CSCC10 - Introduction to Human Computer Interaction
Assignment 6: Combined Prototype & Evaluations

Group #: 16 (HelpingGrads)
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Section 1: Combined Group Low-Fidelity Prototype

Our team focused on three major areas; accessing program information, viewing statuses of applications, and forums to help users prepare their documents. Our goal was to create a simple and straightforward looking design. We did have some overlaps in our solutions, so we tried combining the best parts of each group member's paper prototype. We also had some disagreements which we were able to resolve through discussions.

We want the user to be able to find program information and see the application status for that program using our prototype. Instead of having two separate pages for this, we decided to combine these two features in the "Search For Programs" page. We created a modal with two tabs; one for information such as program requirements and deadlines, the other for students to share their application status and view the statuses of other students who applied to the same program. The next page where we combined solutions was in the "Discussion Board Post" page. One of our group members introduced an autosave feature to save the post and a popup that would make it easier to manage attachments. Some of our group members included a "Profile" page, each of which had different features. We decided to combine all of them as we determined they would all be important for our users. In the profile page users can see their posts, their documents, account settings and a calendar which shows the deadlines of their saved applications.

An area where did have some disagreement was the home page. We thought about putting a search bar on the home page for users to search for programs. After discussion we felt that it would be repetitive to have two pages for searching programs, so we decided to have a sign-in/sign-up option on the homepage instead. Another disagreement was the calendar under the profile tab. One of the team members wanted to add a feature to the calendar where the user could add other important dates related to their program other than the deadlines. But some team members felt that might not be that important for the user as they might use their own calendar for keeping track of things. Then we had an issue with how the deadlines would get updated on the calendar. One of the ideas was to automatically update the calendar with deadlines once the program is saved by the user. Others wanted to create a reminder button which the user could simply click to save the deadline on the calendar. But we went forward with the former idea that saving a program automatically adds deadlines to the calendar.

Section 2: Cognitive Walkthrough

| Issue	Cause	Severity	Remedy
Programs page Add more filter bars (school/ country etc)	1 search bar is ambiguous multiple columns/attributes you may want to filter by	HIGH	Add multiple filters to the program's list page
Profile Add saved programs onto profile	Unclear method of adding/viewing saved programs	HIGH	Add a button for 'My Applications' in profile
Profile Add bio (undergrad etc)	No way to add/view education info	MED	Add fields for people to enter info
Application Status/Discussion Board Instead of status; more clearer name to show acceptance statuses of universities	Definition of "Status" is unclear.	HIGH	After discussing this issue, we concluded that this feature would cause more harm than benefit. So we will remove this feature completely.
Calendar user friendly Ability to add our own events (interviews etc)	No option to add own events	MED	Allow people to export calendar instead
Calendar user friendly when saving an application, user does not know it has been added to their calendar	User has no way of knowing that the saved applications have been added to their calendar	MED	Add a pop up
Discussion post, back button to go back to the discussion board page	User might find it easier to navigate within the site if there was a back button instead of using the web browser back button	LOW	Add a back button at the top of the discussion post page

Section 3: Heuristic Evaluations

Page #	Problem Details	Severity	Heuristic Violated	# of Evaluators
1 (Home page)	Should only show sign-up form or sign-in form on a single page, as I cannot be signing up and singing in at the same time.	1	8: Aesthetic and minimalist design	1
1 (Home page)	The wording on the navigation bar is inconsistent. Programs / Tutorials / Discussions is a more consistent wording choice.	2	4: Consistency and standards	1
1 (Home page)	There is no documentation provided on the home as to what information each item on the navbar contains	4	10: Help and documentation	1
1 (home page)	Users may not know what database/website is used for as there's no description on the homepage telling the users what it is used for.	4	10: Help and Documentation	1
2 (programs list page)	Users are only able to filter by saved so should have more filters like by school, country etc.	4	7: Flexibility and efficiency of use	3
2 (programs list page)	There is a filter to filter by saved, however also buttons to mark a program as my favourite. Are saved and favourite the same thing?	3	4: Consistency and standards	1
2 (programs list page)	Unlike other pages, this page doesn't have a title	2	1: Visibility of system status	1
2 (programs list page)	There should be a small toast something that that a program has been favorited and added to the calendar	1	1: User feedback	1
2 (programs list page)	Users may not know that the you can select a school since it doesn't look like a button)	4	1: Visibility of system status	1
3 (modal page)	No back button on the modal or clear way to go back	4	3: User control and freedom	2
3 (modal page)	Users may want to have an	3	10: Help and	1

