

WLUUX

Networking / Connection Platform for Students and Alumni



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Stage One: Project Planning

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Project Scope

UX Plan

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Data Analysis

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About This Document

The idea for this document is to provide those interested with a detailed look at the process of developing the WLUUX Platform. This project was my term project for *UX103: Intro to User Experience Design*, a course I took in my second semester at Wilfrid Laurier University. Each block of the project, presented here as stages, were developed as deliverables submitted for marking. I recieved full marks for each.

Hopefully, this document can provide some valuable insight into my process as a student who still has much to learn about UX but whose skills are growing. I am more than happy to communicate anything beyond what is presented here should you have questions about any specific portion of the project. I appreciate you taking the time to comb through this and hope the document I've put together here can provide some value for you.



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Stage One: Project Planning

Competitive Analysis

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Concept Statement

My goal for this project is to build a foundational concept for a platform where current students enrolled in User Experience Design at Wilfrid Laurier University can interact with each other, their professors, and alumni of the program to share their experiences, their work and their knowledge with one another. The platform should include options to share portfolio work that incorporates both process work and final products, as well as text based content with a focus on sharing experiential learning at companies or events. There are valuable resources to be exchanged between alumni and students, as well as current students who have previously gone through classes. The exchange of information is the foundation of the platform -- the ability to solicit advice or gain knowledge through the previous experiences of those alum should prove invaluable to first years working on projects in the program, and eventually working on projects in the real world.

Competitive Analysis

My primary competitors are other social media platforms such as *Behance*, *Dribbble*, and *Instagram*. These platforms work to visually represent a users work while allowing the opportunity to connect over said work in a comment section. For text-based contributions, I'm also considering *Medium*.

Dribbble

- Posts allowed via invitation
- Strong community
- Bright, generally lighter palette
- Option to solicit work via profiles
- Portfolio page for each member
- Variety of post types
- Powerful search function
- Potential for in-depth write-ups
- Ability to share process work

Behance

- Posts allowed via subscription to the Adobe Creative Cloud
- Built specifically for professionals
- Option to solicit work via profiles
- Portfolio page for each member
- Variety of post types
- Average search function
- Potential for in-depth write-ups
- Not much process work

Instagram

- Posts allowed freely to anyone
- Selfish community
- Palette is all over the place
- Minimal options to solicit work
- Each member has a page, sorted in grid view or individually
- Post sizes and types limited
- Lack of potential for explanations
- Inability to sort inhibits process

My competitors each have characteristics that set them apart from each other and strengths that I'm looking to adapt for WLUUX. To name a few examples, Dribbble's exclusivity promotes high-quality work, and fosters the growth of a strong community based on it's size. As a small initial cohort and overall smaller program, UXD at Laurier should take note of any and all opportunities to really develop the community into a thriving group that is encouraged to share their knowledge and resources with each other. Behance's platform is built around custom post sizes and various disciplines of design, along with the ability to immediately get in touch with a designer. Instagram's platform allows quick and easy posting with the ability to digest a bunch of similar work quickly to get a larger scope of an overall idea or project type. Each has their benefits but each lacks aspects that are important for those looking to start a project and do meaningful work in a similar vein.

Content Requirements

The goal of the project revolves around creating a fully-formed foundational design concept and I'm working on this project with the goal of being able to hand off my work someday to developers that can tackle the development and rollout of the project as a real product. I'm working considering students and alumni of the User Experience Design program as my users, and the program (via it's coordinator) as my client, and therefore I'm responsible for the submission of incredibly high quality work. The backend of the project revolves around the ability to upload photos and posts to the platform and the development of that backend is absolutely not my responsibility, however there are many graphic assets I am responsible for delivering as well as measurements and prototypes that demonstrate the core concept that can be used for the purpose of both user testing and pitching in the hopes of funding the development of the project. That means delivering a brand package, a series of high-fidelity mockups, and a document built to ease the transition from design to development.

Project Calendar

January 30th

- *UX Project Scope & Plan*
- Initial low-fidelity mockups
- Begin refinement of brand identity

February 6th

- Conduct user interviews
- Journey map of competitors sites
- Develop medium-fidelity mockups

February 13th

- Confirm Valentine's Day reservations
- More interviews (users, client)
- Begin testing using medium-fi prototypes

February 20th

- Refine prototypes based on user feedback
- Begin development of experience map & personas

February 27th

- *Personas and Experience Map*
- More interviews!

March 6th

- Evaluate available information
- Gather additional relevant information
- Refine prototypes

March 13th

- Test prototypes
- Begin work on high-fidelity mockups
- Begin work on hand-off documentation

March 20th

- Present high-fidelity mockups to testers
- Wrap-up handoff documentation

March 27th

- *Prototyping and Testing*

April 3rd

- Add project to personal portfolio
- Solicit feedback from Dr. Goodrum on how to improve on future projects



UX Plan

With a project like this, it's important to hit the ground running, and I've already begun work on my initial mockups and prototypes. I think that to design the vision I have for this project effectively, I need to make sure I avoid falling into the traditional traps that come with working alone. When working individually, it's easy to design for yourself, and so I'm going to make sure I have an active focus on soliciting valuable feedback to try and avoid some of the pitfalls of 'waterfall' design. When designing products with the knowledge they may never actually get out of the concept stage, it's easy to provide unrealistic targets or elements that simply aren't feasible at scale, and so one of the other keys to making this a successful product will be understanding the limits of scaling up the platform I'm building.

I'm fortunate to be working in an area with real users to be able to interact with and test my platform on, whereas some students tackling things like marketing, for example, may not be able to test their solutions as easily. With these users, I can gather immensely valuable analytic data to refine my work and make sure they're finding value in the product I'm building, as I'm building it.

ADDING VALUE FOR THE USER IS THE CORNERSTONE OF A GOOD PROJECT.

