University of Florida

Department of Computer and Information Science and Engineering

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User Experience Design

(CEN5728) Fall 2022

Instructor: Benjamin Lok

TA: Jacob Stuart

Project 2: Cycle 1

Teaching Assistant Assignment System (TAAS)

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1. Interviews/Focus Groups Script

Focus Statement (include research context and target users)	The purpose of the interview is to find out about the Teaching Assistant onboarding process. Our group is working along with Dr. Zhang to revamp the current TA Assignment System (TAAS) portal in order to improve the overall experience of the application. In this interview, we will discuss issues faced by users while going through the process of TA assignment. We will also try to find out about their concerns regarding the website. With help from these interviews, we will try to figure out things that can be improved to make the process of assigning TAs more smoother and efficient.
Discussion Guide	
Introduction	Hello, we are 'Devang's Group' and as part of the course project for the class CEN5728 User Experience Design, we are working along with Dr. Zhang to revamp the current TA Assignment System (TAAS) portal. We are going to interview three TAs and an admin regarding the issues they face using the TAAS portal. The interview will last for roughly 15-20 minutes. The conversation will not be recorded, just transcribed for further analysis.

Key demographic questions	Hi _____, How has your day been so far? If you don't mind, I'd like to know more about yourself and your background. 1. How old are you? 2. What are you currently studying?
Warm-up questions (factual answers)	Moving on, now let's talk about your TA application process. 1. Which course/professor are you TA for? 2. How many TA positions did you apply for? 3. How did you get to know about TA openings? 4. Have you used the TAAS portal?
Main questions (open-ended discussions)	1. How often do you use the TAAS portal? 2. What was your first impression of the application? 3. Can you explain the process of applying for TA? 4. Can you walk me through your most recent experience using the portal? 5. How confident are you that you will be able to navigate through the application if you were to use it today (for someone who doesn't use it that often)? 6. What are the most important tasks you perform on this portal? 7. Is there anything hard to find on the portal?

	8. How can the portal be used to support your current needs?
Design Probes (Reminders & Prompts):	If the user answers for less than 10 seconds: "Can you please elaborate?" If the user answers for less than 20 seconds: "Can you tell a bit more about that?" If the user answers for less than a minute: "Alright, I appreciate you trying this. Now let's move on to the next question"
Data Analysis Plan:	1. First we went through the notes and jotted down the key points. 2. We examined all the key points and then created a few categories. 3. Then we assigned each key point to a category they belonged to. 4. After forming the clusters, we sorted each category based on the issue level.

2. Interview Notes

- Interviewee 1:
    - Siddharth is a 23-year-old master's in computer science student. He works as a teaching assistant for the Advanced Data Structures course.
    - He applied for the TA position using the TAAS portal and had also emailed Professor about his interest in the role.
    - He got an update about his job status through an email from Miss Cook, who is the academic advisor.
    - He has used the portal only twice so far, once to apply for the TA position and the second time to check the status of his application.
    - The details that he gave while applying for the role were his UFID, Name, and a query that asked him “why he thought he should be hired”?

- Interviewee 2:
    - Taher is a 24-year-old master's in computer science student. He works as a teaching assistant for the Database Management Systems course.
    - He got the assistantship by reaching out to the Professor.
    - He believes that his application through the TAAS portal was not the leading factor in him getting the role.
    - He has to go through other processes such as interviews and reaching out to Professors.

- Interviewee 3:
    - Shashank is a 25-year-old masters in computer science student. He works as a teaching assistant for the Mathematics in Intelligent Systems course.
    - He got his assistantship by reaching out to his Professor.
    - He had to fill out a google form sent by the Professor in order to get the role.
    - He doesn’t recall applying for the role on the TAAS portal.

- Interviewee 4:
    - Dr. Zhang is the manager of the TAAS portal.
    - Her work revolves around notifying the candidates about the status of their applications.
    - She also updates the candidates on the availability of open positions under different Professors.

