

GetItDone

Giving Students Time Management Tools to Reduce Stress and Improve Control of Time

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Background

Our project is focused on how college (specifically, Cornell University) students keep track of their tasks and manage their time in order to complete their obligations. We have found that generally, students do not have an enjoyable experience managing their time and workload. For our project, we worked towards creating a design solution able to help college students manage their workload in such a way that would lead to a productive and balanced lifestyle.

Methods

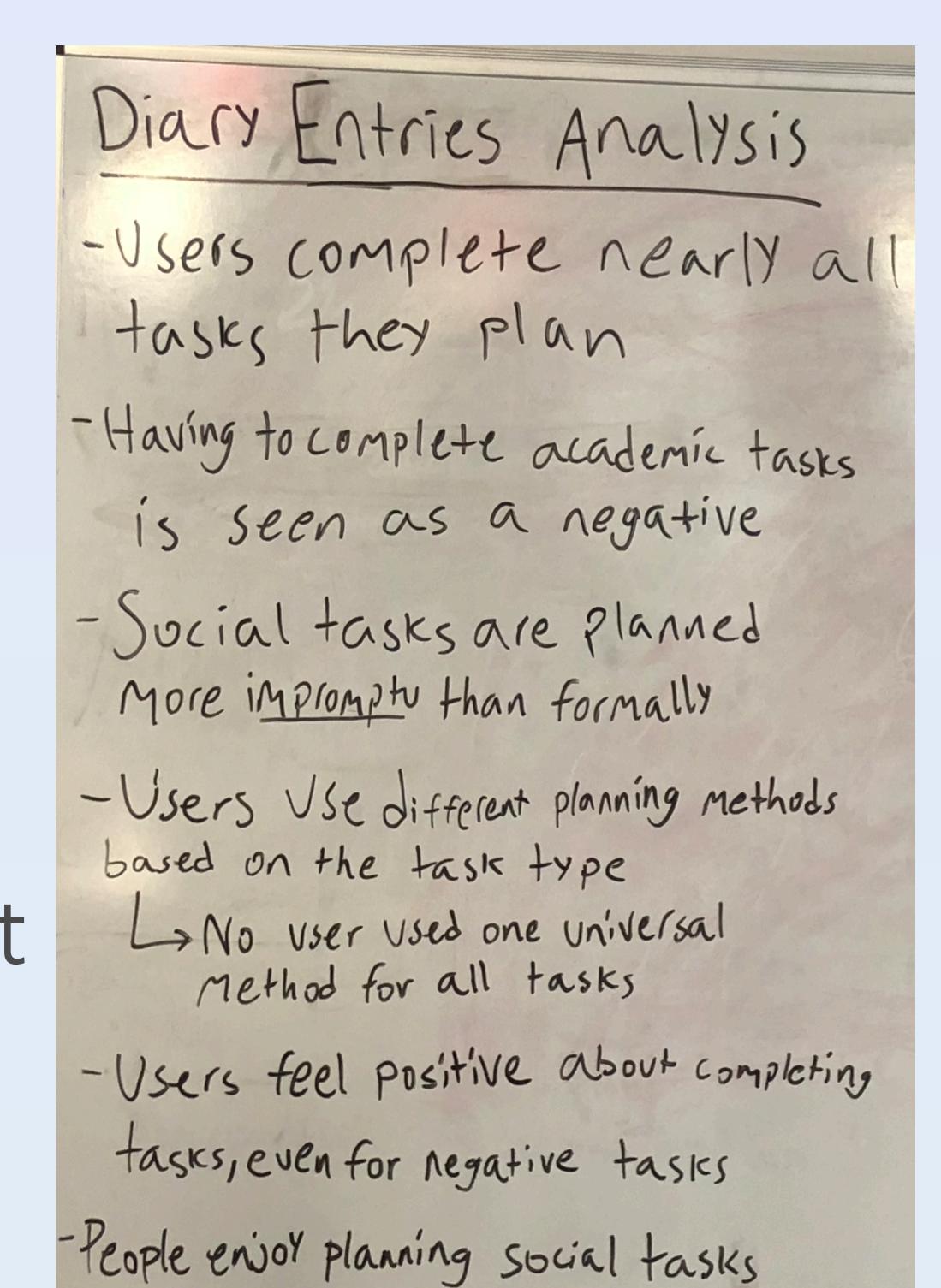
DIARY STUDY

- **Purpose:** get a closer look at the everyday behaviors and methods that students employ.
- **Procedure:** track the task management and scheduling of college students.
- Helped formulate initial design concept



