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Human Factors Design Final Project Paper
PSYC 3601
May 1, 2014

Beginning several weeks ago, I knew that in approaching this project I wanted to use it as an opportunity to teach myself more about user design. I knew the ASC was having problems marketing themselves, but I also knew that their key marketing strategy and method for drawing in college student users was going to be expanding on their web strategy.

When Katrina came into class, she discussed the main focuses of the ASC, describing their "key products" so to speak as advising, assistance for struggling students (who usually fall into either the freshman or the transfer student category), generating support structures for those groups, and assisting with an online course and module that students take to learn skills for success. Their struggles as an office lay in consistency of their product (with 23 departments and many majors, it is hard to keep CLAS products consistent and hard to make sure each student in CLAS is receiving the same resources and having a similar experience) and in getting the word around that they are a resource center for students and they are willing and accessible for help.

For this assignment, my team took on the second problem with a marketing approach and a website redesign. As my teammates did not seem to have much experience with designing for web, I found my focus there. I used both the CLAS site (because there is little to no information on that site about the ASC) and the ASC site to summarize key issues I saw in the design. At our first team meeting, I sent the attached document (Document 1) to my teammates with the sitemap that the ASC was using and my initial thoughts. I met with my team separately in order to discuss our thoughts about it, and during that process and the next class I suggested we should 1) survey participants with the current design 2)Take those results and create a human factors analysis of the current system 3) Create detailed sitemap and a few wireframes for a new site that would meet our specifications. Though my group agreed that these were necessary and liked the ideas, I ended up volunteering to do them. Other things we discussed were creating a poster for CLAS that would highlight each of the academic advising centers and then describe briefly their location and what they do/why they are useful to CLAS students. This is something that could be made online as well, and added to the CLAS website. That would be a significant improvement over what is currently on there- the only reference to the ASC was on the area that recommended to students where to go for a Dean's signature.

From that point on, I began to go through and keep looking for critiques and areas of improvement with the ASC's web presence. I also scheduled and completed interviews of seven students. They ranged in year from Freshman to Senior, but were all undergraduates, because I felt that should be the target for this analysis.

I measured the amount of clicks users made when asked to perform a task and also took transcripts of our communications. Then I used their feedback (survey results and testing) to come up with some key summary points and add their input to the information we had gathered from our needs analysis. Those are listed in the attached documentation, but made it clear that the main focus areas for improvement would be the self-categorizing of the ASC in terms of website navigation, and the user functionality of some of their main pages. I chose the home page, the faculty page, the student resources page (which I changed to the "On-campus Resources" page), and the about section to focus on. I created a new sitemap for their site which categorized logically the odds & ends that they were having difficulties with, and created wireframes

for my new designs of these pages, keeping in mind the UCONN site and the CLAS site, which were analyses of similar systems, but also needed to remain consistent with the product for the ASC.

In terms of human factors design, so much could be done with this project and the ASC website. Though design considerations would be the amount of IT work possible, the time and effort and payment of IT people, and the limitations and guidelines to adhere to for UCONN and for the ASC, I think a lot of potential could come from future user testing. If I had unlimited time and resource to devote to this project, I would like to take the needs analysis we did and the analysis of similar systems further by visiting other Universities and seeing how they market their academic service centers. I would analyze their media approaches, their registration system for appointments, their online presence, and their interactions with students. All of these things would benefit a designer and developer when knowing how to create a name and a website for our ASC. Understanding student interactions with this sort of office is at the heart of knowing how to solve their problems and how they want to brand themselves, which is something I wanted to know more and more about as this project unfolded.

Again, if I had unlimited resources I would conduct many more usability tests, as that was a focus for my portion of the project and something I found quite intriguing. I would have the appropriate software necessary to test with eye-tracking, so that the user's attention focus could be analyzed. I would also time the users as they navigated the webpage and performed tasks, so that I could measure more quantitively the improvement or delay a new prototype caused. I wish that I'd had the opportunity to do more quantitative data-gathering in this project, because I feel that through click counting, timing, and direct measurements of attention, we can gain a lot of insight to the mind of the user.