3. Acknowledgement Form

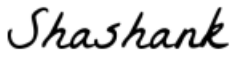
CEN 4722 / CEN 5728 User Experience Design

Participant Acknowledgement Form

Group Name: Group B TAAS Portal

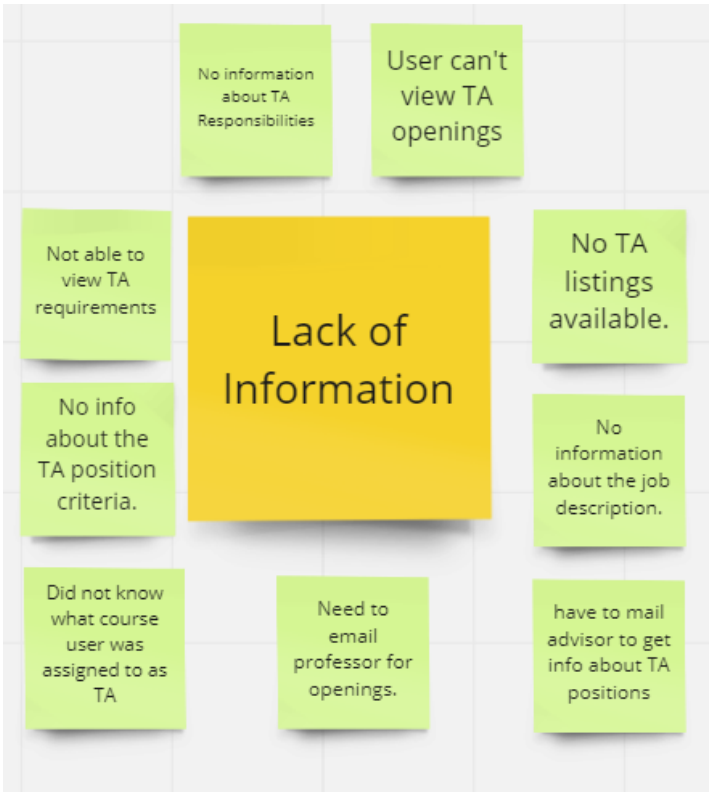
(Devang's Group)

Participants: By signing this form, you acknowledge that you have participated in a focus group or user test for the above group related to the above course on the date indicated below. In addition, you acknowledge that you are aware that you are bound by UF's honor policy in signing this form to indicate that you have participated in a focus group or user test for the class as required.

Printed Name of Participant	Signature of Participant	Date of Participation
Dr. Zhang Rong		10/28/2022
Siddharth Batra		10/27/2022
Taher Mulla	*Taher.*	10/27/2022
Shashank Kumar		10/27/2022

4. Affinity Diagram

https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVPJQ59KU=/?share_link_id=622470961305


No information about TA Responsibilities
User can't view TA openings
Not able to view TA requirements
Lack of Information
No TA listings available.
No info about the TA position criteria.
No information about the job description.
Did not know what course user was assigned to as TA
Need to email professor for openings.
have to mail advisor to get info about TA positions

Students aren't updated when there are new openings.
No updates are made on the application.
No Updates
No feedback on applications.
Acceptance emails are sent by admin/
Need to reach out externally for updates.
No individual statuses for all applications.

5. User Personas, Needs, Scenarios, and Storyboards

User Persona 1

Baburao - The Busy Guy

"I wish I could apply to TAship as quickly as possible"

Demographics
Name : Michael Baburao
Age : 24
Role : PhD Student
Location : Gainesville

User Background:

- Baburao is a PhD student who is doing research under a Professor.
- He published multiple research papers.
- He wants to become a TA in courses related to his field.
- Doesn't know about the TAAS portal.
- He thinks by teaching students, he can learn a lot of new things.

Pain Points & Frustrations

- He has to email every professor to apply for TAship.
- Baburao is very busy with academics and has to followup with the professors via email about the application status
- Doesn't know where to get the requirements for TA applications.

