



Udacity Collab

Forum experience for Udacity Community

Ira Varshavets

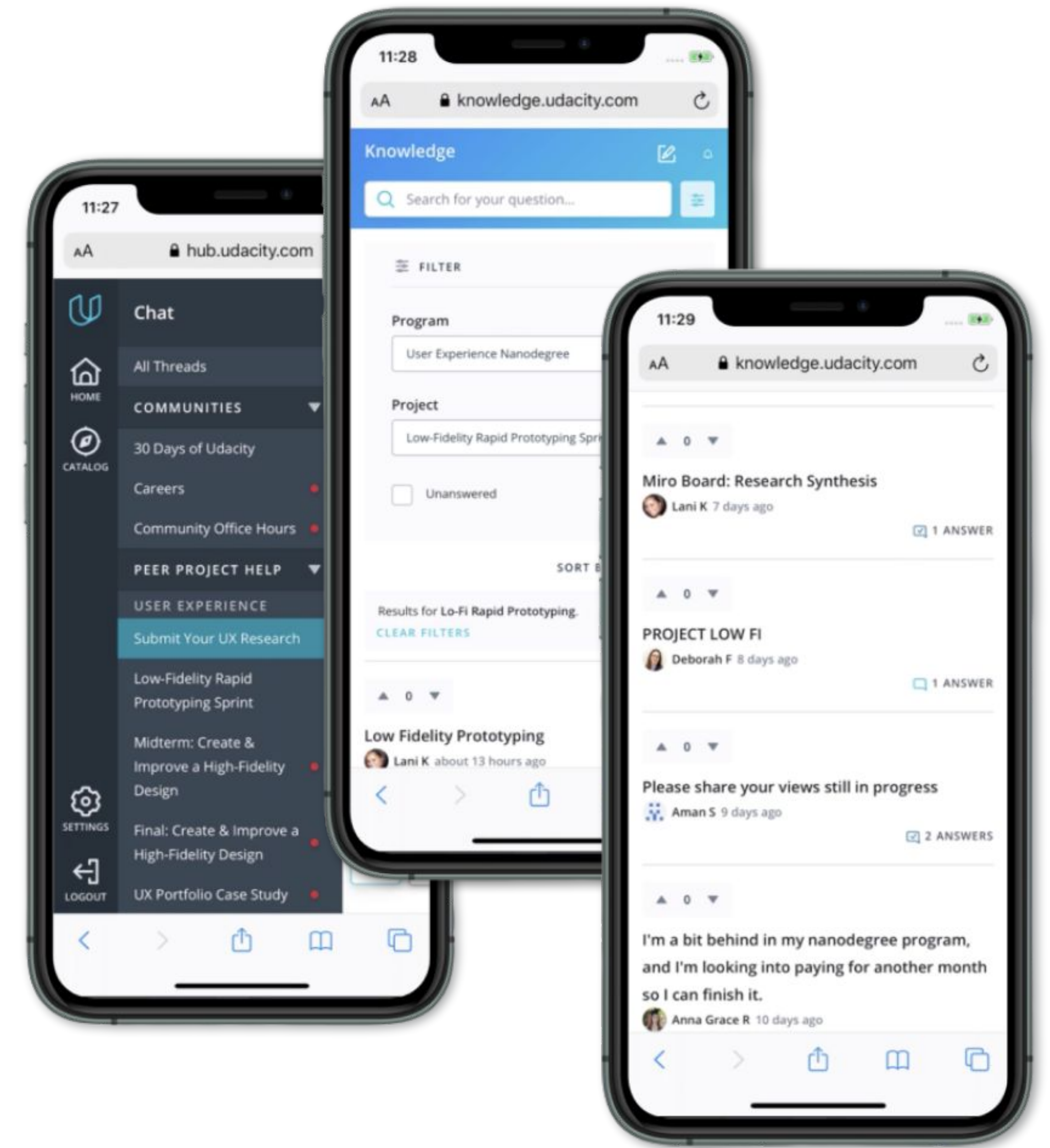
Project Duration: 4 weeks

Tools: Miro, Figma, Zeplin, Lookback

Challenge or Problem Overview

Udacity is one of the biggest learning platforms with thousands of students (graduates, young professionals and adults) who study, communicate and collaborate with each other. Having an efficient community forum becomes the key for successful communication and collaboration between students.

The focus of the project was providing a mobile app for easier and more cohesive forum experience in Udacity students community.



Discovery: Research & Analysis

Research on this project began with understanding our core users: adult online course students which use digital tools for communication on study subjects.

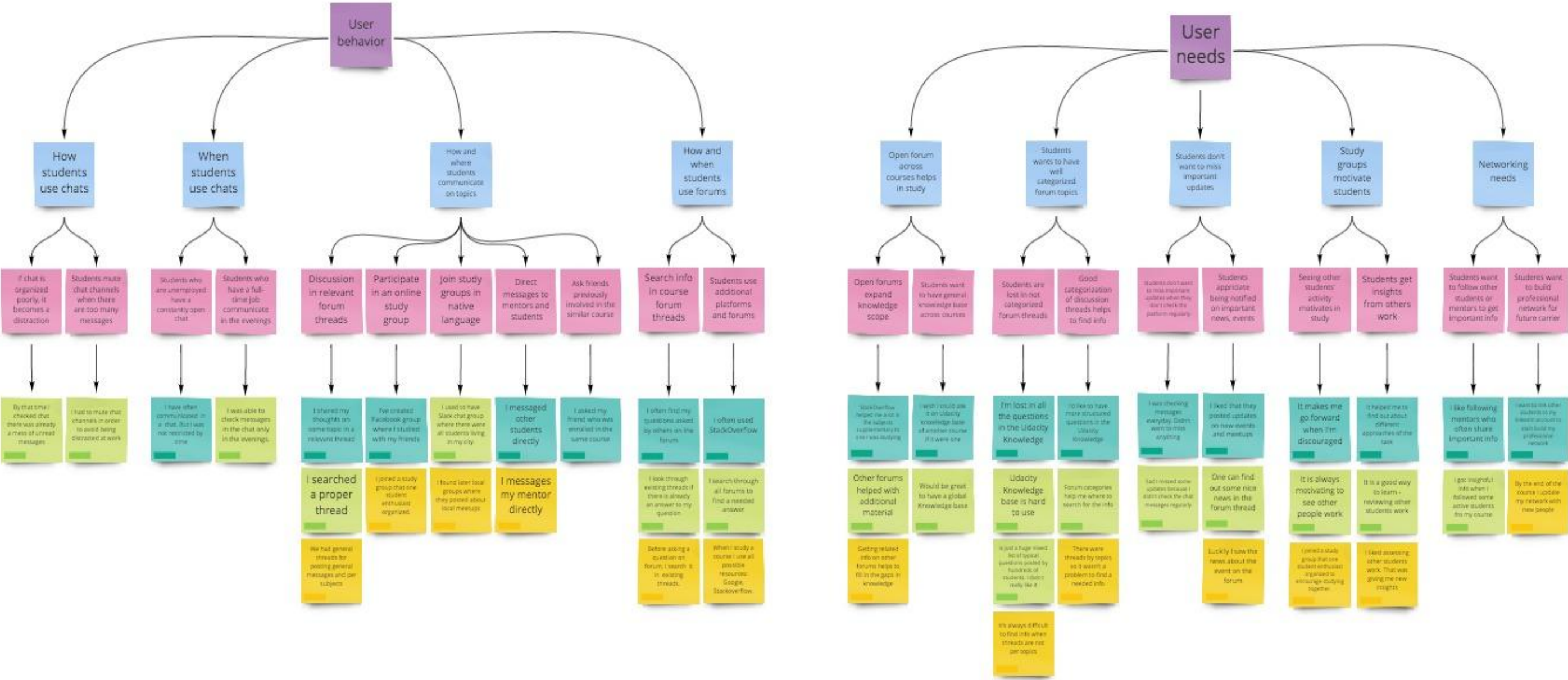
Three user semi-structured interviews were conducted in order to uncover the user's needs , frustration and expectation in their forum experience. I wanted to understand how students use digital tools for communication, getting and sharing information and collaboration with each other to get more knowledge and improve their skills



Key findings

During my research I highlighted a few key findings.

