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1. What are the research questions/goals?

1. Can the user easily find the "Appointments" tab/link from the homepage?
2. Does the user understand how easy or hard it is to book an appointment?
3. Does the user need prior information (like "Type of Service" or "Appointment Reason") to book an appointment?
4. Is the user able to track what options or reasons they have selected previously during the booking process?
5. Can the user change the "Appointment Reason" or "Type of Service" after making a booking?
6. Will the user be able to figure out the location of the appointment by looking at appointment headings in the student appointments page?
7. Will the user be able to verify/validate his/her mobile number?
8. Will the user get any notification/acknowledgement about their booking?
9. Does the user prefer booking an appointment via phone call or the website?

2. Process:

→ Where and when did you collect the data?

- ◆ We collected the data on April 30, 2025, through a Zoom interview with Mekala Saathwik on April 30, 2025. All team members, along with Saatwik, were present during the session.

→ How did you proceed to answer these questions?

- ◆ We began with a brief introduction, explaining the purpose of the interview. Then, we gave the User a scenario to book an appointment using the Student Health Portal. While he completed the task, we interleaved casual interview questions to understand his thought process and challenges. After he completed the booking process, we asked reflective questions about his overall experience, any difficulties he faced, his previous usage of the portal, and what improvements he would suggest.
- ◆ We took detailed notes throughout the session and recorded both the interaction flow and key comments made by the participant to analyze user needs and design gaps later.

→ What are the questions you asked during the interview?

1. General Experience

- How often do you use the OSU Student Health Portal to book appointments?
- Can you walk me through your typical process when booking an appointment on the portal?
- How do you feel about the overall ease of use of the appointment booking system on the website?

2. Navigation

- Can you easily find the "Appointments" tab/link from the homepage?
- What's your experience with navigating through the portal to book an appointment?
- Is there anything confusing or unclear about the navigation from the homepage to the appointment booking section?

3. Appointment Booking Process

- How easy or difficult is it for you to book an appointment on the portal? Can you describe any challenges you've faced?
- Are you aware of all the options available when booking an appointment (e.g, "Type of Service", "Appointment Reason")?
- Do you feel like you need to know certain details, like the "Type of Service" or "Appointment Reason", before booking an appointment? How do you feel about this?
- At what point in the booking process do you usually encounter the most difficulty?

4. Tracking and Modifying Appointment Information

- Are you able to track what options (e.g, service type, appointment reason) you've selected during the booking process?
- Can you easily change the "Appointment Reason" or "Type of Service" after you've started booking your appointment? How do you feel about that?

5. Location and Appointment Confirmation

- Are you able to figure out the location of the appointment just by looking at the appointment headings on the student appointments page?

- Do you think the location should be clearer or more prominently displayed? If so, how could that be improved?
- How do you prefer to verify your mobile number while booking? Did you find this step straightforward on the portal?

6. Notifications and Acknowledgement

- After you book an appointment, do you receive any notifications or acknowledgments that confirm your appointment?
- Do you feel that these notifications are clear and helpful? What would you like to see in a confirmation notification?

7. Preferences and Alternative Methods

- Would you prefer to book an appointment via phone call or through the website? Why?
- Do you feel that any aspect of the booking process would be easier or more efficient with a phone call? Or do you prefer the self-service approach through the portal?

8. Closing Questions

- Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the OSU Student Health Portal or the appointment booking system?
- Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

3. An exhaustive inventory of the elements Observed during interview

The people in the space:

Our participant, Mekala, is a second-term mechanical engineering student at Oregon State University. He had used the OSU Patient Portal only once before, suggesting limited familiarity. The data collection took place over Zoom on April 30, 2025, with all four team members present to observe. We began by introducing ourselves and explaining the purpose of the session. Then, we presented him with a scenario in which he had to book a health appointment using the portal.

Objects in the space and with the people:

During the session, Mekala primarily interacted with his laptop, which he used to access and navigate the OSU Student Health Portal. He wore earphones for clear communication during the Zoom call. The functional objects involved in the task included his keyboard and trackpad, the Patient Portal interface, and external tools like Google Search, which he used when the OSU website's internal navigation proved unhelpful. On his desk, there were additional personal items such as a pen, a phone stand, and his laptop, though he didn't use any paper or physical notes during the session.

