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

**P5 – Alex Yoo**

**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? I have
   * Which benefit? Post 9/11
2. Do you know roughly how much of your education entitlement you have left? I believe I have about 13-14 months left. So I studied compute science major. I did complete the degree, so I’m considering using the remainder for grad school.
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.

So for this page, follow the steps. I feel like the eligibility should be above the apply, because if I apply before I realize I’m eligible. I’d prefer to see the eligibility part first. So is this connected to other VA programs like VA.gov or VA Health? I don’t know if it is connected. It would be nice if it was. I know for VA.gov you can use different sign ins. If it was connected, it would be much easier to log in. Clicked Approved STEM programs. Scrolling through. Wow..there are a lot of degrees or majors. Yes…twenty pages. It would be nice to cut to certain programs. Twenty five pages is a lot. Scrolling through options. So it tells that this portion is also covered by STEM. Maybe having that information up front would be helpful too. Clicked tab to go back. Clicked Rogers STEM scholarship link. Could you bring me back to the application page? So I like this link…it didn’t have the Open in new browser…so I like to have everything in front of me. I want the option to open a different browser or a different page. Looking through Prepare. For information for my school and STEM degree, what exactly are you guys looking for? The name of the school and then the major, but if I need anything more than that, I would like to have that information at the beginning instead of having to go back and start over. Is the payment…actually nevermind. If the person is already receiving payment from the VA, is that info going to be transferred to this system or is that something that I would have to put in? Clicked Check your remaining benefits…ok, this makes sense. So here try sign in or create an account – that’s what I normally do to log in to VA. There’s no specification on whether it is online, in-person or hybrid. If there are any requirements about that, it would be helpful to know. Could you take me back? So when you say mail – are you talking about email or actual mail? (Actual mail) What is this respondent burden? (Time it should take you to complete the form) and the control number is? Is it really needed for people to see it?

Ready to sign in…clicked Sign in. So…..ok. Um….entitlement…more than 6 months. Oh okay. So I guess for the requirement I have one month. If I have less than 6 months or less would it change or would it stay the same? I mean “you may not be eligible”. I’m not sure I should apply or not. It doesn’t sound like I meet the requirements, but it sounds like I could still be approved for this. If I have more than 6 months, then they just shouldn’t be allowed to do this. Maybe they should word it more clearly. It says I have 7 months. If the system knows for sure, I’m not going to qualify, then it should tell me. Then I would know I’m not eligible at the time. It should say “You are not eligible” instead of “You may not be eligible”. According to standard, I am not eligible. So if there is a chance that you may not be approved. Clicked Start the application. Yeah, still apply – it says I may not be, so I could get it. It’s free money so I should try at least. If I click Finish this application later…what would? It will save automatically? Clicked Continue. What is Fry scholarship? Clicked Learn more for Fry. Clicked Post 9/11 and clicked continue. Clicked Yes for STEM, clicked more than 6 months. Ok…so I have to actually fill it out to find out that I’m not eligible. Ok so…even though I know I’m not eligible, the system lets me apply for it anyway. It says please consider that ineligible applications delay processing…so maybe I shouldn’t be allowed to submit. It’s a waste of my time and people who are looking at it. Is there anything I am gaining out of this if I say Yes? Clicked No. It looks like because I have the option to apply, it looks like I have a chance. If there’s no chance, then it shouldn’t give me the choice. The time that I have left…it’s being pulled from my VA profile. If I’m applying to this…if I’m logging into VA.gov I should be able to see this information. I don’t think there’s going to be that many people applying who know they don’t qualify. If the system determines I’m ineligible, I think it would be nice to know before I start the process. I guess it kind of makes sense in case there’s a system glitch. I guess that makes sense. If I knew that I wouldn’t qualify, it would be nice to know from the get go and not waste my time. Since I’m not eligible, I guess just Exit application.

*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.

*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!