I would also directly address certain user populations, were I to redo it. I would probably take key groups that the center wants to focus on (ie I wouldn't choose "senior citizens" as a focus group, because it would be a waste of resources to have them tested if they will not be using the site, and because they would have different issues to consider/sociotechnical considerations when addressing a population in website design). My user groups would be undergraduate students in CLAS, because that's who the ASC serves. I would choose one group of struggling students, one group of transfer students, one group of freshmen, and one control group of average students to test. This would hit all of the main populations that the ASC tends to cater to, and make sure that a redesigned prototype would fit their needs.

Overall, I think that adding the information for the "on-campus resource" page we developed to the CLAS site, and to some major marketing areas would significantly improve the overall population knowledge about these institutions, as well as provide a synergy between the academic regions of CLAS. Katrina discussed the struggle for consistency in a wide ranging institution like our CLAS, and I think that she's right in striving for more streamlined approaches. Differentiation is a weakener for the ASC, because they are intrinsically tied to CLAS. With these adjustments and the adaptation of the prototypes we developed for them, and the potential to continue analyzing their brand in this way, I think that they could improve their user experience drastically. With

this comes increased synergy between themselves and the overarching College, as well as with the other academic services center, all of the above will find fortitude.

Class Notes During Katrina's first Visit:

Intrusive advising for at risk students
    Online course/ module in web ct- skills for success.
        learn about time and stress management. how to be successful.
Most resources towards academically struggling students.
    Most struggling students are transfer campus students.
        Refer to mental health, academic advisor, intrusive advising (limit credits, support services)
    Serves ALL students that are struggling (though althetes, first ten students may have other services)
    Support structures for freshmen. (need a 1.8 gpa to stay off probation)
    Decide who doesn't have to see their advisor and who does.

Faculty training
Professional advisor training
Courses and curricula (know what courses are coming, listen to offers for classes and advise for or against.)
Senate comittees-scholastic standards.
Major changes, minor declarations, assignments.

Changes:
Struggle with consistency.
    23 departments and many majors, difficult to stay on top. Vast majority of advising done by faculty Don't have the time to learn all the nuts and bolts of advising.
    Not all departments provide training and support to advisors.

ID before a GPA is posted.

what does the center do- differences between department advising etc.

there are 5 advisors and the assistanct director and her, plus one admin that advises. meet with 500 to 600 students through course of semester. Potentially multiple times through semester.

Students don't come in because they are embarrassed.
Less pressure advising- meet at starbucks for coffee.
Contacted them- what would be a place or opportunity where they could meet with yme?

Website-
one stop online shop (paperless, minimizing forms)
contacting online, on your own time
goal is to support students
link to other resources.

Personal Log of Activities:

1. Wednesday, April 9- Brainstormed potential project ideas.
2. Thursday, April 10- Took notes in class as we met with Katrina to discuss the project we were going to create for the ASC.
3. Monday, April 21- Identified main issues in website design for both the CLAS site and the ASC site.
4. Monday, April 21- Created a first draft of the sitemap for their current website to make edits.
5. Monday, April 21- Did a personal analysis of similar systems: looked at the sites for similar institutions at the following Universities:
     a. UCLA
     b. University of New Hampshire
     c. Vanderbilt
     d. University of Toronto (Example outside of US)
     e. UC Davis
     f. Bowdoin College (I actually ended up visiting the center at Bowdoin college when I went up to Brunswick, Maine on Sunday April 27)
6. Wednesday, April 23- Wednesday, April 30- Conducted Surveys of Participants who answered interview questions and provided feedback while using the website.
7. Wednesday, April 23- Compiled data from participants and information, created a summary of this information in order to address basic needs of the ASC website.
8. Thursday April 24 - Group meeting, discussed presentation with Monique and Jetesnia, made sure that we each knew the proper section of focus for our project. Volunteered not only to survey participants but also to create our new web suggestions. Monique and Jetesnia decided to take a marketing focus and do some surveying themselves. Looked at similar websites in class and compared, the results of this were in the slideshow presentation.
9. Thursday, April 24- Used the data to combine certain aspects of their webpage, alter others, and develop a new sitemap for the ASC site.
10. Thursday, April 24- Developed wireframes of new pages as according to the specifications of some of the users/the user summary.
11. Thursday, April 25- Created small info brief for the ASC to use when people ask the question "What are you/why do you exist."
12. Friday, April 26- Ran these new models past 3 of the original 7 participants, who answered the same questions as before.
13. Friday April 26- Compiled the data and marked improvement from the original website with the new adjustments. (This was a small user group though, the second time around, so that must be taken into account)
14. Tuesday, April 29- Group meeting. Brought my information to Monique, set up the powerpoint and my portion of the presentation. Made sure that she knew (and would relay to Jetesnia) that they would have to upload it that night so I could submit to Professor Henning for review. Discussed who would go over specific portions of the presentation and what we would be writing in this final project report.
15. Tuesday, April 29- Made finishing touches on project.
16. Wednesday, April 30- Sent to Professor Henning, and revised the powerpoint based on his comments.

