



The New Student GPS: A Digital Experience to Ease Transition

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University of Wisconsin - Madison



ASSOCIATION FOR
Orientation • Transition • Retention
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Agenda

- The Problem
- The Project Proposal
- The Project Process
 - UX Background
 - Campus Collaboration
 - Prototyping
 - User/Usability Testing
- Project Demo
- Closing/Q&A

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, attendees should be able to:

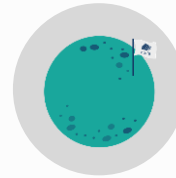
- Understand how a digital solution can help ease student transition from admissions pipeline into their first semester of coursework.
- Identify key steps of user experience design.
- Evaluate various tools and strategies for effective application development.

The Problem

What are our students doing?



Serving ~7,500 new students every summer.



Variety of offices First-Year students communicate and interact with.

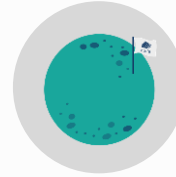


Multitude of websites, applications, and emails new students receive and interact with.

How are our students feeling?



Overwhelmed.



Anxious and concerned.



Decreased excitement.

Question: What are the most challenging or stressful parts of getting ready to attend UW-Madison?

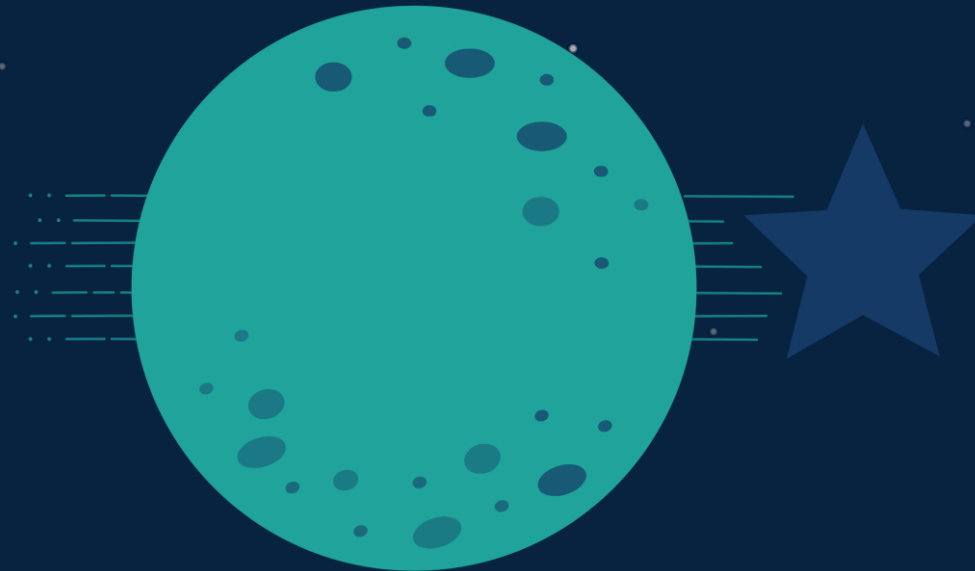
“College in general - a lot of info isn't readily given to us and we have to find it ourselves. Very different from high school where it's 'spoon fed.' I never know if I'm missing something.”

“Filling out modules on dashboard, completing tasks. Getting to know a new system”

“Navigating financial aid and understanding my aid package. Finding a campus job, move-in logistics.”



How might we make it easier for students (and their families) to make sense of and make the most of their first year at the university in a personalized, seamless, and supportive fashion?



