

ASSIGNMENT 3: LOW-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE

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UW STUDENT JOB PORTAL

Introduction

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has extensive career opportunities for those who are seeking one. Many departments recruit students to join their workforce since students offer the skills and talents that they require. Because of that, the UW-Madison Office of Financial Aid provided a job search platform for students.

Our project focuses on the User Interaction and User Experience components of the job portal.



Figure 1 shows the main page of the job portal

As you can see, the website is cluttered, and it's difficult to search for the right job you are looking for. For instance, the job categories on the left-hand side are very extensive, it goes until the bottom of the page. Not to mention that not all categories are available. On top of that, we compared the UW student job portal to other mainstream job portals such as Indeed.com. Just by comparing both designs, we are determined that the filters and categorization can be improved. More filters such as pay rates and locations can be added to make the search functionality better.

As a group, we came up with two main users of the UW student job portal: undergraduate and graduate students. This is because the job categories in the job portal fit both main users.



Figure 2 shows the main users of the job portal

To conduct a contextual inquiry, we have to interview users with different skills and backgrounds. The reason is to broaden our findings so that it applies to more students in UW-Madison. We came up with three criteria which are: different school years, technological proficiency, and work-study eligibility.

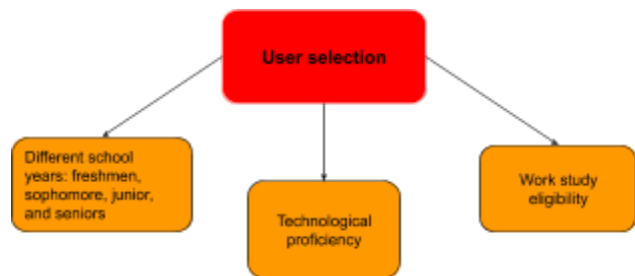


Figure 3 shows the criteria to select users for a contextual inquiry

The context of the contextual inquiry needs to be in a college setting where students will be asked to access the UW student job portal and apply for a specific job. We would like to determine how students use the current website's functionality to search for a specific job, update their account, and lookup for job status. All in all, we hope that data collected from the contextual inquiry will give enough information for us to provide a better solution to the website.

PAPER PROTOTYPE IDEATION

After conducting contextual inquiry, we collected and analyzed most breakdowns that users were having. Some of the breakdowns are: (1) Disorganized job filters (2) Bad page layout. We started the design process by sketching two designs of the UW Job portal's main page.

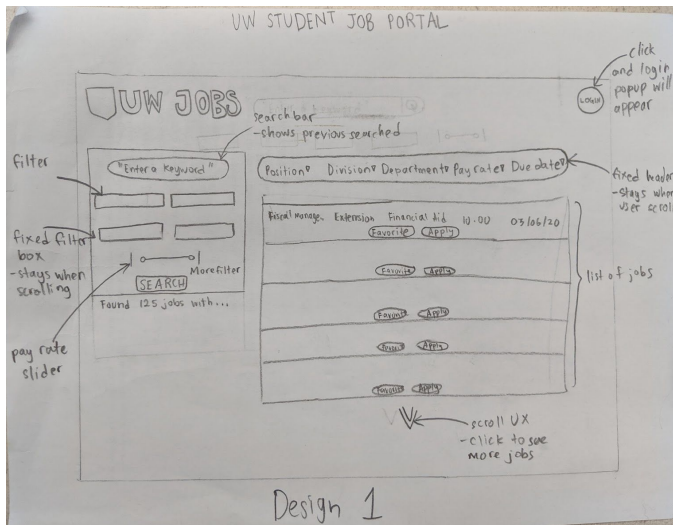


Figure 4 shows the first sketch of the main page

For the first sketch, we were trying to imitate the current UW Job portal but with features added and removed based on what we learned from experiences from the interviews. While imitating, we improved the website layouts, used better UX icons for the filters, better search bar, and introduced job sorting. Based on the CI, the user was having a breakdown going back to the search bar and filters, ones located on the left hand side of the portal, after scrolling to the bottom of the page. Therefore, we redesigned the search bar and filters so that it would be fixed on the specific location of the screen so that even after scrolling down the page, it will stay there.

On top of that, we added a sorting feature for all categories. This feature is added because in the CI, users were having difficulty finding the highest pay rate since there is no filter regarding wage so they had to scroll and compare with other jobs manually. Users can click on the "Pay Rate" and the pay rate will be sorted numerically. For every job, users can mark as favorite and/or Apply

by clicking the buttons. Marking as favorite will store the job on their Account and Apply will bring them to the Application page.