Something I find incredibly important that many young designers, in my (admittedly limited) experience, don't always consider while building out projects is that you really don't want to make the "next" anything. A good project in my eyes is a project that provides some sort of new experience that can bring something new to the table and build out it's own space to prove itself valuable to those that use it. There are many portfolio building platforms on the internet, and my vision isn't to make the next one, but rather to facilitate conversations between students and alumni about their experiences both in the program and beyond it.

The term *networking* has become a bit of a joke among us designers, many of us who consider ourselves part of a counterculture to the business world, but in reality it is essential to career and skill development at a professional level. The platform I'm looking to build out and demonstrate using high-fidelity mockups and after extensive prototyping and user interviews is going to focus at it's core on giving students opportunities to develop valuable connections and relationships with their peers and with those already in the design world working. We all started as wide-eyed designers who had never heard the words "*could you just, make it pop a little here?*" from a client, and it's important that as the program and the people in it grow, we grow together and share our experiences to become better designers.

Let's work together, listen to each other, and form meaningful connections so that we can work better, faster, and smarter, and fix the worlds problems with better design.



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Stage Two: User Research

Data Analysis
Persona Building
Experience Mapping



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A Quick Clarification

As I reflect on the brief I previously submitted while writing this report, I'm realizing that in my project calendar I embraced the term 'user interview' far too often. 'User research' would've been the better term (which included user interviews in my specific case), and now that I have conducted that research I have a much better-rounded perspective on the project as a whole.

Method One: Interviews

When looking over potential ways to gather data on my stakeholders needs and desires for a platform like the one I'm tasked with building, it became clear to me that I didn't necessarily need to establish the medium of the project through my research. It was always going to be a digital platform and it was always going to focus on an exchange of information, so with the limited resources I had available to me in terms of time and money I knew it was important to use that foundational knowledge about the direction of the process to focus my questions and research on that exchange.

When developing interview questions (the first method I embraced), I wanted to get clarification on what kind of interactions my peers (and eventual users) found valuable and engaging, as well as the formats these conversations take place under. Questions like: what kind of interactions leave you feeling inspired and what conversations are too superficial to be valuable? What kind of feedback do you find actionable and what kind of feedback isn't worth much to you? Do you want feedback from your peers on work at all or strictly from profs? How do you communicate your ideas?

6 INTERVIEW
PARTICIPANTS

12 QUESTIONS
PER PERSON

72 INDIVIDUAL
DATA POINTS

Interview Data Analysis

Some of the challenges the participants listed in their answers during the interviews included the speed and scope of the communication of their ideas. A core principle of UX Design is the idea of visually representing our ideas quickly and effectively, and a number of students listed this as a potential struggle when speaking on presenting their work to peers, professors and potential employers. According to the people I spoke to, there simply isn't a basic portfolio manager available that hosts student work for free with the level of customization students would like.

Another thing that came up often was the formality of conversations while soliciting feedback; the impact of the feedback and likeliness of that feedback being actionable varies based on how formal the conversation is, and students are more likely to take feedback seriously if it's given in a meeting with a professor as opposed to an informal text conversation with peers. I believe this comes down to an issue credibility; when receiving feedback from people they respect, students are more likely to actually be impacted by feedback that is each of two things: supplied by someone who they understand to have some authority on the subject, and focused on an individual element of a project rather than an over-arching concept. Without these key elements present, students self-identified as being less receptive to feedback; something I confirmed under my next research method.



Method Two: Contextual Inquiry

Contextual inquiries are great opportunities to validate some of the answers given during interviews and get insight into the vvv and processes of the users. Participants often frame their answers during interviews to make themselves appear a certain way, especially in a process like this one in which I'm interviewing a series of peers. By observing their actions in their workspace, you get a more organic presentation of a user's processes and further insight into what their actual experience is like rather than insight into their work from their perspective.

I observed two separate peers as they worked through separate projects, paying careful attention to their workflows for soliciting feedback and sharing finished work to narrow down what 'networking' meant to them in a UX design context. One was working in a small group, soliciting in person peer-to-peer feedback throughout the duration of the process, and one was working individually and soliciting feedback from online contemporaries. This method helps me to focus in on some of the key observations from the data I gathered in my interviews.

Contextual Inquiry Data Analysis

When observing the workflow of the subject working on an individual project in the presence of his colleagues, the process of gathering feedback on lo-fidelity mockups and initial building of concepts was incredibly fluid -- there was no real pause for reflection, and moments of reflection were often no longer than 60 seconds to a minute. This is a much different experience than the subject working individually had -- their process for soliciting feedback was to stop and reach out to those not in his immediate vicinity and either try and explain the concept and gather feedback based on the verbal explanation of the concept, or try and communicate with their peers looking to offer feedback digitally, by uploading photographs of their work and trying to gather feedback on those representations of their work. This contrast was really interesting to me, because at their core the interactions of my two subjects were the same; they both reached out to contemporaries to try and solicit some sort of advice on how to proceed based on mutual trust. Their experiences, however, were quite different -- one had a very quick and easy way to gather that information and adjust to it, where it interrupted and essentially halted the other's workflow.

Something else really important to note here was that the colleagues in my first subject's case (their roommates) were comfortable offering unsolicited recommendations based on a previously established comfort level, as roommates and as students in the same cohort of UX. The feedback was aesthetic or simple in nature at times, but also occasionally based on the core of the project or a core interaction of the project that they thought should be adjusted. The adjustments happened quickly, again speaking to the fluidity of the process in this instant. There wasn't so much a formal question seeking their opinion on a particular aspect of the project but rather an open invitation to give feedback. My second subject, on the other hand, had a very starkly different experience with the gathering of their feedback -- because the ask had to be specific enough to get feedback from someone not immediately physically exposed to the project, the questioning has to be tailored to a certain aspect and therefore they didn't get the range of feedback that my first subject did from their roommates. However, there were clear parallels in their processes, including who they trusted to give them the feedback and their willingness to adapt to the feedback.



Contextual Inquiry Data Analysis (cont.)