17.Wednesday, April 30- Printed out copies of the final presentation for handout in class.

18.Thursday, May 1- Final Presentation and finishing touches on final project report.

Records and Transcripts from Participant Interviews:

Interview:

What is the CLAS Academic Services Center?

Where is it?

Why would you go there?

Testing:

Can you find_____? *(Half (Participants 1-4) were given "Misconduct Policies and Procedures," (as something that wouldn't be found easily) the other half (Participants 5-7) were given "Late Drop Petition" (as something that could be found easily) Their number of clicks was recorded.*

Find three reasons you might need to go to this center for assistance.

How do you feel after using their website?

Do you feel like you accomplished your goal?

Participant 1:

Interview
1. "Who are they? I'm not sure."
2. "Don't know the first answer so I have no idea. Somewhere on campus?"
3. "I have no idea." [Given prompt of "They advise you..."] "Like… how do they advise me? In what?"
Testing
1. "Misconduct Policies and Procedures.. Dismissal Policies and Procedures… what if I need help but I don't fit into these categories?" This user took 12 clicks.
2. "I see their description of services here [on the home page] but I wish it was more direct… it says what they do, but not how they can help. It looks like they give you forms, sign forms for you, and help with advising."
3. "It was alright. It didn't take too long, it looks like every other UCONN site."
4. "I suppose."

Participant 2:

1. "I'm not sure, a center that helps with academics? If you have academic issues, I guess you'd go there?"
2. "Not sure."
3. See question 1
Testing
1. "Wait… I'm confused. Are the forms under "Student" different than the forms on the home page?" This user took 21 clicks.
2. "For advising, if you have problems with grades, and that's pretty much it."
3. "I like the F.A.Q. Section. It's straightforward and helpful. and It works on my phone!"
4. "Not really, if accomplishing it is finding the info quickly."

Participant 3:

1. "They help CLAS students"
2. "I went there once when I was on probation. It's a brown house near the library sort of."
3. "I guess for the same reason I went- I was on probation or 'subject to dismissal' so I needed to get them to sign something and I was supposed to have discussions with the people there."
Testing
1. This participant took 14 clicks.
2. "The website looks like it represents UCONN well."
3. "The people look welcoming and kind, it's just their info that's hidden."
4. "Yeah."

Participant 4:

1. "Not a clue."
2. "Not a clue."
3. "Not a clue."
Testing
1. This participant took 40 clicks.
2. "Like… how do they advise me? In what?"
3."It's fine I guess. Pretty confusing."
4. "Nah."

Participant 5:

1. "I went there to get a Dean's signature once."
2. "The brown house next to West Campus."
3. "To get things signed? Probably other academic forms?"
Testing
1. This participant took 19 clicks.
2."Who are the ASC and CLAS contact groups?"
3. "I don't entirely understand how they can help me from this website."

4. "No."

Participant 6:

1. "Not sure."
2. "I feel like it's a small building somewhere that I probably pass like every single day but I couldn't tell you which one, which is sad."
3. "My guess would be for academic advice for all UCONN students?"
Testing
1. This participant took 13 clicks.
2. "To address academic issues, it looks like. You could find three of them. Here... dismissal or... academic probation... or second language issues."
3. "Most of the site seems jumbled… I'm not sure where to find things."
4. "Not at all."

Participant 7:

1. "I must say I do not know the answer to that."
2. "Again, the same answer."
3. "Yeah, I'm 0 for 3."
Testing
1. This participant took 8 clicks.
2. "To get something signed, to meet with an advisor, or to get assistance with one of these issues- like dismissal or probation."
3. "It's not bad. Most of the home page tells me about their information, the rest I just got from the endless attached pages they have and forms."
4. "The idea to have forms accessible is really good. I knew where to go."

