



# Time Saver

An elegant task tracking solution  
for busy students

**Anne Aoki:** storyboard, design, user studies, writing  
**Alex Anderson:** user studies, design  
**Matt Willden:** ideation, writing, user studies  
**Brandon Tobin:** storyboard, user studies, design

## THE PROBLEM

- ▶ Student's have a hard time staying on track while studying.
- ▶ This leads to increased anxiety as well as poor grades.
- ▶ Most student's have some sort of way to plan their day but its lacking.
- ▶ Student's only use about 65% of their study time for on-task work.
- ▶ Most modern time tracking applications don't analyze how the user accomplishes their tasks or if they could have been completed more efficiently.

## CONTEXTUAL INQUIRIES

### Methodology & Approach

- ▶ Limit observer effect in time study
- ▶ Find participants whose lives reflects the problem
- ▶ Conduct inquiries, where participants spend their school time
- ▶ Try and understand how students get distracted

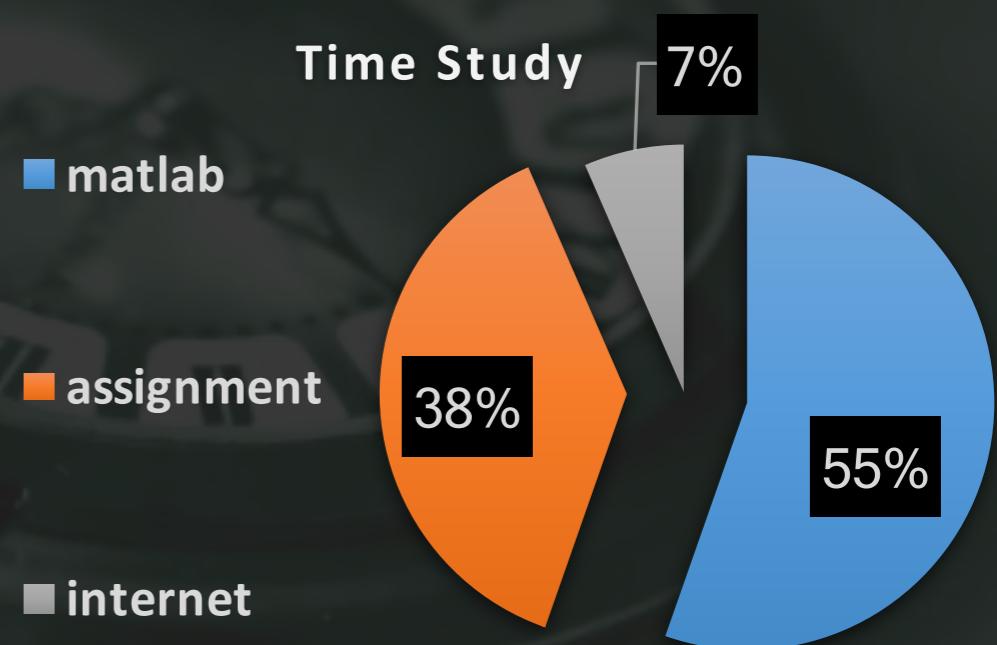
### Participants

- ▶ Austin: Junior in Mechanical Engineering
- ▶ Jennifer: Bio-Med Student
- ▶ Alyssa: Sophomore in Computer Science

## CONTEXTUAL INQUIRIES

### Participant 1: Austin

- ▶ Selected because of heavy course load & tight deadlines
- ▶ Interviewed in home, didn't get distracted
- ▶ However, didn't understand how he spent his time
- ▶ Showed results of time study with him



## CONTEXTUAL INQUIRIES

### Participant 2: Jennifer

- ▶ Selected because of the types of classes she was taking (online)
- ▶ Interviewed in home
- ▶ Gets distracted by other people, but can stay on task when due date is approaching

## CONTEXTUAL INQUIRIES

### Participant 3: Alyssa

- ▶ Selected because she had a full time job in addition to school
- ▶ Interviewed in home
- ▶ Easily distracted
- ▶ Tries to give herself more time to counteract distractions

## CONTEXTUAL INQUIRIES

### Results

- ▶ Participants knew what distracted, usually something in particular
  - ▶ Social interactions were the common distraction
- ▶ None of the participants liked the idea of a tracking app
  - ▶ This presented a unique challenge on how to help improve distractions
  - ▶ Keeping track of non-digital events is cumbersome and a distraction in of itself
- ▶ Finding an incentive to use a time helper application was key
  - ▶ Participants also needed incentive to start projects earlier

## INITIAL TASKS

1. Finding an incentive to study – Medium Task

- ▶ Finding more proactive ways of beginning assignments.