Now, unfortunately because of time constraints I was unable to see either of these participants share their work on the projects I observed them gathering feedback on, however I had them walk through what their typical process looked like for displaying and archiving their work for future professional reference, and their responses could not have been more different. My first subject, the one who worked in the environment with their roommates, archived their work on a self-built online portfolio and took the time to do fairly lengthy write-ups about their experiences working on each of their projects, displaying some process work as well as the finished projects. They had created high-fidelity mockups that displayed a clear attention to detail in the presentation of their work and their explanations and inclusion of process work indicated their understanding of what their priorities should be in the display of their work. My other subject, on the other hand, didn't know where to begin when I asked them about displaying their information in a web-based portfolio. Now it's important to note that the second subject had very little experience doing client work or attempting to market themselves, whereas my first had extensive experience.

What struck me from this series of observations was how starkly different their processes for displaying previous work were. My first subject had an almost streamlined approach to the addition of new work into their portfolio, allowing them to add frequently as new work was completed and giving them the opportunity to focus their energy on their work rather than it's display. My second subject had a limited understanding of how to go about beginning to display their work for potential employers and a lack of exposure to the typical practices utilized by industry professionals. They knew of tools available to aide in the process, but did not necessarily feel like the initial time/capital investment was worth it to utilize those tools and display their work. The barrier of entry for the establishment of the portfolio was a lot to handle and ultimately deterred them from establishing any sort of marketable presence. This difference was evident in their workflows as well, and each of them displayed a different aptitude of strength during the development phases of both the product and it's displays.

Addressable Data Points

The data I gathered here, primarily qualitative, gives me a good idea of what kind of priorities I should have when developing my platform. Two things stick out to me after prioritizing the information I gathered here: the need to facilitate the exchange of information in a meaningful way (that people also feel comfortable participating with), and the need to help people display the progress and finished products of the project's they're working on. I'm confident building a project around those points and my ability to unpack them and help impact meaningful interactions.

- Feedback is valuable when it is communicated effectively, coming from someone credible, and given in a format that isn't formal enough that it discourages vulnerability.
- Displaying content is something that frustrates people, especially initially -- the investment of time and resources may not be initially apparent, but it plays a huge roll in being able to communicate talent and ideas.
- For both people to buy into a process, there needs to be value apparent on both sides.



Persona One: Jess



Jess is a full-time student in her first year of User Experience Design undergraduate at Wilfrid Laurier's Brantford campus. She's 18 years old, fresh out of high school and working hard to earn every mark she can in university.

She's about an hour away from home and living in residence, developing her self-regulation skills in the context of her real life and not just her studies. Because she's still developing those skills, her sleep schedule has taken a hit, and the lifestyle she's adopted since getting to school is one that is barely sustainable at its current pace -- she's simply stretching herself too thin and having to compromise on certain things to make time for others.

Jess networks socially amongst friends (Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.), but has no experience networking in a professional environment. Come to think of it, she has little experience professionally in the field of UX Design, and although she's eager to learn her lack of background sees her doing most of her assignments "by the book," seeing the instructions as a bible for her work rather than a basic guideline.

SHE'S INTIMIDATED BY PEERS BECAUSE OF HER LACK OF EXPERIENCE, AND HESITANT TO GET FEEDBACK FROM THEM.

She wants to get better at design and she practices through her assignments, but with her other courses and trying to maintain her social life she finds herself with a lack of time and energy to really invest in doing the assignments beyond what's going to get her the marks she needs to continue on in the program.

Jess doesn't have a ton of previous work to display in a portfolio, but will build it up as she works through her UX degree. She's afraid that her lack of experience will hurt her professionally and wants to have a portfolio with content that is gonna get her job opportunities where she can learn more about being a professional in the field of user experience design.

"I love the idea of being a user experience designer but struggle in knowing where to begin with developing my skills. I do the work in class and I hope that will help lead to a better understanding of the principles and practices of UX'ers."

Persona Two: Jenna



Jenna is a first year student in User Experience Design at Wilfrid Laurier Brantford, a 19 year old woman who commutes into Brantford for school from Kitchener - Waterloo. She's working hard at school, confident in her workflow and abilities as a designer.

Living away from Brantford and commuting every day leaves her feeling a little disconnected from the rest of her cohort. She gets good grades and lives comfortably in her own home, focusing her energy and using it purposefully for her work and her social life. She's well connected at home and so she doesn't feel alone, but she feels like her classmates and cohort don't necessarily see enough of her to embrace her.

**SHE'S CONFIDENT
IN HER CAPABILITY
AND COMFORTABLE
SPEAKING TO PEERS
ABOUT PROJECTS.**

She's got a decent design background, and worked a summer job doing design work -- she has experience networking professionally as well as socially with friends (she has an Instagram for her design work specifically as well as her personal profile). She learned a lot in high school that has helped her to interpret the assignments she gets in UX and has thrived being able to take a bit of a leadership role on the teams she worked on because of that background in design.

Jenna has a professional portfolio website as well as an Instagram profile dedicated to her design work. She's got a clear process in her workflow to export her work specifically for her platforms of choice, and her portfolio is built to attract employers. She shares this portfolio with her profs and actively encourages feedback from those professors, because she's always looking to grow as a designer.

She's interested in arts and culture and tries her best to get involved on campus as an off-campus student. She has writing experience and loves to document the experiences she has as a student for her family and friends from home. She enjoys travel and has lots to say but won't often approach people about it but would rather be asked. She loves to share her experiences.

"For me, sharing my experiences in leadership roles and while speaking to my peers is a great way to try and connect with them and bridge the distance gap. By having those meaningful conversations, the sometimes hard ones where you're in the center of either giving or receiving feedback, you're connecting with someone on a level they don't get the chance to connect with everyone on, so it's important to acknowledge and embrace that opportunity."

Persona Three: Jhene



Jhene is a first year student in UXD at Laurier Brantford, an 18 year old woman who lives on campus and spends a lot of time working in the design studio on both passion and school projects.

Jhene is the type of person school has always come easy to, and whose work that's driven by passion ends up at an incredibly high quality, while work done to appease other people does well enough to get by but doesn't have the polish her other work can. Living in residence has helped her focus more of her energy on doing great work and continuing her client work outside of school because she doesn't have to deal with the pressures from her home life.

