Add content to the top of the interface: we may want to emphasize that this is a way to freely “shop” for classes before meeting with the advisor, or registering for classes.

We may want to see “how” OASIS currently labels it’s online and on-campus format, but beyond that I don’t think it was a serious issue.

Prevent users from deselecting all options within a category of buttons.

The (amazing) search box in the “By Courses”, “Search Course Titles” had to have had students explore it to understand it; it was not as “favored” as I would have expected by the students. **Providing real-time feedback to students as they interact with this first box may help to address this issue. For example, we can show the number of results that will come back as the user types a term. This will reveal: (1) that a partial word can return results and (2) that a full but misspelled word won’t return anything.**

Another possibility is to combine the first two tabs and drop the third tab. If we do this, we may need to add a toggle to switch between a course and department search and provide the relative functionality.

When it was pointed out that by clicking on the title, course details would emerge, the students loved it. It simply wasn’t obvious to them, and it was nothing they would try on their own.

However, we should all note that the capability is quite powerful and should not be dropped. It might be worth considering re-naming this capability, such as keyword search (as recommended by OLITS).

One important point was that the student with low vision was unable to discern which tab had been selected as a default. This is possibly due to color choice of lettering, as if the colors are close in their degree of intensity, then distinguishing differences is difficult, if not impossible, for those with vision problems.

**Summary of feedback from student testing November 9, 2015**

Four students tested the interface; three of them tested on the mobile site also. The fourth student, who has disabilities, will test on a personal tablet tomorrow.

Section One. Clarity of purpose.

Without any interaction with the website whatsoever, the students were asked to look the interface and describe the purpose of the website.

All four students described the purpose as to look for, and register for classes.

Note: we may want to emphasize that this is a way to freely “shop” for classes before meeting with the advisor, or registering for classes. To the student with disabilities, the ability to shop for classes before meeting with the advisor would be a great enhancement to his life as a student, as he could shop for classes at his convenience, without dependency upon the advisor’s tight schedule.

Section Two. Simple Toggle Exercise.

The purpose of this section was two-fold: To test the degree to which toggling button choices is obvious, as well as, to check functionality of mobile against desktop.

On the desktop phase of the testing, one of the students actually had a little difficulty toggling the “Online” button off and on; this may have been nothing more than the student was not using enough physical pressure on the mouse, to possibly not clicking “fast” enough to align with click speed typically set in operating systems. See the video of Tester #2, “desktop” to see more. Otherwise, this was simple for students to use, including for the student with disabilities, and obvious for them to use. One of the students had difficulty finding the Online button, but I think it was nothing more than simple unfamiliarity with the terms they used. We may want to see “how” OASIS currently labels it’s online and on-campus format, but beyond that I don’t think it was a serious issue.

Section Three: Tab Selection Area.

Of interest was that two of the four student testers elected to go straight to the “Department” tab rather than Course Title tab when asked to search for courses that had to do with Education. Note that none of the students were Education majors. When using the search box, all students tried to search using exact terms rather than typing in a shorthand.\

Much to my surprise, the favorite section for the students seemed to be the “By Department” Tab or the “By Colleges” tab. The student with disabilities loved the fact that he didn’t have to spell the whole word out when looking for course titles, but he had to be told that he could.

Upon retrospect, the fact that the “By Colleges” and the “By Departments” tab provide immediate feedback after three letter entries may be a feature that encourages exploration.

The (amazing) search box in the “By Courses”, “Search Course Titles” had to have had students explore it to understand it; it was not as “favored” as I would have expected by the students. I think it is a simple matter of the students being unfamiliar with course titles in their day-to-day work of working with their advisors and registering for courses; they have been “trained” more or less to look for courses that apply to their degree either by CRN or by Department.

A particular example was in the case where a student looked for a particular class she was interested in, and knew was being offered this semester. To that end, the student entered wetlands, plural, and the result was “nothing found”. Had she entered a “singular” wetland instead of a “plural” wetlands, the result would have returned a proper result. However, the student was not inclined to “explore” search in that manner. This was true for all four student testers. They did not attempt to “shorten” a search without asking me first.

In another example, the student was never able to find courses relevant to her degree in the Course Search by title section. Her degree was languages, and it was not found in the course titles. (The only results one receives when using “languages” as a search term were programming languages). In order to find relevant courses by titles for this student we had to type in exact languages, such as “Spanish”. So, there is some sort of disconnect between the Majors (in her case, “World Languages and Cultures”) and course titles. (Also, recall that OLITS recommended that a highly desired capability would be the ability to search for classes by majors).