2. Reflecting on how time was spent – Easy Task

- ▶ Finding an easy and time efficient way to reflect on time spent.

3. Realizing when off task – Medium Task

- ▶ Finding a way to realize when off task immediately instead of getting carried away with distractions

## INITIAL TASKS

4. Planning time for a task – Medium Task

- ▶ Finding a way to efficiently schedule tasks and maximize free time.

5. Staying on task during group study sessions – Hard Task

- ▶ Finding a way to stay on task in group settings and minimize distractions.

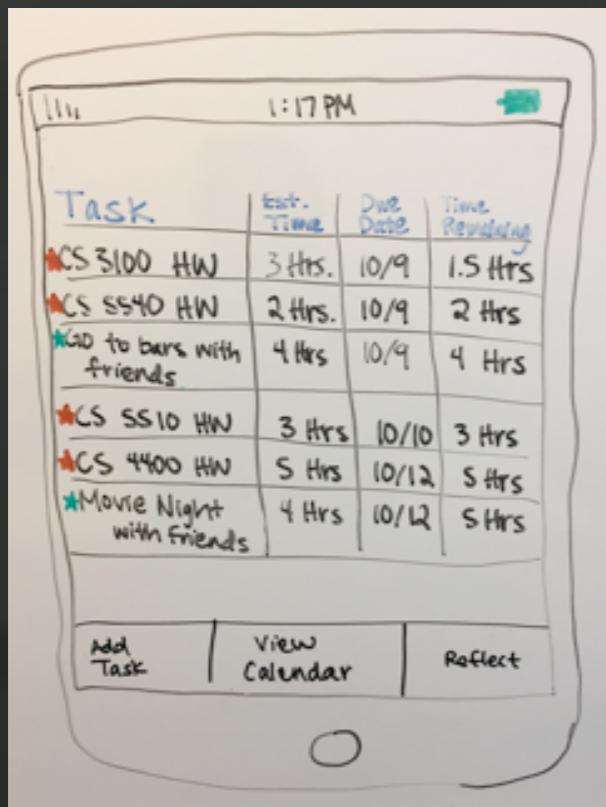
6. Switching between tasks efficiently – Hard Task

- ▶ Finding ways to switch in between tasks without wasting extra time.

