County of Monterey Virtual College Career Fair

Final Design Report

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The County of Monterey (County) values diverse and inclusive community engagement through the recruitment of local college students into the County workforce. Human Resources (HR) expressed difficulty in recruiting candidates for positions in the County of Monterey's 26 departments and single water agency, collectively, the largest employers in the County (Monterey County Human Resources, 2023). As they seek to strengthen the connection with undergraduate students in the County, there is a perceived gap in student knowledge of internship and career opportunities and the procedures involved. Furthermore, County representatives at college career fairs have been limited in their ability to reach out to students due to time and staff limitations involved with in-person career fairs.

Client and Organizational Goals

The County of Monterey aims to build a sustainable "pipeline" between County of Monterey colleges to County internships and employment opportunities. Michael Rosales is the client contact and the Subject Matter Expert (SME) for this project, given his experience representing the County in local career fairs. His primary goals are an increase in student outreach as well as application rates for internships, ideally leading to careers in local government. The vision to bridge this gap is an accessible training to meet students online and guide them through the resources to align their college major/courses with an appropriate position in the County of Monterey. Undergraduate students at California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB), Monterey Peninsula College (MPC), and Hartnell College are the primary target audience. The expected outcome of the training is for students to engage with career fair facilitators more effectively and be able to confidently take the steps toward obtaining

a position with the County. Facilitator limitations are also addressed via a guide for future career fair facilitators.

Learner Analysis

While it is possible that local college students are aware of County career opportunities, this design assumes that students have little-to-no prior knowledge. Design considerations for learners include County website navigation guidance, a career opportunities overview, and recommendations for aligning their current studies with a suitable career path. Students share an intrinsic motivation to utilize the course materials for their own careers. There are a wide variety of learners' specific career interests and backgrounds. It can be safely assumed that current matriculated undergraduate students share similar goals associated with the pursuit of higher education.

Design considerations included ensuring that learners have equitable access to the web-based training modules. Learners will require computer hardware through which to view content, as well as Wi-Fi access. To support students with limited home computer and Wi-Fi access, it may be helpful to suggest locations that offer free access to these resources (Monterey County Free Libraries, n.d.). Otherwise, it may be assumed that students have access to these resources. Ensuring that final content is compatible with viewing on mobile devices might support ready dissemination to college students throughout the County of Monterey.

Project Description

The County of Monterey's Human Resources department requested an interactive, virtual design of the existing, in-person career fair presentation resources on professional opportunities. The course aims to educate local college students on employment opportunities before career fairs while extending remote participation to those unable to attend. Per Mr. Rosales'

communication in the latter half of the project, these products may eventually be shared with college students outside of the County of Monterey. Thus, a general student audience was kept in mind during creation of final materials, rather than using language that specifically addresses CSUMB, MPC, and Hartnell college students.

As proposed by the County's HR department, three student-facing modules were designed by this team of graduate students in the California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB) Masters in Instructional Science and Technology (MIST) program. The course content sets students up for success with three modules: (1) how their college courses are related to County job classifications, (2) how to explore a career based on interests and apply for an internship, and (3) how to pursue a career within the County.

The final materials were delivered to the client via links to a Google Site (GSite) (see Appendix A) with student-facing content and an Articulate Rise 360 course for future career fair facilitators (see Appendix B). The team recommends viewing the student-facing GSite before the facilitator's guide.

The GSite home page includes a welcome message and objectives, followed by an embedded pre-course Google Forms student survey (see Appendix C). Due to its perceived importance to the client, the team built the bulk of the first module in the GSite, then discussed it as a team before continuing development of the second and third modules. Content was primarily added as text with supplementary images to bring the pages to life, along with placeholders with captions/descriptions of videos and images for the client to develop and add at a later date. Existing materials, including County of Monterey Human Resources videos and guides, were embedded or referenced as they supported the goals of each module. The success of this student-facing course can later be measured by comparing application rates and view counts on

the County recruitment website before and after the course is released, though this was deemed outside the scope of this project.

The detailed Rise 360 "County of Monterey Virtual Career Fair Facilitator's Guide" was deemed necessary to meet the client's need for additional trained County representatives. This guide aims to familiarize new career fair facilitators with the student-facing course. Mr. Rosales communicated his plan to later incorporate synchronous provision of this course into college classrooms, further supporting the need for the facilitator's guide.