	overview or description of each program, as it only shows the name of the program		documentation	
3 (Modal page)	When the user clicks on the favourite button, no dialogue box pops up to let the user know that his program has been saved.	2	1: Visibility of System Status	1
4 (programs page)	The term "Acceptance Status" may be misunderstanding at first glance. People may think it's the university's status.	1	2: Match between system and the real world	1
4 (programs page)	On submit, users don't know that they're status has been submitted. They also don't know where they can find their status and where they can update it.	3	1: Visibility of system status	1
4 (programs page)	User cannot undo/cancel updating their status	4	3: User control and freedom	4
4 (programs page)	The modal is way too overwhelming, upon first glance I have no idea what this page is doing. As I was expecting a simple status label.	4	8: Aesthetic and minimalist design	1
4 (programs page)	Different navigation bars	4	4: Consistency and standards	1
4 (programs page)	There should be a small toast or something that indicates to the user that the update has been submitted	1	1: User feedback)	1
4 (programs page)	There is no way to go back after selecting a program if the user wants to look at another program instead or view other programs.	4	3: User control and freedom	1
5 (tutorial page)	Similar to the discussions board, the tutorial page should have a filter search bar so that it's easier for users to find tutorials on specific topics rather than scrolling through all search results	3	7: Flexibility and efficiency of use	1
5 (Tutorial page)	The word "tutorial" means different things for university students, perhaps change it to guides.	2	2: Match between system and the real world	3

6 (discussion page)	There is no way for users to edit their posts after they realized an error on the posts they create	4	9: Help users recognize, diagnose and recover from errors	1
7 (discussion post page)	User cannot exit without saving, or save and exit. They don't know that the back button on top will save and exit for them.	3	3: User control and freedom	1
7 (discussion post page)	No way to delete/edit submitted content	3	5: Error prevention	1
7 (discussion post page)	When the user clicks on the attachment button under the discussion board, there is no further interface to show what happens when the button is clicked.	3	1: Visibility of System Status	1
8 (profile page)	The calendar should clearly show why each event is there, and provide useful links. I don't know why a UofT application deadline is in my calendar, I have to dig through all my applications to find it.	2	6: Recognition rather than recall	1
8 (profile page)	'My Posts' doesn't align with the terminology we have used for that page(Discussion/Question)	3	4: Consistency and standards	1
8 (profile page)	My profile page can use a 'My Saved Programs' button as well	3	7: Flexibility and efficiency of use	1
8 (profile page)	No sign-out button anywhere so there is no way for users to log out of database which contains confidential information	4	3: User control and freedom	1
8 (profile page)	Button to remove deadlines from the calendar missing.	2	3: User control and freedom	1
9 (modal page)	Different navigation bars	4	4: Consistency and standards	1

Section 4: Internal Evaluations Result

Before [Page 1: Home Page]
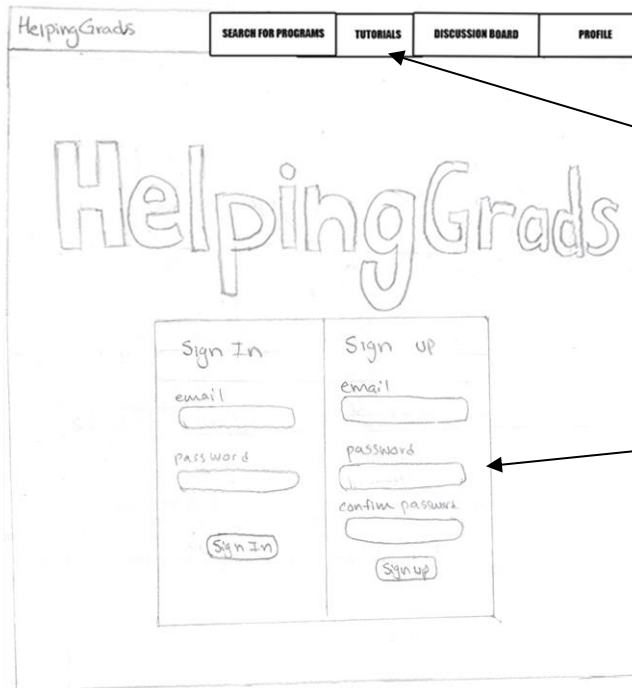
We found that "Tutorials" for a university student might mean something else like a supplementary class to a lecture. This seems to violate heuristic #2: Match between system and the real world.

We felt this violated heuristic #8 Aesthetic and Minimalist Design. We shouldn't be able to sign in or sign up at the same time.