The environment:

Mekala completed the task in his personal bedroom, a shared living space that served as a quiet and comfortable environment for the session. He was seated on a blue chair at a desk with his laptop placed in front of him, and wore a red t-shirt, indicating a relaxed, casual setting. The lighting was sufficient, with light reflecting off the wall behind him, providing clear visibility of his surroundings. Although a roommate occasionally moved in the background, the overall space remained distraction-free, allowing Mekala to stay focused on the task.

4. Attach your raw data: detailed observations with sketches and interview answers

The screenshot displays the 'myhealth.oregonstate.edu' portal for user Saathwik Mekala. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Home, Profile, Medical Clearances, Health History, Appointments (highlighted), Referrals, Handouts (5 items), Messages (1 item), Letters, Downloadable Forms, Insurance Card, Surveys & Questionnaires, Medical Records, and Personal Records. The main content area is titled 'Appointments for Saathwik Mekala' and includes a 'Schedule an Appointment' button. A notice states: 'Online appointment scheduling is limited. For full availability call 541-737-9355. If you are having a medical emergency dial 9-1-1 immediately.' Below this, a warning reads: 'PLEASE DO NOT SELF-SCHEDULE if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:' followed by a bulleted list: Chest pain with difficulty breathing, severe pain or pressure; Severe stomach pain lasting more than 2 hours; Fainting/Loss of consciousness; Head injury with severe headache or loss of consciousness; Fever, pelvic pain, worsening sores/blisters, severe bleeding (bleeding through your pad or tampon every 1-2 hours); and Work related injury. A footer note mentions: 'For telehealth appointments, your provider will be with you within 15 minutes of your scheduled time. If more than 15 minutes has passed and your provider still has not logged on, call 541-737-9355.' The bottom of the screen shows the Windows taskbar with the time 9:14 PM on 4/30/2025.

Branch - Student Health Web

OSU Search

Student Health Services | Stu...

myhealth.oregonstate.edu/MyC/Branch

Oregon State University

Home

Profile

Medical Clearances

Health History

Appointments

Referrals

Handouts 3 Unread

Messages 1 Unread

Letters

Downloadable Forms

Insurance Card

Surveys & Questionnaires

Medical Records

Personal Records

Log Out

Student Appointments

☒ Rapid Care @ Tebeau for Minor Illness or Injury

- Cold/Flu Symptoms
- Seasonal Allergies
- Bladder/Urinary Tract Infection
- Pink Eye
- Earache or Ear Infection
- Skin Irritation or Rash
- Minor Sprain/Strain

☐ Health Clinic (by Beser Stadium) or Telehealth Appointment

- Minor Illness or Injury
- HIV Prevention/PEP/PrEP
- Reproductive or Sexual Health Concern
- STI Testing
- Gender Affirming Care
- Annual Wellness or Physical Exam
- Mental Health
- Other Medical Concerns

☐ Immunization/Vaccine Appointment

☐ Nutrition Consult

Online Services

☐ Emergency Contraception

Continue

Cancel

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Oregon State University
Corvallis 541-737-9225
Cascadia 541-322-3100

Language: English (United States)

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MEXALA SAATHWIK

nikhilgattu

Specify Appointment Reason

OSU Search

Student Health Services | Stu...

myhealth.oregonstate.edu/appointments_book_reason.aspx

Oregon State University

Home

Profile

Medical Clearances

Health History

Appointments

Referrals

Handouts 3 Unread

Messages 1 Unread

Letters

Downloadable Forms

Insurance Card

Surveys & Questionnaires

Medical Records

Personal Records

Immunizations

Log Out

Specify Appointment Reason

Use the menu to select a reason for your visit:

Obtuse, insect

Obtuse

Obtuse

Obtuse Pain

Obtuse Problem

Obtuse Sprain/Strain

Obtuse Congestion

Obtuse Eye

Obtuse Pregnancy Test

Obtuse

Obtuse to Activity Note

Obtuse Allergy Symptoms

☒ Sore Throat

Obtuse Symptoms

Continue

Cancel

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Oregon State University

Language: English (United States)

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MEXALA SAATHWIK

swathigangi

Note:

- Mehala
- first term
- Health Portal used b4
- in his room, sharing screen thru zoom
- search - oregon state to find portal
- "health port" → not found
- search "patient portal" hard
- Give link instead
- press schedule appointment
- info around "not necessary"
- locate appointment quickly
- Cold, sore throat : scenario
- easy choice on where
- System should have show symptom first
- not sure where is Tebean Hall or Health Center
- Not sure what to book 2 appoint for Cold, Sore throat. No options for multi symptoms
- Reason and location should be 4 page
- Need more images
- There's no edit option to validation of phone number
- "Start over" . S/o has urgent need → big problem.
- also frustrating
- Go through too many clicks to appointments
- Address : state should be dropdown, no check zip. Reason we can change address becoz we may change house → easier to change addr
- Country is redundant, we already live in US

- Too many process for sth urgent
- No info on what to do when emergency
- Should be auto when first in appointment page
- No mention of penalty if no-show
- No appo found → he go to health center instead
- system don't describe how it searches available dates.
- Should have give you nearest avail appointment
- Phone call is faster
- Can't choose multi symptoms
- No way to edit existing appointment

Interview (Mepala Saathuk)

- 1) finding hard to find the portal
- 2) easy to find the appointment (sometimes takes issues)
- 3) The place for the appointment is confused
- 4) In specify appointment reason there is only one reason that can be selected.
- 5) NO proper validation in the callback number page.
- 6) difficult to find info about reasons selection
 - Cannot go back and should start from the first page again
 - no proper information about the timing and booking part.
 - the appointment via call should be mentioned in the 1st place
 - cannot select two symptoms at a time
 - No good info about emergency care and the fine if the appointment is unattended without further cancellation.

5. With the detailed observations, point out the places that provide Results/Insights and say what they are:

Based on the detailed observation of Mekala's interaction with the OSU Patient Portal, several results and insights directly answer your research questions and reveal additional usability concerns relevant to improving the patient experience.

Results/Insights from Research Questions:

- **Can the user easily find the "Appointments" tab/link from the homepage?**
No. Mekala struggled to locate the Patient Portal through the OSU Student Health Services website. He scanned the homepage multiple times, paused for a few seconds, and moved the cursor back and forth over unrelated tabs like "Contact" and "Forms". Eventually, he turned to Google for help, which he described as his usual workaround.
- **Does the user understand how easy or hard it is to book an appointment?**
He found the process confusing and unintuitive, especially when dealing with location names and form limitations. His willingness to book separate appointments for multiple symptoms shows the process was not straightforward.
- **Does the user need prior information (like "Type of Service" or "Appointment Reason") to book an appointment?**
Yes. Mekala appeared unsure about what to select as the reason for his visit and struggled because he could only choose one symptom, suggesting that users need clearer guidance beforehand.
- **Is the user able to track what options or reasons they have selected previously during the booking process?**
No. There was no feedback mechanism or clear summary of selections during the process, leading to confusion and potential repetition.
- **Can the user change the "Appointment Reason" or "Type of Service" after making a booking?**
No. If a mistake was made, there was no way to undo or revise it he had to restart the entire booking process from the beginning.
- **Will the user be able to figure out the location of the appointment by looking at appointment headings in the student appointments page?**
No. Mekala was unfamiliar with place names like Tebeau Hall and the Health Clinic, and there was no map or description to help him understand where the appointment would be held.

- **Will the user be able to verify/validate his/her mobile number?**
No. The portal lacked phone number verification, and the address form didn't validate ZIP codes or states either.
- **Will the user get any notification/acknowledgement about their booking?**
This was not observed directly during the session. However, based on his confusion and the lack of clear confirmation feedback, it's likely the notification process is not prominent or intuitive.
- **Does the user prefer booking an appointment via phone call or the website?**
Given the difficulties faced, Mekala stated he would prefer calling the clinic directly in urgent cases, indicating that the current digital system is not meeting user expectations.

Additional Insights Relevant to the Patient:

- The lack of visual cues or icons made navigation harder, especially for users with limited experience.
- The presence of real-life distractions (like a roommate moving around) highlights the importance of a clear, simple, and focused interface.
- The system design does not accommodate multi-symptom inputs, which fails to reflect real-world health scenarios where students often have more than one concern.

6. **With the interview answers, point out the places that provide Results/Insights and say what they are:**

What are the answers to your research questions from the interview?

- **Can the user easily find the "Appointments" tab/link from the homepage?**

Answer from interview: Mekala said he couldn't find the Patient Portal easily through the OSU Student Health Services homepage. He ended up using Google to search for it instead.