The New Student To-Do List

MyUW To Do List

Task List

⚠ Priority Tasks ②

- Complete residency checklist ENROLLMENT
- Make your SOAR reservation HIGH EFFORT SOAR
- Plan your placement test(s) SOAR
- Submit final transcript ENROLLMENT
- Book housing for SOAR (optional) SOAR

🎓 Enrollment ②

- Complete residency checklist
- Activate UW Services
- Accept offer of admission
- Confirm enrollment in my UW and submit deposit
- Submit final transcript

The New Student To-Do List

- Primary hub for all new students to access critical applications, websites, and information needed to facilitate a smooth transition to the university.
- A central place to know what still needs to be done and what deadlines are approaching



Highlights of the Process

- User-experience Focused
- Campus Collaboration
- Prototyping
- User/Usability Testing

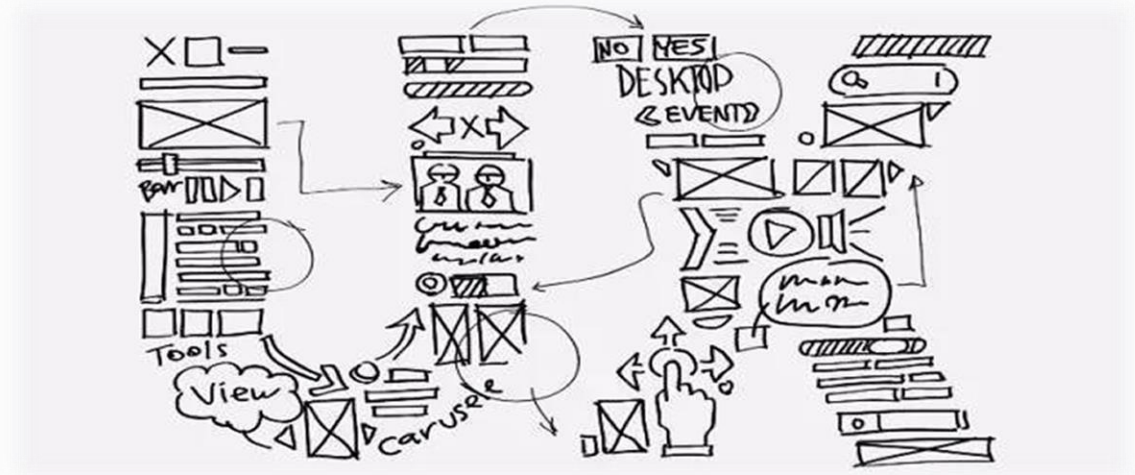
What is User Experience Design?

User Experience Design

“User experience (UX) design is the process of creating products that provide meaningful and relevant experiences to users. This involves the design of the entire process of acquiring and integrating the product, including aspects of branding, design, usability, and function.”

