Undergraduate Admissions Website Redesign
UX Process Documentation

02.24.2017

Texas State Undergraduate Admissions User Experience Strategy

Project: Texas State Undergraduate Admissions Website

Prepared by: Stephan Tynes

VISION STATEMENT

The redesign for the Undergraduate Admissions redesign will first and foremost be mobile first. Mobile first means that the website will be designed for use on the mobile platforms first before any other tablet or desktop designs are made. The user groups that use the Undergraduate Admissions website are primarily focused on using their phones before anyone else, and we want to make a better experience for the Texas State Undergraduate user.

We will accomplish this by first reorganizing the website and doing an overhaul of the existing pages. We will prioritize information after meeting with different departments. From here we will take that information and reform the structure of the website. The design of the website will stay true to making every task as simple as possible while giving the appropriate amount of information along the way. The goal for most users is to apply for college and have a seamless transition from life before and after getting into Texas State University.

USERS

» High School Student: A student still in high school applying to Texas State for the first time.

» Transfer Student: A student transferring from another school to Texas State University.

» Admitted Student: A student currently admitted to Texas State University.

SECONDARY USERS

» Parent: The parent of a student applying or admitted to Texas State University.

» Counselor: A high school or college counselor that works with students about their options for attending college.

DESIGN CRITERIA

All design decisions should aim to meet the goal of giving the user a simple and easy to use website that helps them apply or find additional information about the university, its events, tours, and life at or around the school.

» **Smooth Moves**: Each task should be simple and easy even if they take some time to accomplish. Each should lead to a logical and informative result.

» **Hidden Agenda:** Each page will hide its information within categories so that the user can lick to find more information about a topic. This helps to clean up the pages from an overwhelming amount of information.

» **Drill Baby Drill**: The website will have a "drill down" architecture that is used to sort a large number of pages. Each category will lead the user to the desired location in the fewest amount of clicks as possible.

» **Mobile Prone**: Each page element will usable and suited to use on a mobile phone.

HYPOTHESIS & OUTCOMES

» Hypothesis: We believe that the user will accomplish each task quick and easy with very few hang-ups.

» Test: We will test by recording the users voice, on screen actions, and (if possible) their face and reactions. A researcher (tester) will be there to explain the test, outline each task as they do it, answers any questions, and assist will the overall experience of test the Texas State Undergraduate Admissions website.

» Outcomes: We will know that the test is a success if we see a result of minimal hang ups with each participant's test. If the participant gets lost more than they find their way through the test, then we will consider this test a failure. If the user is not satisfied with their overall experience, then we will make strides to take their suggestions into consideration and improve the website.

Texas State Undergraduate Admissions Website Usability Script

Test conducted by

Welcome participant warmly and show her a place in which you're going to conduct the test. For the introduction part, seat her in a way that will let you see her face (helps with natural conversation). The Computer screen should show a neutral website (Google, Yahoo etc.). Don't show the research software yet.

Hello {Name of the participant}, thank you for coming. My name is {your name} and I'm a researcher for Texas State University – I'm going to walk you through the session today.

Before we'll start I have some information for you.

We're currently testing the Undergraduate Admissions website to learn as much as we can about the way people use it. Every product is intended to work in a certain way by its creators, but as you know – the reality might be quite different. The goal of this research is to get us as close to the reality as possible.

The session will take about 15-25 minutes.

We're currently testing the Undergraduate Admissions website to learn as much as we can about the way people use it. Every product is intended to work in a certain way by its creators, but as you know – the reality might be quite different. The goal of this research is to get us as close to the reality as possible.

The session will take about 15-25 minutes.

<!— I don't recommend running tests that take longer than 1 hour (unless your particular test case requires it). Many participants will get tired pretty quickly during the test, as a result of acting under stress, which might bias your results -->

Please remember, during the next 15- 25 minutes, that we're testing the Undergraduate Admissions website not you. Don't worry at all about mistakes. If they happen, it's the fault of the product. Finding about it is absolutely fantastic and gets us closer to creating a great product.

During the whole test, please try to think out loud. Share anything that's in your head. Tell me what you are looking at on the screen, what your thoughts are, what you like and what don't you like, et cetera. We want to learn about your honest reactions to the Undergraduate Admissions website.

Do you have any questions so far?

<!— Explaining the "think out loud" protocol is extremely important to the whole study. Make sure that the participant understands what you are asking for-->

If you have any doubts during the test, feel free to ask me any questions. However, please remember that I might not be able to answer them during the test. We want to learn about your experience with the Undergraduate Admissions website, so I can't guide you. I'll be glad to answer all your questions after the test.

With your permission, we're going to record the session. We'll record your voice, face and actions on the screen – that will give us the full picture of the session for further analysis. We're not going to share these recordings outside of the team directly working on the Undergraduate Admissions website.

If you don't mind, I'd like to ask you to sign this permission form. It simply states that you give us the permission to record the session and that we're going to secure this data and make it available only to the team working on {name of the product}.

Hand the permission form and a pen to the participant. While the participant signs the form, set up the recording software.

<!— Refusal to sign a form, has only happened a couple of times in my career. If it happens, I still recommend carrying on with the session and taking detailed notes (but leaving the data out of the research report). The session might still prove enlightening, but the data may be misinterpreted by others without the video recording.-->

<!— Inform participants if your team is observing the session. If you have any other forms that need to be signed (e.g. NDA) – handle them after the permission form. For each form that must be signed, clearly explain why.-->

Also, I hope you don't mind, but I'm going to take notes. It helps me with analyzing the session.

