In those cases, I'll let you know that the functionality isn't working and ask what you would expect to happen.

Are you comfortable if I record the screen and audio as we talk today? We use the recordings to confirm that we have captured your opinions accurately. The recordings are deleted after we finish analysis, and none of your comments will be attributed to you directly.

* If yes: Great - thank you. Once I start recording, I'll ask again so we have your audible confirmation.
* If no: Ok. My team will just observe and take notes as we go.

Start recording.

* I have started recording. I'd like to confirm: Are you comfortable if I record my screen 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.

1. Are you currently using or have you ever used your VA education benefits? No
   * Which benefit? Husband has Post 9/11 and Montgomery GI Bill and he’s passed both of those on to me.
2. Do you know roughly how much of your education entitlement you have left?
3. Are you familiar with the Rogers STEM scholarship? No, I have not

* If yes, what have you heard about it?
* If no, as a quick summary of the scholarship, the Rogers STEM Scholarship provides up to nine months of additional Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits (to a maximum of $30,000) to qualifying Veterans/Fry Scholars seeking an undergraduate STEM degree or who have earned a STEM degree and are seeking a teaching certification.

For our session today, I'm going to give you a couple tasks to do online. While you're going through them, it would be really helpful if you'd think aloud - kind of like you'd do if you were talking to yourself. We are interested in your first reactions, what you're thinking & wondering as you go through the process. The more you say about what you are thinking and wondering, the more we’ll learn.

When you think aloud, it helps us understand what works well and where we might want to make improvements to make things even easier. If you have questions, it’s likely that many other Veterans will, as well, so feel free to ask them along the way.

I'm going to give you control of my screen & mouse. I'll pass control to you and you should receive a message that prompts you to control the screen.

Note: Each participant will go through ONE of the tasks below.

**Task 1: Authenticated User with Too Much Entitlement - 15 minutes**

We're going to do some role playing. Let's say you're Sammy Smith and you're using the **Post 9/11 GI Bill** to obtain an undergraduate degree in **Chemistry** from **Chicago State University**. How would you go about filling out this application? You will log in as an authenticated user.

*When eligibility warning alert on intro page appears*

* What did you think of the eligibility alert message you saw?
  + Where do you think the information is coming from?
  + Do you think this information is accurate?
  + Would you still apply?

*When school information appears*

* What did you think of the pre-population of school information? What would you do if the information wasn't right?

Things to watch for:

* Does the user read the subway map?
* Does the user experience any confusion in determining how to start the application? (Need to scroll to bottom of page)
* How does the user react to the eligibility alert message (entitlement)?

**Upon completion of task**

* In your personal field of study, would you expect to be eligible for this scholarship?
* In terms of applying for this scholarship, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very hard and 5 is very easy, how would you rate this task?

**Task 2: Unauthenticated User that is Not Chapter 33 - 15 minutes**

We're going to do some role playing. Let's say you're Jamie Lee and you're using the **Montgomery GI Bill** to obtain an undergraduate degree in **Chemistry** from **Chicago State University**. You don't currently have an account and aren't interested in creating one. How would you go about filling out this application?

Scroll to subway map. Okay I’m just reading through everything…things you’ll need…what if I need help…apply…here we go. This is what I’m looking for. Clicks sign in without signing in. SSN says it’s required…continue. I have Montgomery GI bill..clicked Continue. Based on your response…oh. You’re not…let’s go back..Clicked Back button Oh I clicked the wrong one I think. Clicked Montgomery Bill again. Oh..Oh. Okay so let’s see….Yes, I don’t know. It keeps on telling me that I’m not telling me that I’m not eligible but it’s not the response I picked. So it’s telling me that I’m not Post 9/11 or Fry Scholarship and that’s not what I clicked…I would just click Yes and let them determine my eligibility. They gave me a phone number below so I might write that down and give them a call below. Are you enrolled…I am. How much of your eligibility benefits do you have left? I am running out…based on your responses, you are not eligible. It’s still that first one that’s holding me up and I think that’s an error on their part. Yes, I would still like to apply. Me I think that the website….since I apparently found out about it. I would have researched it and known that I was eligible. It keeps telling me that I’m using Post 9/11, but I’m using Montgomery, so it’s wrong. So my question is if it denied me, can I re-apply again. I can fill this all out and say I’m ineligible…can I go back and apply to this scholarship again? I know definitely I clicked Montgomery GI Bill – it should hopefully have a check saying I’m using Montgomery GI Bill and I’m eligible. I think there’s a glitch in the system and I truly am eligible. I’m here on the website and clicking in responses. I guess the people on the other end and there’s no way I can explain that I’m using Montgomery and not Post 9/11. As of right now, I don’t know what the next 3 pages are. Like a true paper and pen application where I can put in my true responses since the computer isn’t working. So maybe 4 of 6 or 5 of 6, it’s going to be a form where I can put my answers in. Is there anyone I can talk to about this because the website isn’t working? I would hit Continue because I’m curious what the other pages are, at least to the last page to see if I can change the responses. Ok, so Chemistry. Chicago State…hope I don’t get shot…school ID number. It’s never been my SSN – it’s a completely different number. Continue. No. Address…clicked Email. Continue. Direct deposit. That to me sounds premature…I have to give you my bank information before I get the scholarship. I could see where there would be a disclaimer…putting this on an application, makes me very nervous. My cat is nervous too if you can hear him. So you can choose not to do direct deposit, but I know that that’s more of a hassle. Open Applicant info…will it let me Edit…yay. Oh see – it is there (Montgomery GI Bill). Now I’m confused…maybe I don’t know. I would have to talk to someone. This is correct…Are you using Post 9/11 GI Bill or Fry. Yeah ,I’d have to talk to someone at this time, because I’m confused. I did see that I could send them a message. I love those chat buttons on store pages and stuff. They help me all the time. I would submit a question so I don’t have to be on hold forever (if I call them). And just send them a message saying I’m really confused here. And maybe I just didn’t read carefully enough on the first page…How to apply. [Facilitator transported her back to the beginning]

