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Overview:

Many college students find it difficult to stay motivated and organized when studying alone. Although students may be taking the same subjects, even across different programs, they often don't have a convenient way to connect for collaborative learning. Traditional methods like messaging apps or social media are unfiltered, unmoderated, and not designed for academic use.

Stubby (Study Buddy) is a smart, school-specific study matching application that connects students taking similar subjects within the same college or university. What makes Stubby unique is that it allows users to be matched either with a single partner or a study group, based on shared subjects, study preferences, and compatible schedules. All sessions are held within campus locations only, and activity is monitored by authorized school or app personnel to ensure safety and accountability. After each session, users can also submit feedback or reviews to continuously improve their experience.

User Description:

Who are the potential users?

- College and university students
- Students from different programs but enrolled in the same general education or core/major subjects
- Individuals seeking structured peer learning in either pairs or groups

User Characteristics:

- Typically aged 17–25, tech-savvy and familiar about mobile app
- Students who benefit from collaborative learning environments
- Expect safe, moderated systems backed by their institution or by the IT department
- May prefer one-on-one study or a small group study format

Insights were collected through campus surveys, peer observations, and informal interviews.

Task Analysis:

Characteristics of Tasks:

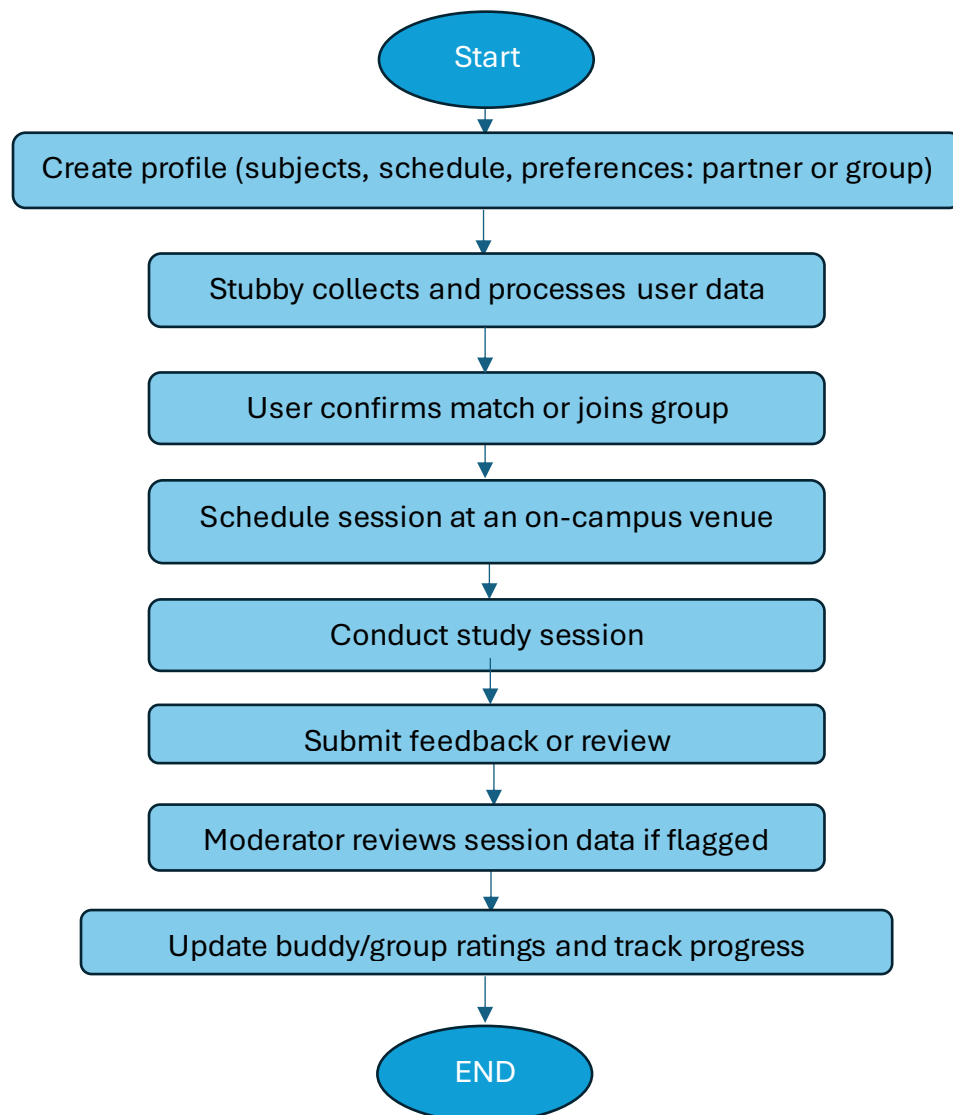
- Creating a school-verified profile with subject, schedule, and group/partner preferences
- Matching with either a study buddy or study group
- Choosing an available on-campus venue
- Joining or hosting a scheduled session
- Submitting post-session reviews or reporting issues

Task Environment:

- Used on mobile or desktop, within campus or dorms
- Sessions occur in approved study areas (library, classrooms, lounges)
- Require secure login using school credentials
- Admins or moderators are present to oversee app usage and address issues

Structured Task Analysis:

Figure 1. Flowchart: Stubby Matching & Study Session Workflow



Existing System Analysis:

Current methods used by students include:

- Facebook Messenger groups: not subject-specific, no structure
- Discord servers: not moderated or limited to campus
- Shared Google Docs or LMS forums: good for content, but no social matching

Strengths:

- Familiar to most students
- Free and accessible

Weaknesses:

- No smart matching by subject or schedule
- Lack of campus-based safety oversight
- No session feedback system or review process
- Not designed for group or academic use

Stubby combines all these necessary features into one academic, school-supported platform.

Larger Social & Technical Context:

Stubby meets the evolving need for hybrid, flexible, and safe collaboration in modern universities. It supports personalized peer learning while maintaining campus regulations.

Social context:

- Promotes a sense of academic community
- Encourages positive group dynamics
- Enhances student motivation through accountability

Technical context:

- Requires secure school logins
- Venue limitations using geolocation
- Admin dashboard for moderators
- Feedback loop from students to continuously improve match quality

Usability Criteria:

Key principles for Stubby's success:

- **Learnability:** Easy to create a profile and join sessions
- **Flexibility:** Choose between individual or group study matching
- **Safety:** Verified users only, with in-app moderation
- **Efficiency:** Fast matching and clear scheduling
- **Feedback:** Session rating system to assess quality and behavior
- **Accessibility:** Designed for all types of learners and devices

How Success Will Be Measured:

- Match acceptance rates
- Session attendance logs
- Feedback quality and ratings
- Student satisfaction surveys
- Moderator reports and resolution turnaround

Implications for Design:

These insights shape Stubby's development:

- **Group flexibility:** Users can choose between individual study partners or joining/creating a group
- **Subject-aware matching:** Algorithm must recognize equivalent subjects across programs
- **Venue restrictions:** Geolocation filters must ensure all sessions occur on campus
- **Safety-first:** Moderators must have tools to oversee sessions and manage reports
- **Feedback feature:** Post-session reviews are essential to guide future matches and behavior
- **UI Simplicity:** Both individual and group flows must be intuitive and accessible

Stubby isn't just a tech tool, it's a campus-driven academic support network that ensures compatibility, accountability, and convenience for every student who wants to succeed.