One of the important characteristics of forums is information findability. Structuring and categorization plays the key role in the quick and easy access to needed information.



Unemployed
Udacity
Student

Employed
Udacity
Student

Employed
Coursera
Student

I discovered also that social/study groups help build network and motivate in study process.

Design: Concepts & Sketching

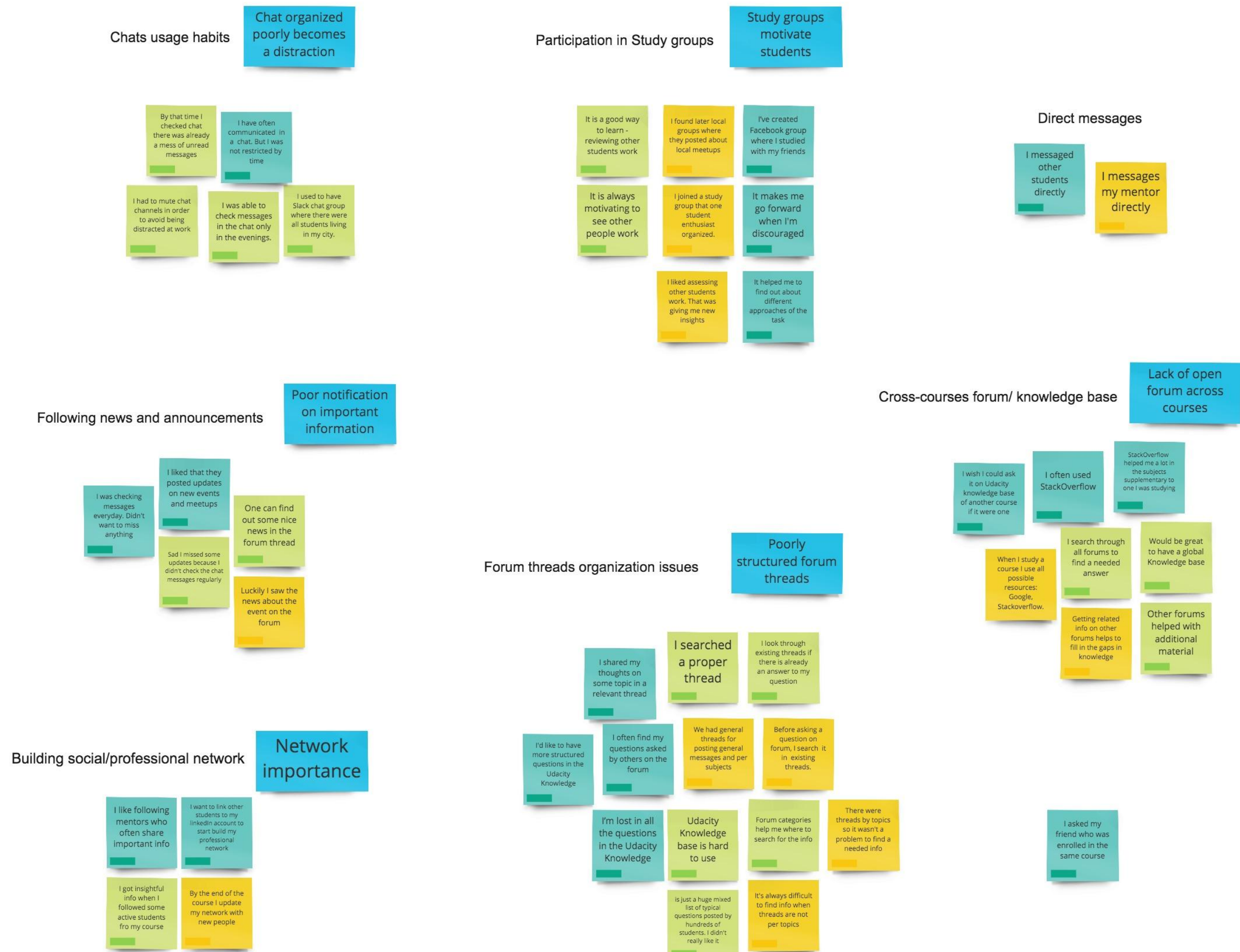
After completing my research I used research data to uncover opportunities for my project. After ideation and prioritization of more than 10 features I identified my main focus.

I decided to focus on providing a well-structured forum per course using extensive categories, forum threads filtering and sorting, providing options to follow interesting threads.

I discovered that providing a separate study/social group feature may be also an interesting design exploration.

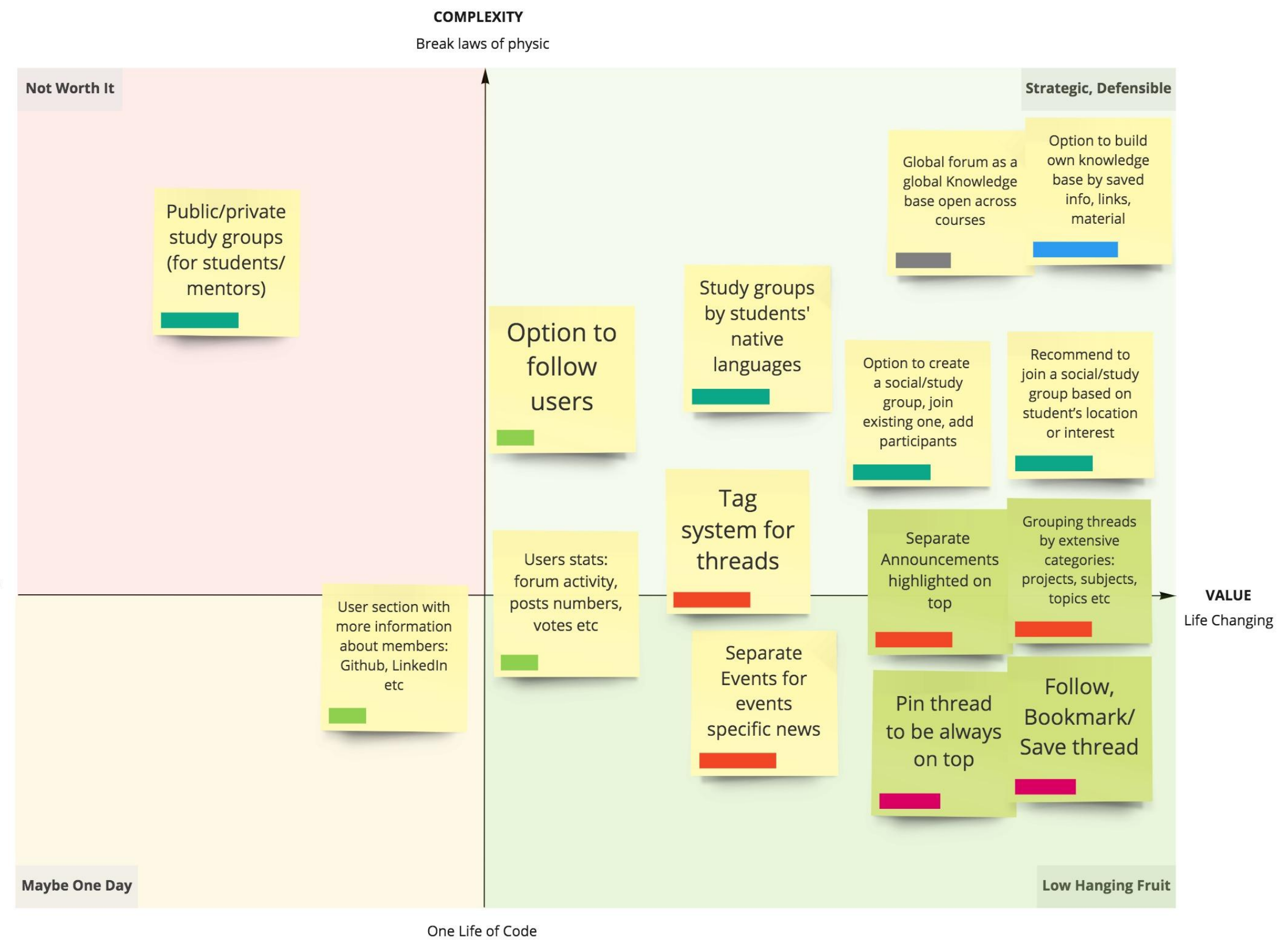
I started to develop the concept by sketching some of the flows on paper using techniques like crazy 8, Detailed Sketching and Layout sketching to shape out ideas rapidly.