<https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/ux-design>

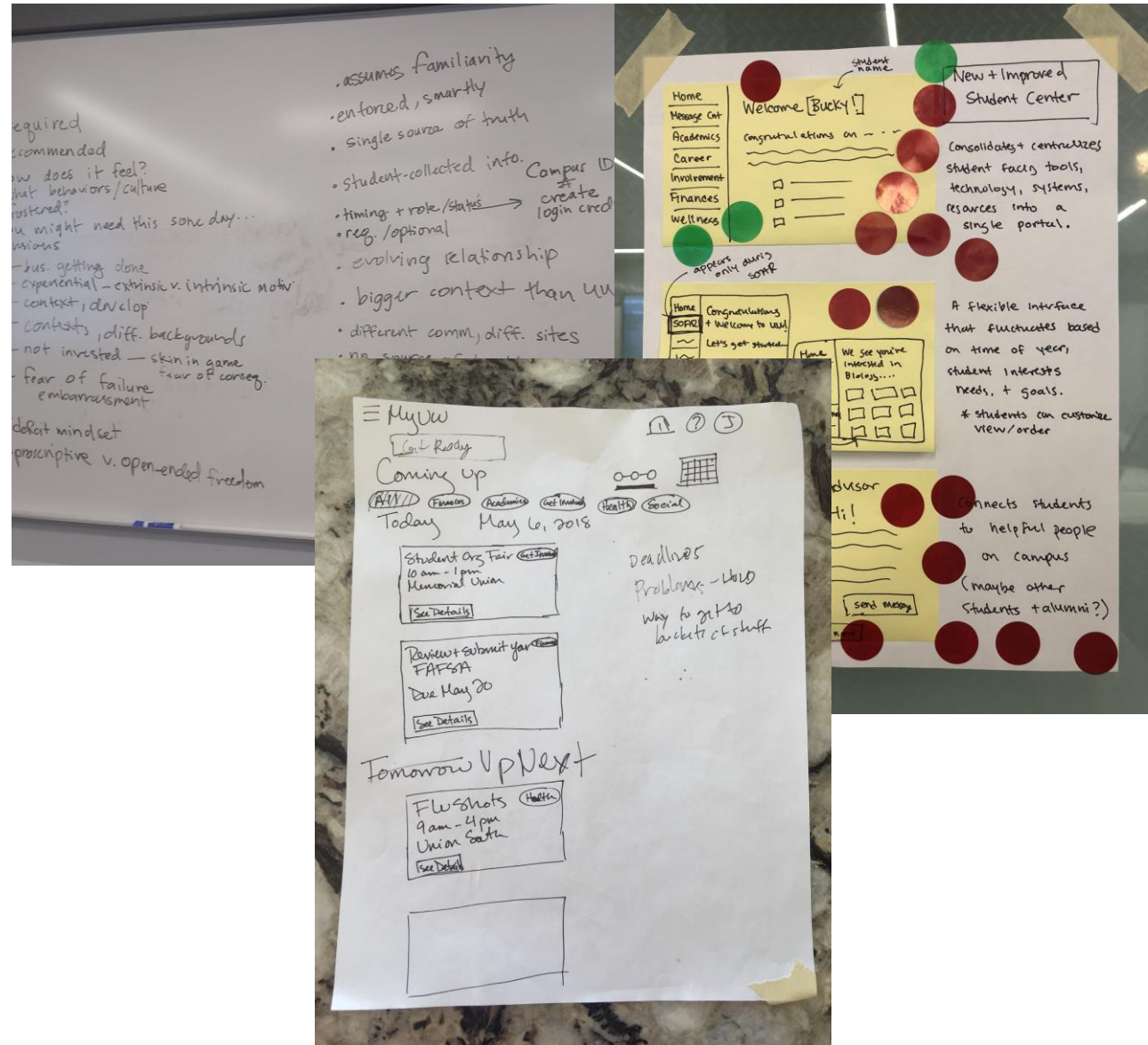
“No product is an island. A product is more than the product. It is a cohesive, integrated set of experiences. Think through all of the stages of a product or service – from initial intentions through final reflections, from first usage to help, service, and maintenance. Make them all work together seamlessly.” Norman (2009)



Campus Collaboration

Campus Collaboration Design Sprint

- One-week design sprint with various campus partners
- Evaluate Need and Feasibility
 - Interviewed various campus partners
 - User/Usability testing using our students
- Conclusion: This project was not only something that is **feasible** to complete but one that would be **beneficial to both students and university offices.**