Insight: The current homepage layout and navigation structure are not intuitive, even for someone familiar with OSU systems.

- **Does the user understand how easy or hard it is to book an appointment?**

Answer from interview: He described the experience as “a little confusing”, especially the steps involving clinic locations and symptom selection.

Insight: While the process is technically functional, it lacks clarity and confidence-building features, especially for infrequent users.

- **Does the user need prior information (like "Type of Service" or "Appointment Reason") to book an appointment?**

Answer from interview: he said he wasn't sure what each option meant, and would have liked explanations or example scenarios. Example: what does “PrEP”, “Gender Affirming Care” means?

Insight: The UI assumes users understand clinical terms or categories, but students may not know how to classify their concerns.

- **Is the user able to track what options or reasons they have selected previously during the booking process?**

Answer from interview: Mekala said he couldn't easily see a summary of what he selected. He mentioned feeling unsure if he was “doing it right.”

Insight: There is no progress tracker or review summary, which adds cognitive load and reduces user confidence.

- **Can the user change the "Appointment Reason" or "Type of Service" after making a booking?**

Answer from interview: He noted that he couldn't go back or edit once a mistake was made, he had to restart the booking.

Insight: The portal lacks flexibility or undo options, which is frustrating for users making errors mid-process.

- **Will the user be able to figure out the location of the appointment by looking at appointment headings in the student appointments page?**

Answer from interview: He said names like “Tebeau Hall” were confusing and he didn't know where that was or if it was a clinic.

Insight: Location info is not contextualized or mapped, which is a barrier for first-time visitors.

- **Will the user be able to verify/validate his/her mobile number?**

Answer from interview: He mentioned that the form did not validate the number or ZIP code, and the “country” field felt unnecessary.

Insight: The lack of input validation can lead to incorrect data entry, especially under time pressure.

- **Will the user get any notification/acknowledgement about their booking?**

Answer from interview: He remembered getting an email in the past, but said there was no immediate confirmation screen or reassuring message this time.

Insight: The system provides weak real-time feedback, which leaves users unsure if they’ve succeeded.

- **Does the user prefer booking an appointment via phone call or the website?**

Answer from interview: He said in urgent or confusing cases, he would rather call the clinic than use the portal.

Insight: The digital process lacks trust and immediacy, making users fall back on traditional methods.

What other insights did you get from this that are relevant to your "patient"?

- Mekala said the portal felt “very bare”, he wanted more visual elements to guide the process.
- He was surprised that no appointment slots showed up, and no error message or guidance was provided.
- He believed students should be able to list multiple symptoms instead of booking separate appointments.

7. Triangulate your Results/Insights from the observation and interview data with your Heuristic Evaluation by stating and numbering which issues/bugs were common to both with an ID number.

ID	Heuristic matched	Issue Observed in Part 3	Observation/Interview Evidence
1	Heuristic #1 – Visibility of System Status	User only saw a brief “Booking Successful” screen, no clear on-screen feedback, no SMS or email immediately.	User was unsure if booking was successful or if a notification would come.
2	Heuristic #2 – Match Between System and Real World	User was confused by location names (e.g, “Tebeau Hall”), unfamiliar service labels, and medical terminology.	User couldn’t recognize locations or services; stated names were unclear.
3	Heuristic #3 – User Control and Freedom	No way to go back or edit once a mistake was made, user had to restart the whole process.	User said he wished he could go back and change inputs without starting over.
4	Heuristic #5 – Error Prevention	No validation when entering phone number, ZIP code, or address fields.	User commented that there was no warning or check when entering incorrect info.
5	Heuristic #6 – Recognition Rather than	No dropdowns, tooltips, or autofill in address entry user had to remember	User had to type ZIP manually and guessed on inputs due to lack

	Recall	details manually.	of prompts.
6	Heuristic #8 – Aesthetic and Minimalist Design	Interface felt “bare” with no visual cues; made the process feel unintuitive.	User mentioned interface looked plain and lacked helpful visual guidance.
7	Heuristic #9 – Help Users Recognize, Diagnose, and Recover from Errors	No message explained why no appointments showed user didn’t know what to change.	When no slots appeared, user wasn’t told why or how to fix it.
8	Heuristic #10 – Help and Documentation	No tooltip or helper text for “Type of Service” or “Reason for Visit”.	User was confused about category choices and wanted guidance or examples.