We can prefill part of the application…not a big deal, it wasn’t hard to do.

Eligibility – oh so that’s the problem, I’m not using that, so that’s the problem. I’m going to apply anyway. They aren’t meeting their quota and I’m going to apply anyway. I just blasted right through that the first time.

Going through screens again…clicked Montgomery Bill. So now that I’ve been through it all, it is a little confusing. Now I know what it means. It has an X that I’m not using that. It led me to believe that that was the box I checked. It should give me what my response was…because I thought I had clicked the wrong thing the first time. That’s just confusing to me. It gives me what my response was and then it tells me to be eligible to receive the scholarship you need to be using Post 9/11. It makes more sense now that I’ve been through it. Later – when it shows me the two checkmarks. The X needs to be red. That would make it more clear.

What I personally would like is for you to tell me what my response was and then to say that I have to be using this in order to be eligible. Now I understand going back.

No – because I’m not in STEM. Well I guess I could be. I’d use Montgomery GI Bill first, then I would use Post 9/11, then I think I would actually be eligible. Then my response would be correct….I don’t know if it lets you select more than one (benefit). If I was in STEM, I think I would be eligible for it. In real life, it depends on how they define it. Technically, I’m in Behavioral Health so it’s social science. But maybe it would be…I’d have to look into that. What I think of STEM – my son and daughter love STEM.

\*I don’t think she read the because statements

In real life I would have my Bachelor’s and would be going for my Master’s or graduates degree, so I wouldn’t be eligible.

There’s a really good chance that they’re going to apply anyway – it’s like fishing, they’re sending out a hundred lures to get one bite. Another thing would be that if they aren’t eligible, they can’t hit Submit. Or put an extra step in there that they have to call or do something else in the process.

*When eligibility alert appears*

* What did you think of the eligibility alert message you saw? Would you still apply?

*When 2nd (STEM) eligibility summary page appears*

* What are your thoughts on seeing this information again?
* What would you do at this point?

Things to watch for:

* Does the user read the subway map?
* Does the user experience any confusion in determining how to start the application? (Need to scroll to bottom of page)
* How does the user react to the eligibility alert message (wrong benefit)?
* How does the user react to the 2nd ineligibility alert message?

**Upon completion of task**

* In your personal field of study, would you expect to be eligible for this scholarship?
* In terms of applying for this scholarship, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very hard and 5 is very easy, how would you rate this task?

**TASK 3: Authenticated User in non-STEM program - 15 minutes**

We're going to do some role playing. Let's say you're Jordan Johnson and you're using the **Post 9/11 GI Bill** to obtain an undergraduate degree in **Philosophy** from **Chicago State University**. How would you go about filling out this application? You will log in as an authenticated user.

*When eligibility alert appears*

* What did you think of the eligibility alert message you saw? Would you still apply?

Things to watch for:

* + Does the user read the subway map?
  + Does the user experience any confusion in determining how to start the application? (Need to scroll to bottom of page)
  + Does the user check the Approved STEM programs document?
  + How does the user react to ineligibility alert?
  + If they click "Check remaining benefits", what would you expect to happen (e.g. modal, new page, etc.)?

**Upon completion of task:**

* In your personal field of study, would you expect to be eligible for this scholarship?
* In terms of applying for this scholarship, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very hard and 5 is very easy, how would you rate this task?

**Post-Task Interview - 10 minutes**

Circle back on

* School contact details - Is your school ID the same as your SSN? If applicable, what would you put down for your school email?

Those are all the tasks I have for you today.

* Do you have general thoughts or feedback on the application that you’d like to share?
* Any questions for me?
* I want to give a chanced to the other people on the line to ask a question.

**Thank-You and Closing - 3 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, thanks so much and enjoy the rest of your day!