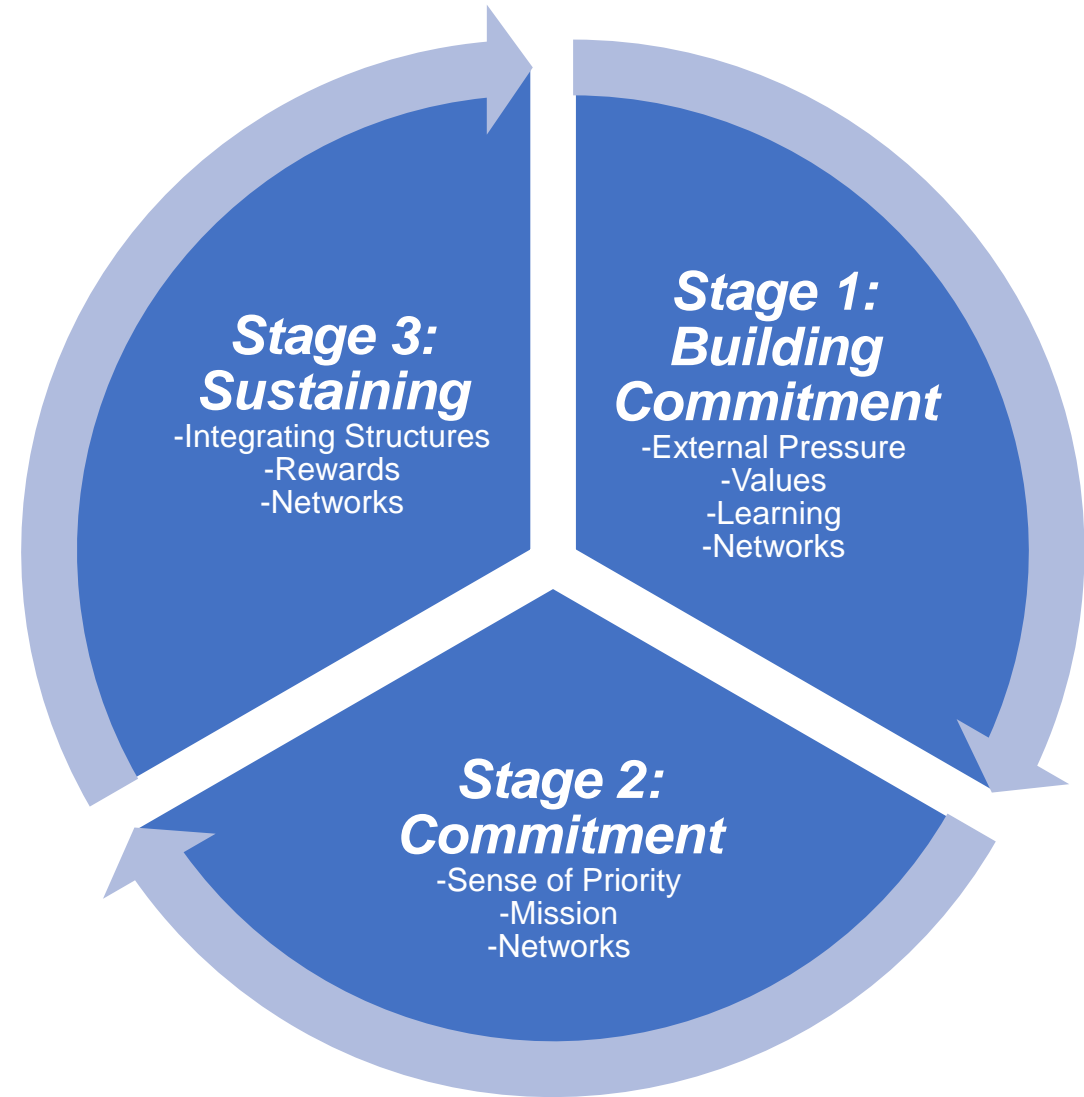
Campus Collaboration Steering Committee

- Cross-campus stakeholders of various technical experiences to help facilitate the development of the first iteration of the project.
 - Admissions
 - Registrar
 - Financial Aid
 - First-Year Experience
 - Advising
 - University Health
 - Testing & Evaluation
 - Housing
 - Campus & Visitor Relations
 - Information Technology
 - User Experience
- Kick-off included an abridged version of “The Wallet Project” from the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford
 - Great intro to the design process and get into the mindset of a designer
 - Used in User Experience design classes at our institution as well
 - https://dschool-old.stanford.edu/groups/designresources/wiki/4dbb2/the_wallet_project.html

Campus Collaboration Steering Committee

Stage 2 - Commitment

- Formation of committee
- The most important piece for our mission: “For the students”