I turned the paper sketches into a [low-fidelity prototype](#) using Figma app

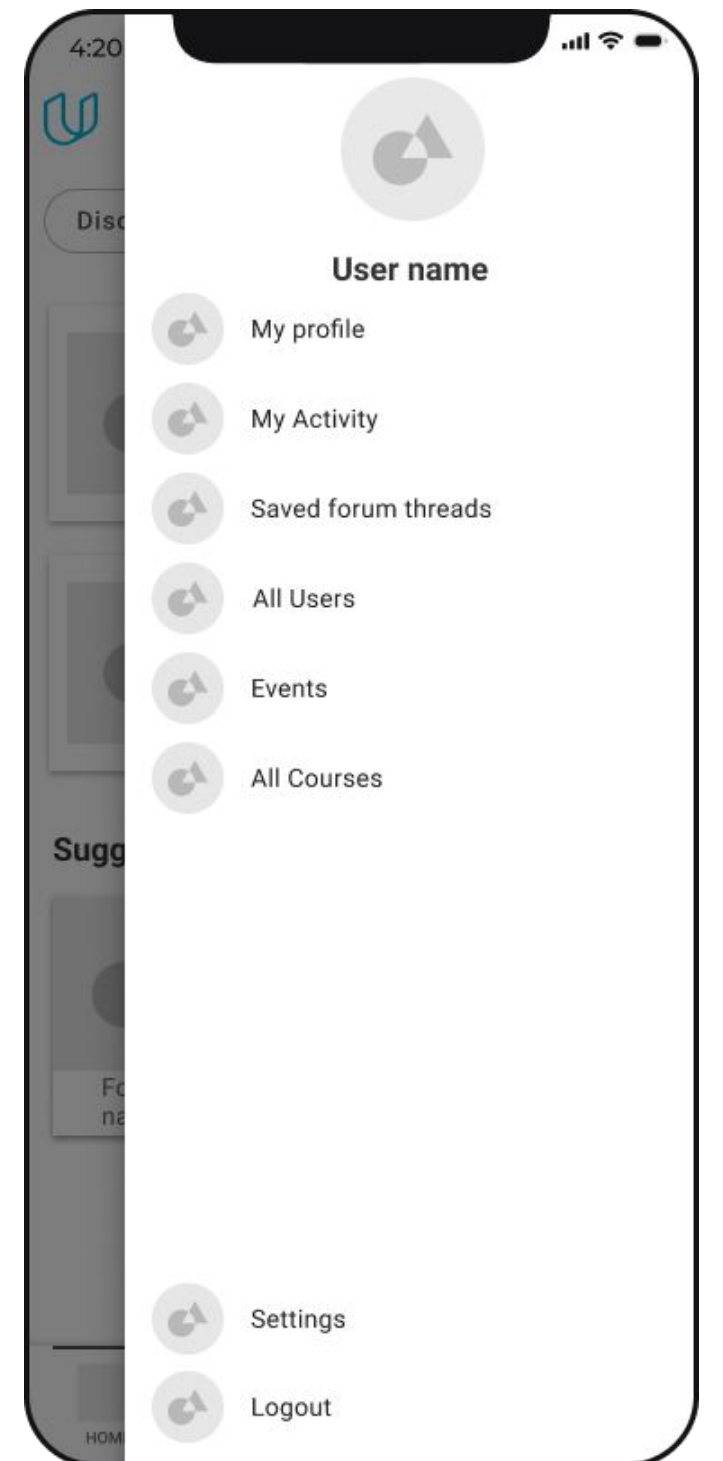
