Milestone Report: Persona Update and Problem Statement Selection for University Admission & Financial Aid Website Design

Part 1: Data Analysis (Themes)

Data Analysis Process:

To revise the **Transfer Student Persona** (David Luiz), I reviewed the data gathered from the interviews with **Jenmy**, **Pranav**, and **Yash**. I focused on their **needs, goals**, and **pain points** when interacting with university websites during the **transfer application** and **financial aid** processes. I identified recurring themes and common patterns that could help us understand the user's **experience** and **challenges** more clearly.

Identified Themes:

1. **Lack of Clear and Transparent Credit Transfer Information**

   - All participants expressed difficulty in understanding how their previous credits would be applied toward their new degree program.
   - Jenmy and Pranav noted that the process for credit transfer was unclear, and they had trouble finding accurate information online.

2. **Confusion with Financial Aid Options**

   - Participants struggled with understanding financial aid options and tuition estimates, particularly related to transfer students.
   - Pranav and Yash highlighted that scholarships and financial aid resources were not clearly tailored to transfer students.

3. **Website Navigation and User Interface Challenges**

   - Many participants reported difficulty navigating the website due to unclear navigation paths and lack of organization in content.
   - Jenmy mentioned the difficulty of finding specific information on transfer-specific financial aid and course credits.

4. **Need for Clearer Transfer Process Guides**

   - David, Jenmy, and Yash all wanted step-by-step guides to help them understand the entire transfer process, from admissions to credit transfers and financial aid applications.
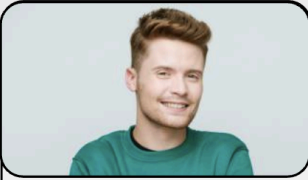
5. **Personalization and User-Specific Resources**

   - There was a consistent desire for personalized resources. For example, Yash wanted a personalized financial aid guide for graduate transfer students, while Jenmy and Pranav emphasized the importance of tailored guides for transfer students specifically.

Part 2: Persona Update

Based on the interview data, I updated David Luiz's persona to reflect the newly identified needs and pain points. Below is the revised persona:

PERSONA TYPE : TRANSFER STUDENT

NAME David Luiz
GENDER Male
AGE 26
OCCUPATION R
LOCATION Austin, TX

Backstory

David is currently pursuing his Master's in Cybersecurity at UT Austin, but he is considering transferring to UNC Charlotte for its stronger research opportunities and better alignment with his career goals. He is facing challenges in understanding how his previous courses will transfer and has found the financial aid process to be confusing. As a transfer student, David needs a clearer, more transparent process to help him transition smoothly to a new university.

Motivations
- Pursuit of Academic Excellence
- Clear, transparent pathways for credit transfer and financial aid.
- Career Advancement.

Ideal experience
- Clear and Transparent Pathway.
- A financial aid guide for transfer Student.

Quote

"It Doesn't Matter what others are doing, it matters what you are doing !!"

Frustrations
- Unclear credit transfer policies and lack of detailed transfer equivalency information.
- Difficult navigation on university websites to find transfer-specific information.
- Lack of personalized resources to guide him through the transfer process.

Part 3: Analysis Report

The analysis of the interview data provided insights into the **transfer student experience**, particularly around **credit transfers**, **financial aid**, and **website usability**. The key findings are as follows:

     1.**Credit Transfers:** A major pain point for transfer students is the uncertainty around credit transfers. This causes frustration and delays in the decision-making process.

     2.**Financial Aid:** Transfer students often find financial aid resources unclear and not tailored to their specific needs. This makes it difficult for them to understand what aid they are eligible for.

     3.**Website Usability:** Navigating university websites is a challenge for many transfer students. The lack of clear, dedicated transfer student resources and poor website navigation are frequent barriers.

4.**Personalization:** Participants wanted a more personalized experience on the university website, especially regarding financial aid and course transfers.

Part 4: Integrated Prioritized List

1. **Clear Credit Transfer Information:**

   ● The need for a **clear and transparent credit transfer policy** is the highest priority. Providing **easy-to-find credit transfer guides** would ease the process for students like David who are uncertain about which credits will be accepted.

2. **Personalized Financial Aid Information:**

   ● Financial aid information should be **tailored to transfer students** with a dedicated section that explains available scholarships, loans, and estimates for transfer students. A **financial aid calculator** would also be highly beneficial.

3. **Improved Website Navigation and User Interface:**

   ● The website should offer a **user-friendly navigation experience**, with dedicated sections for transfer students and a **step-by-step guide** for the entire transfer process.

Part 5: Problem Statements

From the **prioritized list**, the three higher-priority needs and improvement areas that will serve as the **problem statements** for the **university website design project** are:

1. **Problem Statement 1:**

"Transfer students need **clear and transparent credit transfer guidelines** on the website, as they currently face uncertainty about how their previous coursework will be applied to their new program."

2. **Problem Statement 2:**

"Transfer students require **personalized financial aid resources**, including a **clear financial aid guide** and **scholarship calculator** to better understand their eligibility and financial support options."

3. **Problem Statement 3:**

"Transfer students face challenges navigating the website, and they require a more **user-friendly and organized website**, with **step-by-step guides** and clear sections specifically tailored for their needs.