DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

Problem:

Difficulty in finding communities at UofT with existing systems.

Design Principles:

- Simple and easy to use.
- Efficient in building quality and long-lasting relationships/communities.
- Fast / not too time consuming to get started.
- As personable as possible to your preferences.
- More useful than existing systems like Facebook / ULife.
- Safe / prevents online bullying and other toxic internet behaviour.
- Enjoyable.

Environmental Requirements:

Should be able to work in a university setting of various sizes. It must synchronize perfectly with existing university systems so that it doesn't feel disorganized or cluttered.

Functional Requirements:

- Should be able to connect students with other students given their preferences without hassle.
- Should be able to synchronize with courses and other university-specific attributes.
- Should be able to make complex decisions for users, taking work off the user's hands.
- Should be able to adjust itself to different types of users (confident, shy, etc.)
- Should be able to care of all community requirements such as messaging, posts, etc.
- Should be be able to be administered to prevent toxic online behaviour.

Technical Requirements:

- Should have a good complexity of technical functionalities such as online messaging, maps, etc., while not being too cluttered or confusing.
- Should be usable in both smartphones and computers.

Usability Requirements:

- Should be usable by anybody and must feel simple and intuitive.

Measures of success:

The number of active daily/weekly users and the amount of engagement could be indicators for the degree of success of the system. Also the users should be able to give feedback about the usability of the system and their experience with it, to see if the design criteria are met.

PERSONA:

Fast Fred

Fred is a 19 year-old first-year undergraduate student. His current goal is to ace his academics to keep a perfect GPA. To do so, he plans to put a lot of time into his studying. He has a fast lifestyle and often works on his assignments while on the move. He is also an extrovert and wants to make new friends and join communities but he does not want his social life to feel like more work. He wishes that finding and making new friends would not be so time consuming and can be done quickly on-the-go. He needs the complexity of community-finding and friend-making to be broken down into a couple of swipes and clicks on his smartphone.

Scenarios:

- Fred feels like his social life is empty and is desperate to find new friends. But he also wants to be putting 10 - 12 hours of work a day into his work and hence, he does not have time to search for friends and make commitments. He wants the searching-for-friends process to be immediate and wants to automatically find friends and communities that are compatible with his schedule.
- Fred knows that there are systems in place to find communities in UofT but feels like they are too much work, unclear and hence, would be too time consuming to be worth the effort. He needs something to make clear and simple choices in a matter of seconds, and a system that automatically takes care of all the hard work that comes with having and maintaining a social life.