Jess is a little awkward socially -- she's focused a lot in her past experience on professional networking and skill development so while she tries her best to be involved with her peers, her closest friends are her roommates based solely on proximity. She's included in any all-program events but doesn't facilitate hanging out with anyone outside of those events, because she's busy doing the work she's so passionate about. She's strong-willed and the type of person whose brain moves at a million miles a minute.

Jhene can't be bothered to put her work into a purposefully structured portfolio -- she simply doesn't have the time. She presents past client briefs and reports when asked for previous work by potential employers but other than the odd Snapchat story or process tweet, she doesn't have much information available that's tailored to viewers who aren't her clients.

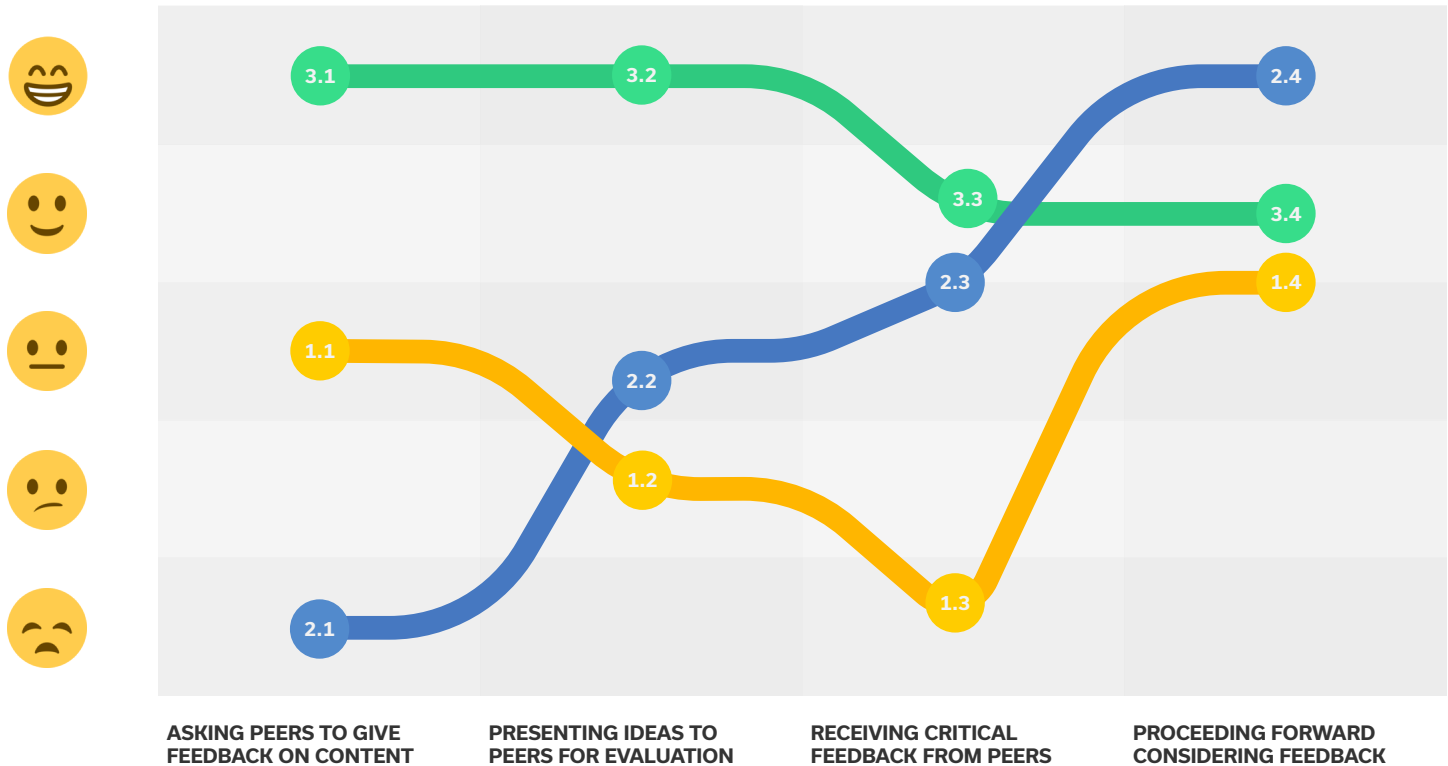
For fun, Jhene regularly participates in design sprints and spends free time watching YouTube tutorials looking for new techniques she can incorporate to improve on her process. She struggles with doing readings for classes she's not interested in and her GPA isn't well balanced, as her UX marks are extremely high but her marks in other courses are weaker because of her lack of passion.

SHE MOVES QUICKLY, & CONSTANT STREAMS OF FEEDBACK HELP TO REFINE HER WORK.

She does well to receive feedback from peers, constantly drawing up lo-fidelity mockups in the design studio and looking for opinions on how to make them better. She's not afraid to make mistakes and is confident she'll be able to correct them just as fast as she conceived them.

"I love the program, and I love the other students. When we get to work on projects everyone cares about, I get a real rush seeing great ideas come to life and love working with and on teams that promote those great ideas and try to get them out into the real world for everyone to experience."

Experience Map: Soliciting Feedback



Path One: Jess

1.1 Jess doesn't have peers immediately available, but has the connections to find them quickly. She knows that it's hard work to gather them, but understands the value.

1.2 Jess wants to present her ideas effectively and is willing to put effort in to make it happen using mockups.

1.3 Opening herself up to feedback is hard, because she feels judged by her peers on a personal level.

1.4 Having actionable feedback motivates Jess to keep working on the project to improve as a designer.

Path Two: Jenna

2.1 Jenna has to actively reach out to ask for feedback on her work because she lives out of town and doesn't have the well-established relationships to make this comfortable.

2.2 Jenna is excited about presenting her ideas but limited in her ability to communicate them when not available to do so in person.