Prototyping

Prototyping

Lots of tools can be used to prototype



<https://www.invisionapp.com/>

Web-based tool



Sketch

<https://www.sketchapp.com/>

Desktop Application
(MacOS Only)



<https://www.adobe.com/products/xd.html>

Desktop Application
Part of Adobe Creative Suite

Prototyping



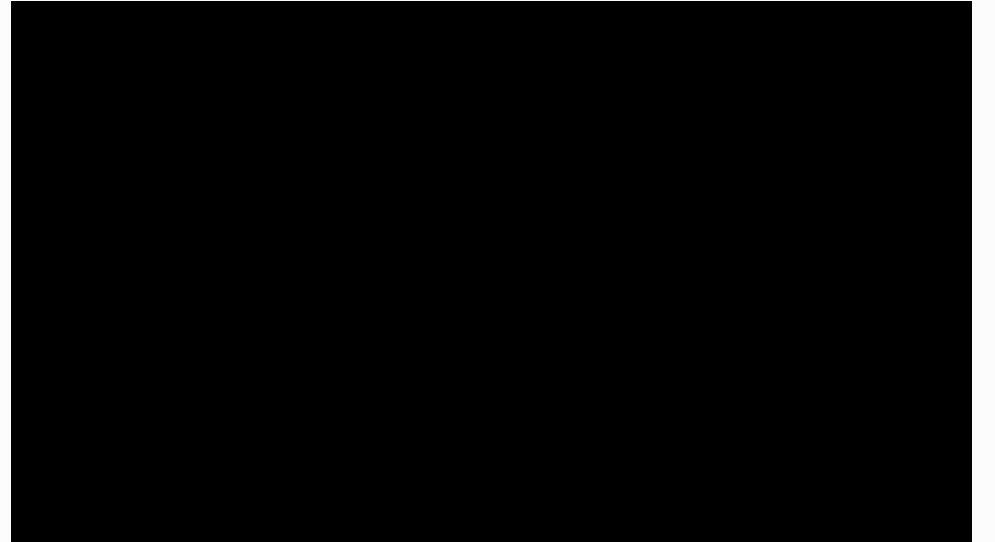
Exercise: Crazy 8s (abridged)

Exercise: Crazy 8s Ideation (Abbreviated)

- Part of Google's Design Sprint Methodology
- <https://designsprintkit.withgoogle.com/methodology/phase3-sketch/crazy-eights>
- Fold paper into 8 equal sections
- Scenario: Reservation Application for Summer Orientation Sessions
- Draw out 8 different designs in each box
- You have 8 minutes to finish them all



GO!



Exercise: Crazy 8s (abridged)

