

What Went Well and What Didn't

What Went Well:

The usability testing sessions provided rich, actionable feedback from all three participants. Each user was able to navigate the wireframes effectively and completed the assigned tasks without significant confusion. The interactive credit transfer tool and the financial aid dashboard were particularly well-received across all three sessions. Participants appreciated the simplicity, clarity, and task-based design that catered to their transfer-specific needs. The step-by-step structure of the sessions and the clear instructions allowed users to feel at ease, promoting authentic feedback and natural engagement with the wireframes.

What Didn't Work:

Despite the overall success, there were some challenges during the sessions. A key issue was that the **financial aid dashboard** lacked **graduate-specific filters**, which was a recurring concern for Yash. Additionally, while the navigation bar was helpful in theory, Pranav mentioned that the dropdowns felt slightly cluttered and could benefit from further categorization. In Jenmy's case, although the layout was simple, she found some of the terminology a bit too technical for non-traditional students. Lastly, technical issues such as minor screen lag during the interactive tool demo slightly interrupted the flow of testing in one session.

Unexpected Learnings

1. Graduate Transfer Needs Are Underserved:

One of the most insightful takeaways came from Vinay's session. He emphasized that graduate-level transfer students have significantly different expectations and needs, especially in terms of **financial aid**, **credit validation**, and **research opportunities**. This user group is often left out of the design conversation. This feedback suggests the need for differentiated pathways or filters in tools designed for transfers.

2. "Non-Traditional" Isn't Just a Buzzword:

Riya's input revealed that non-traditional students like her are often overwhelmed by institutional jargon. Her need for "plain language" support and more **human-centered design** highlights the importance of designing for **readability and inclusion**. She also suggested the idea of a live support or chatbot feature, which had not been previously considered in the wireframe.

3. Visual Timelines and Progress Trackers Are Highly Valued:

Pranav's preference for a **visual dashboard** that maps out deadlines and

application progress in real-time reinforced the idea that students want clear, actionable visual cues. The idea of **calendar syncing** was mentioned as a key improvement that could significantly enhance user experience during the chaotic transfer period.