1 Introduction

1.1 Choice of Problem

As mentioned in my previous write-up, I chose **problem 2**, where I wanted to do a re-design of a current website. I chose **Piazza**.

1.2 Purpose of Prototypes

Here is the **Figma Link** for the Prototype.

The main purpose of the Wireframes is to redesign the following components of the Piazza Website as mentioned in the previous write-up. While at the same, work on the User Interactions which Piazza has been lacking in and fixing the layout of the pages that I have done from my wireframes.

These are the components that I will be working on for this series of lab assignments, as mentioned in my 1st write-up.

1. Common Components between Piazza Pages

2. The Home Page

3. A Student's Post, Responses and Follow-Up Discussions

4. Drafts Page

5. Filtering of Posts

1.3 Rationale To Choosing Piazza

Piazza is a Q&APlatform for Students and Instructors to interact with one another to solve relevant questions with respect to a subject or a module. As I have schoolmates who have used Piazza, they find that interactions are inadequate and it does not make it very interactive. As a result, I would constantly define the user group here to be **students**. There are a **few issues** with respect to piazza, to name a few:

1. **Unique Interactions** such as viewing a post's history are not **obvious** to the user and users have no idea such a feature even existed!

2. Not only that, they are unaware of their **drafts** and that they had issue finding their saved drafts.

3. It is difficult to find the **favorite** button to bookmark a specific post for reading in the future.

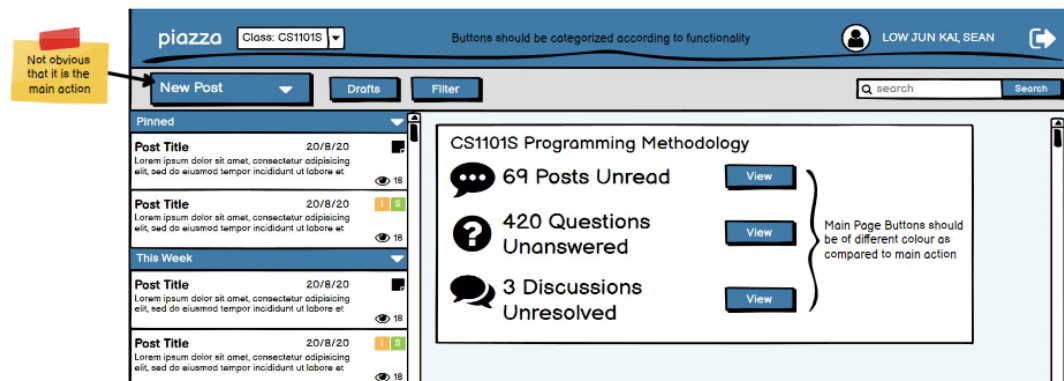The wireframes to solve these problems will be discussed in later sections.
As a result, this website would be a good choice to re-design and make further improvements on.the usability and the interactiveness of the website as a Q&A platform.

2 Changes from Previous Design

I would to talk about a few main changes from my wireframes that I have did previously. They mainly aim to provide clarity to the user in terms of **interface** and **interactions**.
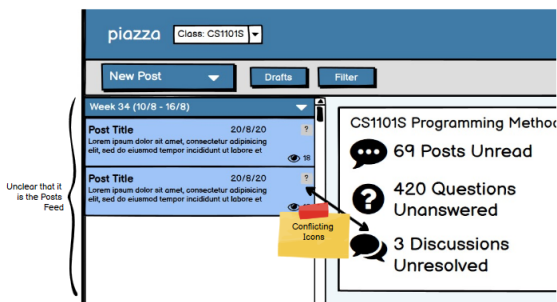
2.1 Changes to Main Components

2.1.1 Wireframes

With regards to the idea of the common components, the **New Post** button is not **obvious** as the main primary action of Piazza, where students can make posts to add notes or questions. As a result, it might confuse them.