2.3 The feedback she gathers on what she does communicate is good.

2.4 Actionable feedback is where Jenna thrives, as she can work independently to improve her project.

Path Three: Jhene

3.1 Because Jhene is always in the studio working on design projects, finding people to ask for advice is easy as pie.

3.2 Jhene loves presenting her ideas and it gives her the opportunity to evaluate them herself as she has to externalize her ideas.

3.3 The feedback she gathers is valuable but can be frustrating because she often feels very invested.

3.4 She feels confident getting back to work on incorporating the feedback into her project.



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Stage Three: Prototyping and Testing

Usability Testing

Data Analysis

High-Fidelity Mockups



Usability Testing: Planning for Round One

Going through usability testing on some low to medium fidelity prototypes is an essential aspect of confirming any of the information gathered through user research and serves as an extension of that research. I spent the term working on wireframes that sprawled over the whiteboards of our design lab, but when it came time to test I had users go through low-fidelity (henceforth referred to as lo-fi), paper workflows that answered some of the key questions I had about how users would interact with the product (and technically service) I had been building.

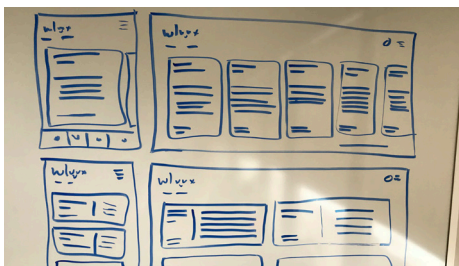
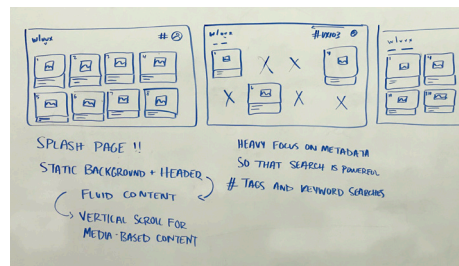
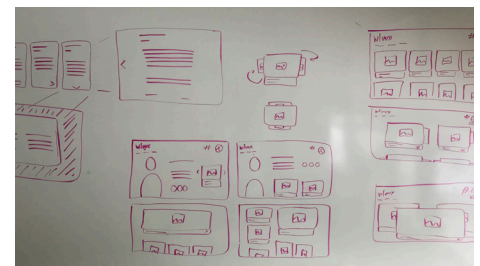


Figure 1.1 Early Whiteboarding



1.2 More Lo-fi Whiteboarding



1.3 Slightly Refined Concepts

Planning Round One (cont.)

When developing my approach for the cognitive walkthroughs, I identified a few key priorities to base my questioning around based on some of the feedback I gathered in interviews and some of the key features of the platform that I wanted to validate as such.

For example, as I worked through my first mockups I identified the process students would work through when attempting to create their high-fidelity mockups or stylized portfolio work (something they identified as a pain point in previous research regarding the exchange of project work with peers and eventually alumni) was bound to be a much smoother experience on a desktop versus a mobile platform. I then designed a line of questioning that allowed testers to choose between lo-fi mockups of both platforms to attempt to post and used it as an opportunity to identify whether or not users actually naturally flocked to the web-based mockups rather than mobile, and also to analyze the decision-making process of those who did choose the mobile platform for that process. This is just one example of a line of questioning developed with the intention of providing multiple data points.

I also wanted to ensure I covered a reasonable assortment of subjects in my testing, because although the project is built for my peers it's important to ensure that all types of users are covered early on in the testing process to avoid mass confusion or reworking later. I looked for users at a range of comfort with technology, in a diverse age range.

5
8
80

TEST PARTICIPANTS

TASKS PER USABILITY TEST

QUANTIFIABLE DATA POINTS

Figure 2.0 - Lo-fi Usability Testing Results (Mobile)

	Task	Pass %	Fail %	Time <small>Average</small>
2.1	Identify if the most recent post in the 'Projects' feed was submitted coursework.	100%	0%	0:16
2.2	Switch the home page to the 'Experiences' feed, then back to 'Projects'.	100%	0%	0:06
2.3	Access an author's profile from the portfolio work posted in the 'Projects' feed.	100%	0%	0:14
2.4	Locate Anna Bolger's most recent portfolio project.	100%	0%	0:12
2.5	Leave a comment on some of Joel Schellenberger's portfolio work.	100%	0%	0:16
2.6	Begin the process of contacting an author directly about their work.	80%	20%	0:22
2.7	Share an experience via Twitter.	100%	0%	0:14
2.10	Begin the process of posting content, stopping at the upload mockups stage.	80%	20%	0:34

Notes / Points of Interest (taken at the time of testing)

- (2.1) Tags system seems to work in identifying work as coursework... could it be expanded as a sorting option? Can it be more useful in search?
- (2.2) Easily identifiable tabs layout, icons appear to be descriptive enough to indicate the difference between the projects and experience tabs respectively.
- (2.4) Although there was a posting available on the splash page done by Anna, most users identified the search function as their strategy for locating Anna's profile. Worth noting that because of the comfort users show with searching. How can that be utilized appropriately to give them valuable information?
- (2.5) The comments being at the bottom of the description of the work may need reworking. The lack of visibility of other user's comments also doesn't bode particularly well for visibility and I personally feel this took too long for most users.
- (2.5) Also worth noting that I probably shouldn't ask these questions in such a linear order. The process of working through 2.4 likely influenced at least some participants ability to execute 2.5. That said, the tests are supposed to be specific enough that a user shouldn't have to do one thing to get to another... seek clarification on that portion of the testing process.