Figure 1: The Home Page that was first designed for the combined prototype.

After [Page 1: Home Page]
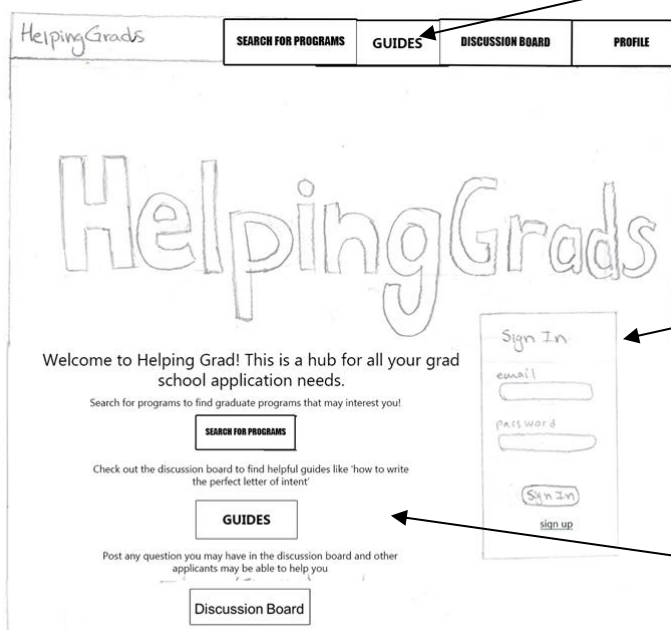
We changed "Tutorials" to "Guides" to make it clearer that users can go here to learn something.

We simplified the sign-in/sign-up. If users click on "Sign In" then they will be asked to enter information to sign in. If they click on "Sign-up" then the fields will change, and users will be asked to enter information to create an account.

We added some text to communicate to the users what the site is for and what they can expect to see on the different tabs

Figure 2: The new Home Page that was designed after incorporating the changes from the cognitive walkthrough and heuristic evaluations.

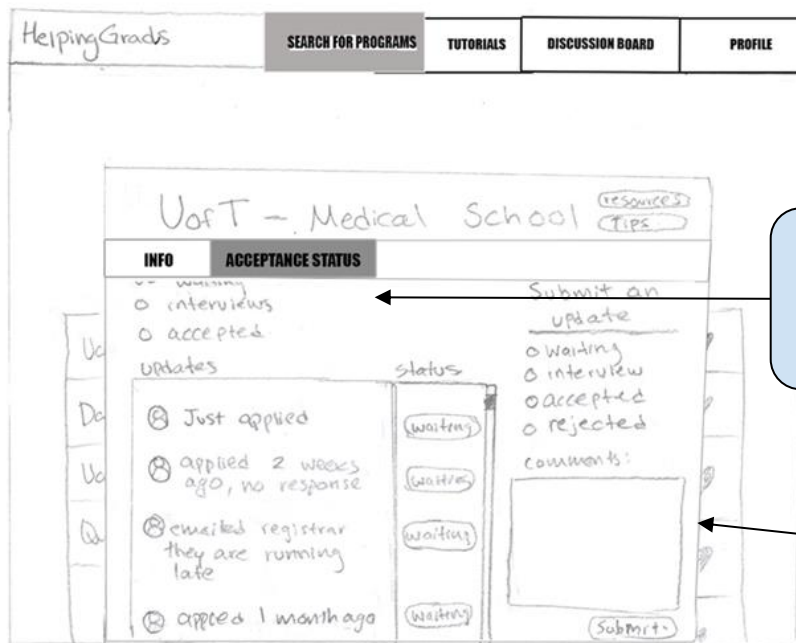# Before [Page 2: Search For Programs Modal Page]

HelpingGrads | SEARCH FOR PROGRAMS | TUTORIALS | DISCUSSION BOARD | PROFILE

UofT – Medical School (resources)(Tips)

INFO | ACCEPTANCE STATUS

"Acceptance Status" still seemed to be a little confusing. This would violate heuristic #2 Match between system and the real world.

Overall we felt the whole modal for the "Acceptance Status" was overwhelming which violates heuristic #8 Aesthetic and minimalist design. A single tab has two functions, sharing and viewing, and we felt that would confuse the user.

Figure 3: The modal that was first designed for the combined prototype.