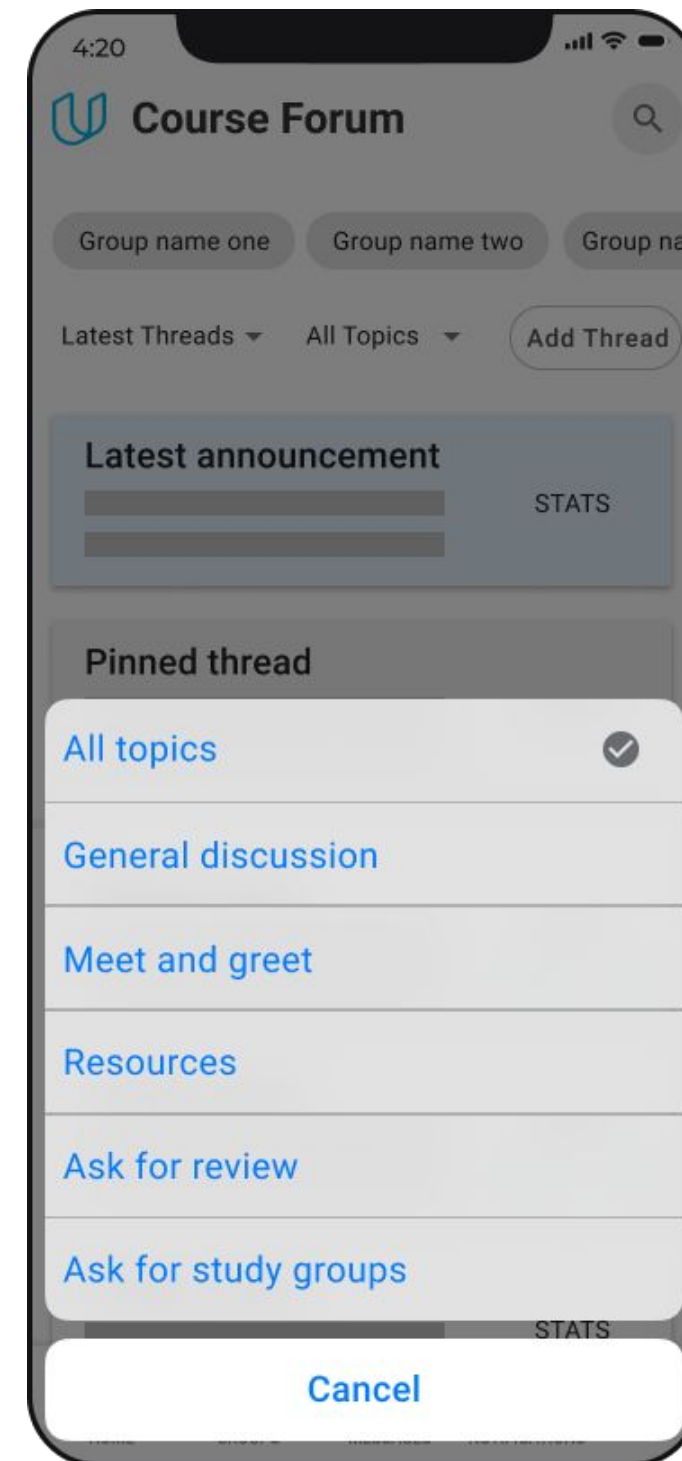
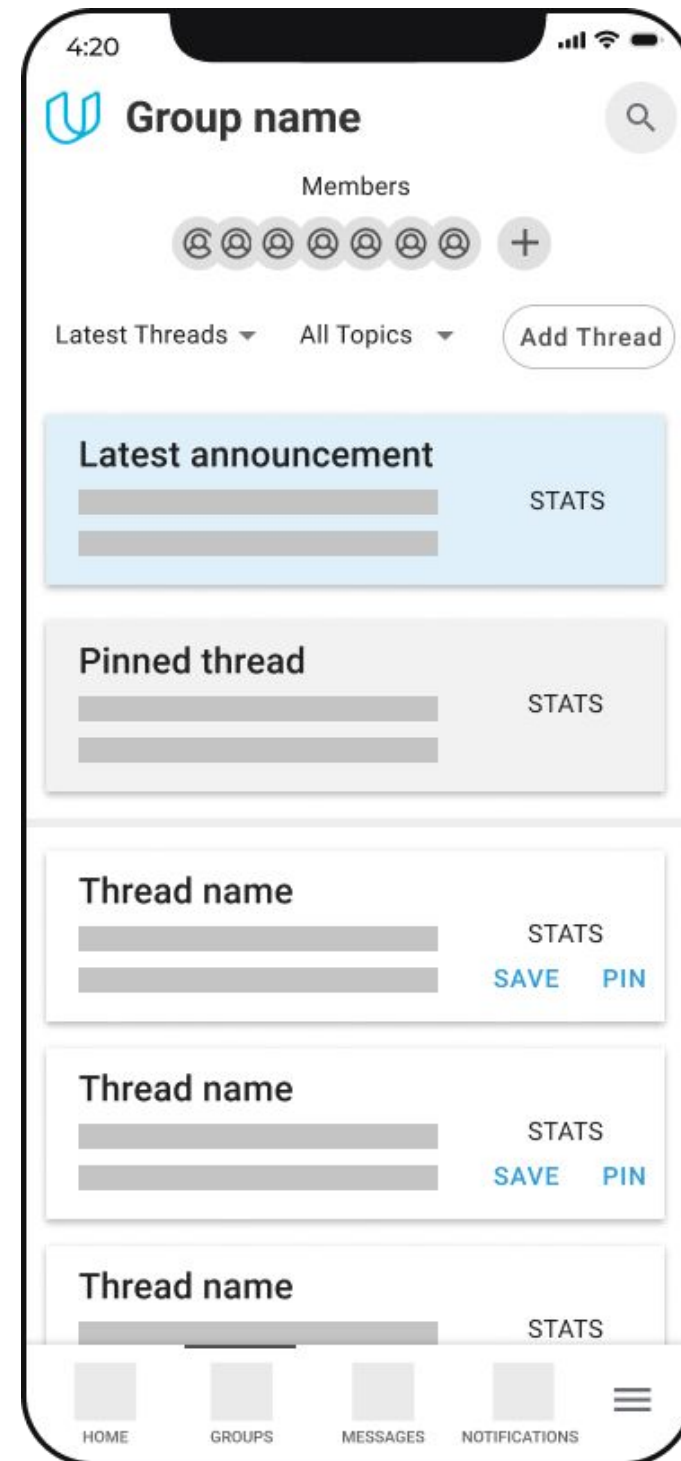
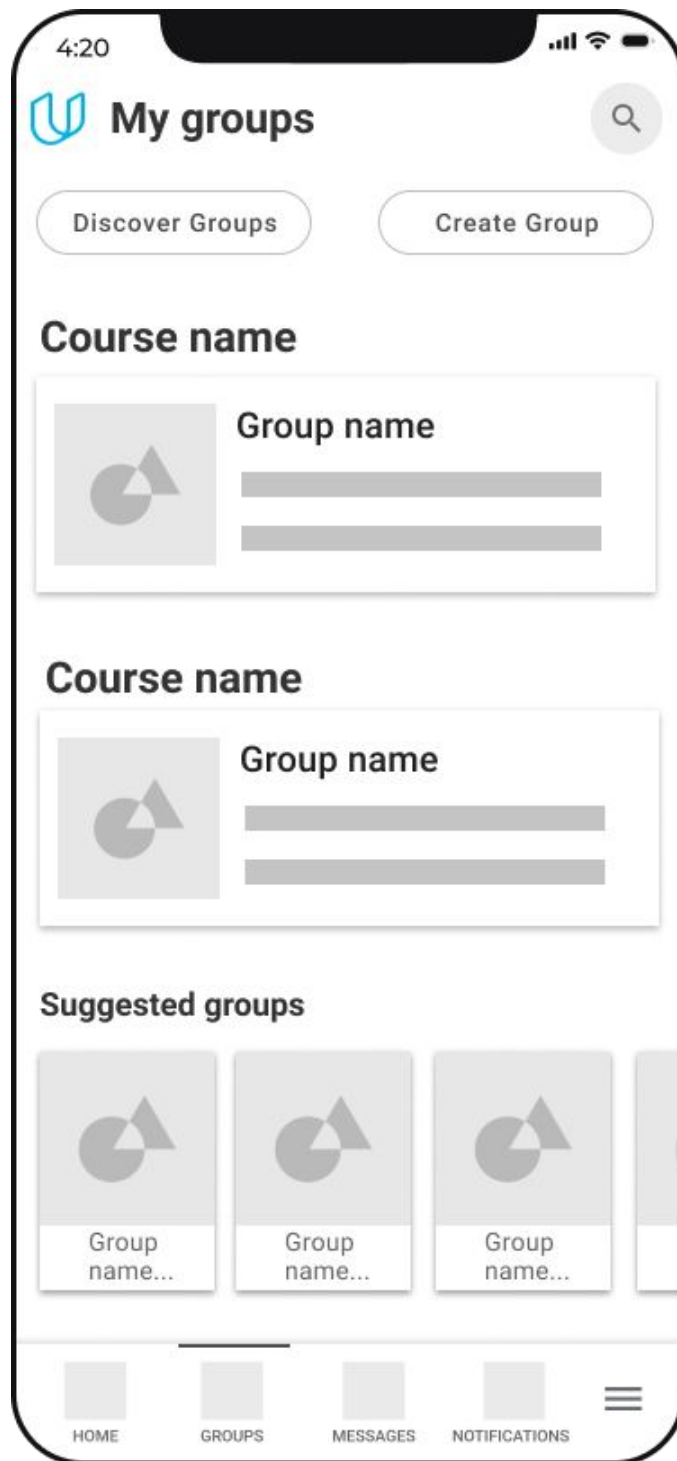