Figure 3.0 - Lo-fi Usability Testing Results (Web)

	Task	Pass %	Fail %	Time <small>Average</small>
3.1	Identify if the most recent post in the 'Projects' feed was submitted coursework.	100%	0%	0:08
3.2	Switch the home page to the 'Experiences' feed, then back to 'Projects'.	100%	0%	0:04
3.3	Access an author's profile from the portfolio work posted in the 'Projects' feed.	100%	0%	0:10
3.4	Locate Fil Telescu's most recent portfolio project.	100%	0%	0:12
3.5	Leave a comment on some of Liam Bullock's portfolio work.	100%	0%	0:10
3.6	Begin to contact an author directly about their work.	100%	0%	0:17
3.7	Share an 'Experience' via Twitter.	100%	0%	0:08
3.10	Begin the process of posting content, stopping at the upload mockups stage.	80%	20%	0:34

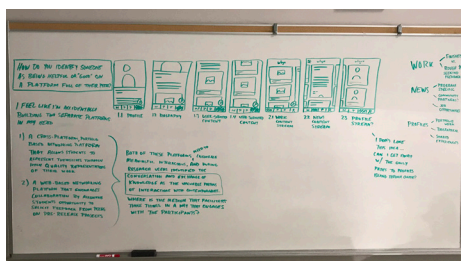
Notes / Points of Interest (taken at the time of testing)

- In general, the processes seem more effective on web as opposed to mobile... maybe it's the nature of professional style services like this one, but what it means is that I can't discount the importance of the web view and should avoid prioritizing either platform.
- (3.2) These are represented by words on web, rather than the icons on mobile, which gives users a bit more clarity and speeds this process up, even if it was a quick one to begin with on mobile.
- (3.3) When this gets mocked-up into interactive, users want to be able to directly click on an authors name to go to their profile rather than view the work first.
- (3.5) Neither platform had a particularly clear way of displaying the email address associated with the author of a post... needs clarification in future mockups... maybe icon based representation as opposed to text-based? Should also likely be moved to a place closer to the other intractable elements of the profile (such as the share menu).
- (4.1) All but one participant reached for the web view to post their content, and the person who reached for mobile was the one unable to pass the task. I'm scrapping the ability to do it on mobile altogether. Saves time, which saves money.

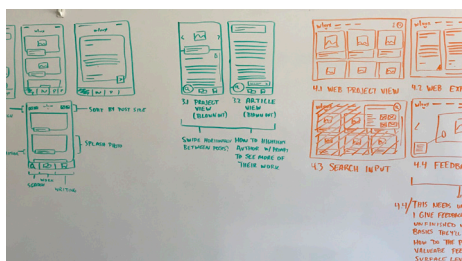


Testing Round Two: Onward and Upward

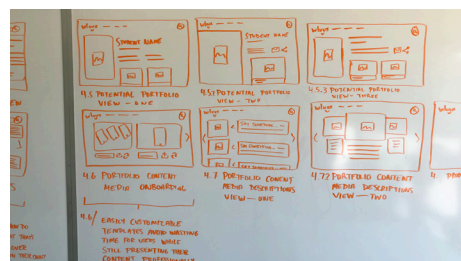
After gathering valuable insights in the first round of testing, it came time to adjust my mockups and start building out the digital versions of my mockups. A bit of deliberation and a lot of caffeine later, I felt satisfied with the mobile version mockups and moved quickly to slightly adjust my questioning to account for the changes I made. Those changes included things like putting a greater emphasis on the search function (to ease navigational headaches), as well as removing a misguided 'Profiles' tab from the navigation all together.



4.1 Concept Refinements / Tear-downs



4.2 Continued Refinement of Digital Strategy and Concepts



4.3 Brainstorming Profile Layouts and Upload / Framing UI

Round Two (cont.)

The mobile testing tasks stayed quite similar to the questions from the first round, as I felt there were addressable datapoints that could be used as opportunities for improvement on that side of the project. On the web platform, however, questioning focused on the fleshing out of the section of the site built to upload content, an essential feature of the platform that I made the decision to only have available through the web view.

One of the key points I looked to nail down as I began revisions and the development of the higher-fidelity work was search. I felt it vital that the search function worked quickly and provided users the information they not only know they're looking for, but that they might not be aware they're actually looking for. Seeing as search is something each user tested was comfortable with using, I saw it as an opportunity for seamless navigation of the platform; building the platform on an "ask for information and you shall

receive it" structure saves the user from having to really dig deep to understand the information architecture, but rather gives the user the opportunity to learn as they go and explore at their own pace while still finding information they require at the press of a button.

The other point I wanted to really hit home was the conversation piece. Going back to my user research, many of the people I spoke to identified the transfer of information as a point of value for them in using a service like this and that feedback is a key in establishing the kind of intrinsic motivation a user needs to possess to frequently utilize the site to it's full potential. How can we make sure that if someone wants to receive feedback on a post that they can, in a way that encourages those viewing their post to give it? What kind of processes should be in place for a user to contact a poster privately to give more critical feedback? Addressing those questions started by refining the existing contact mechanisms.

Figure 5.0 - Medium-Fidelity Usability Testing Results (Mobile)

Task	Pass %	Fail %	Time <small>Average</small>
5.1 Access the view of all posts tagged "UX103."	100%	0%	0:21
5.2 Begin the process of contacting an author directly about their work.	100%	0%	0:14
5.3 Access an author's profile from the portfolio work posted in the 'Projects' feed.	100%	0%	0:08
5.4 Locate Anna Bolger's most recent portfolio project.	100%	0%	0:10
5.5 Leave a comment on some of Joel Schellenberger's portfolio work.	100%	0%	0:15

Figure 6.0 - Medium-Fidelity Usability Testing Results (Web)

Task	Pass %	Fail %	Time <small>Average</small>
6.1 Begin the process of contacting an author directly about their work.	100%	0%	0:07
6.2 Leave a comment on some of Fil Telescu's portfolio work.	100%	0%	0:10
6.3 Upload a mockup image to be used in a 'Projects' post and select a frame.	80%	20%	0:29
6.4 Mark a post on your profile as "soliciting feedback."	100%	0%	0:18
6.5 Offer private feedback on a peer's 'Projects' post.	100%	0%	0:23

Data Analysis

The data in these successive tests confirmed some of my beliefs about user flows within the systems I designed and corrected some errors I hadn't accounted for in my earlier mockups. For example, all of the tasks were completed successfully by each participant in the second set of mobile testing, after refinements to the previous process of direct contact with an author of a post. Instead of only having an option to offer feedback via email or public comment, private comments were added as an option to avoid the need for users to leave the app to send an email.

