

USABILITY ENGINEERING

CS5714 SPRING 14

PROJECT 2

The Writing Center

Inkhorn: a scheduling and feedback system to help tailor coaching services to patrons

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1 Concept Statement

The Virginia New River Valley community members often seek support services surrounding improving their communication skills and understanding of the English language. The Virginia Tech Writing Center (WC) provides varying personal coaching services for these locals in addition to VT affiliates. Inkhorn, an automated scheduling and feedback system, will help tailor coaching services to patrons to develop their skills to enhance their writing, such as conference or class papers, personal statements, and interpersonal communications. Inkhorn will help promote services offered by WC, manage session scheduling with compatible coaches, automate reporting, provide a continual coach feedback system, manage forms, and suggest appropriate tools for patron goals.

2 Choosing a Client Process

Among our initial ideas for clients and problems, we focused on writing. Our initial problem was in the realm of collaborative writing techniques for technical, novel, and story telling writers. Given client scheduling problems, we had to abandon this idea. Our next client in the writing domain we chose was the Virginia Tech Writing Center (WC), and the Assistant Director Jennifer Lawrence. She has served in this role for 7 years, and her extensive knowledge alongside positional status makes her the ideal candidate within the WC to initially contact and get organizational information, as well as follow communication for project details.

3

2.1 Description

2.2 Interviews

4 — 5 — 6 — 7

2.2.1 WADD

Description



Figure 1: Example image.

3 Work Roles

Director Diana George

Assistant Director Jennifer Lawrence (7 years in this position)

The Assistant Director is in charge of hiring all coaches, scheduling coach work allotments, reports, a

Administrative Staff Sandra Ross

This role is in charge of making the consolidated reports and trends that are received from the Scheduler, and providing administrative assistance to the Director and Assistant Director.

Graduate Assistant to the Director Katharine Torrey

This is a special coach that in addition to normal coach role duties, also helps with some of the tasks that are oriented towards the coaches, speaking as representative for the coaches and a supporting voice for the Assistant Director.

Coach

These are under/graduate students who have a strong skill set in the English language. They are required to have an application, strong GPA, a letter of recommendation from a VT faculty member, have passed the English 3744 class, and ideally a second language, double major, and/or honor student.

Patron

Any local resident of the New River Valley, with or without VT affiliation, who wants help improving their communication skills ()

VT Professor

A professor or lecturer at Virginia Tech.

Scheduler

A coach at the WC that is currently not seeing a patron, who makes appointments in the schedule book.

Paperwork Organizer

A coach at the WC that is currently not seeing a patron, who arranges the session paperwork to hand to the Admin person.

Funding

People or entities, predominately but not always affiliated with VT, that provide monetary funds to the WC for operational costs.

4 Flow Diagram

5 Photos

5.1 Interviews

5.2 Raw Data Notes

5.2.1 Task Data Notes

5.2.2 Audio Interview Notes

[Audio Folder](#)

[Assistant Director 1](#)

[Coach 1](#)

5.3 Task Data

5.4 Artifacts

text



Figure 2: Fish

6 Conclusion

References

- [Figueredo and Wolf, 2009] Figueredo, A. J. and Wolf, P. S. A. (2009). Assortative pairing and life history strategy - a cross-cultural study. *Human Nature*, 20:317–330.