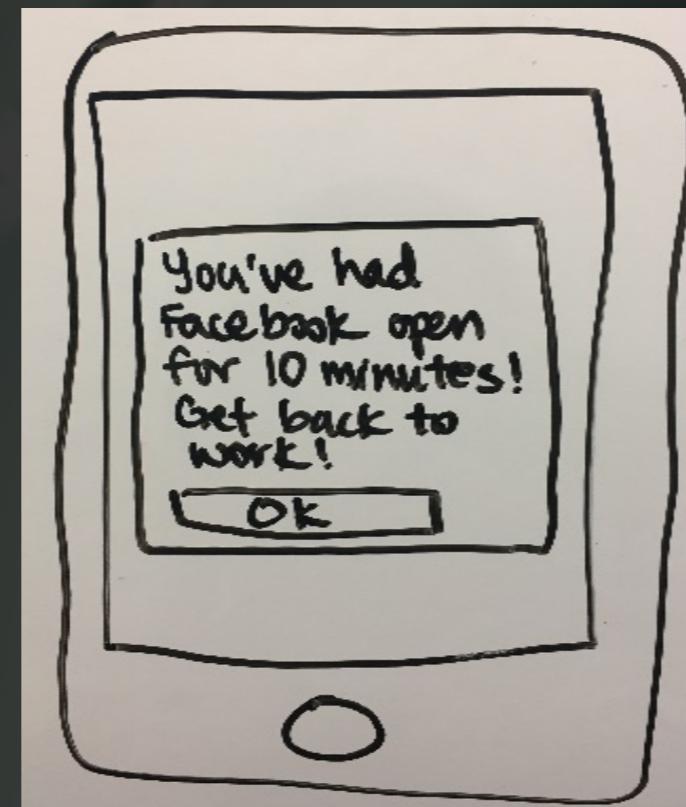
## DESIGN 1

### Task Scheduler Mobile Application

Task Schedule/Tracking



Off Task Notifications



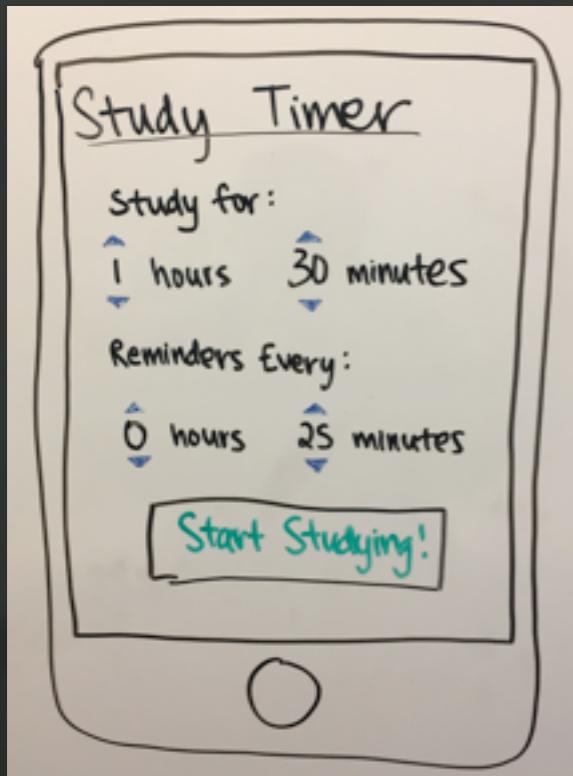
Planned Time Reflection



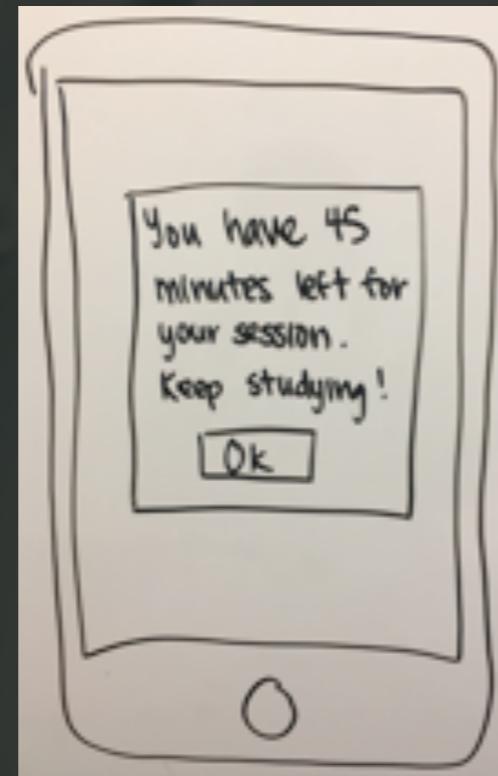
