

## FOCUS GROUP RESULTS - COOKING COMPANIONS DELIVERABLE 2

### Transcript

(1 is closest to door)

3:30 - Group arrives:

1. liv
2. ryan
3. natalie
4. casey

3:31 - group members all sign consent form

3:32 - Presentation begins

- 4 and 1 nod in agreement statement: "only 1 in 4 college students cook from home" <sup>1</sup>

3:38 - Presentation concludes

3:38 - Questions begin

Group Information:

Three out of four live in same apartment:

- Group Meals planned out ahead of time.
- 1 person cooks per night for everyone.
- Group cooks at least once a week minimum.

1. What experience do you have cooking?

1 Has experience cooking, cooks at least once per week.

2 Very little home cooking .

3 Lives off campus, cooks sometimes, but her recipe knowledge has expanded since living off campus.

4 Does not cook as often as they used to when they lived with their parents.

Conclusions: Agreement with 2021 study,<sup>1</sup> very few college students cook at home often.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope, L., Alpaugh, M., Trubek, A., Skelly, J., & Harvey, J. (2021, May 14). *Beyond ramen: Investigating methods to improve food agency among college students*. Nutrients. Retrieved February 25, 2023, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8156074/>

2. Is this something appealing to you? Why or why not?

1: Ability to filter recipes very appealing, especially by allergy info. Blacklisting is appealing.

2: Likes the idea of querying, cutting back on recipe search-time. Inference: queries must provide most relevant results first.

3: Likes the idea of hands-free prompting, hates ingredients and instructions being separated by ads.

4: Likes the idea of blacklisting certain ingredients.

Conclusions:

May want to look into calculating allergic information when possible through an API or using the public FDA nutritional database.

Hands free prompting should unify ingredient amounts with instructions. No ads embedded in them. Maybe ads before is okay? Just on the side?

3. Are there any features that are particularly convenient?

Are any inconvenient or not useful?

3: Filtering is great. Ability to add comments or suggestions to recipes would be nice.

no particularly inconvenient feature or suggestions from other sample-members.

Conclusions:

Add some kind of commenting, or even suggestion system. An upvote or rating system would also be useful.

4. What in the UI is appealing to you?

3: When asked if they preferred a search engine on the homepage or not, they agreed it would be convenient.

4: preferred central landing page without a search engine, some kind of message to explain how the site works is preferred.

3: Usually already has a good idea of what they want to make when searching for a recipe, finding a process is more important than finding a result.

Conclusions:

Focus on querying relevant results from a name search over tag-based filtering.

Maybe have a basic text search embedded into the homepage with more advanced filtering being "advanced". Like most websites with such an advanced search feature.

5. Do you have any experience using any similar products?

None, apartment groups have a physical cookbook.

a. Any other suggestions then?

4: Ability to export or print recipes is a must.

3: In agreement, suggests this would appeal to older users.

Conclusions:

Implement formatted export-to-pdf or to plain text. Maybe export multiple as a bunch of index-card sized cutouts.

6. Would this encourage you to cook more?

General agreement for yes, would make it more convenient to not have to physically search through the apartment group's cookbook.

2: Would make searches more convenient if there was one place he could reliably search for recipes.

Conclusions:

Image-to-text API for storing physical recipes?  
Focus on features for personal recipe storage and meal-planning?

3:50 - Focus Group Concludes

We are conducting a focus group for our COS 420 project, a web app to store and browse recipes called **Cooking Companion**. At the end of the session, we will ask you a few questions for feedback. We are showing a presentation for a class project in COS 420: Intro into Software Engineering. **Our names are Heath Miller, Nick Jacobs, Tristan Cilley, Kass Belaya, and Tyler Harwood**. We will use the results of this focus group to help improve our app.

**Participation:** You need to be at least 18 to participate. Participation is voluntary. You can stop at any time. This focus group session will take approximately 20 minutes. During this time, we will ask you to sit through a presentation on the Cooking Companion app. At the end of the session, we will ask you some questions about your experience; it should take only a minute or two to complete.

**Risks:** Risks for participating are minor—just your time.

**Confidentiality:** No names will be collected. You will be identified by a participant number in all of our data collection and reports.

**Presentation:** The information will be used to evaluate our product and then the data from this focus group will be destroyed.