Not only that, most of the buttons are all **squeezed** to the left side of the gray Navigation Bar. As a result, it becomes very tight and it might cause errors when students want to press on the relavant buttons.
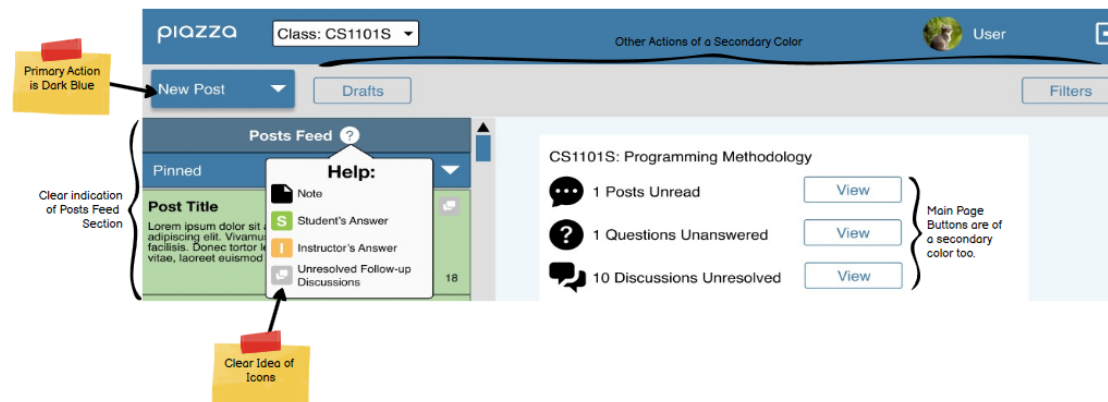

With Regards to the **Posts Feed** section, there are a few issues with my previous design:

Also, there is a **conflict** of ideas with respect to the grey icon which shows that a posts has **Unresolved Follow-up Discussion** using a Question mark, which is being used to show Unanswered Questions as well.
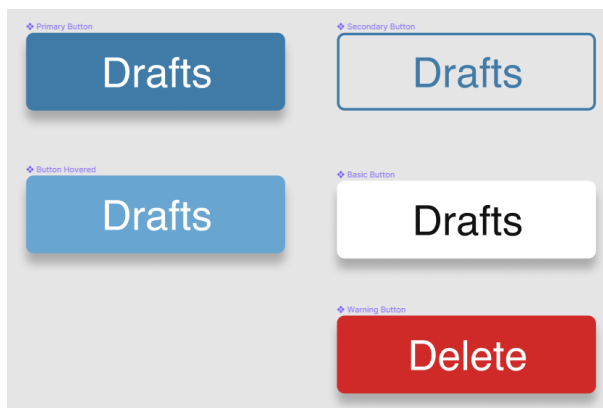
There needs to be a **clear indiciation** of the idea behind the usage of these icons for the **Posts Feed** and **standardization** is also necessary to reduce confusion.

Furthermore, it is necessary to indicate to the student **the precense of the Posts Feed** section to make it stand out as a separate section.

2.1.2 Prototype

As a result, I have decided to enhance the visibility of the **New Post** button to make it stand out from the rest of the common components.

This will be the **main palette** of buttons used throughout the redesign of Piazza to give strong **distinctions** mainly to primary actions and danger actions.

Not only that, I also have removed the **search feature** as it has overlapping features with respect to the **filter feature**.
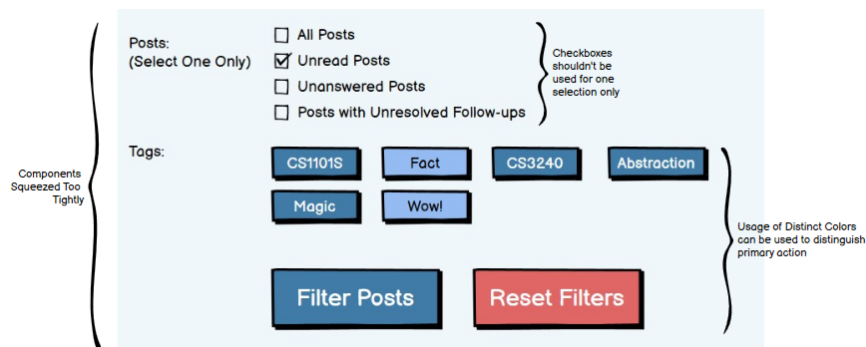
With Regards to the **Posts Feed** section, there are a few changes made too:

Also, The **Posts Feed** is much clearer as a separate section of the webpage and that students are aware of the **consistent structure** of the webpages of Piazza.
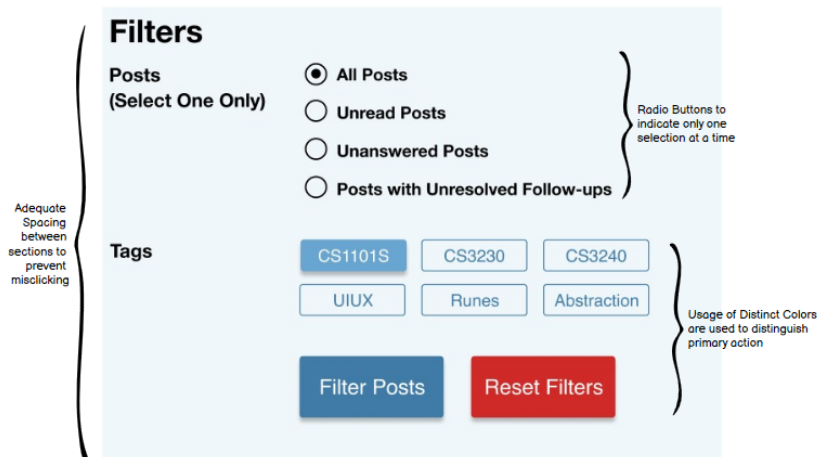
Furthermore, there is a help button which shows the student the **clear idea** of what the icons stand for to make the easier for the student to understand what is going on. Coupled with the fact that the **Unresolved Follow-up Discussion** icon is not standardized with the **Main Page Icons**, it gives a hint as to what the icon stands for an prevents **any possible misunderstanding**.

2.2 Filters

2.2.1 Wireframes

The main issue is that **checkboxes** are normally used to indicate more than one selection, which is not applicable here. Furthermore, the space between the **Posts** and **Tags** sections are squeezed too closely to each other, and it might result in **misclicking**
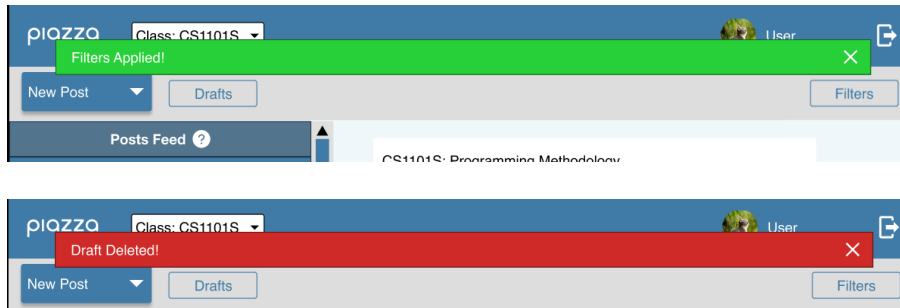

As a result, the key idea is to use **radio buttons** for the **Posts** section and to space them out so that **it reduces the likelihood of misclicking.** Furthermore, a simple change in color palette of tags are used to help better distinguish the primary and danger action at the bottom row.
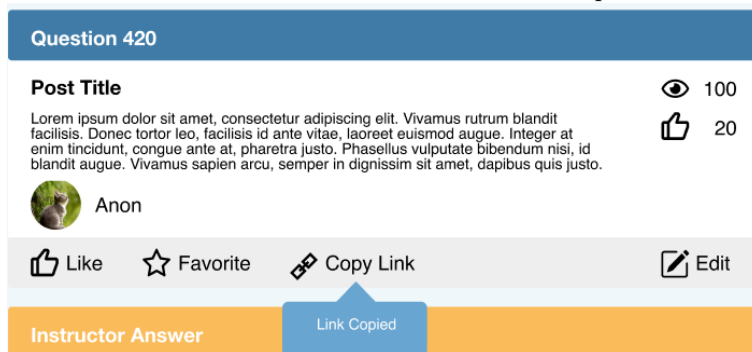
2.3 Alerts

