CPSC 430 Usability Study

Section 1: Overview of System Functionality

A)   We are in the development progress of developing a web-based system that will allow users to review companies that they have worked for in the past. The intended users for our system will be University of Mary Washington students that have declared their major to be Computer Science. The jobs that they are writing reviews for should be internships that these students have completed. The purpose of this system is to allow other Computer Science students to read past reviews from other students. This will allow them to get a good idea of the companies that are recruiting UMW students, and what it is like to work for them. We assume that our users are computer literate and will be able to effectively navigate a typical web-based system.

The first thing a user should do to interact with our system is to navigate to the domain that we have selected for our product. Upon arrival, they will see a splash page with a short list of user reviews, and a toolbar at the top that will allow them to either login or register to complete new company reviews. They should click one of these options to progress. If the user is registering, they will need to supply a UMW email address, or the registration process will reject the request. If they are logging in, and the process is successful, they will be greeted with a slightly different splash page. This new page will have the option for them to create a new review. Once they click the button that says, "Create Review", they will be directed to the review creation page. This new page will have a form that the user should fill out in order to submit a company review. Once all required fields have been filled, the submit button will be able to be clicked. The user should see their new review populated into the review list once the administrator has approved their submission.

Admin users will follow a similar process. The one difference is that they will see a button on their splash page that take them to the "review approval" page. This page will allow the admin to approve or reject all new reviews that are submitted by regular users. The process will be for the admin user to select a review, read the user's review that pops up, and to click the reject or accept button at the end.

Section 2: Imaginary Users

A) In an attempt to anticipate the various types of users that will be utilizing our web-site, we have created three imaginary users of various backgrounds. We will be discussing how they may interact with our site and what they might think during the process.

User 1. Quentin

- Quentin is a junior University of Mary Washington student. He is assertive and knows exactly what he wants out of life. His passion for computer science has given him the drive to complete two internships during each of his previous summers. He feels compelled to provide information on his experiences to his fellow students, and desires to provide that information via our web platform. His knowledge pertaining to technology and computers allows him to deftly maneuver through the review process and quickly completes several well written reviews that are approved by the administrator. Features that are important to Quentin will be a well-designed review submission process, as his time is valuable, and he would like to provide suitable amounts of information for his friends to able to see.

User 2. Josh

- Josh is a senior at the University of Mary Washington. He is aggressive and not very passionate about the major he has chosen. He has coasted off the backs of other students for most of his time at the University and cannot be considered knowledgeable about Software Engineering (or technology in general). Josh has completed one internship that he received because he was related to a hiring manager. Unfortunately, Josh was not offered a full-time position with the company and would now like to write a scathing review of his experience. Due to his lack of foresight, Josh did not recall any of what he was tasked with doing during the internship. Because of this, Josh's review was useless. It also contained unsuitable language for the standards of a UMW based website. Josh's review was rejected by the administrator. The feature that is most important to Josh will be the ability to submit an anonymous review so that he cannot be criticized by his fellow students or his previous employer.

User 3. Alice

- Alice is a University of Mary Washington student completing her Freshman year in the computer science program. Alice is very bright and wants to prepare for her future as a software engineer. She has come to our website so that she can read reviews that other students have submitted about their previous employers. Alice tends to skip over what she deems to be useless information and gets
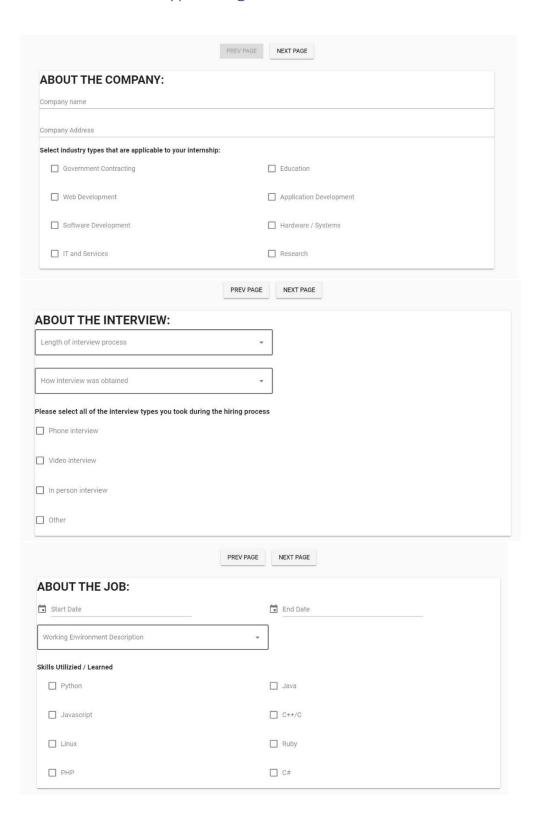
annoyed when she can't do so efficiently. Due to this personality trait, the feature that will be most important to her will be a broad and effective search feature. This feature should provide the user the ability to filter out companies that they are not interested in based on numerous categories.