**Contact Information:** Please contact one of the following people if you have any questions:

**Research Team:**

Nick Jacobs, [nicholas.jacobs@maine.edu](mailto:nicholas.jacobs@maine.edu)

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**Principal Investigator/Instructor:**

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Printed name: Natalie Robinson

Sign here:

Natalie Robinson

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Ryan Robinson

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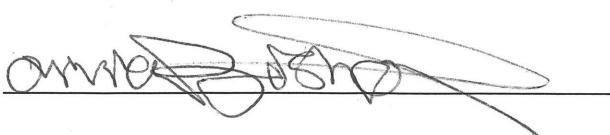
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Printed name: *Liv Bishop*

Sign here:



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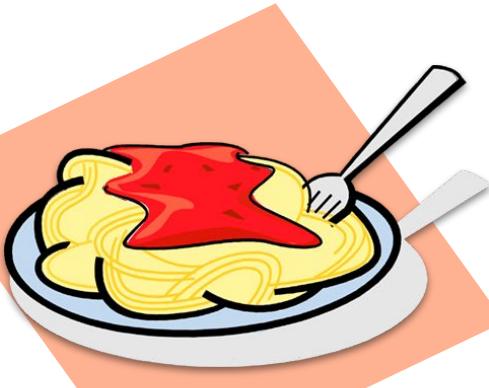
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Printed name: **Casey Libuda**

Sign here:





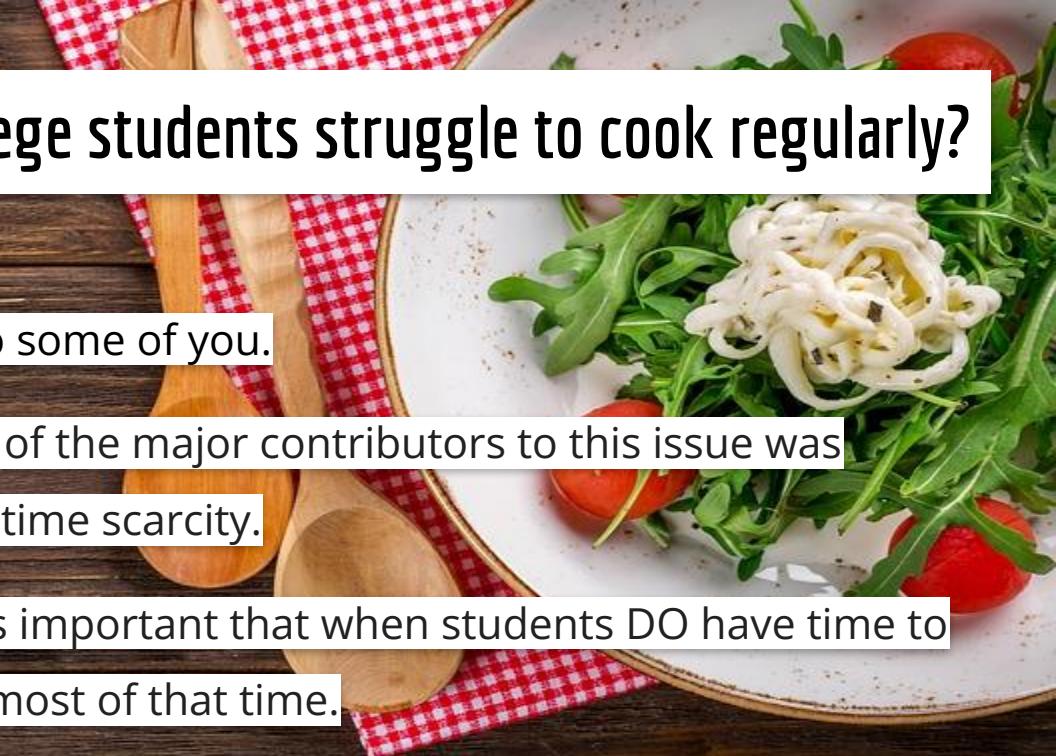
# Cooking Companion

**Team Members:**  
Kass Belaya  
Tristan Cilley  
Tyler Harwood  
Nick Jacobs  
Heath Miller



# Did you know studies show college students struggle to cook regularly?

- This may not come as a surprise to some of you.
- In a study by Pope, et al(2021) two of the major contributors to this issue was lacking knowledge in cooking, and time scarcity.
  - Between classes and work, it's important that when students DO have time to cook, they need to make the most of that time.
  - To do that, they might need a little help.



