

YACS Field Study

Below are links to and descriptions of course schedulers and aids at other universities and colleges. Most design comments are my opinions of the overall layout and usability, and others may disagree with them. All personal opinions and comments are welcome.

MIT - [Firehose](#) AND [CourseRoad \(mit.edu\)](#)

The first site, Firehose, is the course scheduler. It appears to be a very basic course scheduler with one of the least aesthetically pleasing designs I've seen in a course scheduler. This reiterates the importance of user-friendly intuitive design. This site does not read left to right and therefore feels unnatural. CourseRoad is similar to our idea for a four-year planner. You can create a course plan and choose a major to add into your 4-year plan. A teammate has a brother who attends MIT who says very few people use either of these websites.

Key Takeaways:

- Importance of intuitive, aesthetically pleasing design
- Creating a 4-year plan tracker is doable, but it is very easy to make very

UC Berkeley - [Enrollment \(berkeleytime.com\)](#)

Berkeleytime.com is a comprehensive site with a course scheduler, catalog search function, and grade and enrollment features. The user interface is similar to YACS, and is simple to understand. However, it is not particularly cool or special. The most interesting part about this is the ability to see the grade averages and breakdowns for all previous classes, down to each professor. However, the availability of this information is based on policies that UC Berkeley has to release certain data, which (knowing RPI admin) RPI would likely never agree to doing.

Key Takeaways:

- Easy to use interface, good colors picked out
- Too many clicks to get a simple class scheduler going
- Unknown how often students actually use the site