Problem Space

The problem space we are addressing has to do with the graduate school application process. The sole thought of upper-year education, let alone the countless number of questions, essays, and references needed to complete an application, certainly stress students out. With our target audience of post-secondary students and instructors in mind, our goal is to create a solution so that the application process can become less tedious/complicated for both parties.

Discovery Plan

Describe how your group will go about conducting background research.
We will be conducting our primary research through surveys/questionnaires and interviews. We will be surveying and interviewing undergraduate students who are planning to or are currently applying to graduate school, students who have been accepted or are currently attending graduate school, and students who have completed graduate school. We will also interview instructors and academic advisors who have helped and/or are helping students in the application process.

What primary research methods would you like to use (interviews, surveys, observations)? Where would you like to find stakeholders to interview?
Since we will be doing all the interviews and surveys/questionnaires remotely due to COVID-19, we will be looking for stakeholders online through various social media sites such as Facebook university groups and university subreddits on Reddit. There is a community on Reddit dedicated to discussions revolving around post-graduate education which currently has over 100,000 members! We will also conduct interviews and surveys online with our peers who are applying to, have applied to or have completed graduate school. We will also be reaching out to instructors that have taught us in the past to get their perspective on the whole process.

What type of information will we want to collect from them?
We want to know what the application experience was like for our stakeholders. We will collect information such as stress levels, difficulties they faced during the application process, which parts of the process they found the most difficult and confusing, resources that were available to help them and if they found those resources to be useful. We also want to know why they found certain parts of the process difficult and what prevented them from using the available resources. For instructors, we want to know what they are looking for specifically on a graduate school application, and what difficulties they face when reviewing applications.

What secondary research sources will you explore (academic papers and industry reports)?
We will be conducting our secondary research through academic papers and industry reports. We will be looking for peer-reviewed academic articles and journals on some academic search engines like Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic as well as use the UofT online library, all

of which have thousands of academic papers for different topics. We will also use research papers published in HCI journals/HCI conferences. We will be using IBISWorld for industry market research, as students we have on/off campus access to the full database.

We will conduct the following research.
- 3 Surveys/ Questionnaires
- 4 academic papers
- 2 industry reports
- 5 interviews

Division of Labor

	Primary Research	Secondary Research
Jun Zheng	1 survey (5-10 respondents)	1 industry report
Nikisha Jeyakumar	1 interview	1 industry report
Shamanth Chedde	1 survey (5-10 respondents)	1 academic paper
Muskan Patpatia	1 interview	1 academic paper
Syed Sharjeel Haider	3 interviews	1 academic paper
Gaurav Sharma	1 survey (5-10 respondents)	1 academic paper

Assignment Attribution

Jun Zheng: Contributed to what information will be collected and research sources.

Nikisha Jeyakumar: Worked on the problem space paragraph

Shamanth Chedde: Contributed to the paragraphs on the plan to conduct background research and what information will be collected

Muskan Patpatia: Contributed to What primary research methods would we like to use and what secondary research sources we will explore for our research.

Syed Sharjeel Haider: Contributed to what secondary resources that we will use for our research

Gaurav Sharma: Contributed to help recognize possible resources methods available. Looked over and added to the discovery plan.