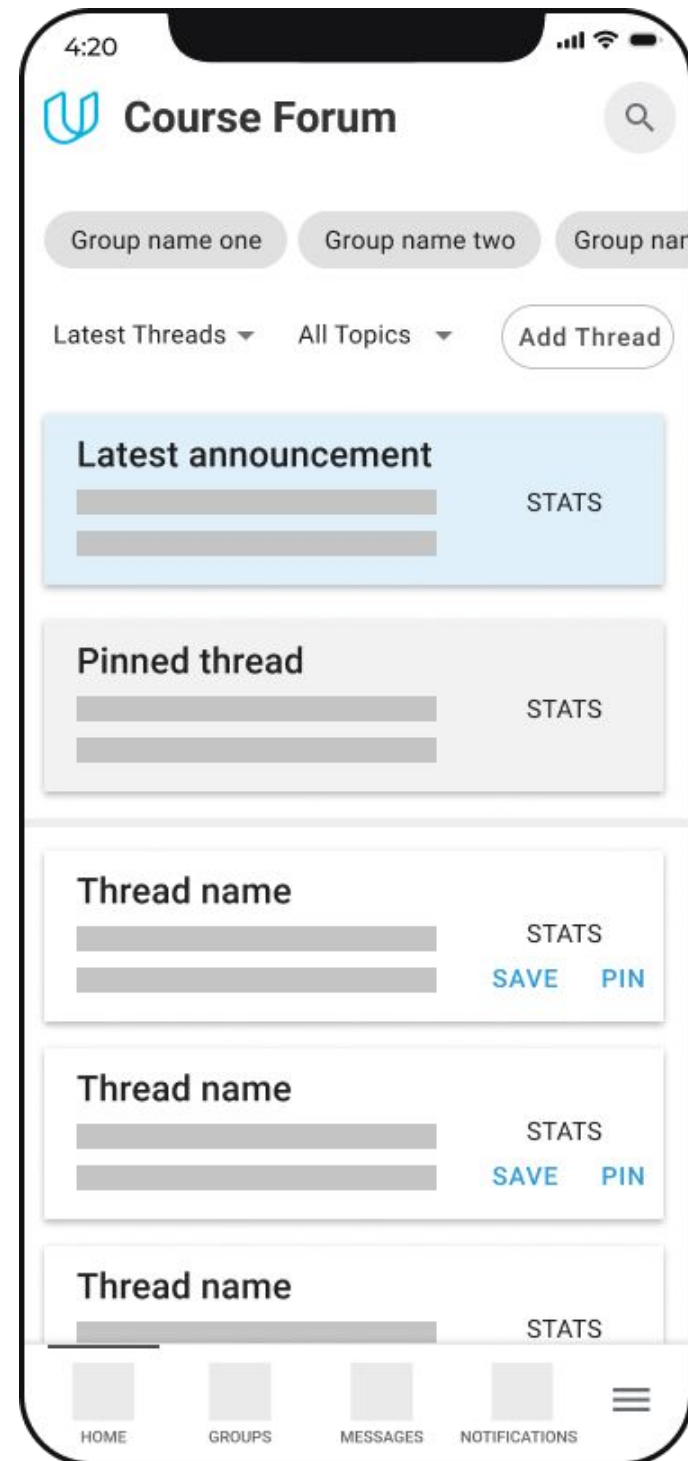
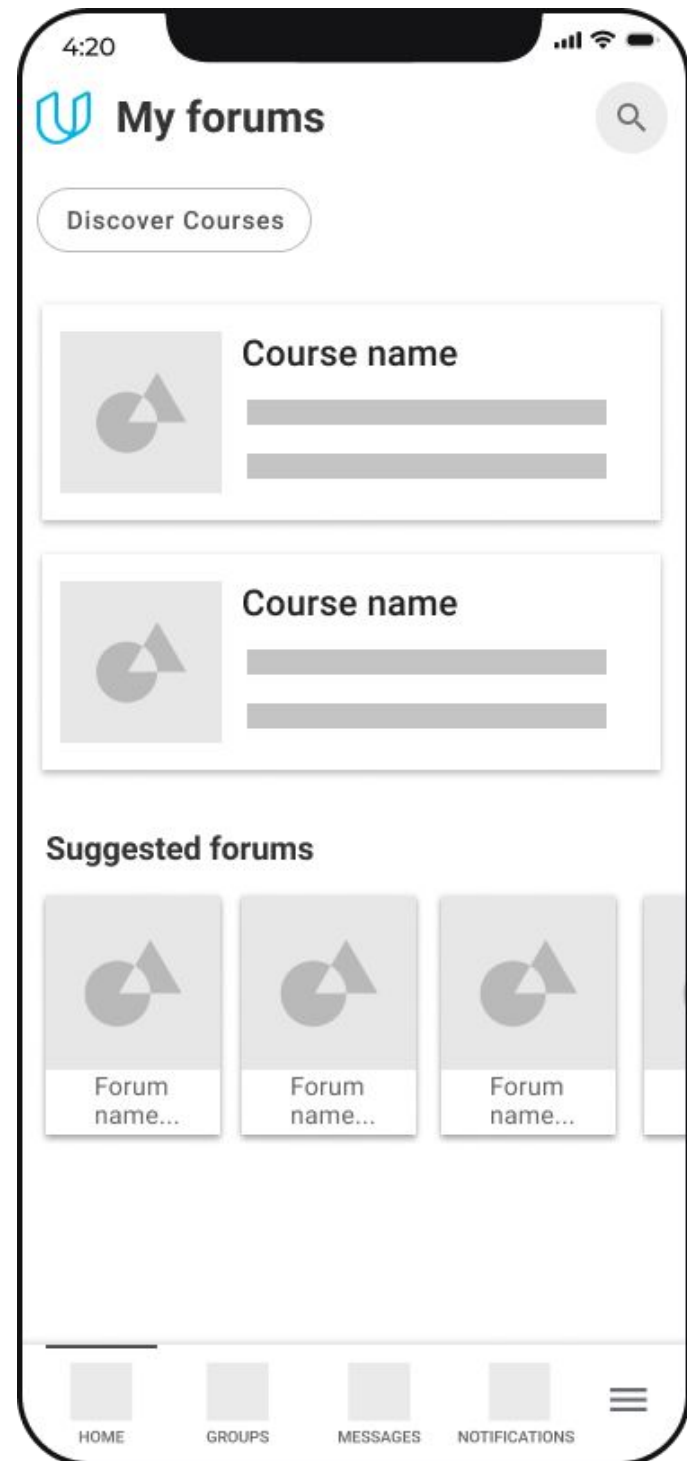
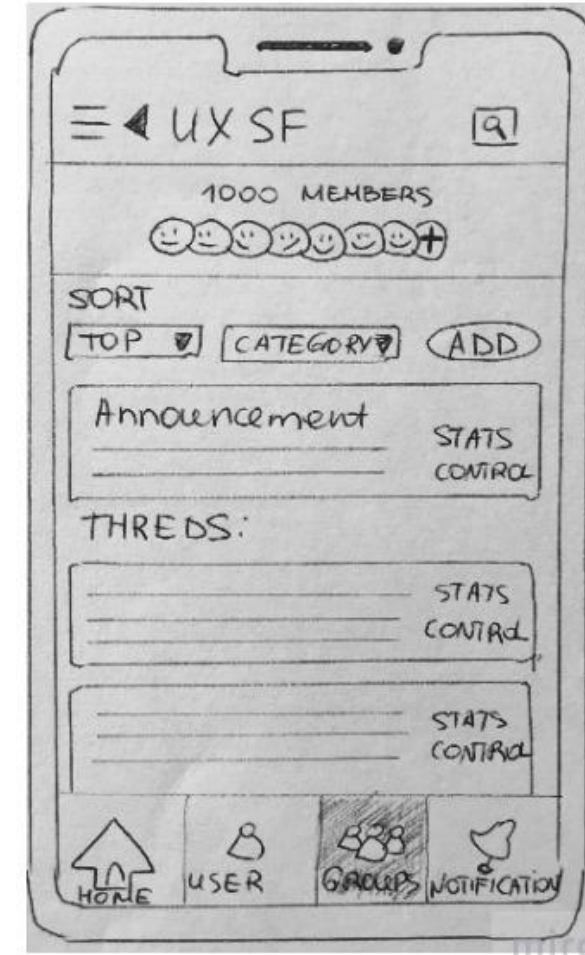
