dotEDU: a college conversation

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MOTIVATION

- STRESS
- INFORMATION OVERLOAD
- EMOTIONAL DISCONNECT
- INFORMATION BIAS

EXPECTED AUDIENCE

"I can't decide on a major."

—FIRST AND SECOND-YEARS

"I am struggling with the college application process."

—PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

"How can I prepare myself to enter the job force?"

—THIRD AND FOURTH-YEARS

TECHNIQUES & DATA

WORDNET

POS, Sequence Tagging, Synset Manipulation, Etc.

Approach

Focus on generics, Categorization, Personality of the User

Datasets

National Center for Education Statistics, US Department of Education, and more...

Hard-Coding

Natural Expressions, Ontology, more emotional and opinion-based questions

CONVERSATION FLOW

System: Have you been to college?

User: I'm just a senior in high school.

System: College is a good investment if you want to pursue certain careers. However, it may not be for everyone. Do you want to go to college?

User: I probably should.

System: That's great! About 70% of seniors go to college after high school. Do you have an idea of where you want to apply?

User: I'm not really sure.

System: Well, there are a lot of options, so I can understand why you don't know. Maybe I can help. What are some things you liked about your high school?

User: I really enjoyed the sports program. I played varsity lacrosse.

System: It's great that you like <sports>! How do you feel about moving away from home?

User: I'm scared about being apart from my family. / I don't want to live far from home.

System: It's okay to feel <scared>. Many students decide to go to a school that's close to home. What state are you from? Maybe I can help you out.

User: I am from Florida.

System: I think you would be happier at sports-oriented, in-state schools. Some schools in <Florida> that fit that description include University of Florida, Florida State University, and University of Miami.

User: Thanks, I'll look into those!

NOVELTY

EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

Taking Values into Consideration

NAVIGATING EXPERIENCES

Campus Life
Majors & Minors
Not “what” but “how”

BEYOND THE FIRST YEAR

Upperclassman Experience
Success after Graduation

GOALS

"I feel more emotionally comfortable and less anxious about the college search process."

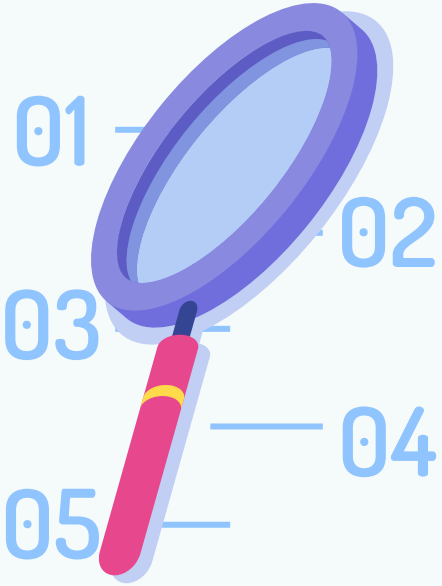
"I have a better, understanding of what types of majors may be more suitable for me."

LIMITATIONS

U.S. only schools
Datasets specific to the U.S.

Conversation length
Boredom vs. Useful Information

Predicting all cases
Breadth vs. Depth



Rare activities
“Underwater basket weaving” would be hard to predict.

Anonymity
Preserving user anonymity prevents specific suggestions

TIMELINE

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WEEK 1	hw2	hw2	hw2	hw2
SPRING BREAK	dataset handling, macros	dataset handling, ontology	ontology, possible cases and branches	possible cases and branches
WEEK 2	prospective students	prospective students	first/second years	first/second years
WEEK 3	first/second years	first/second years	third/fourth years	third/fourth years
WEEK 4	third/fourth years	third/fourth years	error handling	error handling
WEEK 5	error handling	error handling	debugging	debugging
WEEK 6	debugging/lab report	debugging/lab report	test trials/ lab report	test trials/ lab report

Questions?

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