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Homework 1

The site that was looked at for this activity was UVa Collab. This was in part of me and my partner being knowledgeable with the site and simply because of how often we use it in our college career.

The simple tasks that were used for the software was the assignment submission feature. The task was oriented to see how easy to learn and how easy it was to use to turn in daily assignments. As long as the instructions given by the instructor were clear it was easy to submit assignments by the software having many buttons to signify how to submit a document or file. Another feature that was looked at was organizing the classes by semester and using the favorites bar. It interesting to see how a student could customize what classes to see in the top navbar of the site. Take for instance a TA for CS1110 might want to reference how he/she completed his/her assignments when he/she completed the course. The TA could easily have it in the navbar easy to navigate to whenever he/she needed to look at a previous assignment.

Evaluation Checklist completed.

Ranking/Evaluation

The Ranks for the different criterion for the checklist were avoiding user errors being 1, time to learn being 2, speed of performance being 3, retention over time being 4, and subjective satisfaction being the last rank. We thought the avoiding user errors was the highest priority due to the sites purpose. The sites purpose can be narrowed down to communication between the students and professors. The communication includes giving and turning in assignments, completing in class assignments, keeping up with readings, or even taking exams. These tasks being done the tasks can directly reflect the grades of the student. Therefore, avoiding user errors can mean avoiding misgrades or missing an assignment. For a similar reason time to learn came second due to it being used so much by faculty and students of the university. People must learn the site quickly to complete tasks and exams that are critical for a class. Therefore, even someone that transferred will need to learn the site quickly. Retention over time came fourth due to it being used for so many classes. There needs to be a plan to keep the interface going for later use. The subjective satisfaction came last because although important students today are forced into using the system.

Overall my group decided to give the Collab site a rating of “Good”. This is because we still found ways that the site could improve in, which are provided in the evaluation checklist. Overall the interface was easy to use and quick to learn. There were some features that were completely not necessary, which may deviate the attention of users, but other than that it was good that it was a very simple interface with a simple purpose.

Usability.

Overall the usability of the interface was good. We liked the organization of the website very much. Organizations such as organizing classes by semester on the home screen or organizing the classes by semester in the my sites tab. Also, the nav bar of classes was a very

easy to navigate nav bar to use to organize the classes. Also, the feature to customize the nav bar with the classes you want was a good implementation by the makers of the website. Also, the left navbar of home page, gradebook, assignments, etc was a good implementation to facilitate navigation.

There is one specific suggestion our group has come up with regarding the home page of Collab. The home page has many different sections containing a lot of texts such as the message center, message of the day, and other information that may not be useful to some if not most users. Having a clear very simple interface might be better due to the purpose of the website being common for all users. It is not for commercial use so there is no need to have so much information as long as the functionality works. Perhaps taking some blocks out and making it a simple interface to select classes to look at may be a good idea. Another thing we found was that if we click on some link such as assignment 1 in the assignments tab and we then click the back button we are taken back to the previous page not the list of assignments. Collab is made so that we MUST click a button for "back to list of assignments" to go back to the desired page. This can be frustrating for students at times when they are trying to gather information from difference assignments.