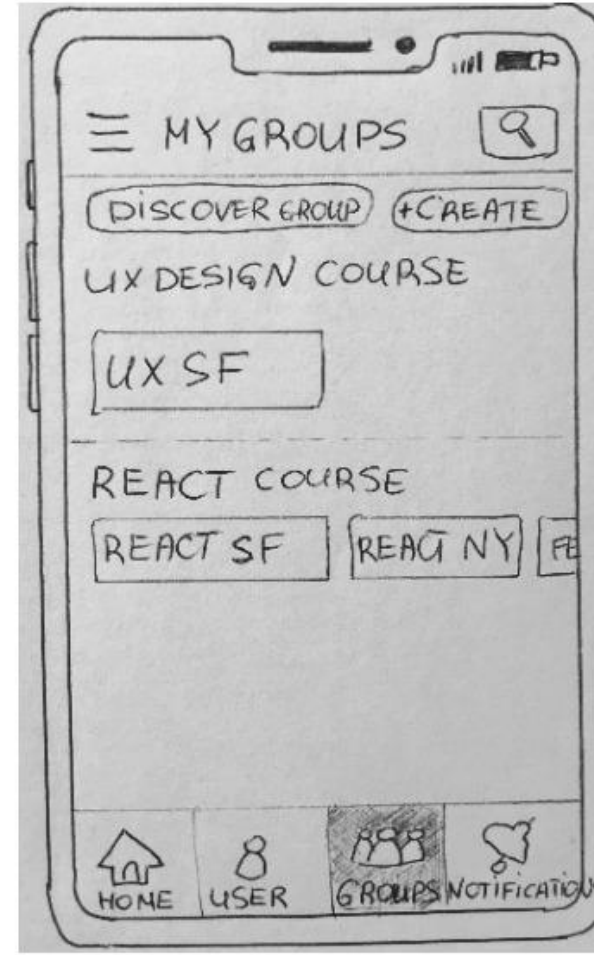
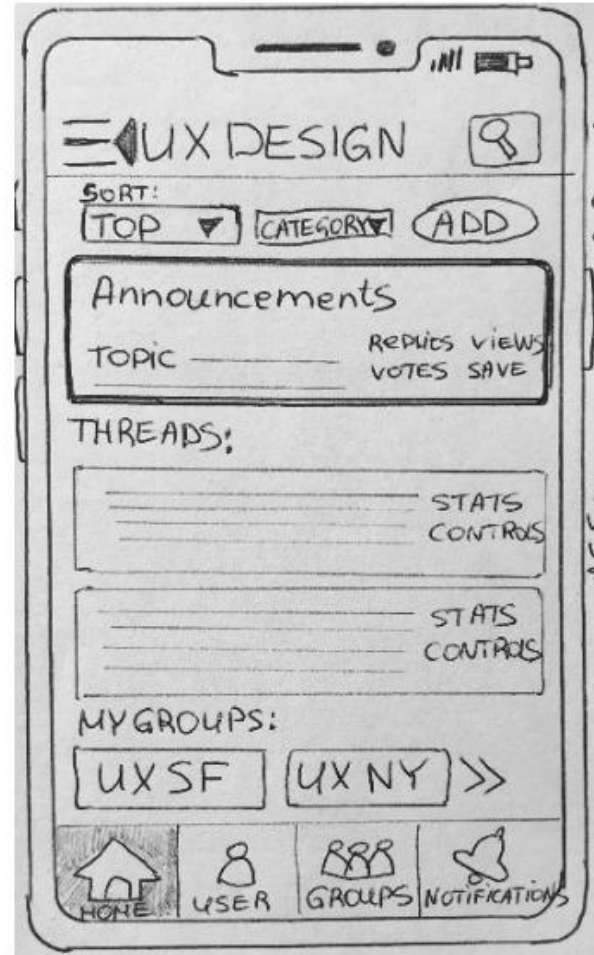
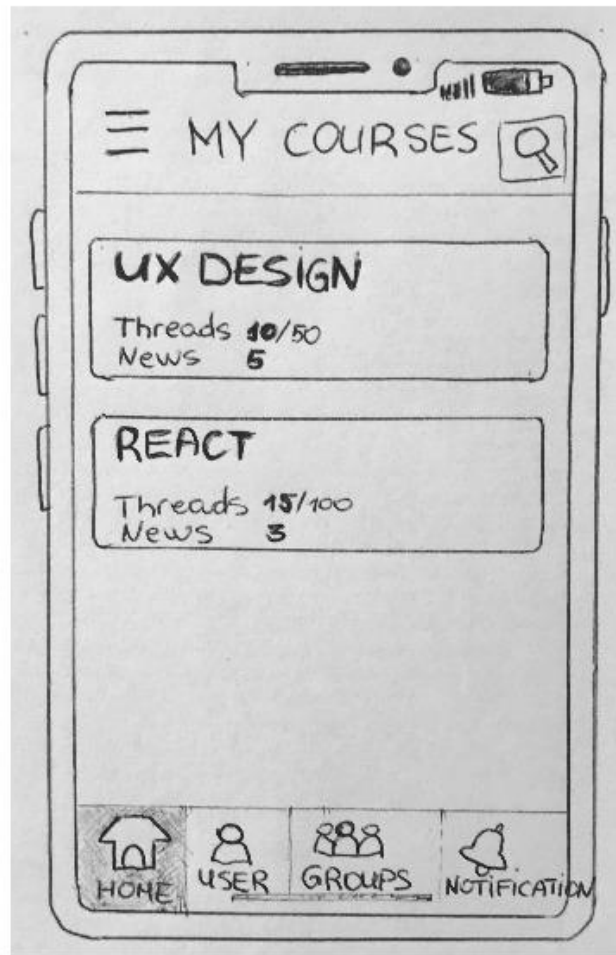