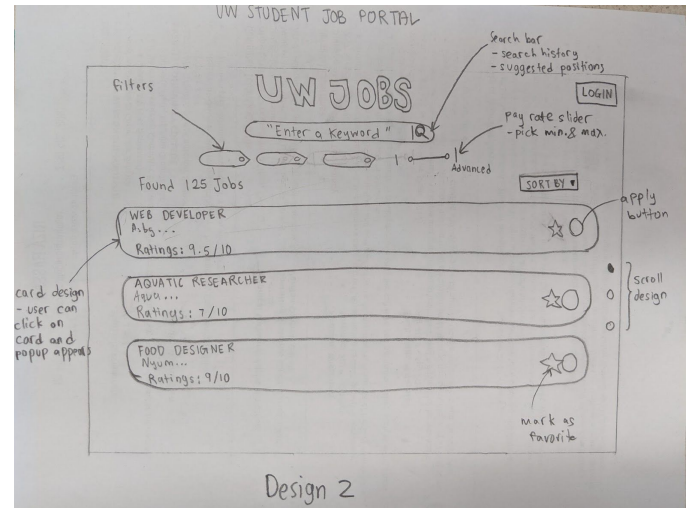


Figure 5 shows the second sketch of the main page

For the second sketch, we wanted to drastically change the page layout, filters and categories, job information, and sorting. The reason is because we want to design a page that adapts to the current trend of contemporary and minimalist design. First and foremost, jobs are listed in card layouts. Every job has its own cards that show some information. Also, the cards of jobs are fixed on that center page section. We believe this is more organized and easier for users to see than just listing all the jobs. When the user scrolls to different pages, the content of the cards will be replaced with jobs on other pages.

Next, the search bar has better UX. When a user searches for a keyword, it shows the previous searched keyword and provides job suggestions. Furthermore, we placed all sortings as a dropdown menu on the right hand side. These sorting includes sort by wages or ratings which were not provided before. Users can sort the jobs by selecting options they want from the dropdown menu.

DESIGN DISCUSSION

Our team decided to choose design 2 because of the latest design of UI features and the ease of use. Our focus in the design is to be minimalistic and less complex in our design for the ease of the usability for our users and also have a contemporary design appearance.

Design 2 utilizes enhanced search bar with search history and suggested positions, combo boxes for our sorting functions, and a fixed filter accompanied through the search and scroll process. The new section-by-section scroll bar on the right hand side allows users to search effectively and efficiently, allowing them to revisit other jobs that they may have not saved. This feature is not provided in a typical vertical scroll bar.

The key difference between our Design 1 and Design 2 is that Design 2 uses a card layout featuring different jobs in different compartments on the website rather than a series of lists. Using a series of lists makes it less visually appealing and since the list has extensive information for every job, it is difficult for the user to understand every detail while making a decision.

Our overall explanation is that Design 1 resemble closely the existing design of the Student Jobs website with a few new updates but not fully acknowledging the user experience. On the other hand, Design 2 has additional UI/UX functions based on user evaluation experience.

In Design 1, filtering on the left section was minimized by merging the search bar with not too

many extensive filters. The header categories for sorting in Design 1 in alpha-numerical order have been changed to a simple combo box in design 2. Also, the information in the job list of Design 1 includes all categories within the applied options and favorite's buttons which might seem overwhelming to the user. So, we redesigned that in a way where detailed information can be viewed through a pop up when mouse cursor is hovered over the job title, allowing the user to not feel overwhelmed while getting access to all necessary information.

Based on the above, we chose design 2 for better visual appearance which eliminated aspects of complexity and showed focusing on enhanced usability and efficiency.

The designs are based on what we had derived from the contextual inquiry conducted last week. After the interview, we were able to analyze the job portal's layout with an artifact model. The artifact model shows us that UX can be improved by adding a sorting feature. That is why we chose to have a sorting drop-down-menu. On top of that, the sequence and flow model used in CI showed that the job portal has extensive filters and categories that are hard to read by users. Based on that model, we came up with the idea to design a few filters under the search bar with an option to have more filters by clicking "All filters" in Design 2.

USER ASSUMPTIONS

We can assume some of our users come from financially well off households while others may be from financially less advantaged households affecting their opportunities to resources such as the latest technology and/or the education needed to be competent. We also need to acknowledge and assume that the personality and thought of users may differ from person to person such that some individuals may be quick-witted, others slow learners, others with an impatient personality tending to give up easily and others with the curiosity to explore.

Based on the different personalities, we can design a web interface such that makes the user experience for the interface only more easier for the different personality types. The goal is for the interface to be straightforward and provide a clear motive for any personality of a user to achieve in an efficient and successful manner. Our focus will be working to improve or eliminate any breakdowns for any user through their process analysis and provide clarity. If the user can perform to completion effectively, we can focus on efficiency and any unnecessary aspects that may be redundant with our design.

In addition, some users are more experienced in job searching than others. Because

they are more experienced, they have more tendency to skim through job information quicker and probably skips reading just after they read the job title. Therefore, these users might want a better layout that makes their job search easier and faster with less repetitive features.