When it was pointed out that by clicking on the title, course details would emerge, the students loved it. It simply wasn’t obvious to them, and it was nothing they would try on their own.

However, we should all note that the capability is quite powerful and should not be dropped. It might be worth considering re-naming this capability, such as keyword search (as recommended by OLITS).

Tester #3 on Android 9 Nov 2015

One possibility to consider is that when the user hit "Return", it actually cleared the data....the expectation would be that it would be treated as a "Enter"

It seemed that completing a selection in the “By Colleges” tab would “freeze up” the capability of the search box in the “Search Course Titles” tab. This should be investigated.

One important point was that the student with low vision was unable to discern which tab had been selected as a default. This is possibly due to color choice of lettering, as if the colors are close in their degree of intensity, then distinguishing differences is difficult, if not impossible, for those with vision problems.

The students were unanimous in their praise for the interface, for different reasons; they loved its ease, its clarity -- and in the case of the student with disabilities --- loved the greater independence it promised not just for him, but for his friends with disabilities.

**Summary of feedback from student testing November 16, 2015**

**Note: The results provided after searching were formatted differently than in the November 9, 2015 search test.**

Two students tested the interface, and also tested on the mobile sites.

Section One. Clarity of purpose.

Without any interaction with the website whatsoever, the students were asked to look the interface and describe the purpose of the website.

Both students described the purpose as to look for, and register for classes.

Section Two. Simple Toggle Exercise.

Both students had an easy time with the buttons, both on the desktop interface, and on mobile. I think we need to change term “toggle” (my fault for using the word) as another student was unfamiliar with the term. It must be a “web” term, not a “user” term.

Section Three: Tab Selection Area.

When using the search box, both students tried to search using exact terms rather than typing in a shorthand, at first. One of the students started using a shortcut for marketing after the interface in the “Departments” tab made clear that one could type in a partial search term and get results.

One of the students provided an insight that I had not caught before from the other students; that is, that unless terms and numbers were spelled out a little more, that the interface would be one good for current students, but not necessarily good for potential students. Also, I found noteworthy that although the student loved the interface, she felt that a capability for comprehensive searches should be available.

Pages we looked at for discussion of what to include in the interface were the following:

<http://www.usfsp.edu/journalism/>

<http://www.usfsp.edu/journalism/programs-summary/under-grad/>

<https://usfonline.admin.usf.edu/pls/prodss/wp_search_catalog_db?p_subj=ENC&p_crse=1101&p_term=201601>

<http://www.registrar.usf.edu/ssearch/search.php>

In terms of importance of the ability to search, she thought that CRN, CRS#, Seats available, Time/Professor, Title should be readily available on a first search, but that a comprehensive search should be available to different audiences, such as Junior/Senior, fully online, etc. Such a different audience would be interested in some of the more intricate information on the courses.

I was surprised at her remark that “seats available” were of interest to her. I asked her opinion on setting up a filter on the search so that only courses with available seats were to show up; she did not think it was a good idea. A lot of students watch for seats to become available, and definitely, a link to a “waitlist” is very important.

She also thought it was important to link to a 2 year and/or 4 year plan. This was brought up in a discussion about sequencing. Right now, DegreeWorks recommends course sequencing in a manner that is easy to read; the Campus Scheduler may do this also. She also said that a student could ascertain necessary sequencing by looking at the pre-requisites for the degree in the details from the OASIS report, and students do, but it is time-consuming.

A definition of “online” continues to be confusing. The state definition of 80%online does not seem to square with expectations. Worse, students seem to ascertain whether a course is online or not by looking at student fees. (This student made specific mention of it, and a student from an earlier test made mention of it also). Additionally, important information often seems to be put, very generically, in the “title” section, apparently because there are not enough “boxes” in the OASIS framework in which to enter important information for the course.

The take-away from interviewing the second tester today is that it takes a student familiar with “the system” to understand the coding printed out as is. This is fine, but more needs to be done if the intention is to allow students who are not yet admitted to the university to be able to browse. Also, even she, as an experienced student, confused the number associated with the semester to be a course number. She said the breakout needs to be more clearly defined. She also recommended that the terms, “Spring”, “Summer” etc. be used instead of the year and semester in numbers, as is currently printed out.

As many have suggested before her, she felt that an ability to search by majors would be of great benefit.

Follow-up: November 17, 2015

I asked a student with disabilities to evaluate what he needed to help him more quickly navigate through DegreeWorks, and through this, have found that DegreeWorks has changed its interface. It also has a “kind” of schedule planner and class chooser in it now. He says the interface is problematic for some students. To be investigated further.