Design Decisions

Mr. Rosales communicated his intention to eventually create a script that supports career fair facilitation, alleviating the labor that currently falls primarily to him. In the days before submission of the Design Document, the team debated switching tracks to focus on facilitator training. The student-facing content was relatively straightforward and it was agreed that there was also a pressing need to design a guide for future career fair facilitators. Due to time constraints, the team continued developing the requested three modules in the GSite while also creating the facilitator-facing Rise 360 course with general guidance on how to support students in completing the three virtual modules. While the specific recipients are yet to be identified, the intended facilitator's guide audience includes college professors, administrators, and County of Monterey employees.

The deliverables are intended for asynchronous learning for both students and facilitators. Student participants receive an orientation to internship and career opportunities in the County of Monterey, while the facilitator's guide familiarizes new County representatives with the student-facing materials in preparation for in-person conversations. Mr. Rosales seeks consistency in career fair presentations and to combine the asynchronous training with in-person

presentations to learners. Facilitation of conversion to a synchronous format will entail scripting to guide facilitators in gaining student attention and eliciting active participation; in-depth creation of such materials was deemed outside the scope of this project.

The MIST team supported the design and development phases of this project via content creation with storyboards, sample scripts, a pre-course student survey, a facilitator's guide, and a GSite with the basis for future course development by County's HR. Existing content, including video testimonials and department activity summaries, were incorporated. Materials were shared with the client via email and a shared Google Drive folder. Final materials were delivered via links to the GSite and the Rise 360 facilitator's guide. The County already uses the Articulate 360 authoring tool and plans to use this format for final delivery. However, not all MIST team members had Articulate access and a GSite was used as a free, collaborative platform for content creation. The County will be given access to edit the student-facing GSite modules for the County's creation of the Articulate 360 Rise modules.

Evaluation

Developmental testing was conducted to the degree that time and target audience availability allowed. One team member consulted with a previous MIST student and three student assistants at Chico State between the ages of 19 - 24 years-old. These individuals generously reviewed the materials and provided requested feedback. Their feedback was important in the design and development of the facilitator's guide. Apart from this evaluation, the team did not have access to the primary target audience of local college students in the County of Monterey. The 19 - 24 years-old age group participants provided adequate insight, given the limited timeframe.

The module materials and facilitator's guide may be further evaluated by the County of Monterey. The pre- and post-course student surveys, in particular, should provide valuable evaluation data. It is recommended that student feedback be used to inform future iterations of the course modules and the facilitator's guide.

The team was delighted to receive overwhelmingly positive feedback when drafted materials were shared with Mr. Rosales. He asked for a few small changes but otherwise conveyed that the team's work was on target. The team is proud to report Mr. Rosales' feedback on our most recent work below:

> First, excellent work from everyone. I have been participating in this program for about 5 years and you have been the best group in preparation and delivery. I am wowed by the layout and information that you provided. This team is so bright and I can see you all successful in you [sic] future endeavors. I am looking forward to your final project.

Teamwork

The success of our team is owed to 1) the dedication of its members, 2) clear and consistent communication, and 3) creative collaboration within identified roles. All team members were reliable and supportive of one another. Mutual respect was an invaluable asset of our teamwork. Consistent connection via multiple channels created group cohesion. In the face of initial uncertain project parameters, supportive creativity facilitated effective work. Our team capitalized on each other's strengths and supported one another throughout our shared efforts.

With a strong background in group work, our team recognized the value of organizing our efforts from the outset. We identified the roles we would fill and defined intended communication patterns and avenues in our first meeting. In subsequent weekly team meetings, we divided assignments and identified team deadlines that facilitated collaborative feedback

prior to final due dates. Our team was fortunate to have all members follow through on commitments to their roles and to specific tasks assigned throughout the term.

Established team roles allowed work to commence smoothly. All members equally shared the designer, writer, and editor roles each week. Mandy took on the responsibilities of project manager/organizer and main client point of contact. She communicated consistently with Mr. Rosales on behalf of the team as the primary client meeting facilitator, ensuring all agenda items were addressed and mitigating confusion in communication. Caitlin took on the role of organizational support by managing the multitude of documents in a Google Sheet (see Appendix D) with assignment due dates, instructions, samples, due dates, and task delegation. She also served as a creative guide by facilitating creation of the final student-facing deliverable in the GSite and providing technical support for the team to take full advantage of GSite functionality. Jeremy provided key insights into our work as equity specialist along with his strong background in teamwork and communication that supported effective client dialogue. His creative problem-solving efforts led to the use of the Rise 360 authoring tool for the facilitator's guide. Jeremy served as the lead designer and creator of this facilitator's guide and the team commented with minor revisions. Eric took on the roles of note-taker and editor. His organized consolidation of meeting items was indispensable to our efficient work and served as a reference for both team members and Mr. Rosales. His technological skill set supported the creation of organized and effective materials. Renee took on the roles of graphic designer and editor. Her creative eye offered valuable direction to our team, her research efforts informed our evaluation process, and her editing work provided support throughout the project. All team members were communicative and supportive, filling in on behalf of one another whenever necessary.