User Needs Statement

- Baburao a PhD student needs to find information about the TA application process in one place so that, he doesn't have to spend a lot of time on it.

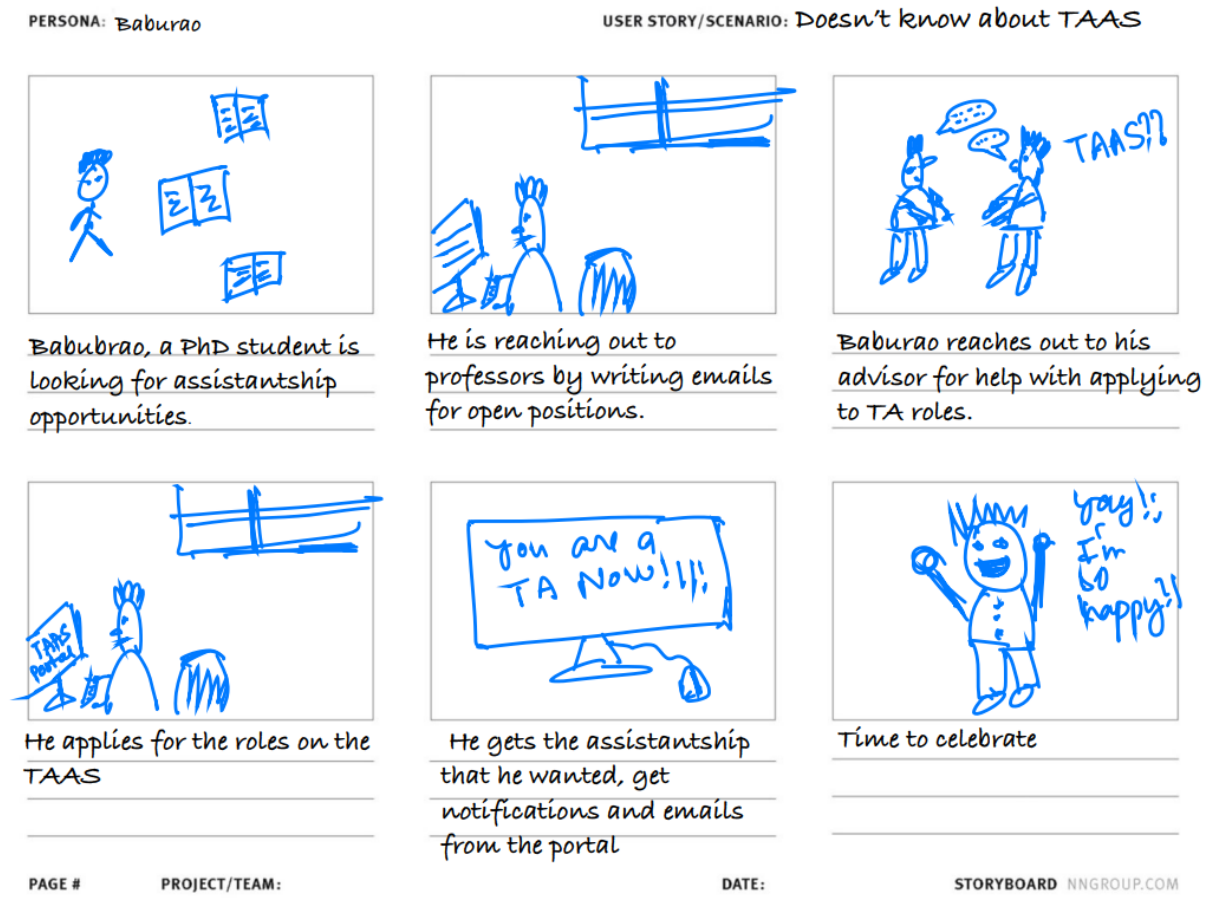
According to new research … (Nichita, 2017)
In research from Nichita … (2017)

Scenario and Storyboard for Persona 1

Scenario:

Baburao is a Ph.D. student interested in Machine Learning and currently works as a Research Assistant. He wishes to become a Teaching Assistant because he believes the best way to learn new things is by teaching. He starts looking for assistantships by cold-emailing professors, but to no avail. Frustrated, Raj consults the student advisor. The advisor tells Raj about the TAAS portal, where Raj can search for open assistantship positions, make applications and get updates about his application. Raj is happy that he can now use a one-stop application to get assistantship offers.