The testing for the updated web platform was intriguing, as the repeated processes tested had their efficiency improved upon while the new workflows being tested leave room for improvement in both ease of completion and subsequent speed of completion. The private feedback option needed refinement in its ability to be identified as a feature (as I initially hid it behind the comment button without indicating there was another option beyond a public comment), and the upload and framing process for project work was the only task without a 100% completion rating.

Action Items and Prioritization of Tasks

The mobile application works well enough through two rounds of testing that I would be confident shipping it. However, a large asterisk hangs over that statement because for a user to submit content, the web view has to be stable and usable enough for a user to work through that process; otherwise, the app is an empty shell waiting for content to communicate.

So what kind of polish would the web version need to get the seal of approval? Well, the uploading process needs much more TLC than I gave it throughout the initial development of the project. Although I did receive the feedback from participants in my research that one of their major painpoints with traditional portfolio creation or the framing of their work in general was that it was a strenuous, time consuming process. I chose to focus on the feedback I received in that research regarding the conversation between users on work with more energy, rather than making sure the framing process was ironed out first, which was an oversight on my part that needs adjustment. There needs to be content posted to the site by a variety of people in a variety of formats before meaningful exchanges can really have the opportunity to be had.

That said, the comment system and interaction between users is something I'm particularly satisfied with. For short form feedback, users have the option to leave either public or private comments on a post as well, and for users looking to solicit longer-form feedback, an email option is also available to provide a little more flexibility. The viewer's ability to comment privately in short-form is set up to only be enabled if a poster has marked their project as "soliciting feedback", something that is clearly visible in their project page and gives viewers the indication that comments are not only welcomed but highly appreciated by the poster of the work.

As I move forward with high-fidelity mockups and try and give a cleaner, more concise picture of what this site and service would look like in the real world, streamlining everything and ensuring a continued focus on the actual priorities of students remains an active focal point of the project. In a perfect world, with a more generous timeline and an actual budget, I could continue to grow the site and its uses for students and proceed with more in-depth, frequent user testing to continue to gather this type of valuable information.

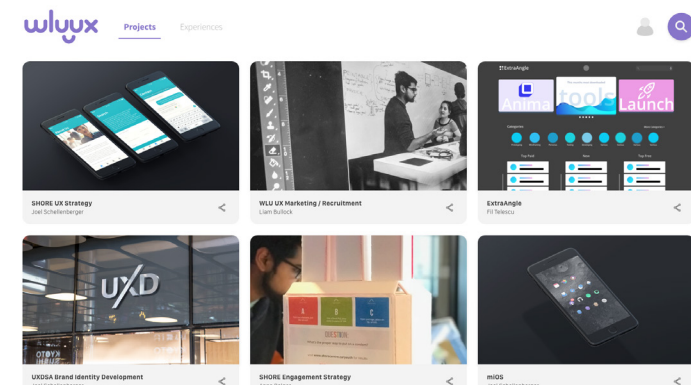


WLUUX

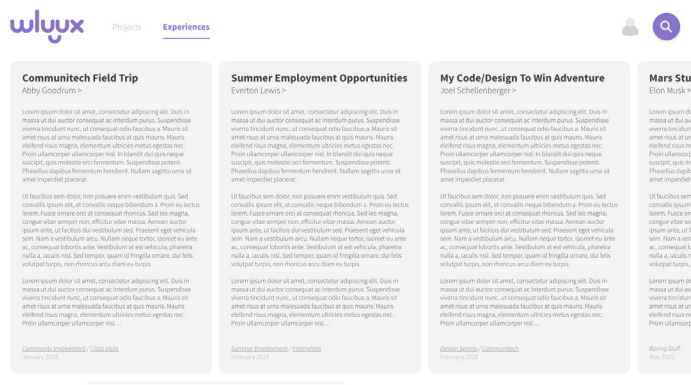
Networking / Connection Platform for Students and Alumni



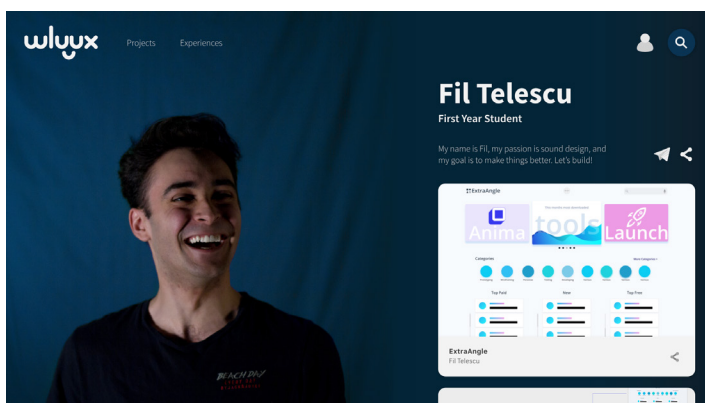
High-Fidelity Mockups (Web)