On top of that, we are assuming that most users are slightly unsure of the specifics of their job search. For instance, a Business major student might not know the exact job title. Therefore, our design is aimed at helping them figuring out the relevant jobs. For example, by selecting basic options like job categories, wages, and student year, the users can easily look for a job that they might want if they don't have specific jobs they want.

Although many students live on campus or near campus, not all students live near campus. Moreover, UW Madison has a huge campus so jobs shown after clicking UW Student jobs does not have significant meaning regarding location. So, we added a location filter. Everyone wants to work at a place that is close to their house and some users live far away from campus. So, when users type in their zip code, or select a certain location, the portal will list jobs that are closest to that point.

FINAL PAPER PROTOTYPE

At the beginning of our research we had the hypothesis based on our own experience that the UW-Student jobs website had some flaws. From our investigation we figured out that the UI flaws slowed down the User Interface process by extending the search time and providing breakdowns in finding their specified jobs. Not only that, the design was very complex consisting of extensive filter categories with many sub-options overwhelming the user in making a decision leading them to breakdowns in their search for a specific job category and wage. Although they were able to find a job, the timing was inefficient.

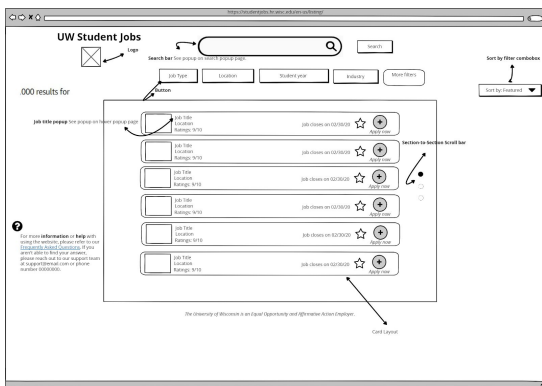


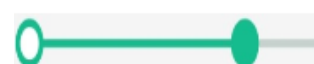
Figure 6 shows the prototype of main page

Our design adopted from Design 2 paper prototype including various UI features such as extensive filters combo boxes and advanced filter popups to better assist the user to finding a suitable specified job, but also to make the user experience less overwhelming with all the search filtering options in the current design of the website. We provide a sort by button as a combobox to filter based on numerical comparison. We also minimize the vertical nature of the categories in original design by creating pop-up categories for the sub-types such as job type, location, student year etc. Additionally, we have more filters button providing option for sliders to filter minimum and maximum numerical values for ratings, wages etc.

Wage (minimum - maximum)



Salary (minimum - maximum)



User Ratings (0 - 10)

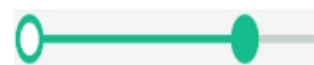


Figure 7 shows advanced filter for wages, salary, and ratings



Figure 8 shows combo box for category selection with business related jobs as stakeholder



Figure 9 shows sorting drop down option with wage, rating, and end date

USER EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

The next step is the user evaluation. We will start the process by interviewing different users as in the first week. To perform this task, we will set a certain context for the interview and provide them with tasks to work on.

Task 1: Create your profile with your latest information and add your latest resume.

01. Login by using appropriate method, as UW Student account or personal login email and password used during sign up
02. Click on the update profile link and fill in or add your latest personal information with email, address, phone number, student status, and other required information as noted by the red asterisk.
03. Click on the education link and fill in your latest education experience such as the school, degree type, institution, year, and major.

Task 2: Find a specific job. Make the user find a specific job in certain filtering categories. Time to see how long it takes and reactions. Find a finance and business job in the College of Letters and Sciences that pays more than \$15 for an hour. Any wage more than 15 or the maximum wage with those criteria will work. Moreover, search for a job that has a good rating.

01. Type in the job in the Search field.
02. Select appropriate Job filters, Job categories, and Job outcomes using the combo box.
03. For example, “UW Student Jobs” for Job filters in job type, search for “Business”, “Management”, and “Marketing categories” in the combo box for industry section, and search “Professionalism/Work Ethic” for Job outcomes.
04. Set wage to over \$15 from the advanced filter section
05. Sort listing based on highest rating.
06. Search for a job that pays more than \$15 an hour or a high wage that meets all the job criteria.

Task 3: Update your original references for the job you applied for.

01. Select “Home” in the navigation panel.
02. In the “Submitted application” column, refer to the correct position that they applied for.
03. Click “...” which would open option for “Update References”.
04. Update the information with the correct information.

Task 4: Withdraw your application.

01. Find the application that they want to withdraw under the “Submitted applications” column.
02. Click “...” which would open option for “Withdraw” for that application
03. Indicate the reason for withdrawal and provide details.
04. Logout by clicking the button in the top right corner.