Before: Average clicks for harder task: 21 (About)
**After: Average clicks for easier task: 14**

List of Needs:
1.   Sitemap
      a.   Links are difficult to discern/navigate
      b.   Main information should have hierarchy
      c.   Root information of the site is great
      d.   Faculty page should be more approachable
      e.   Resources page should be more accessible
2. Overall
   b. Clarify "what ASC does" & "who you are."

Prototypes to Develop:
1. Sitemap-organizational layout of the website.
2. Layout of main pages. (Create wireframes to show the content and outline).
      b. Home Page - incorporation of the video from the about section and the current information
      c. Faculty Page- improved accessibility
      d. NEW On-Campus Resource Page - redesign and make more user friendly

Sitemaps:
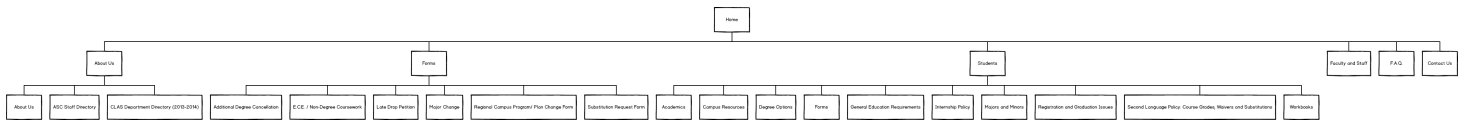
Current:

Home
- About Us
-- About Us
-- ASC Staff Directory
-- CLAS Department Directory (2013-2014)
-Forms
-- Additional Degree Cancellation
-- E.C.E. / Non-Degree Coursework
-- Late Drop Petition
-- Major Change
-- Regional Campus Program/ Plan Change Form
-- Substitution Request Form
- Faculty and Staff
- F.A.Q.
- Students
-- Academics
-- Campus Resources
-- Degree Options
-- Forms
-- General Education Requirements
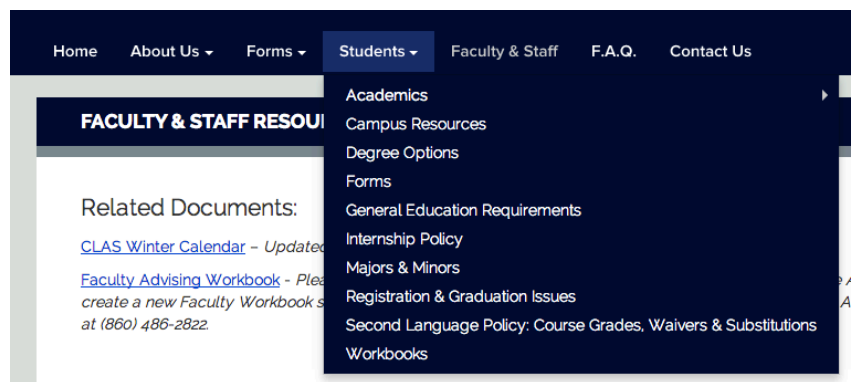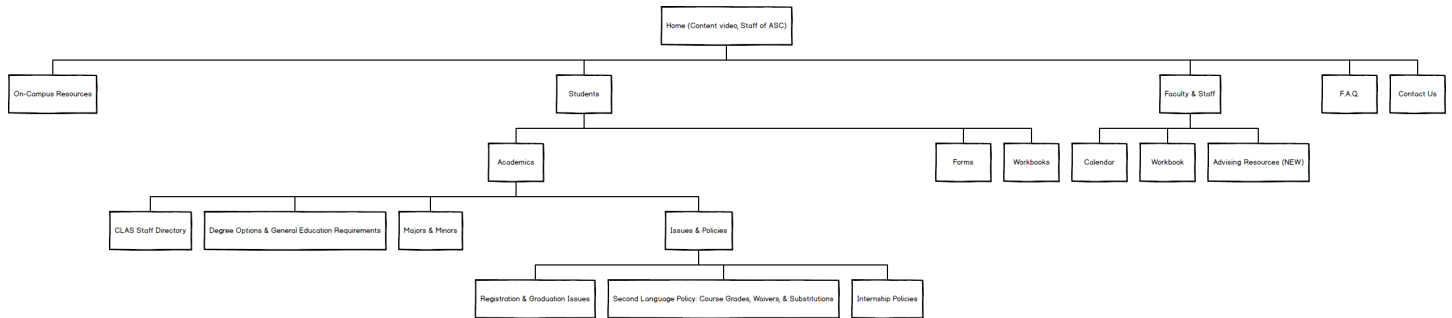-- Internship Policy
-- Majors and Minors
-- Registration and Graduation Issues
-- Second Language Policy: Course Grades, Waivers and Substitutions
-- Workbooks
- Contact Us