## DESIGN 2

### Study Timer Mobile Application

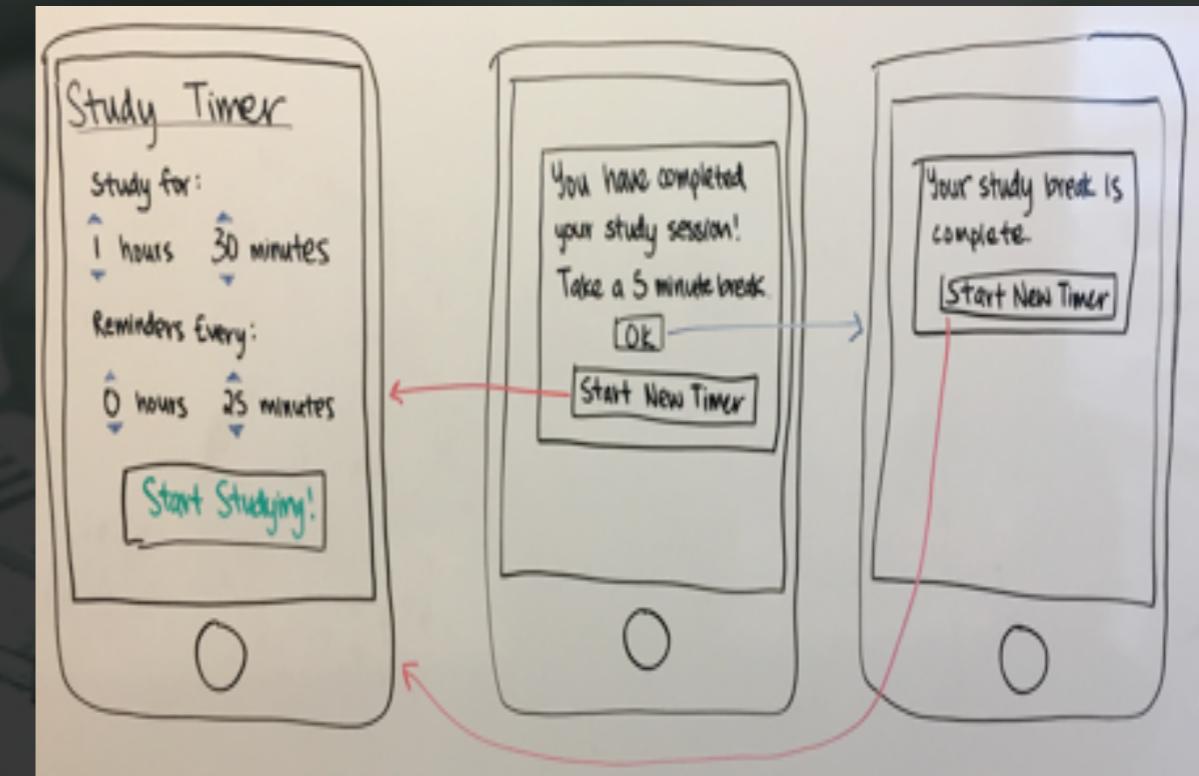
Starting Study Session Timer



Reminder Notifications



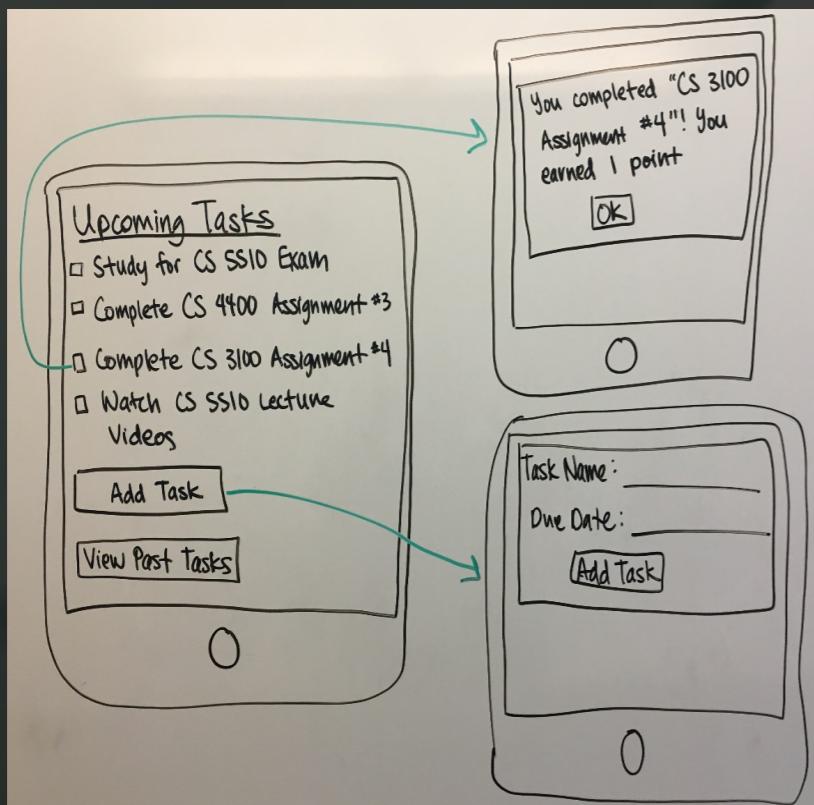
In Between Tasks and Starting a New Timer