The distance learning nature of our work rendered collaborative tools indispensable. Zoom was used for weekly and as-needed team meetings, as well as for regular meetings with Mr. Rosales. Our team used a Slack messaging thread for communication throughout the project. Gmail was utilized to maintain consistent client contact and facilitated feedback between scheduled Zoom meetings. Google Suite products – Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Forms, and Google Sites – were utilized for collaborative effort on team essays and for creation of final client products. Rise 360 was used to create the "Virtual Career Fair Facilitator's Guide." The Articulate 360 Review feature allowed all team members to provide product feedback, circumventing the issue of lacking team accessibility.

Challenges

This group was prepared for challenges from the outset of this course. Working with a client to produce a product in an eight-week course is a challenge unto itself. We also understood that this summer term course would entail obstacles associated with travel plans, work, and other obligations. Our team agreed to give each other grace and empathy throughout the process. Retaining dedication to this agreement proved key to our group's success. The top three challenges our group faced are as follows:

1. **Time constraints and obligations** - Time limitations proved a challenge for both our team members and Mr. Rosales. Conflicting obligations arose for most team members at some point throughout the term. Mr. Rosales also had work commitments that delayed his feedback and ability to meet with greater frequency. This was addressed by exemplary organizational skills, frequent team check-ins through Slack, frequent email communication with Mr. Rosales, and giving ourselves and the client reasonable expectations.

2. **New SME and resulting unclear direction at outset** - At our primary meeting with Mr. Rosales we were told the project proposal was not his and had been inherited from a colleague. This resulted in Mr. Rosales' need to familiarize themselves with the proposal, with resulting divergent viewpoints on some of the details. This was addressed via communications with Mr. Rosales, creative problem-solving as a group, and feedback from our professor.

3. **Software limitations** - From the initial client meeting, the team thought Rise 360 would be a powerful tool to leverage for the creation of final deliverables. We thought there would be the ability to share team license permissions for editing but that was not the case. This was addressed with a quick pivot to GSites for the bulk of the materials. It was decided by the group that we could leverage Rise 360 for the supplemental facilitator's guide.

<div align="center">Advice for Future Students</div>

The advice we have for future students is to mitigate immediate challenges as soon as possible, namely, time constraints, technology limitations, or group/client schedules. To address challenges, we recommend:

1. Start the project early. Read carefully through the client proposals and have key ideas to discuss with your teammates in the first meeting that you can consolidate and take to your client.

2. Make sure your idea of the project is grounded in the client proposal and stays within scope. The timeframe of the class means that it is unlikely that your group will deliver a finished product, so do not be too stressed about refinements beyond your client's feedback.

3. Use the course timeline to design a timeline with your team, so that deadlines and the project schedule are clear.

4. Think about the kind of technology you would use or have access to that would be appropriate, and make sure that everyone either has access or can get access within the design timeline.

5. Set up a communication plan. Identify a regular time for everyone to meet and communicate. Designate someone as the point of contact for the client. Additionally, have some asynchronous communication to support those that cannot make meetings. Record each meeting and take clear, concise notes, so that anyone can refer back and see key decisions.

Through careful management of time, good communication practices, and a clear understanding of what tools are available, many challenges can be alleviated, and the course will go smoothly.

Appendices

Appendix A. Google Sites Modules

Modules Link

Appendix B. Rise 360 Facilitator's Guide

Rise 360 Share Link

Google Drive Folder

Appendix C. Google Forms Survey

Form

Appendix D. MIST Team Timeline Spreadsheet

Team Timeline Link

References

Monterey County Free Libraries. (n.d.). *Free Wi-Fi connection.*

https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-i-z/library/how-do-i/use-wi-fi-computers

Monterey County Human Resources. (2023). *Internship proposal: CSUMB MIST program summer 2023.*

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