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                          │ Home (Content video, Staff of ASC) │
                          └─────────────────────────────┘
   ┌──────────────┬───────────────┬──────────────┬──────────┬──────────┐
┌──────────┐  ┌────────┐                   ┌────────────┐  ┌──────┐  ┌──────────┐
│On-Campus │  │Students│                   │Faculty & Staff│ │F.A.Q.│  │Contact Us│
│Resources │  └────────┘                   └────────────┘  └──────┘  └──────────┘
└──────────┘
          ┌──────────┐        ┌──────┐┌─────────┐ ┌────────┐┌────────┐┌──────────────────┐
          │Academics │        │Forms ││Workbooks│ │Calendar││Workbook││Advising Resources (NEW)│
          └──────────┘        └──────┘└─────────┘ └────────┘└────────┘└──────────────────┘
  ┌──────────────┬────────────────────────────┬──────────┬──────────┐
┌──────────────┐┌──────────────────────────────┐┌────────────┐┌──────────────┐
│CLAS Staff    ││Degree Options & General       ││Majors &    ││Issues &      │
│Directory     ││Education Requirements         ││Minors      ││Policies      │
└──────────────┘└──────────────────────────────┘└────────────┘└──────────────┘
                           ┌──────────────────┬──────────────────────────────┬──────────────┐
                        ┌──────────────────┐┌──────────────────────────────┐┌──────────────┐
                        │Registration &     ││Second Language Policy: Course  ││Internship    │
                        │Graduation Issues  ││Grades, Waivers, & Substitutions││Policies      │
                        └──────────────────┘└──────────────────────────────┘└──────────────┘
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Proposed Sitemap:

Home (Content video, Staff of ASC)

-On-Campus Resources

-Students

--Academics

---CLAS Staff Directory

---Degree Options & General Education Requirements

---Majors & Minors

---Issues & Policies

----Registration & Graduation Issues

----Second Language Policy: Course Grades, Waivers, & Substitutions

----Internship Policies

--Forms

--Workbooks

- Faculty & Staff

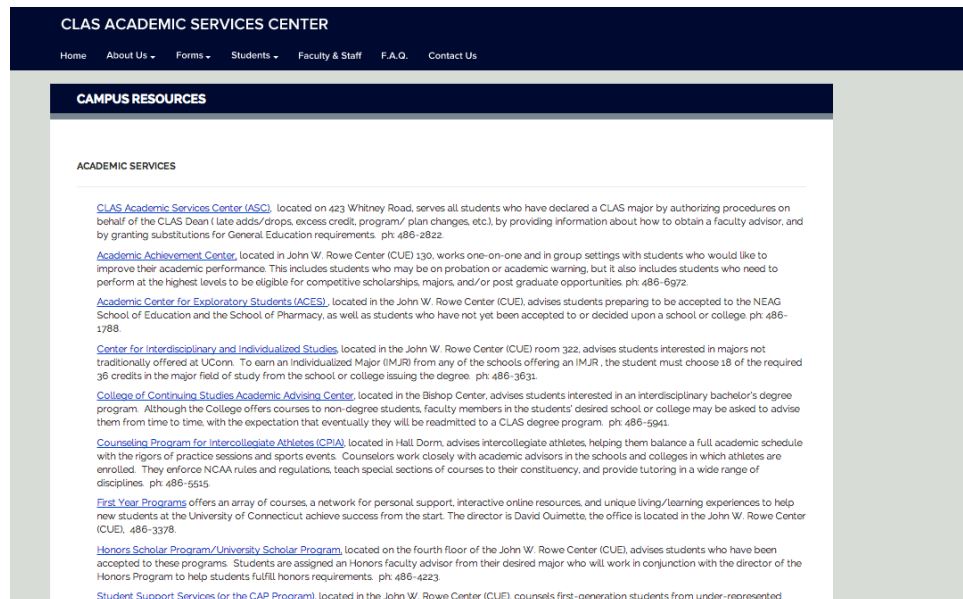--Calendar

--Workbook

--Advising Resources (NEW)

- F.A.Q.

