

User Research Plan

Studi

CSCI 426: Building a High Tech Startup

Background

Hypotheses

- Students struggle to choose the right courses
- Students want more information when choosing their courses
- Information, such as syllabi and reviews, would help students with making decisions about course registration
- Faculty would like to provide more information about courses to students

Purpose of Research

- Determine key product features
- Understand the barriers students experience during course registration

Objectives

Goals

- Understand what actions university students take when registering for courses
- Discover students' motivations behind collecting information about courses
- Learn about competitor websites/apps students are using to collect information about courses
- Evaluate pain points students are experiencing when determining what courses to register for

Key Performance Indicators

- Total sign ups
- Conversion rate (sign ups/total visits)
- Number of users that upload course-related documents and submit reviews

Research Success Criteria

- 50 sign ups
- At least 10% conversion rate
- At least five documents uploaded
- At least ten reviews submitted

Research Methods

Discovery Research

- Field study
 - Task: The student interviewees will perform the steps they usually take when registering for courses
 - Tool: Computer
- Survey
 - Tool: Typeform
- User interview
 - Number of interviewers: At least one member of the team
 - Length: Approximately 20 minutes
 - Task: The student interviewees will verbally walk through their process of course registration and note any pain points at each step of the process
 - Tools: Phone (for video recordings) and paper (for handwritten notes)

Exploratory Research

- Competitive analysis
- Persona building
- Prototype feedback and testing

Evaluative Research

- Usability testing
- Benchmark testing

Research Scope & Focus Areas

Question Themes

- What main factors play a role in choosing a course, and do these factors change depending on class standing and major?
- Is the process of choosing a course different depending on class standing and major?
- How do students deal with course conflicts?
- What information do students want or need in order to choose the right course?
- What information (e.g. syllabus, enrollment number, previous semesters' statistics) can we gather from professors and the university about courses?
- What do students think define a good class versus a bad class

Design Focus Components

- **Utility:** Is the content or functionality useful to intended users?
- **Learnability:** How easy is it for users to accomplish basic tasks the first time they encounter the design?

- **Satisfaction:** How pleasant is it to use the design?
- **Persuasiveness:** Are desired actions supported and motivated?

Primary User Scenarios

- A current student is registering for next semester's courses
- An incoming freshman or transfer is creating a degree plan as a full-time student

Research Participant Profiles

User Roles

- Incoming freshmen who are going to register for the first time and have limited knowledge of registering for classes
- Sophomores, juniors and seniors from different majors who would like to know more about courses
- Faculty who would like to provide more information for potential students in order to assist with decision-making for courses

User Profiles

Demographics

- Where are they from
- Class standing
- Age (incoming freshmen to instructors)
- Major
- Transfer students
- GPA range
- Attitude towards academics

Behavioral Patterns

- Indecisive
- Cautious

Recruitment Methods

- Volunteer sampling (at least one interviewee for each user role)
- Survey for screening participants

Interview Questions

Incoming Freshmen and Transfer Students

- Which university are you planning to attend in the fall?
- What resources did you use to research the universities that you were applying to?

- What information were you looking for?
- What do you know about applying for college classes?
- How are your friends finding out information regarding colleges?

Current Students

- What factors play a role in your decision?
- What is the main reason you want to take a class?
- How do you deal with schedule conflict? What do you prioritize?
- What other course information would be helpful in your decision?
- Which classes have you enjoyed? Why?
- Which classes have you not enjoyed? Why?

Field Study (for students)

- **Scenario:** The student is registering for next semester's courses
- **Task:** Walk us through that process
 1. Register for one elective
 2. Register for a required course for your major
 3. Register for a GE

Survey Questions

Survey link: <https://coursesurvey1.typeform.com/to/Pj2enM>

Questions

1. What is your name?
 - a. Short Answer
2. What is your class standing?
 - a. Freshman
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior
 - e. Graduate Student
 - f. Other: _____
3. What is your major and minor (if applicable)?
 - a. Short Answer
4. Which main factor influences your decision when choosing a major-required course?
 - a. Time-consuming
 - b. Difficulty
 - c. Relevance to career goal
 - d. Interest/Passion
 - e. Instructor's Teaching Ability
 - f. Taking classes with friends

- g. Date and Time of Course Selection
 - h. Other: _____
5. Which main factor influences your decision when choosing a G.E?
- a. Time-consuming
 - b. Difficulty
 - c. Relevance to career goal
 - d. Interest/Passion
 - e. Instructor's Teaching Ability
 - f. Taking classes with friends
 - g. Date and Time of Course Selection
 - h. Other: _____
6. Which main factor influences your decision when choosing an elective?
- a. Time-consuming
 - b. Difficulty
 - c. Relevance to career goal
 - d. Interest/Passion
 - e. Instructor's Teaching Ability
 - f. Taking classes with friends
 - g. Date and Time of Course Selection
 - h. Other: _____
7. What resources do you use when looking for classes to register? (Select all that apply)
- a. Contact Friends/Acquaintances
 - b. Online platforms (e.g. RateMyProfessor)
 - c. Course Registration Information (i.e. Registered Students)
 - d. Contact Professors/TA
 - e. Look for syllabi
 - f. Other: _____
8. If you selected "Online platforms" for the question above, please specify the name of the platform and the features you like/dislike about it.
- a. Short Answer
9. What other information would you like to know when choosing courses?
- a. Short Answer