2.3.1 Wireframes

In my previous design, there was **zero indication** of whether an action was successful or not. For example, the application of a filter from the filters page. It is always important to **Offer Informative Feedback** to users.
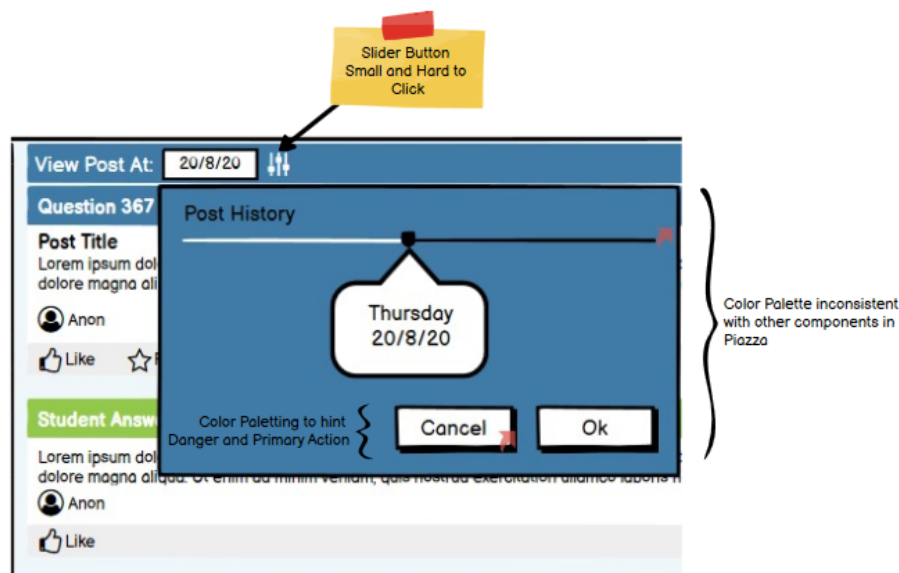
2.3.2 Prototypes

Whenever an action is successful, there would be an **alert** that comes into the screen, indicating to the user that the action **has been completed**. This is very useful when it comes to letting the user know of the status of an action in the Piazza platform.

Also, a small dialog box has been added whenever a user clicks on the **Copy Link** button to indicate to the user that the link has been copied successfully.
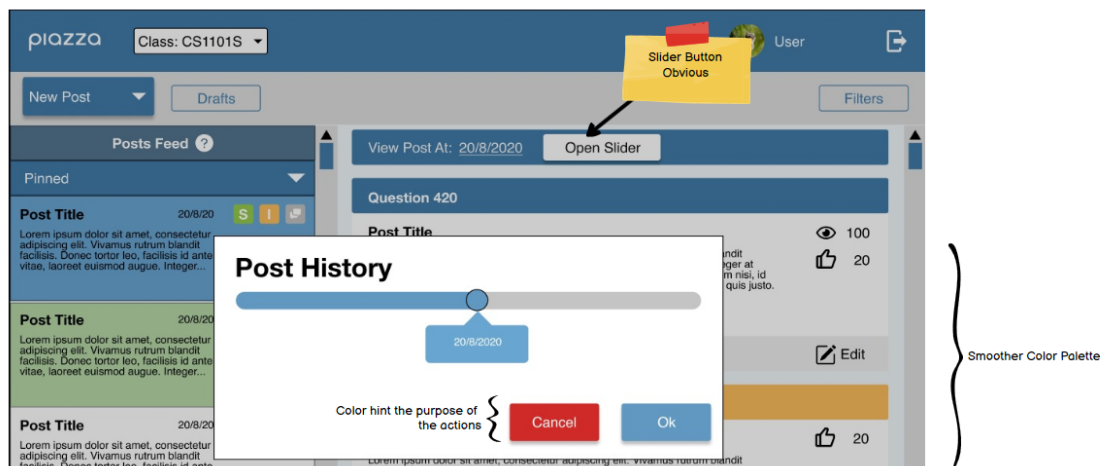
2.4 Post History

2.4.1 Wireframes

The Design of the old **Post History component** is plain and dull. It feels that the deisgn of this component is inconsistent with the other components in the Piazza platform.

Furthermore, the slider button is small and difficult to click. As a result, there is definitely potential for misclicks by the students.
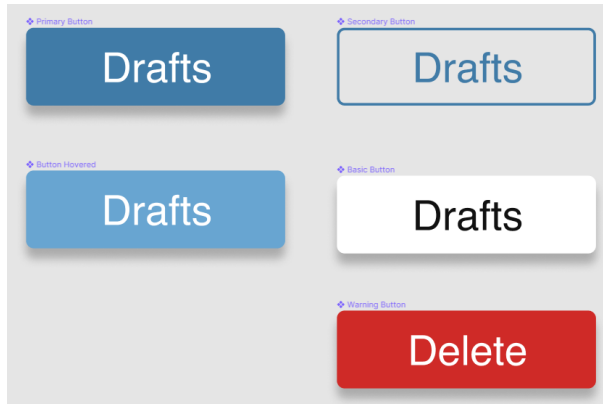
2.4.2 Prototypes