Section 3: User Model

A) My name is John Herrin, and I am a student at the University of Mary Washington. I am part of a group that is developing a website for Computer Science interns here at UMW. The website will allow these students to write and share reviews for companies that they have worked for in the past. The website will also allow users to read past students reviews and filter them to their liking. We are creating this website so that students can find new companies that they may wish to work for, as well as to provide them a place to share their experiences to others.

B) The primary function that I have chosen to discuss is the ability to submit new reviews. Below, you will find a list of comments that I have acquired from my focus group in reference to this proposed functionality.   These comments will display how each user thinks this functionality should operate.

  - ➢ User: Caleb
      - i. How will you interact with it?
          - • "I don't want to see a lot of clutter. Remember KISS. Keep It Simple Stupid. I want to be able to click through it quickly"
      - ii. What should you be able to do with it?
          - • "I want to be able to tell others if they should work here or not"
      - iii. What should you not be able to do with it?
          - • "I shouldn't be able to trash talk people by name"
      - iv. What's important to you for this?
          - • "I want to rate the company"

  - ➢ User: Sam
      - i. How will you interact with it?
          - • "Hopefully mostly by mouse. I don't like typing"
      - ii. What should you be able to do with it?
          - • "I want to say what cool things the company offers"
      - iii. What should you not be able to do with it?
          - • "It shouldn't have my name attached to it. I wouldn't use this if they can see it's me writing these things"
      - iv. What's important to you for this?
          - • "Being anonymous"

- ➢ User: Michelle
    - i. How will you interact with it?
        - • "I want it to ask me a lot of specific things so I can get my feelings out there. I like to express my opinions."
    - ii. What should you be able to do with it?
        - • "I should be able to save a draft of what I'm writing if I don't want to finish the review all at once. "
    - iii. What should you not be able to do with it?
        - • "It shouldn't do that stupid thing where if you accidentally click the back button, it erases your whole review."
    - iv. What's important to you for this?
        - • "I want to talk! Give me a section where I can express my views and not just pick pre-selected answers."

- ➢ User: Richard
    - i. How will you interact with it?
        - • "By clicking buttons only. I'll probably avoid typing a lot."
    - ii. What should you be able to do with it?
        - • "I should be able to rate the company poorly if they were really bad. Don't just give me a scale of average to great."
    - iii. What should you not be able to do with it?
        - • "I shouldn't be able to give confusing answers. If there are two questions that look the same, remove them. I could see dummys answering these in two different ways and confusing everyone."
    - iv. What's important to you for this?
        - • "Don't prevent me from finishing the review if I haven't written a bunch of text. I will quit the website immediately."

C) Based on the opinions collected from the focus group, I can conclude that user interactions for this website will vary based on typing capabilities. Some users will want mostly mouse interaction, while some will want to provide elongated responses. A common theme also seems have emerged on anonymity for both the reviewer and the reviewee. The review creation process should also have a draft saving capability, at least in a basic form. Users desire to have the ability to provide an honest opinion and should not be held back from expressing negative views.

Section 4: Prototype Images

ABOUT THE COMPANY:

Company name

Company Address

Select industry types that are applicable to your internship:

☐ Government Contracting   ☐ Education

☐ Web Development   ☐ Application Development

☐ Software Development   ☐ Hardware / Systems

☐ IT and Services   ☐ Research

ABOUT THE INTERVIEW:

Length of interview process   ▾

How interview was obtained   ▾

Please select all of the interview types you took during the hiring process

☐ Phone interview

☐ Video interview

☐ In person interview

☐ Other

ABOUT THE JOB:

📅 Start Date   📅 End Date

Working Environment Description   ▾

Skills Utilizied / Learned

☐ Python   ☐ Java

☐ Javascript   ☐ C++/C

☐ Linux   ☐ Ruby

☐ PHP   ☐ C#

YOUR OPINION:

Rate This Company ▾

Summary of your experience with the company

Section 5: Focus Group Feedback

A) After meeting with the same focus group from section 3 and providing them with the prototype from section 4, I was able to ascertain several quick conclusions about the current design idea. All of the focus group was able to determine that the buttons at the top of each image would navigate you through each page of the reviews. Most were happy with the fact that there was only one section that you had to provide a written review. Michelle wanted a few more typable sections, but she understood that the majority of the group wanted a more mouse-oriented experience. Everyone understood how the checkbox groups worked, but one member didn't grasp that the boxes with the arrow on the side was a drop-down menu. This problem should be alleviated once the website is live as they will be able to click around see how the form behaves. One focus group member suggested that the lines for "Company Name" and "Company Address" be shorter so that users know they need to type something there. It was unclear to them that these were text boxes. They instead appeared to be section separators to the user.

B) Overall, the current prototype seemed to be a success. I am happy that most members of the group were able to tell what they should do through just the prototype images. The few problems that arose should be solved once the product is in a tangible format.

Section 6: Changes

A) The biggest change that will need to be made will be the appearance of the "Company Name" and "Company Address" text boxes. It does appear that they might provide users with a confusing experience. These lines will be shortened in the future.