After [Page 2: Search For Programs Modal Page]

HelpingGrads | SEARCH FOR PROGRAMS | GUIDES | DISCUSSION BOARD | PROFILE

UofT – Medical School

INFO | Community Acceptance Status | SHARE YOUR STATUS

36 waiting – 0 interviews – 0 accepted – 0 rejected

FILTER BY

Changed "Acceptance Status" to "Community Acceptance Status" to make it clear it is not the university's status but the community of applicants.

We split up the single modal tab that had two functions into two different tabs. This makes it less overwhelming and easier to use for the user. One tab is now for seeing the community status, the other is for the user to share their own.

We thought we were violating heuristic #5 Error prevention and #9 Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors, so we added an edit button so users can easily edit/delete their statuses.

We thought not having a filter would violate heuristic #3 user control and freedom, and heuristic #7 Flexibility and efficiency of use. We added a filter to make it easier for the user to view different statuses and their own.
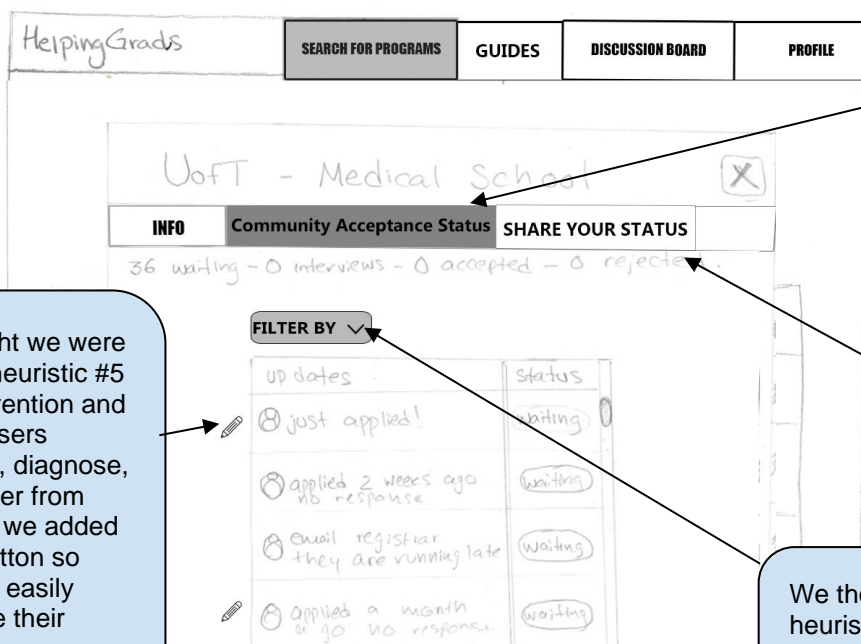
Figure 4: The new modal designed after incorporating the changes from the cognitive walkthrough and heuristic evaluations.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Shamanth's Individual Heuristic Evaluation

Page #	Problem Details	Severity	Heuristic Violated
4	The term "Acceptance Status" may be misunderstanding at first glance. People may think it's the university's status.	1	2 Match between system and the real world
4	On submit, users don't know that they're status has been submitted. They also don't know where they can find their status and where they can update it.	3	1 Visibility of system status
4	User cannot undo/cancel updating their status	4	3 User control and freedom
7	User cannot exit without saving, or save and exit. They don't know that the back button on top will save and exit for them.	3	3 User control and freedom
2	Users are only able to filter by saved so should have more filters like by school, country etc.	4	7 Flexibility and efficiency of use

Appendix 2: Jun's Heuristic Individual Evaluation

Page #	Problem Details	Severity	Heuristic Violated
1 Home	The wording on the navigation bar is inconsistent. Programs / Tutorials / Discussions is a more consistent wording choice.	2	4 Consistency and standards
1 Home	Should only show sign-up form or sign-in form on a single page, as I cannot be signing up and singing in at the same time.	1	8 Aesthetic and minimalist design
2 Programs List	There is a filter to filter by saved, however also buttons to mark a program as my favourite. Are saved and favourite the same thing?	3	4 Consistency and standards

Page #	Problem Details	Severity	Heuristic Violated
4 Modal Status	The modal is way too overwhelming, upon first glance I have no idea what this page is doing. As I was expecting a simple status label.	4	8 Aesthetic and minimalist design
5 Tutorial	The word "tutorial" means different things for university students, perhaps change it to guides.	2	2 Match between system and the real world
8 Profile	The calendar should clearly show why each event is there, and provide useful links. I don't know why a UofT application deadline is in my calendar, I have to dig through all my applications to find it.	2	6 Recognition rather than recall