Status Quo

miro

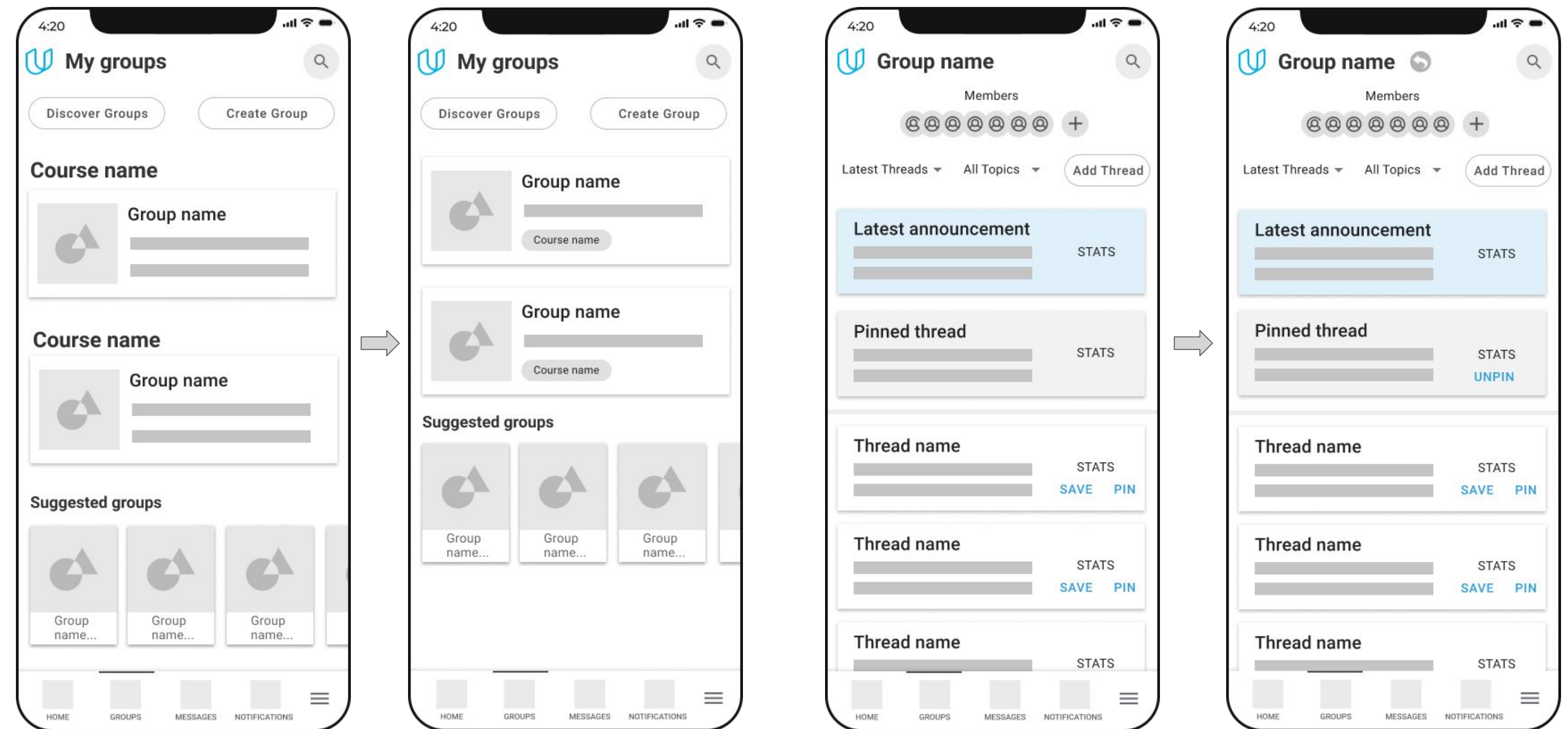


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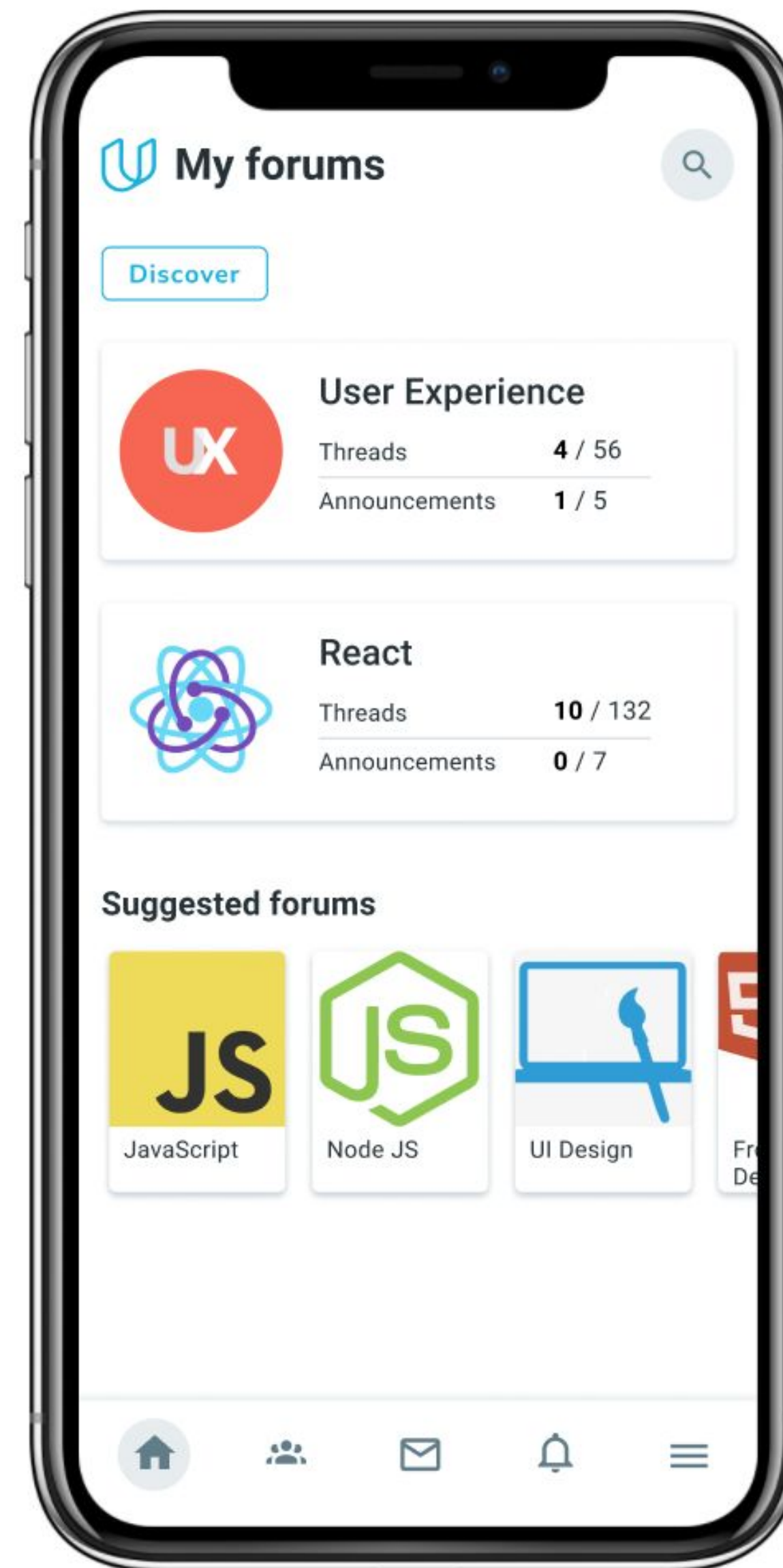
Design: Usability testing

I conducted a usability test to validate my design concept and user flow. It helped me to discover few issues with navigation and content which were address in the next design iteration.



Develop: Prototyping

After all design iterations I developed a [high-fidelity prototype](#). The main color schema was inherited from Veritas design system using for Udacity platform in order to create cohesive experience with the main platform.



Test: Validation, Usability, Feedback

I performed an accessibility check to ensure that the designed app can be accessible and made necessary improvements.

After having final design I conducted the usability test using Lookback app.

I wanted to explore new ways how to improve user experience of browsing through the forums and forum's groups and manipulation with forum threads.

