

Usability test planning and pilot

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Persona

Name: David Luiz

Type: Transfer Graduate Student

Demographics: 26-year-old cybersecurity graduate student currently at UT Austin, considering a transfer to UNC Charlotte

Goals: David is looking for a smooth and informed transfer process. He wants to easily access information on credit transfers, tuition, financial aid options, and how the campus experience at UNC Charlotte might differ from his current university.

Starting Usability Test Plan

Session Duration

The usability test pilot session will last approximately 15 minutes per participant

Goals of the Testing

The goal is to evaluate how effectively a transfer graduate student like David Luiz can navigate the newly designed UNC Charlotte Admissions & Financial Aid website. We aim to test how easy it is to access transfer-related details, including graduate admissions, credit transfer equivalencies, and financial aid options specifically geared toward students coming from other universities.

Script

Hi! Thanks for joining this usability testing session. We'll be walking through a few tasks using a low-fidelity wireframe of the UNC Charlotte Admissions and Financial Aid website. The session will take around 15 minutes. There are no right or wrong answers—just think out loud and act naturally as you go through the site.

Task 1:

You're currently a graduate student at UT Austin considering transferring to UNC Charlotte for a Master's in Cybersecurity. Navigate to the transfer admissions section and locate the graduate application form and any upcoming application deadlines.

Task 2:

Now, look for information about financial aid or scholarships available to transfer graduate students. Try to determine if international or merit-based aid is mentioned anywhere.

Task 3:

Suppose you're confused about whether your previous course credits will transfer. Show how you would look for credit equivalency or contact someone for clarification.

Follow-Up Questions

- How would you describe your experience finding transfer-specific admission information?
- Were you able to easily locate deadlines and requirements?
- How intuitive was the navigation when exploring financial aid details for transfers?
- Did you expect any additional features or content that wasn't available?

Pilot Usability Test Experience

Conducting the pilot with Devaang helped me visualize how a real user like David would explore the site. Devaang adopted the persona well and provided thoughtful navigation paths. Observing him navigate the wireframe highlighted how users might bypass certain sections or need clearer visual cues when searching for transfer-specific resources.

Feedback Received

Devaang shared that the initial script was helpful but could be more focused on the transfer experience. For example, Task 2 initially referred too broadly to financial aid instead of narrowing it to the unique position of a transfer grad student. He also suggested having more user-facing terms (like "Transfer Credit Calculator") to make tasks feel realistic. Lastly, he felt that transitions between tasks could be more fluid to simulate a real use case flow.

Revised Usability Test Instructions**Session Duration**

15 minutes

Goals of the Testing

To evaluate how well transfer graduate students can access essential information, such as admission timelines, financial aid, and credit transfers, on the newly designed UNC Charlotte website.

Script

Hi! Thanks for joining today. This session will walk you through the UNC Charlotte Admissions and Financial Aid site using a mockup. You'll complete a few tasks, and we'll observe your process. Just think aloud and browse as you normally would.

Task 1:

Imagine you're David Luiz, a UT Austin student looking to transfer into UNC Charlotte's Cybersecurity program. Show how you'd locate the transfer admissions form and figure out the application deadlines.

Task 2:

Now that you've found the application section, look for scholarships or financial aid tailored to transfer graduate students. If nothing stands out, explain what you would do next.

Task 3:

You're unsure if your existing credits from UT Austin will count at UNC Charlotte. Try to locate transfer credit tools or contacts that can help clarify this information.

Follow-Up Questions

- Was the transfer admissions process clearly laid out on the website?
- Did the site address your specific concerns as a transfer student?
- How accessible was the financial aid information?
- Was anything missing or harder to find than expected?

Explanation of Changes

Based on Devaang's feedback, I refined the task descriptions to align more closely with the transfer student experience. I clarified that the persona is a graduate student (not undergrad) and made financial aid instructions more scenario-driven. I also restructured the flow so that tasks simulate a logical progression—admissions, aid, then credit transfers—just as a real user might encounter. These changes make the usability test more realistic and relevant to David Luiz's specific journey.