Storyboard:



(Storyboards Help Visualize UX Ideas, n.d.)

User Persona 2

Maria - The Guru

"I wish I knew the real time status of my applications."

Demographics
Name: Maria Mohan
Age: 23 years old
Role: Master's Student
Location: University of Florida, Gainesville.

User Background

- Maria is a masters in computer science student.
- She is a coding enthusiast.
- She is looking for assitantship this semester because she loves teaching.
- She has applied to assistantships on the TAAS portal.

Pain Points & Frustrations

- Maria has applied to assitantship for 3 courses.
- She is not aware about the status of her applications.
- She does not know whom to reach out to.
- Her application status just says as submited.

Needs & Goals

- Maria a Graduate Student needs to know her application's status as soon as possible so that she can refresh her memory in the courses that she gets the job .

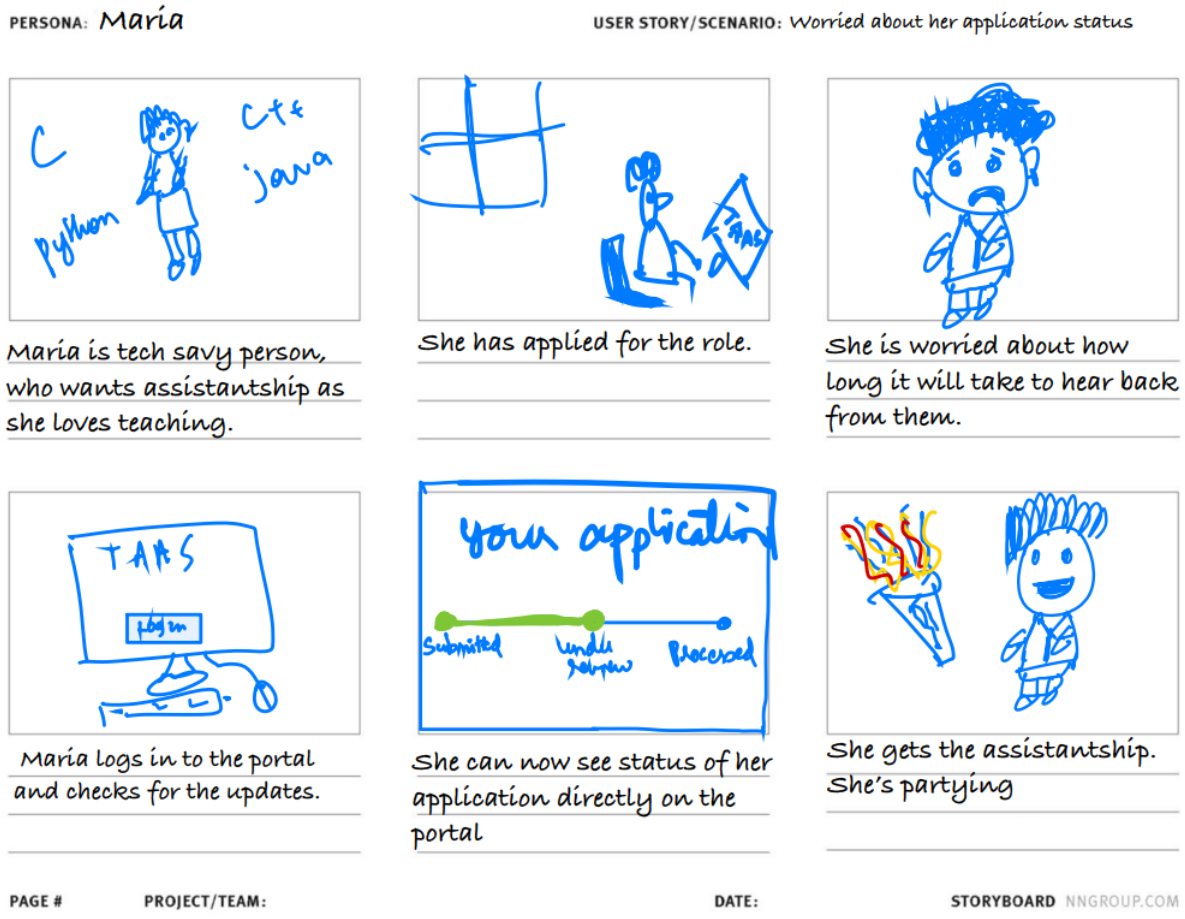
McCarthy, A. (2020, October 9). man in brown leather jacket smiling. Unsplash. https://unsplash.com/photos/RGKdWJOUFH0