After the scary, formal, part – you need to relax the participant. Ask questions that are easy to answer and somehow connected to the research.

So how did you learn about the Undergraduate Admissions website?

Have you used any similar products?

How much time, roughly, would you say that you spend on the Internet? What do you usually do?

Thank you, the context you provided was very helpful.

If you feel ready, let's begin with the test.

Sit slightly below and to the right of participant so she won't be able to see your face during the test and read your emotions. Turn on the recording software.

We have {insert number} of tasks that I'd like you to go through today. I'm going to read to you the first task. If you have any questions about it – please ask them right away.

Read slowly the first scenario and task. Make sure that the participant understands it. Hand her the printed version in case she needs a reminder of the details of the task later on.

Start whenever you feel ready and once again – please share your thoughts with me out loud.

<!— Repeat the procedure with all the tasks and scenarios. Continue with each task until the user succeeds, or shows signs of frustration or difficulty.
-->

Thank you, that was a very helpful session. Your feedback is extremely valuable to us.

Before we wrap up, could you please take a look at this quick questionnaire as well?

Hand the user the post-test questionnaire (if you planned one), which might include questions about demographics.

When the user has completed all the questions, provide the promised compensation, stop the screen recorder, thank her and escort her out.

<!— Try to repeat the procedure in the exact same way with each participant. That will reduce the likelihood of bias in the research. -->

DURING EACH SESSION

» Welcome the participant and introduce yourself

» Explain the reason for the session

» Explain "Think out loud" protocol

» Give participants "Permission for recording" form

» Give participants other forms (if applicable)

» Turn on the screen recorder

» Ask, easy-to-answer, introduction questions

» Read first task and hand it to participant

» Ask participants about their questions

» Hand post-test questionnaire

» Thank and compensate the user for participation

AFTER EACH SESSION

» Make sure you have all the documents signed

» Make a backup copy of the recording

» Analyze the recording as soon as possible

Usability Test - Permission to Record

Thank you for participating in our usability test. We will be recording your session to allow Texas State University staff members who are unable to be here today to observe your session and benefit from your comments, as well as to thoroughly analyze this session after its end.

Please read the statement below and sign where indicated.

I understand that my usability test session will be recorded.

I grant Texas State University permission to use this recording for internal use only, for the purpose of improving the designs being tested.

Signature: _____

Print your name: _____

Date: _____

Texas State Undergraduate Admissions Usability Test Tasks

FRESHMAN APPLICANT

TASK ONE
Sign up for a campus tour

TASK TWO
Submt and application as a freshman

TASK THREE
Look for frequently asked questions

TASK FOUR
Find and contact an undergraduate admissions counselor

TASK FIVE
You got in! FInd out what you should be doing now.

TASK SIX
Sign up for new student orientation

TASK SEVEN
Find out what degrees texas state has to offer.

Look for a degree in studio art.

TRANSFER APPLICANT

TASK ONE
Sign up for a transfer information session

TASK TWO
Submt and application as a transfer student

TASK THREE
Find and contact an undergraduate admissions counselor

TASK FOUR
You got in! FInd out what you should be doing now.

TASK FIVE
Sign up for new student orientation

TASK SIX
Find out what fiendls of study the college has to offer

CAMPUS TOURS
Discover > Visit > Campus Tours > Campus Tours > Thank You

LARGER GROUP TOURS
Discover > Visit > Campus Tours > Large Group Tours > Thank You

TRANSFER INFORMATION SESSIONS
Discover > Visit > Campus Tours > Transfer Information Sessions > Select Date > Select Time > Thank you

BOBCAT DAY
Discover > Visit > Event > Bobcat Day > Bobcat Day Sign Up > Date > Thank You

INSIGHT VISIT DAYS
Discover > Visit > Events > Insight Visit Days > College Select > Thank You

FRESHMAN/TRANSFER/INTERNATIONAL ADMISSIONS
Admissions > Future Student > Freshman > Step One > Learn More > Thank You

ADMITTED NEXT STEPS
Admissions > Admitted > Next Steps > Step One > Read More > Thank You

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION
Apply > Admitted > New Student Orientation > Freshman Gold > Fall > Date > Thank You

COLLEGES
Academics > Colleges > Fine Art > Learn More > Thank You

DEGREE LIST
Quick Link > Use search > Choose major > Thank You

Or

Academics > Undergraduate Degree List > Use search > Choose major > Thank You

COUNSELOR SEARCH

Connect > Find your Counselor > Search > Submit > Counselor Page

Or

Connect > Find your Counselor > Out-of-State > Select State > Counselor Page

ADMISSION STAFF

Connect > Admissions Staff > Select Staff Member > Staff Member Page

FUTURE STUDENT FAQ

Admissions > Future Students > Frequently Asked Questions > Select one of first two Drop Downs

- » What if I don't meet the assured Admission standards
- » What if my school doesn't rank?

Usability Test - Notes

Participant:

Researcher:

Date:

Task	Time stamp	Observation	Category (error, success)	Severity (1-5)

Usability Test - Notes

Participant:

Researcher:

Date:

Task	Time stamp	Observation	Category (error, success)	Severity (1-5)

Usability Questionnaire

Name:

1. What **DID** you like about the Texas State Undergraduate Admissions website?

2. What <u>DIDN'T</u> you like about the Texas State Undergraduate Admissions website?

3. What was <u>easy</u> to use or understand about the website?

4. What was <u>difficult</u> to use or understand about the website?

5. If you had complete control over the website what three things would you change?

6. What general comments do you have about the website?