Analysis & Insights

- Planning is context-dependent
- Like having a visual representation of tasks
- Like breaking large tasks into smaller tasks
- Academic tasks are prioritized
- No interest in using current smart assistants, but showed interest if devices are more adaptive.



USER ENACTMENT

- **Purpose:** get a better understanding of what students value, regarding task management
- **Procedure:** scripted scenarios in a simulated futuristic environment we have constructed
- Helped formulate final design concept

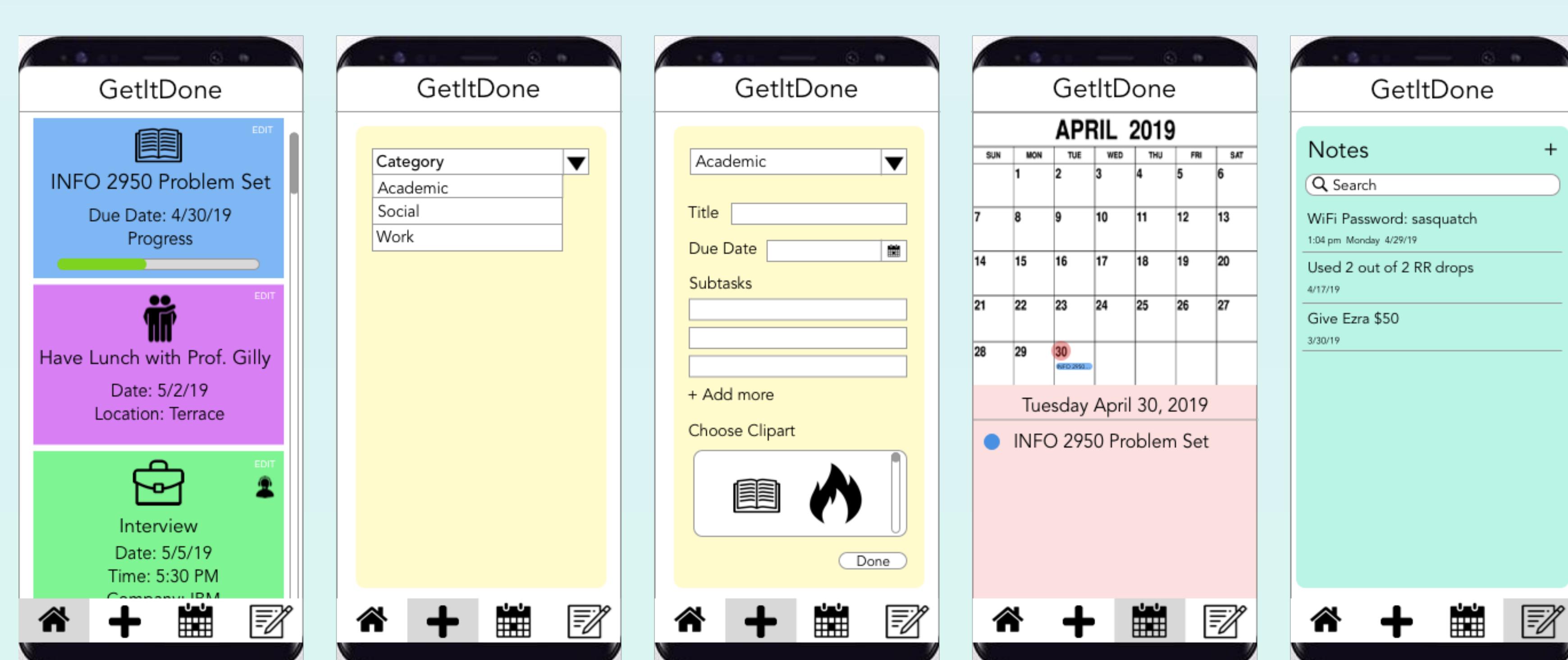
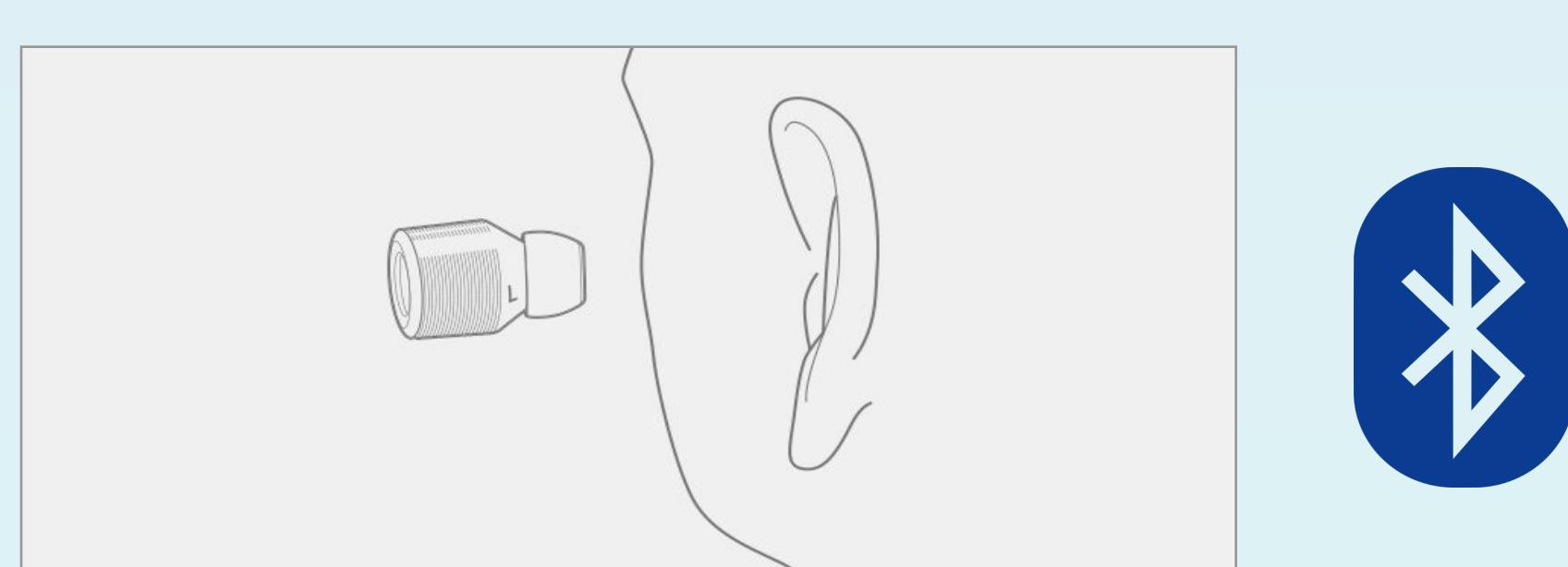
- Overall dislike for the smart assistant earbuds
- Parsing of data from multiple sources is most helpful for accurate information
- Users prefer more flexibility in planning to make impromptu plans, due to the unpredictable nature of a college student's life

Initial Design Concept

Smart Earbud Personal Assistant

Design: Smart earbud that connects to mobile app via bluetooth.

Functionality: Smart earbud will remind user of important and upcoming tasks that are inputted into the app. The user can input tasks through the app directly or command the personal assistant to save an event or task into their schedule.