- Contact Us

Current Resources Page

Text is both long (across) and high in quantity.

This is a pivotal page-

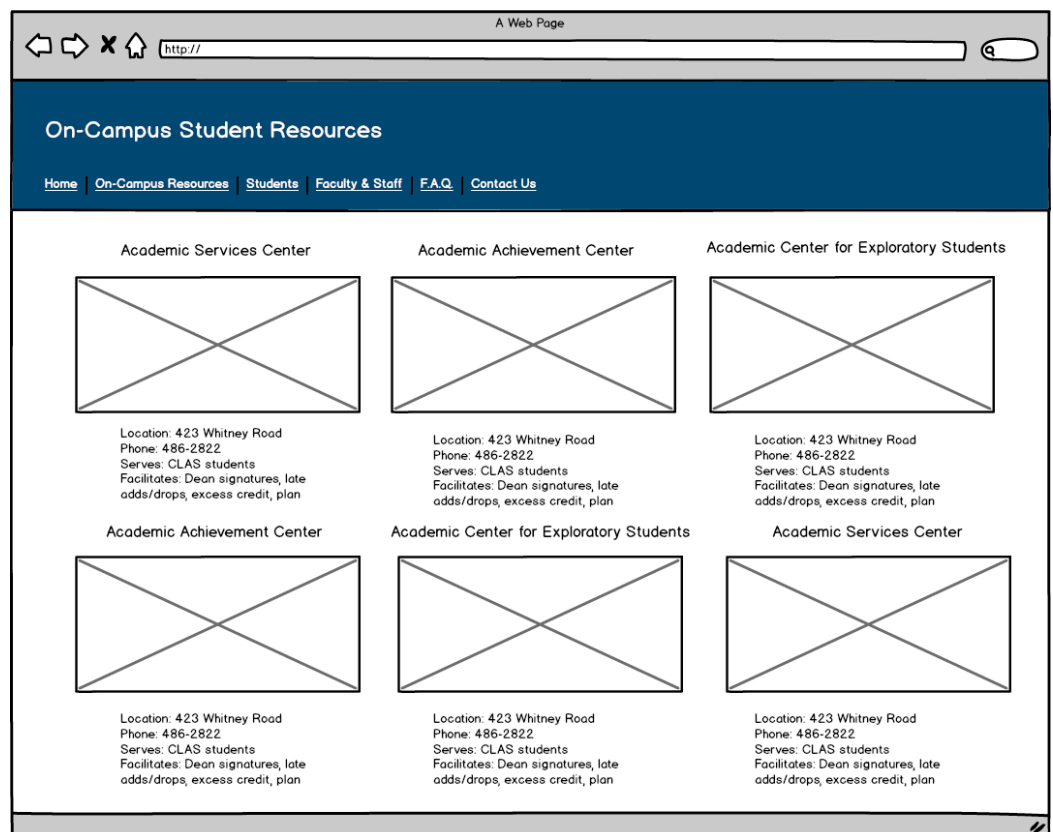it has great info describing each of the resource centers, but will it get read?

Accessibility>Space concerns

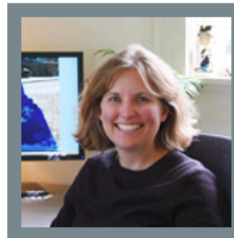Keeps the same format as the main CLAS site and other ACS pages

Include this on main CLAS site
Moved to the top of the navigation display

Same amount of text, different format.

Current Faculty Page:

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

KATRINA HIGGINS, PH.D.

Assistant Dean for the CLAS Academic Services Center

Email: Katrina.Higgins@UConn.edu

Specialty: Scholastic dismissals Academic Misconduct CLAS policies and procedures

Hometown:
Townsville, QLD, Australia

Educational Background:
BA Hons, Political Science, James Cook University, Townsville, QLD, Australia

MA, International Relations, Australian National University, Canberra, ACT Australia

MANSOUR NDIAYE, PH.D.