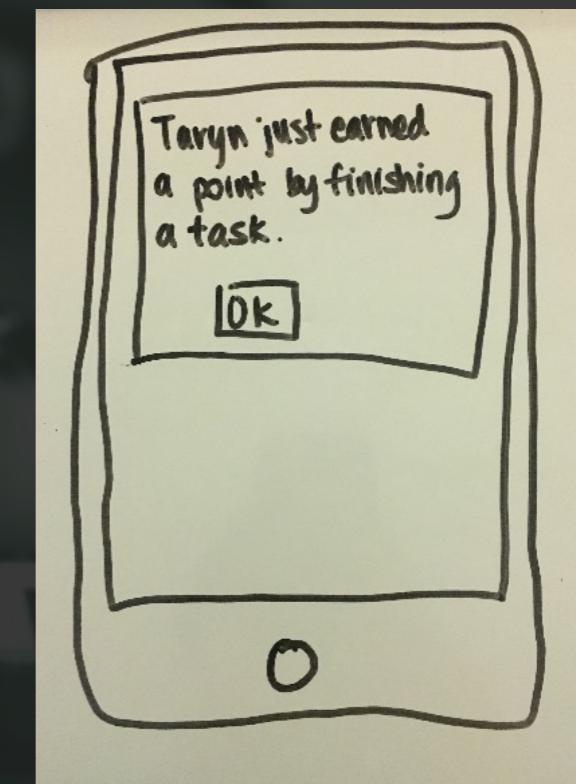
## DESIGN 3

### Incentivized Task Manager

Task Manager / Adding Tasks / Earning Points



Notifications of Competition Earning Points



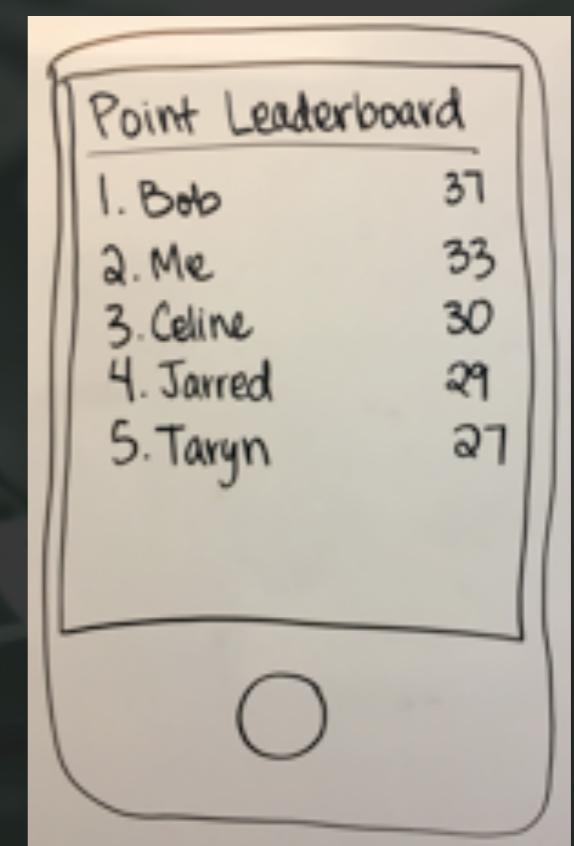
## DESIGN 3

### Incentivized Task Manager... continued

Updating Past Assignments For More Points



Point Leaderboards



## SELECTED DESIGN & TASKS

### Design 3: Incentivized Task Manager

Staying on Task



Leaderboards

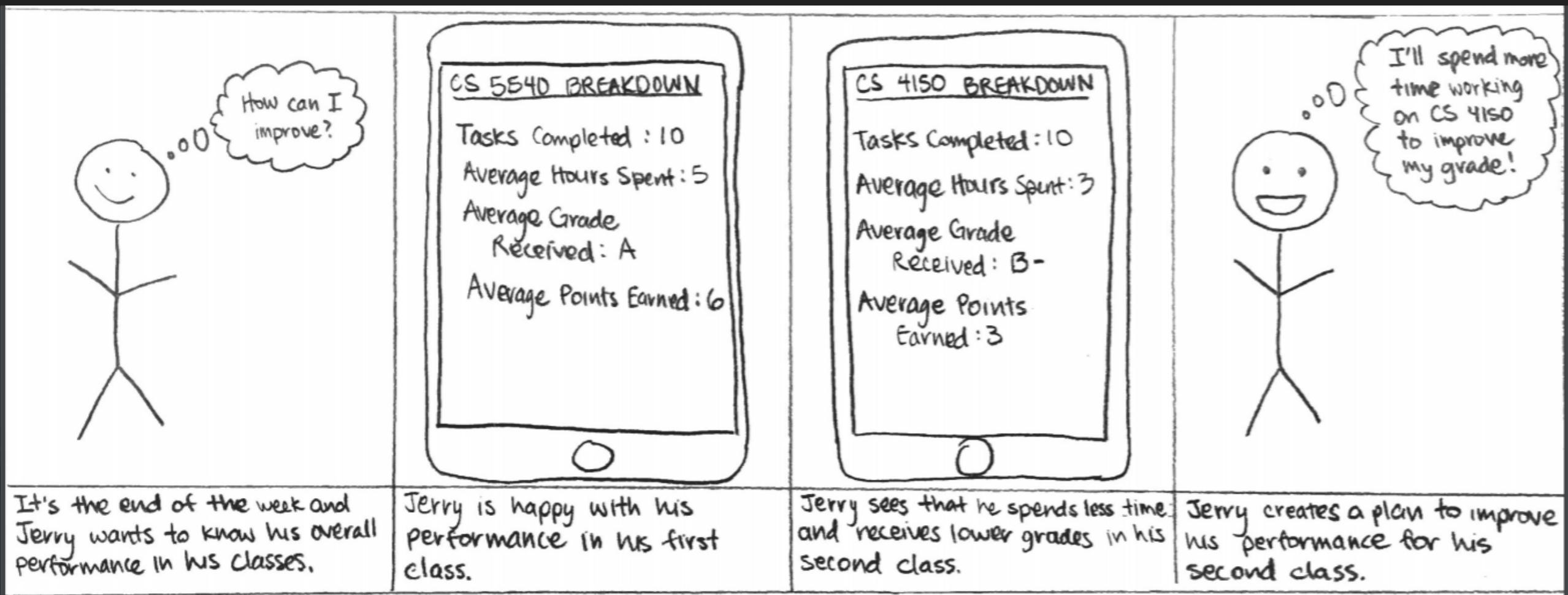


Incentives



## STORYBOARD 1

### Reflecting on how time is spent



## STORYBOARD 2

### Finding an incentive



Bob has been on top of the leaderboard for weeks and sees that his friend John has surpassed him!

Bob wants to be on top again and starts working on an Upcoming task.

After completing the task, Bob earns a point. He is sad because he is still in second place and has no tasks to complete.

## STORYBOARD 2

### Finding an incentive ... continued



Bob remembers that he received an A on a recently graded assignment and hasn't updated the task in his app.

Bob enters his grade for the graded assignment and receives more points.

Bob sees that he is in 1<sup>st</sup> place on the leaderboard again and is happy.

## SUMMARY

- ▶ Users don't want another intrusive time tracker
- ▶ This went against our intuition
- ▶ The target user needs to decide the outcome
- ▶ Participants are the greatest source of inspiration
- ▶ Asking our participants questions, helped us understand the implementation

**THANK YOU!!!**

**ANY QUESTIONS?**

**COMMENTS?**

## WORKS CITED

- ▶ SULLIVAN, BOB. "Students Can't Resist Distraction for Two Minutes ... and Neither Can You." NBC News. N.p., 18 May 2013. Web. 17 Oct. 2016.