**This is where our Cooking Companion comes in.**

# What is Cooking Companion?



Cooking Companion is an exciting new web application currently under development that enables people to **cook**, **share**, and **save** recipes.

Users will be able to:

- cultivate a personal list of recipes
- upload their own recipes
- search for new recipes in the public collection by:
  - name
  - specific ingredients
  - or dietary restrictions
- and much more!

# What is it really, though?

- The foundation of the application will be a database of recipes supplied by users.
- For any recipe, the app will be able to produce a detailed shopping list for all ingredients and cookware needed to complete the recipe.
- Once the users have everything needed to begin cooking, the application will provide step-by-step instructions to guide the cooking process.

How is this different  
from other recipe apps  
and websites?



Recipe sites like the Betty Crocker or Allrecipes focus on having one big collection of recipes, rather than helping cooks curate their own collections, and have little to no filter or advanced search features!

The Betty Crocker site doesn't even allow users to upload their own recipes, just view patented Betty Crocker recipes!



Meanwhile, Cooking Companion provides users with several ways to search, filter, and curate from a collection of user-submitted recipes, along with adding their own recipes to the mix!

Additionally, apps like RecipeKeeper, while they have the personal database features, ignore the public database features of the other sites. Cooking Companion has both, and the filter and search features that none of the other apps do.



While the Whisk app comes the closest to Cooking Companion's features and functionality, Whisk focuses on the nutritional and health aspects of food, where Cooking Companion chooses instead to help with the act and art of cooking.

Overall, Cooking Companion combines all the best features of these applications into one, creating a tool that supports and assists cooks in ways none of these others do.

Primary  
Functionalities/  
User Stories



# A. Public and Private Recipe Databases

- As a registered user I want to be able to create a new recipe page so that I can store a recipe electronically.
- As a registered user I want to be able to toggle if my recipes are public or private so that I can choose who can see them.
- As a registered user I want to be able to upload pictures of the dish if I choose, so that people can see how wonderful the dish looks.
- As a registered user I want to be able to display the ingredients of my recipe so that I or another user will know what ingredients are needed to cook it.

# B. Search Recipes

- As a user I want to be able to browse public recipes by title so that I can expand my cooking knowledge.
- As a user I want to be able to filter my search for public recipes based on ingredients because I want recipes for what is in my fridge.
- As a user I want to be able to filter my search for public recipes based on tools because I only want recipes that I have the tools to make.
- As a registered user I want to browse my private collection of recipes so that I do not have to waste time scrolling over public recipes that I do not want to take a chance with.
- As a registered user I want to be able to tag allergies to a recipe so that someone on a specific diet will be able to easily blacklist or whitelist it in searches.
- As a registered user I want to be able to tag my recipe with its required ingredients so that it will show up in a search when a user whitelists for the ingredients.

## C. Other Features

- As a registered user I want to be able to share recipes with people outside the platform so that I can share my family recipes.
- As a user I want to be able to get step-by-step prompts when cooking so that I don't have to fumble with my electronics when I am cooking.
- As a registered user I want to be able to follow other registered users so that I can see when they post a new public recipe.

# Preliminary UI Designs



# Home Page

#Example Homepage

The image shows a wireframe of a website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a logo (a triangle containing 'C.C.'), a 'Recipes' button, a 'Cooks' button, and a 'Sign In' button. Below the navigation bar is the main title 'Cooking Companion'. The page is divided into two main content areas. The left content area contains the text: '\*Food pictures' followed by 'or', and then '\*Public Database search feature'. The right content area contains the text: '\*Mission statement', '\*Benefits of the app', '\*Features', and '\*Pictures'.

C.C.