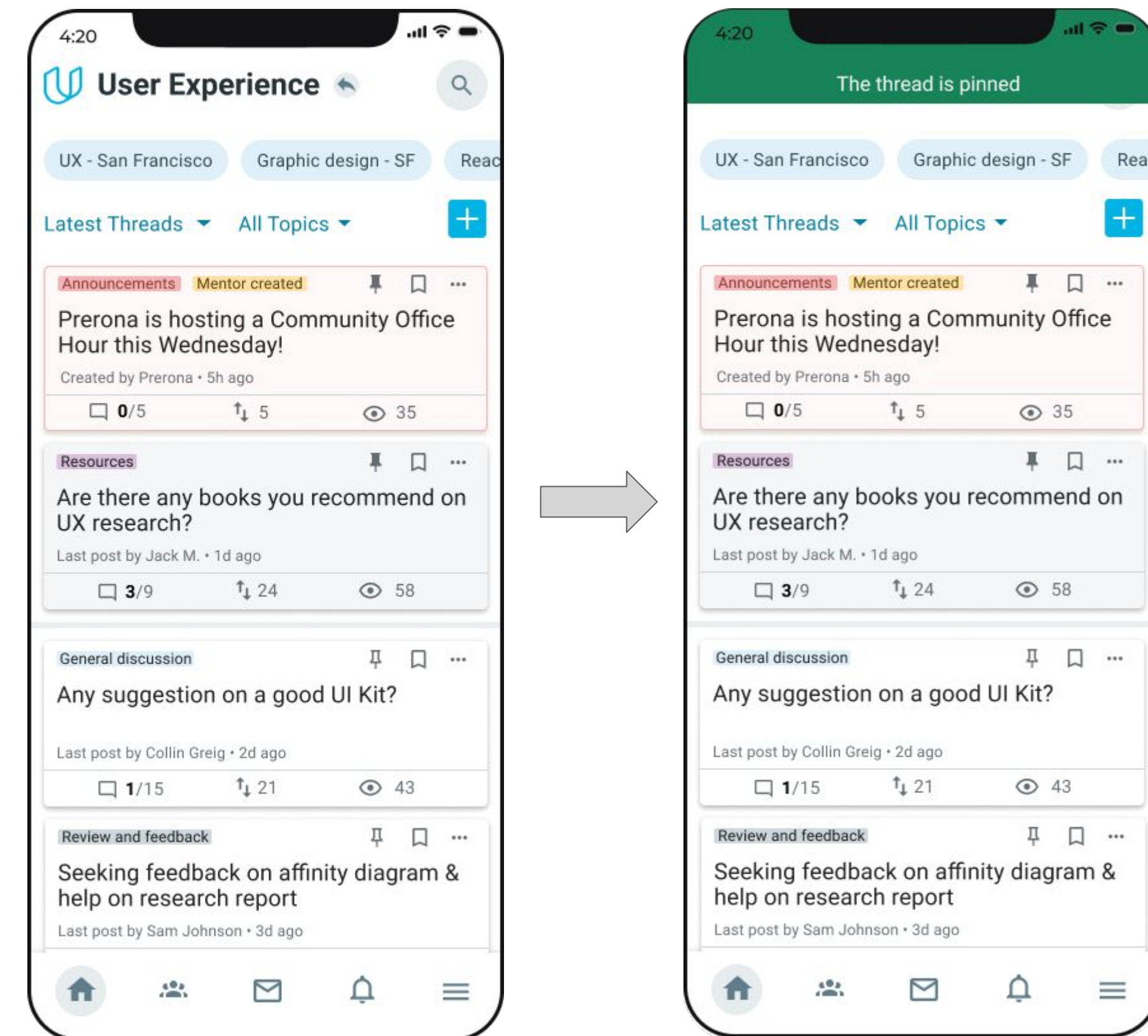
In the result of the test I found out that 4 out of 10 participants had problems with the application status when saving and pinning a thread. They would pause and be confused, increasing the time on the thread saving/pinning task. It took a few seconds for 4/10 users to recognize that a thread is pinned or saved.

25%

25%

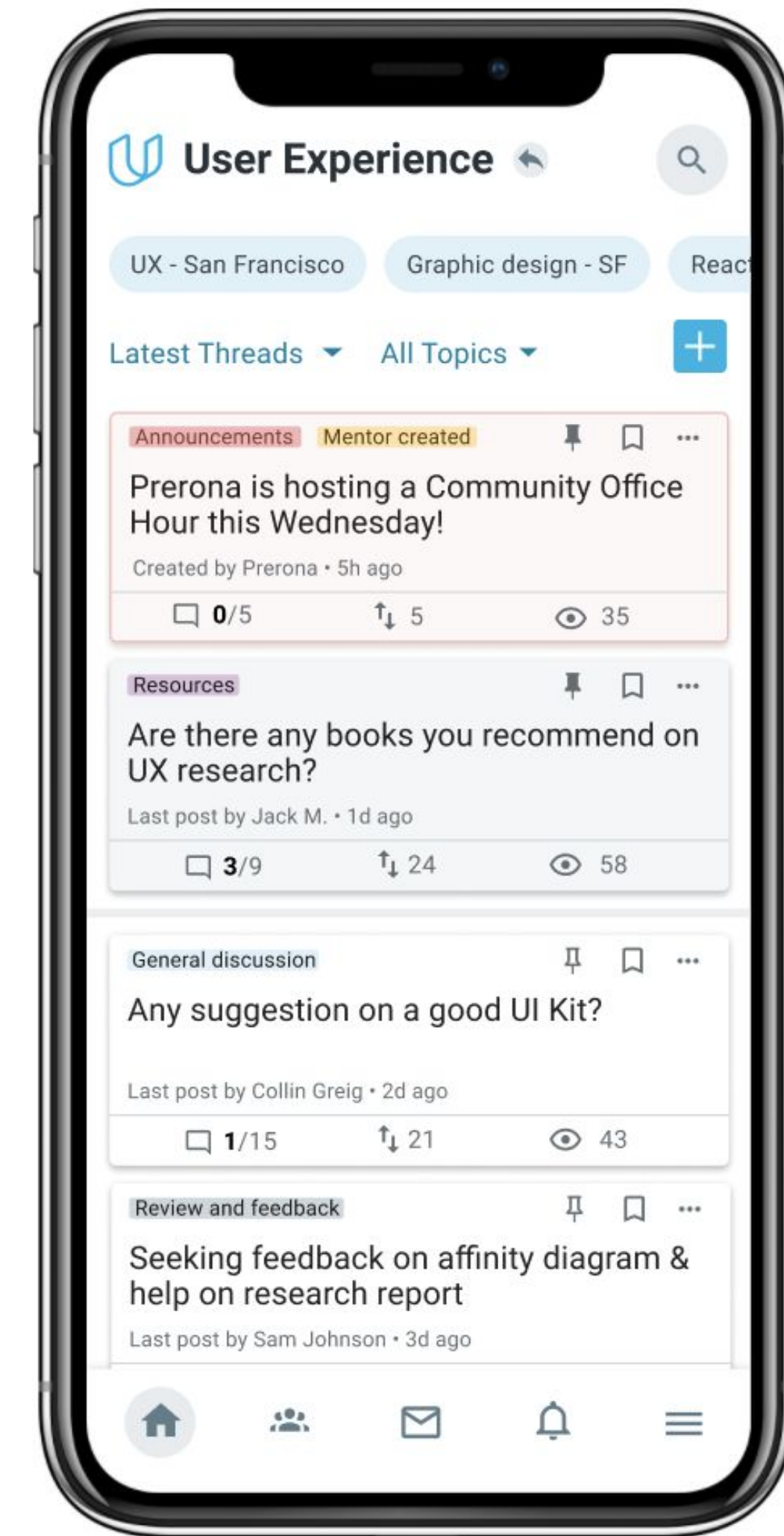
Design: Iteration

Based on gathered test data I defined my KPI - Decrease Time on task of saving/pinning a thread and built the hypothesis. Users may feel frustrated by the lack of clear system status and adding an additional success notification will decrease the time spent on recognizing the status of performed action. Based on that data and KPI I refined my designs.



Solution & Impact Overview

[My final design](#) solution allowed to create more cohesive forum experience and deliver more value for Udacity students.



About Me

Hi, I'm Ira. I'm a UX designer with solid front-end skills. I've been working as a front-end developer for 3 years but one of my biggest passion is creating a great user experience. For me design is about solving a problem in an aesthetic way and not about decoration. I love putting/dropping ideas and features based on user research and evaluate them through user testing.

With my tech background and a love for digital design, I'm helping to build usable and accessible products.

My home town is Kyiv but I live in Poland for a while.

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