Director

Email: Mansour.Ndiaye@UConn.edu

**Specialty**: Scholastic dismissals Academic Misconduct CLAS policies and procedures

Hometown:
Dakar, Senegal

Educational Background:
BA, Economics and French, University of Connecticut

BS, Management Infomation Systems, University of Connecticut

awesome information here. Great photos, but the fun/approachability is lessened by the use of the scroll box.

Proposal: Large images like some other sites at UCONN link to individuals information.
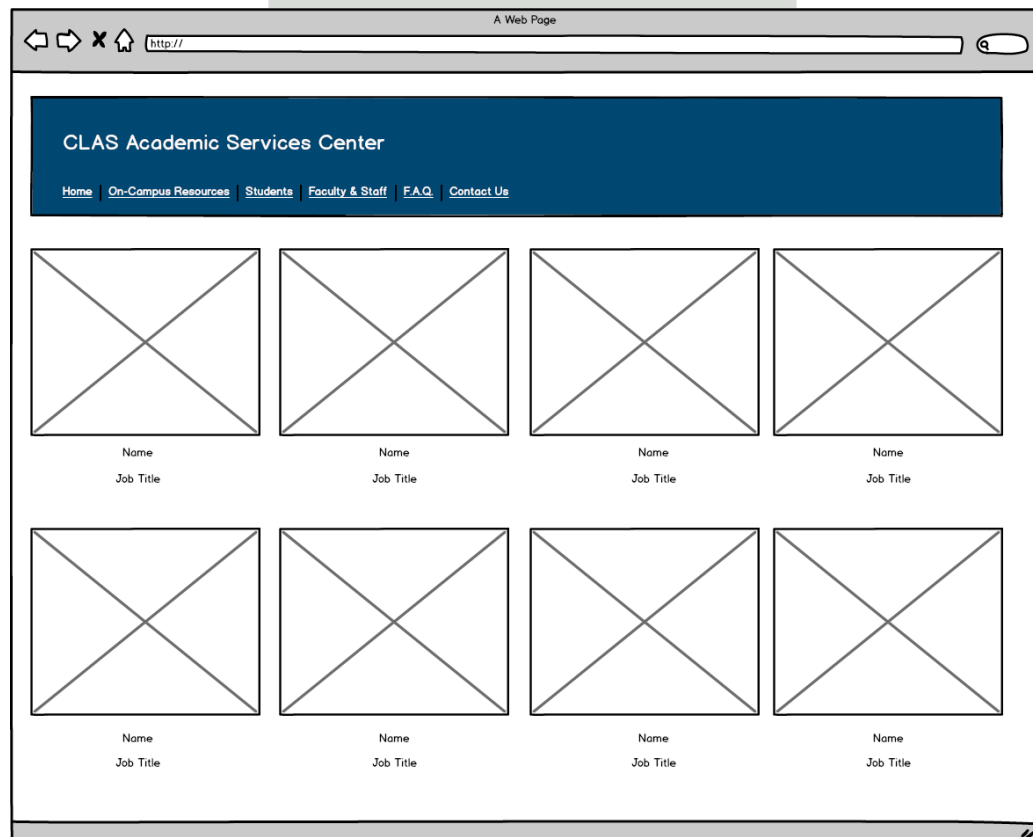
Second Round of Testing: (Participants were allowed to skip the second testing question.)

Can you find_____? *(This time, for variation, they were given: "Degree Options & Requirements") Clicks were recorded again.*

How do you feel after using their website?

Do you feel like you accomplished your goal?

Participant 1: (Was Participant 1 in first round)
1. 3 Clicks
2. "Honestly, I really like how this got more streamlined. I think with the first site they were trying to hard to make everything accessible from the home page, but even though I have to look for what I want now and it's not labeled directly, the fact that there are less tabs and confusing information means that I got to what I wanted really easily."
3. Yes.

Participant 2: (Was Participant 5 in first round)

1. 6 clicks
2. "Similar, but overall I think it's good."
3. Much more than last time.

Participant 3: (Was Participant 2 in first round)

1. 5 clicks
2. "It's similar to before in the look and feel but I like the new adjustments. When you show me the edits you made I feel like they are more approachable... and like, I also really like the categories that the webpages are in. What you did with that makes sense."
3. Yep!