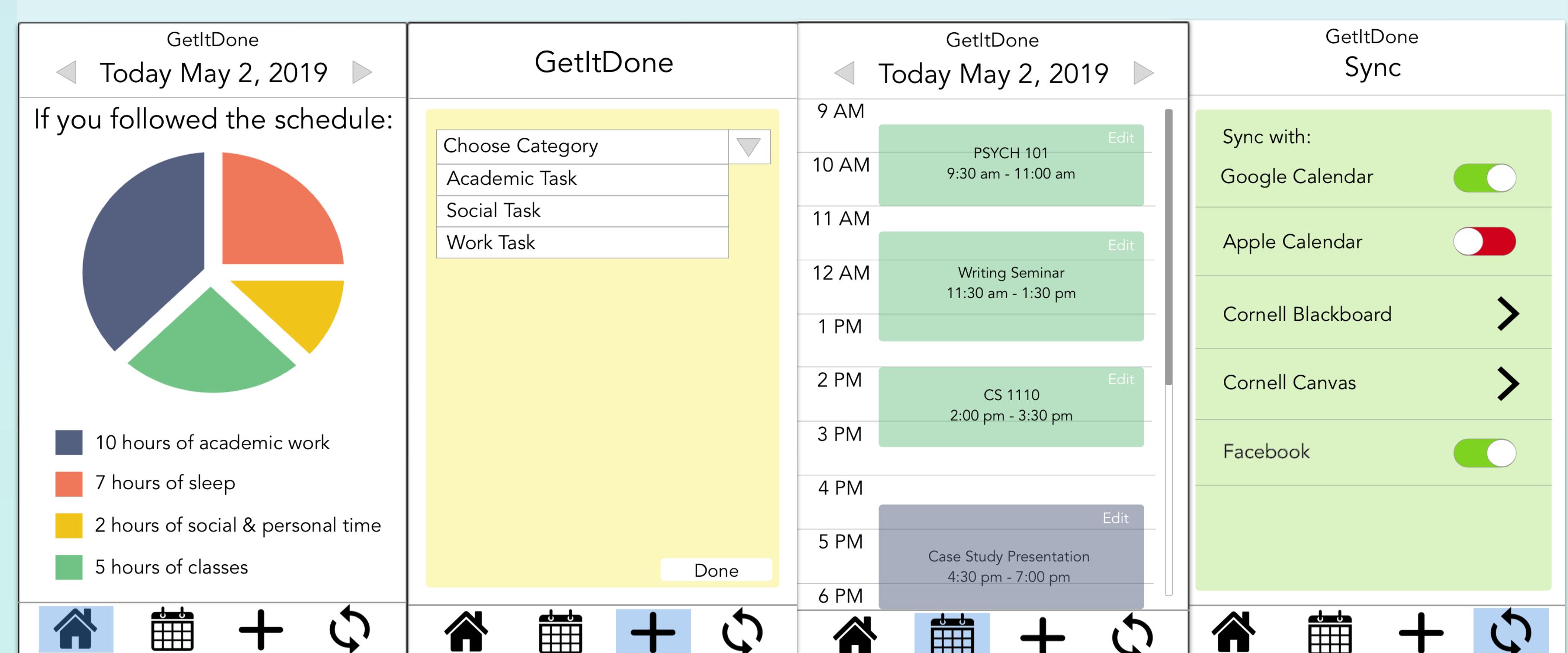


Final Design Concept

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Design: Mobile application

Functionality: The app will allow users to sync their deadlines from external sources, like Blackboard and Canvas, to create a more seamless experience for managing their tasks. Additionally, the app will create a suggested schedule by taking into consideration approaching deadlines and constant work and class schedules, which the user can move around to fit their impromptu lifestyles. Lastly, the home screen will summarize and breakdown the amount of hours taken for each task to show how the user is managing their time and tasks daily.



Design Implications & Conclusion

College students, especially those at Cornell, have a lot on their plate. Though they are diligent about getting their work done by the deadline, their heavy workloads have a negative impact on their stress and moods. However, task management plays into workload. We know that we can not change student workload directly. However, user research shows that we can intervene at the point where students manage their plans in order to help them feel like they can get things done and still have a balanced schedule. From our project, we hope to contribute to the HCI and design community that when faced with an invariable problem (ex. heavy workloads for college students), there is still a space for a design solution. In this case, designing to improve the way students interact with that invariable problem and making a meaningful improvement to the amount of perceived control and stress levels.