Recipes

Cooks

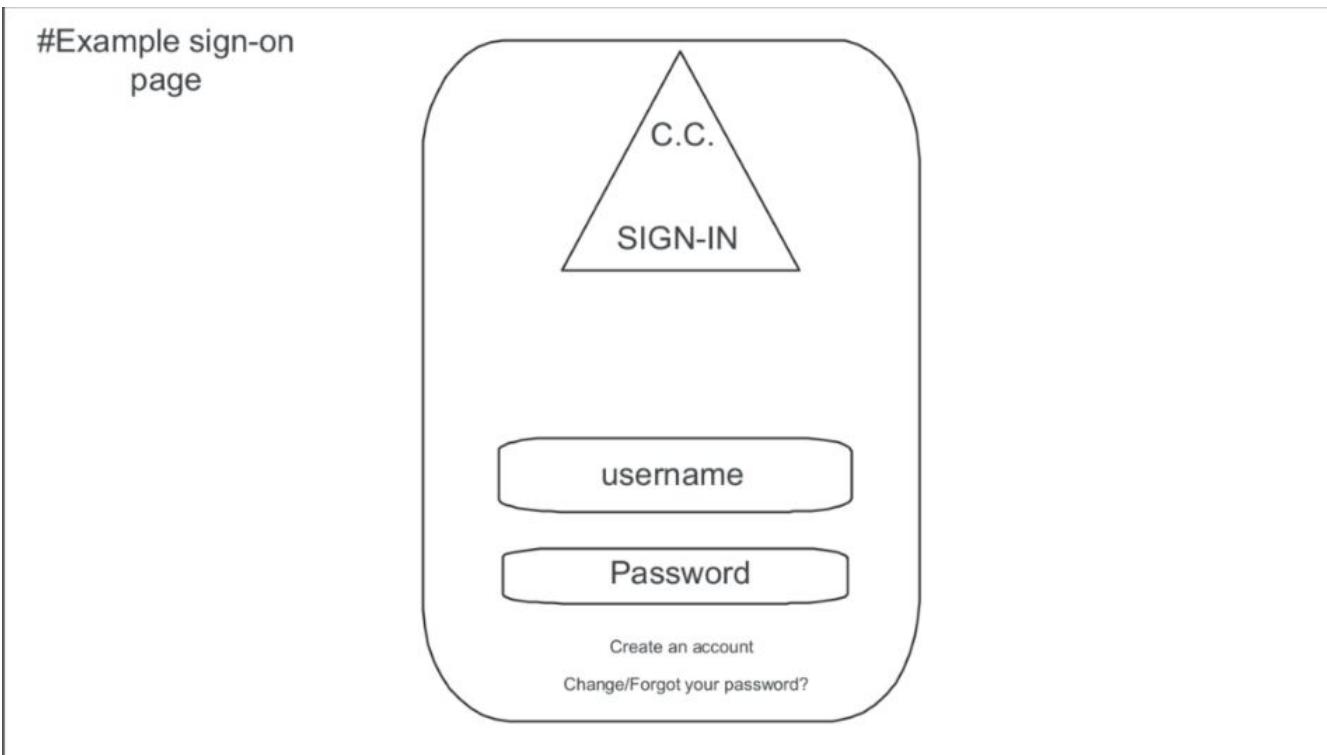
Sign In

## Cooking Companion

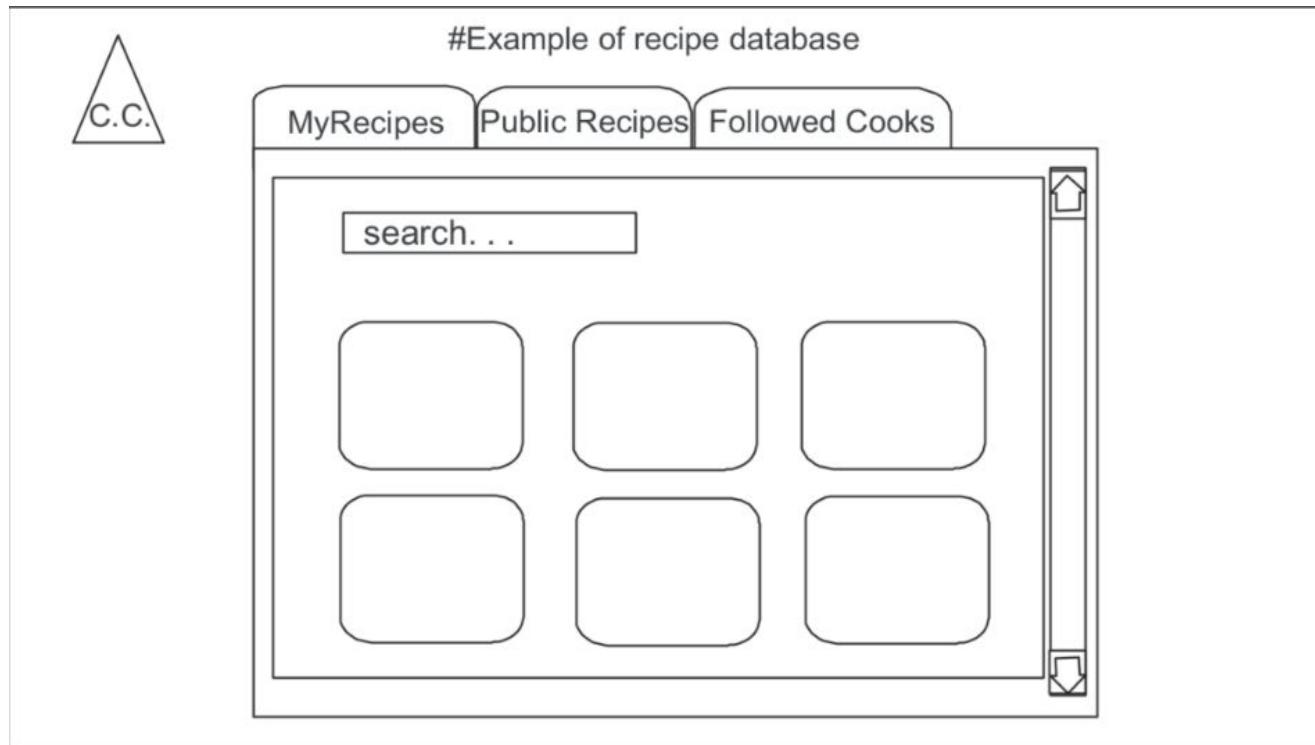
- \*Food pictures
- or
- \*Public Database search feature

- \*Mission statement
- \*Benefits of the app
- \*Features
- \*Pictures

# Log-in Screen



# Recipe Database



# Recipe View

#Example Recipe view

log out

C.C.

Browse Upload MyRecipes Cooks Sign-In

\*"Cooks" refers to fellow users.  
See FR13 in SRS

Recipe Title

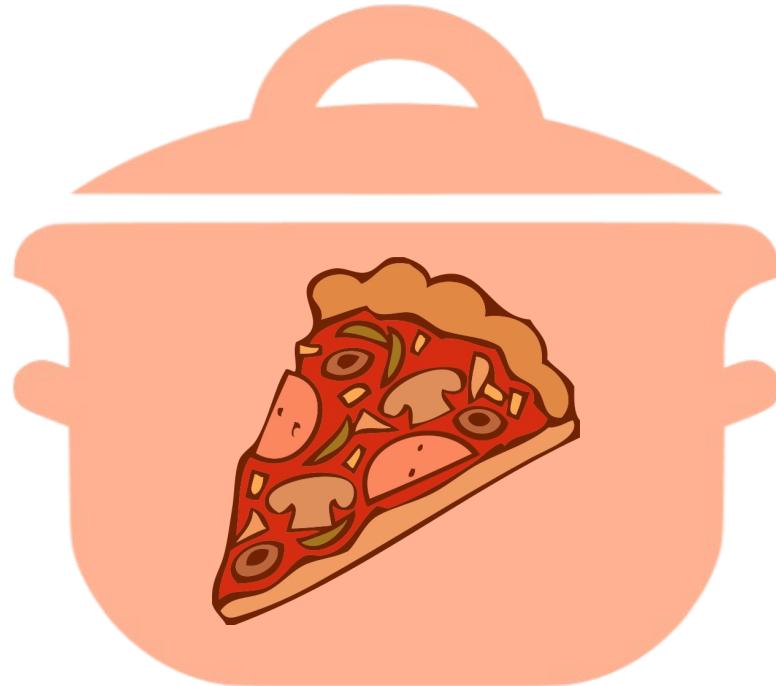
Ingredients

Procedures

edit  
delete  
share

Any questions or  
comments?

Input or constructive  
criticism is welcome and  
appreciated!



# Work Cited

- Pope, L., Alpaugh, M., Trubek, A., Skelly, J., & Harvey, J. (2021, May 14). *Beyond ramen: Investigating methods to improve food agency among college students*. Nutrients. Retrieved February 25, 2023, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8156074/>

## GitHub:

- <https://github.com/njacobs2019/Cooking-Code-panions>