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

**P3 – Tyrone Baylock**

**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? Yes
   * Which benefit? Post 9/11
2. Do you know roughly how much of your education entitlement you have left? I think 8 months
3. Are you familiar with the Rogers STEM scholarship? No

* 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?

*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.

Studying – right now I’m doing a degree in liberal arts and sciences.

In order to apply for scholarship, I would scroll down to read about the scholarship and it’s already here. Looked through eligibility. So…looks like everything is easy to get…so yep, it looks like. I’d click start and sign in or create an account. Clicked button. Typical VA screen I’ve seen before. I don’t know how to try and sign in here. Let me ask a question – am I supposed to be a vet returning back to school? (Yes) And I already have my undergraduate? (Working on undergrad in Philosophy). So I tried to sign in and click start the application. Ok…so it looks like my information was put in there. My social is in there. It looks like a really easy application so far. VA has the other forms you fill out 1055? The ones where you change your benefit…which is easy. Clicked Post 9/11 and clicked Continue. Is Philosophy count as STEM? So me personally, I would just go to Google (to determine if its STEM). Can I go to Google on here? What would you suggest at this point? I don’t want to overstep my boundaries here. Opened new tab. Google.com. “Is philosophy a stem major” It does not say that it is…so…it is…no, it’s separate. So it does not count. So I would say No. Do you have a STEM undergrad degree and now pursuing teaching? No. How much of your benefits? Am I assuming mine…less than 6 months. So based on responses, it appears that I’m not eligible. So because of what I was reading on Google and which, philosophy is separated in the 19th century from sciences. There is a potential that VA would determine it was eligible…so I would actually select Yes. Reasoning being…Reason being because I believe that there are certain…I mean maybe, VA would determine based on the degree, that it would be…I don’t know what they would think to be honest. Philosophy is kind of hard….So basically I read the grey box, I know that green checkmarks is stuff I’m good on . The X is enrolled in bachelor’s degree. In order for this to really go through, I would probably have to select…go back and select Yes at “Are you enrolled in a STEM program?” See I’m a little torn here…my responses are torn between if I was a student and I would be wanting…yeah, I’d be wanting to use the STEM for Philosophy. In my mind, Philosophy will count as a science. I’m reading on the screen that it isn’t a science, but in my mind it is. The only way I would know is if they [VA] determined I was eligible. So I guess I would suggest selecting No and letting them review. And then Yes to apply and click Continue. What’s the name of your STEM degree…I would say Philosophy. If I had school details, I would put those in. The reason why I’m saying that because I know the VA can take time to do things. If I can provide my school details, then that’s easy. Hit Continue. School ID is not SSN. I use my student email. I know my student ID by heart because I use it all the time. I use my email pretty frequently too. I would do Mail, Email…to get any communication at all. Click continue. Once again, easy to find this info – I would do direct deposit checking…easy enough. Any bank account info will only affect your Rogers STEM scholarship…that’s good. I know because based on the note that it wouldn’t affect it, so I would put in a different account. I realize that the note right there makes it easy to realize there’s no crossover. Would crossover affect what account you put in? If it did, I would…I see if there’s a line that What if I don’t have and opened that additional content. So if it doesn’t go through bank account, you’ll have to do a card. So I’d have to call or apply. Alright cool…they encourage you to participate in EFT. So at that point, when I read that, I’m like I’m going to try and do EFT because it’s going to be a headache if I don’t. So at this point, if I didn’t want to use account, I would go on website or call that number. If it would affect, you would want it on a bank card? Yes. My reasoning is because I move my accounts around a lot, so the primary account I have that VA funds go into…I’d treat(?) the scholarship. I’d have it go to a savings account personally. Usually I transfer things over to a savings account so they accrue interest. Ok cool, so I have stuff here...of course I know if it’s important that I worked on it for several days. I’m going to say I clicked the privacy policy even though I never read it. Submit application. See I’d be wondering about the 30 days…I would want to know. Do they usually process applications in 30 days…back on the one screen on student email and ID. It didn’t really occur to me…now I would want to know how much time I was saving by adding that email address. I know because of dealing with the VA that sometimes it takes a while. At this point, I usually do a screenshot of the information and save stuff like this. I could select What happens after I apply? But I’m pretty sure I know what would happen – I’m going to wait and see if I get the scholarship. It was easy – very easy to follow.

In personal field of study, eligible? So that’s a good question…in my degree right now, I don’t know if liberal arts and sciences counts as a science. Yeah, in my current degree, it would depend on the track that I take. Would depend on the track I take – right now I don’t think so because right now I’m doing more artsy stuff.

That question where it was asking me if I was qualified – it would help to have that STEM program link there, so I could easily open it. I didn’t even see that there. Usually when you have links like this in bullet points. It would help if approved STEM programs was the first link. Because I’m just scrolling through this real quick. I’m just looking to verify that I have that and that and that.

Now that I’m backtracking and thinking what I’m doing – if I would have saw that and recognized it, I would have clicked that first.

Expect a list. Ctrl F to see if Philosophy.

Check remaining benefits – could log in and see. Have never checked before online. He’s called or been told via mail.

Checks email every other day.

Is there anything the VA could do to make it easier to determine if a degree was STEM? Good question – can’t really think of anything (other than STEM list)

Looks good.

*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!