As a result, the **Post History component** looks more vibrant and the actions of the **Post History component** are more clear due to the color coding of the buttons.
Not only that, the slider button has been icnreased in size to make it easier to click.
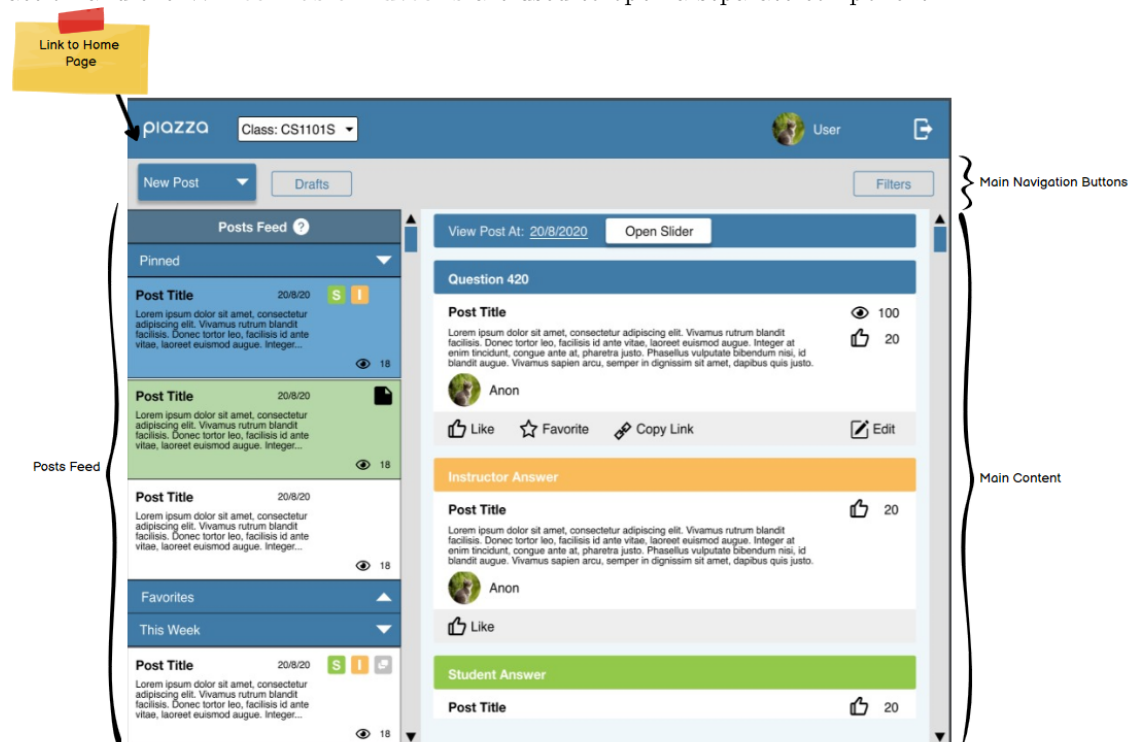
3   Design Principles

Throughout this assignment, I mainly abided by **4 of the 8 Rules** from Shneiderman's Principles.
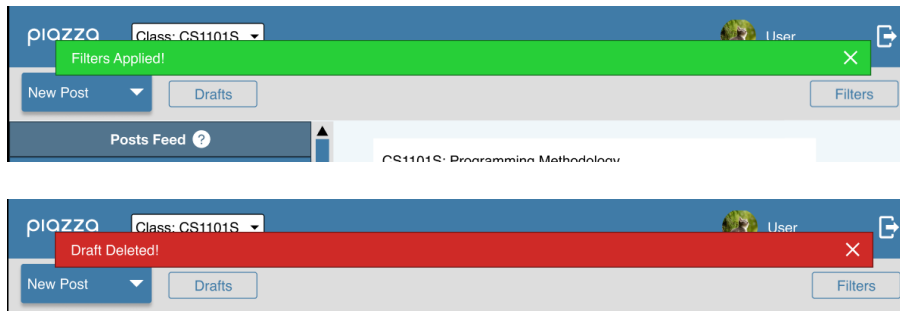
3.1   Striving for Consistency