Appendix 3: Sharjeel's Heuristic Individual Evaluation

Page #	Problem Details	Severity	Heuristic Violated
1, 5	Tutorials label is ambiguous. I am lead to believe that it's a class' tutorial	3	2 Match between system and real world
3	No back button on the modal or clear way to go back	4	3 User control and freedom
4, 7	No way to delete/edit submitted content	3	5 Error prevention
4, 9	Different navigation bars	4	4 Consistency and standards
6	Tags on the side for sorting do not reflect the information on the 'Create Discussion' page	4	8 Aesthetic and minimalist design
1	There is no documentation provided on the home as to what information each item on the navbar contains	4	10 Help and documentation
2	Unlike other pages, this page doesn't have a title	2	1 Visibility of system status
8	'My Posts' doesn't align with the terminology we have used for that page(Discussion/Question)	3	4 Consistency and standards
8	My profile page can use a 'My Saved Programs' button as well	3	7 Flexibility and efficiency of use

Appendix 4: Gaurav's Heuristic Individual Evaluation

Page #	Problem Details	Severity	Heuristic Violated
4	There should be a small toast or something that indicates to the user that the update has been submitted	1	1 (user feedback)
1	The name tutorials can be a little confusing, renaming it to 'tips & tricks', 'resources', 'lessons', ext. May help	2	2 (real world vs system)
2	Give the user more freedom with filtering the columns so they can drill deeper	4	3 (user control and freedom)
2	There should be a small toast something that that a program has been favorited and added to the calendar	1	1 (user feedback)
4	There is no indication of what the overall acceptance status is here	2	1 (user feedback)

Appendix 5: Nikisha's Heuristic Individual Evaluation

Page #	Problem Details	Severity	Heuristic Violated
1 (home page)	Users may not know what database/website is used for as there's no description on the homepage telling the users what it is used for.	4	10 (Help and Documentation)
8 (profile page)	No sign-out button anywhere so there is no way for users to log out of database which contains confidential information	4	3 (User control and freedom)
3,4 (programs page)	There is no way to go back after selecting a program if the user wants to look at another program instead or view other programs.	4	3 (User control and freedom)
2 (programs page)	Users may not know that the you can select a school since it doesn't look like a button)	4	1 (Visibility of system status)
3 (programs page)	Users may want to have an overview or description of each program, as it only shows the name of the program	3	10 (Help and documentation)

5 (tutorial page)	Similar to the discussions board, the tutorial page should have a filter search bar so that it's easier for users to find tutorials on specific topics rather than scrolling through all search results	3	7 (Flexibility and efficiency of use)
5, 6 (tutorial and discussion page)	There is no way for users to edit their posts after they realized an error on the posts they create on both the tutorials page and discussion board	4	9 (Help users recognize, diagnose and recover from errors)

Appendix 6: Muskan's Heuristic Individual Evaluation

Page #	Problem Details	Severity	Heuristic Violated
3 Modal info	When the user clicks on the favourite button, no dialogue box pops up to let the user know that his program has been saved.	2	1: Visibility of System Status
7 Discussion Post	When the user clicks on the attachment button under the discussion board, there is no further interface to show what happens when the button is clicked.	3	1: Visibility of System Status
8 Profile	Button to remove deadlines from the calendar missing.	2	3: User control and freedom
2 Program List	The filter button only has an option to filter by saved programs, but the user might want to filter by different attributes like country, university and so on as this can help them look for what they want more easily as compared to searching through the entire list.	3	7: Flexibility and efficiency of use
7 Discussion Post	The discussion post page doesn't seem to have any back or cancel button. The user may want to not post anything.	2	3: User control and freedom

4 Modal Status	On the Acceptance Status page, there is no option to change the status if the user accidentally submits the wrong status.	2	3: User control and freedom
7 Discussion Post	When the user clicks on submit, there is no dialogue box that appears to ask the user to recheck what they have written one last time before submitting.	2	5: Error prevention

Appendix 7: Assignment Attribution

Name	Contribution
Shamanth Chedde	Participated in group discussions, contributed to Section 1 Discussion and Section 4 Before and After pages
Jun Zheng	Group discussions and contributed to cognitive walkthrough and heuristic individual evaluation.
Syed Sharjeel Haider	Participated in group discussions, contributed to Cognitive Walkthrough
Guarav Sharma	Participated in discussions, combined images in photoshop, contributed in walkthroughs. Edited images in photoshop for after images
Nikisha Jeyakumar	Participated in group discussions and contributed to section 1 combined low fidelity prototype
Muskan Patpatpia	Participated in group discussions and contributed to section 1(Combined group low fidelity prototype)

Appendix 8: References

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