Scenario and Storyboard for Persona 2

Scenario 2:

Maria is a graduate student at the University of Florida. She is tech-savvy and loves to teach. Excited about the prospect of becoming a teaching assistant, Maria makes multiple applications on TAAS Portal using one single application form. She keeps waiting for a response but to no avail. Maria wishes there was a way to keep track of her applications individually and to see updates regarding the status of each of her applications. Maria finds that the TAAS Portal has a "Recent Updates" section where she can track her applications. There, she learns that one of her applications has been processed and she is approved as a TA. She likes this usability feature very much.

Storyboard 2:



(Storyboards Help Visualize UX Ideas, n.d.)

User Persona 3

Andrea - The Multitasker

"It is frustrating to navigate multiple pages of the application to get a small task done"

Demographics

Name : Andrea Singh
Age : 35
Role : Manager of TA Portal
Location : University of Florida Gainesville.

User Background

- Dr. Andrea is the admin of the TA Portal
- She manages the communication between students and professors after they apply for a TA position.
- She has a busy schedule and likes to process things in an orderly, neat fashion

Pain Points & Frustrations

- Dr. Andrea has to manually send out emails to students regarding their application status, and finds it repetitive to do so
- Dr. Andrea does not like the overall interface of the TAAS application
- She finds it extremely hard to navigate around the application

User Needs Statement

- Dr. Andrea is the admin of the TA Portal and needs a more responsive, usable application to make her job easier