As mentioned earlier, the color scheme of the buttons are **standardized** throughout the redesign in terms of the idea they convey. For example, the **Red Danger Buttons** are used to cancel an action and the **White Basic Buttons** are used to open a separate component.
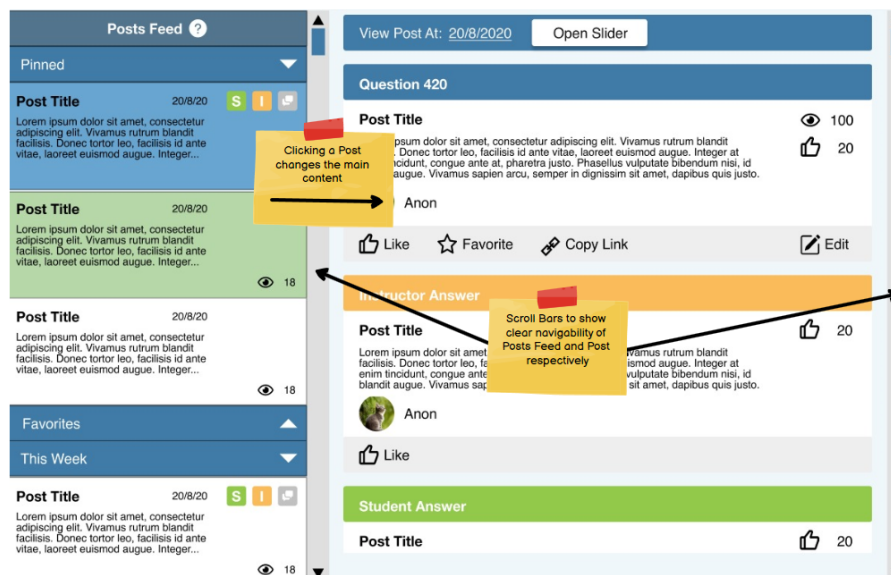

Furthermore, the page format is **the same** regardless of the page the student is navigated to. The Main Navigation Buttons, Posts Feed and Main Content will always be located in their **respective locations**. This helps to reduce the student's cognitive load which will be talked more later.
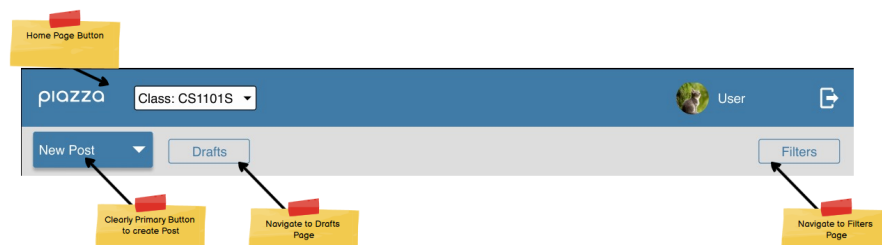
3.2 Offering Informative Feedback

As mentioned in **Section 2.3**: Whenever an action is successful, there would be an **alert** that comes into the screen, indicating to the user that the action **has been completed**. This is very useful when it comes to letting the user know of the status of an action in the Piazza platform.

3.3 Keeping Users in Control

By clicking on a post, it will be clear to the student that he or she will be able to view the page content in the main content section.

Simple **Scroll Bars** are provided to show simple **vertical navigation** to explore the posts avaialble on piazza and the discussions from a post respectively.
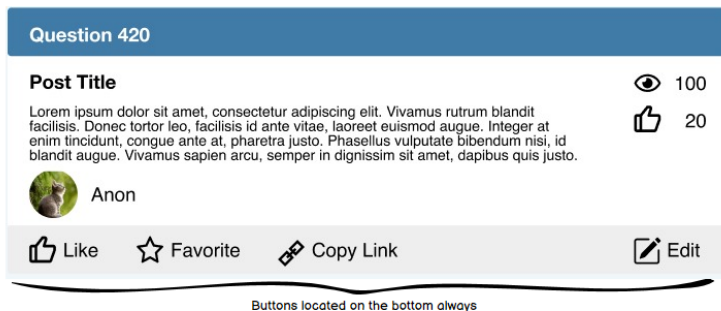

Furthermore, Common Buttons on the top are always present to allow easily navigatability around the piazza platform, giving the student control over where he or she can explore.

3.4   Reducing Cognitive Load

As mentioned previosuly, the reason for a consistent page structure is to make it easy for the student to remember the location of the 4 main sections.

1. The Navigation Bar

2. The Primary Action and other Navigation Buttons

3. The Posts Feed

4. The Main Content Page on the bottom right

Buttons located on the bottom always

Also, the buttons with regards to posts and answers are always located on the bottom of it. They are stated together with their icons to indicate their meaning so that it makes it easy to remember their purpose too.