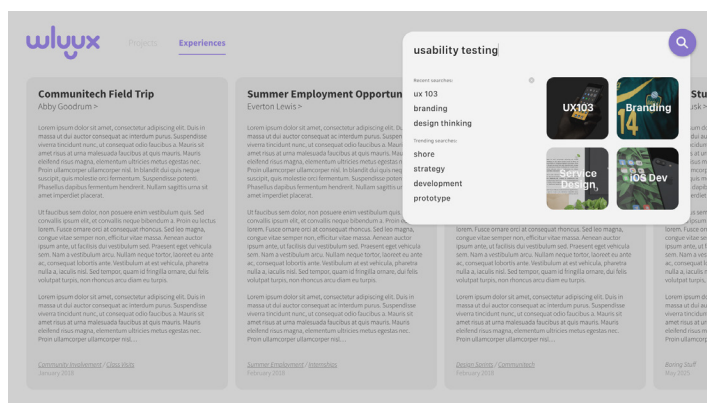
7.1 'Projects' Feed



7.2 'Experiences' Feed



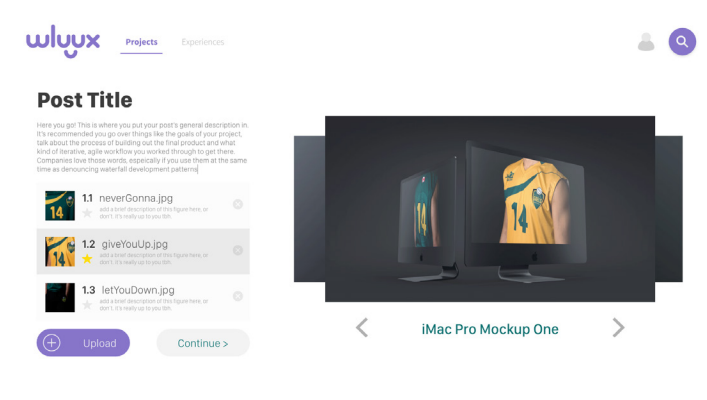
7.3 User Profile



7.4 Search Functionality



7.5 Expanded Project Post View



7.6 Content Upload / Framing View

For a fully interactive mockup, and more in-depth views of each aspect of this project, scan the QR code in the top right of either mockup page or visit idkjoel.co/wluux.



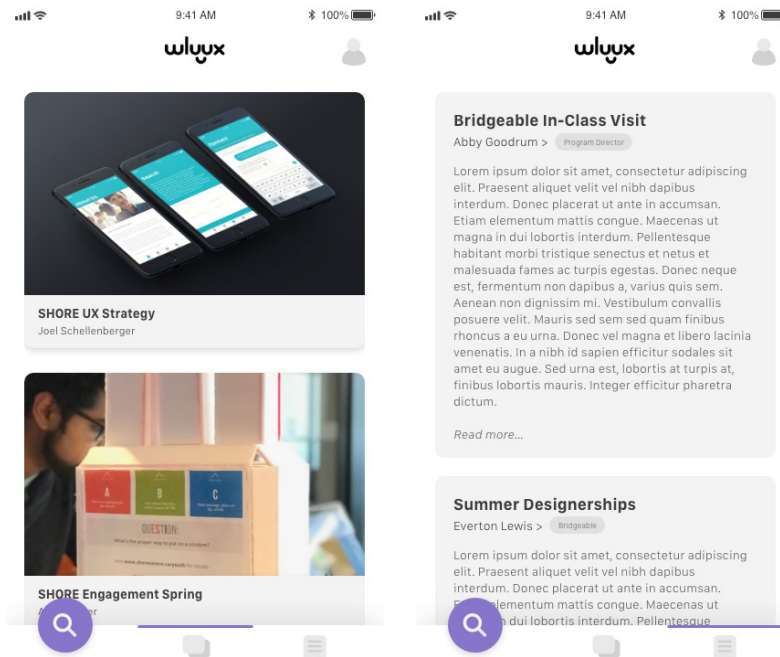
Joel Schellenberger
joel@idkjoel.co



High-Fidelity Mockups (Mobile)

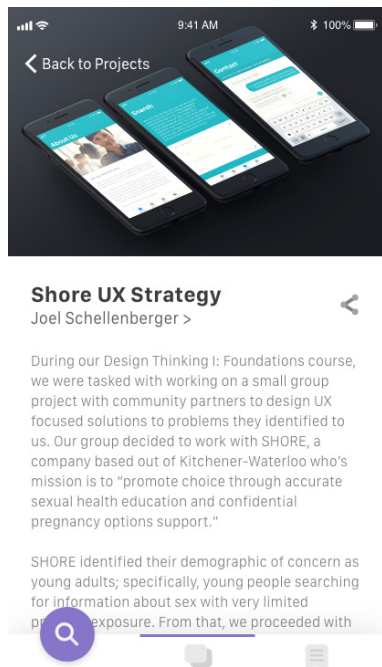


8.1 Splash Screen

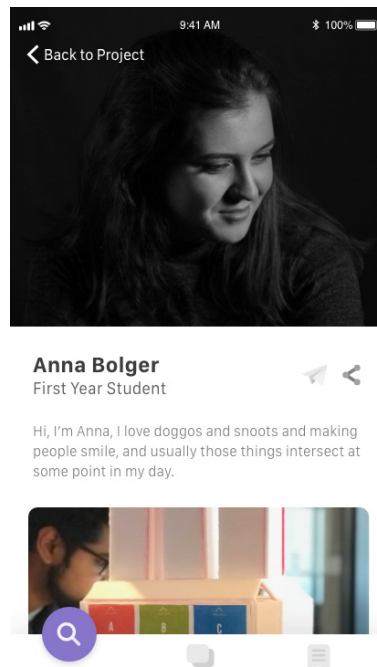


8.2 'Projects' Feed

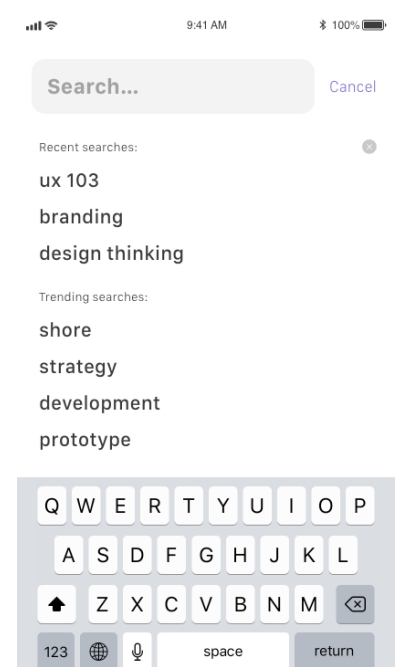
8.3 'Experiences' Feed



8.4 Expanded Post View



8.5 User Profile



8.6 Search Functionality