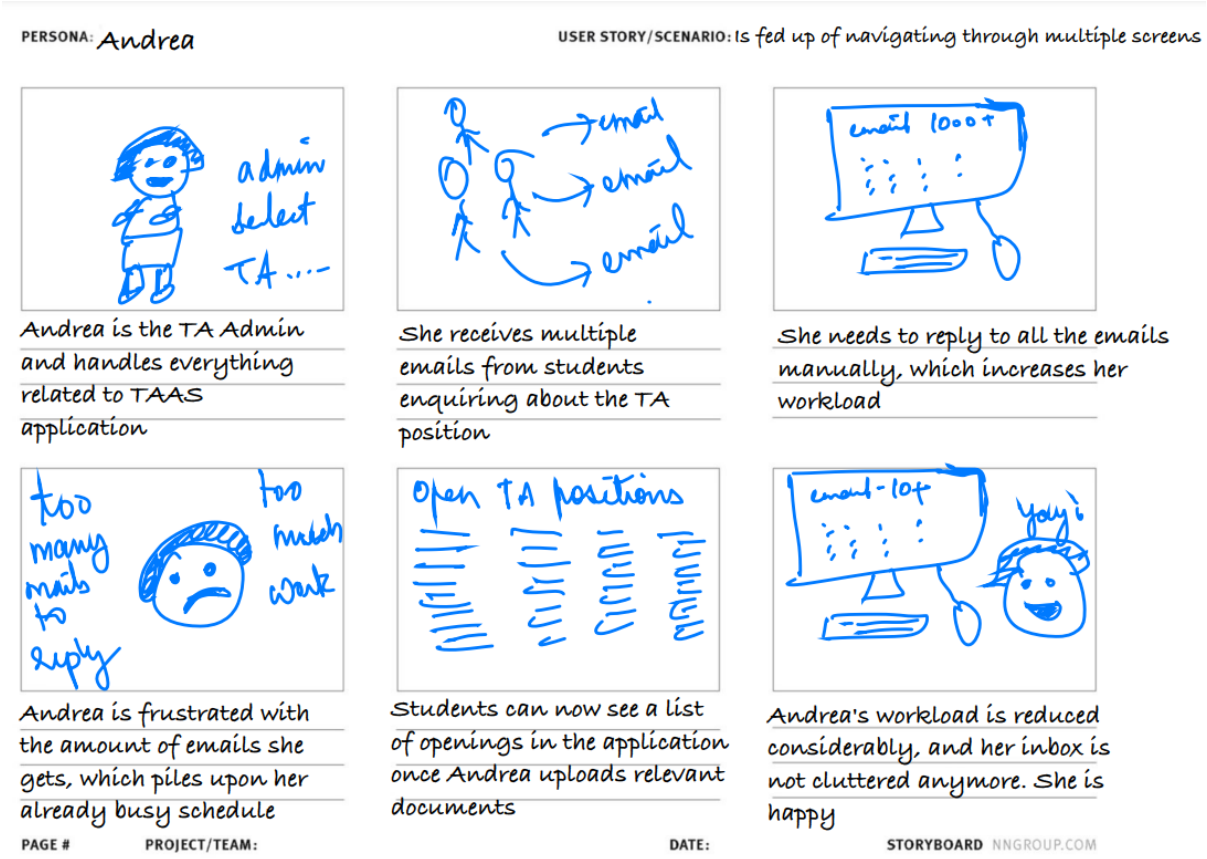
According to new research … (Liverani, 2019)
In research from Liverani … (2019)

Scenario and Storyboard for Persona 3

Scenario 3:

Dr. Andrea is the admin of the TA Portal and is tasked to manage and process every TA application she receives on the portal. Dr. Andrea is frustrated by the fact that she needs to navigate a lot for doing simple tasks on the portal, and does not like the experience of the portal in general. She also finds it hard to email every single student about their application status, as well as answer queries about assistantship availability.

Storyboard 3:



(Storyboards Help Visualize UX Ideas, n.d.)

6. Recruitment plan

Our recruitment plan involves reaching out to professors, instructional professors, teaching assistants, and graders for an interview that should last about 15-20 minutes. We plan to make use of our network of peers to connect with TAs and graders, and Dr. Zhang's network to connect with professors who have used the portal. During the interview, we will ask them questions to get more insights into their usage of the TA Portal. Based on their answers, we will try to formulate affinity diagrams and come up with themes we should focus on improving. During each cycle, we will take more user interviews and gather feedback on the deliverables we implemented in the first cycle from the previous interviewees.

7. Citations:

Storyboards Help Visualize UX Ideas. (n.d.). Nielsen Norman Group. Retrieved October 28, 2022, from https://www.nngroup.com/articles/storyboards-visualize-ideas/

Liverani, S. (2019, September 3). *woman wearing black scoop-neck long-sleeved shirt*. Unsplash. https://unsplash.com/photos/Zz5LQe-VSMY

Nichita, A. (2017, October 18). *man standing near to tree*. Unsplash. https://unsplash.com/photos/BI91NrppE38

McCarthy, A. (2020, October 9). man in brown leather jacket smiling. Unsplash. https://unsplash.com/photos/RGKdWJOUFH0