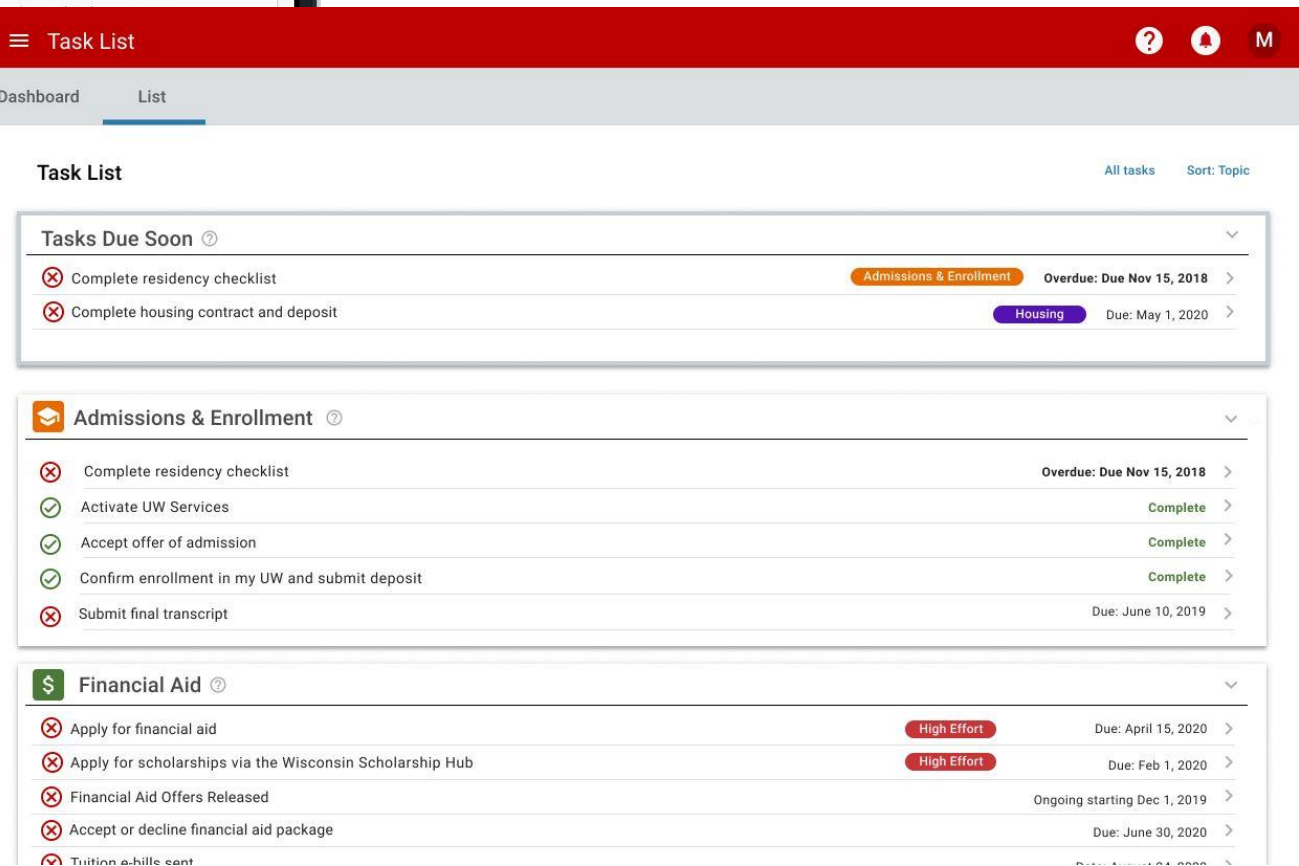
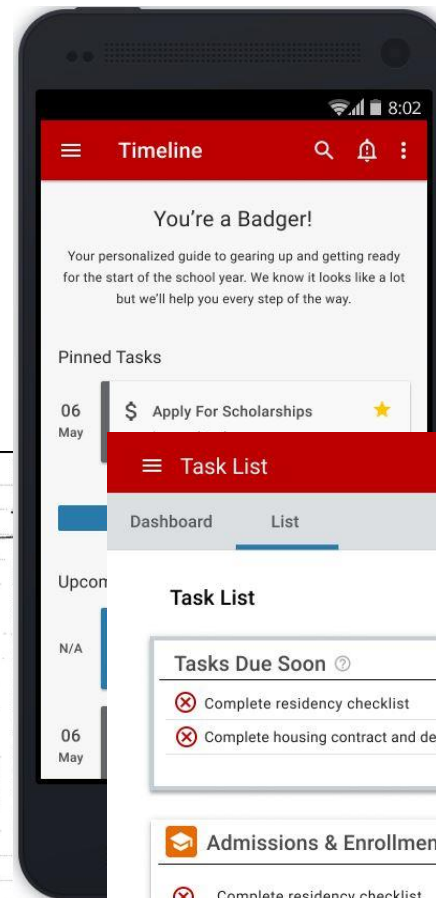
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- Easy way to get rapid ideas out for a design
- You don't need technical experience to do it
- Next steps:
 - Present designs
 - Vote on what to pursue

Prototypes



Testing

Testing

User testing

Do users need my app?



Usability testing

Can users use my app?



Testing

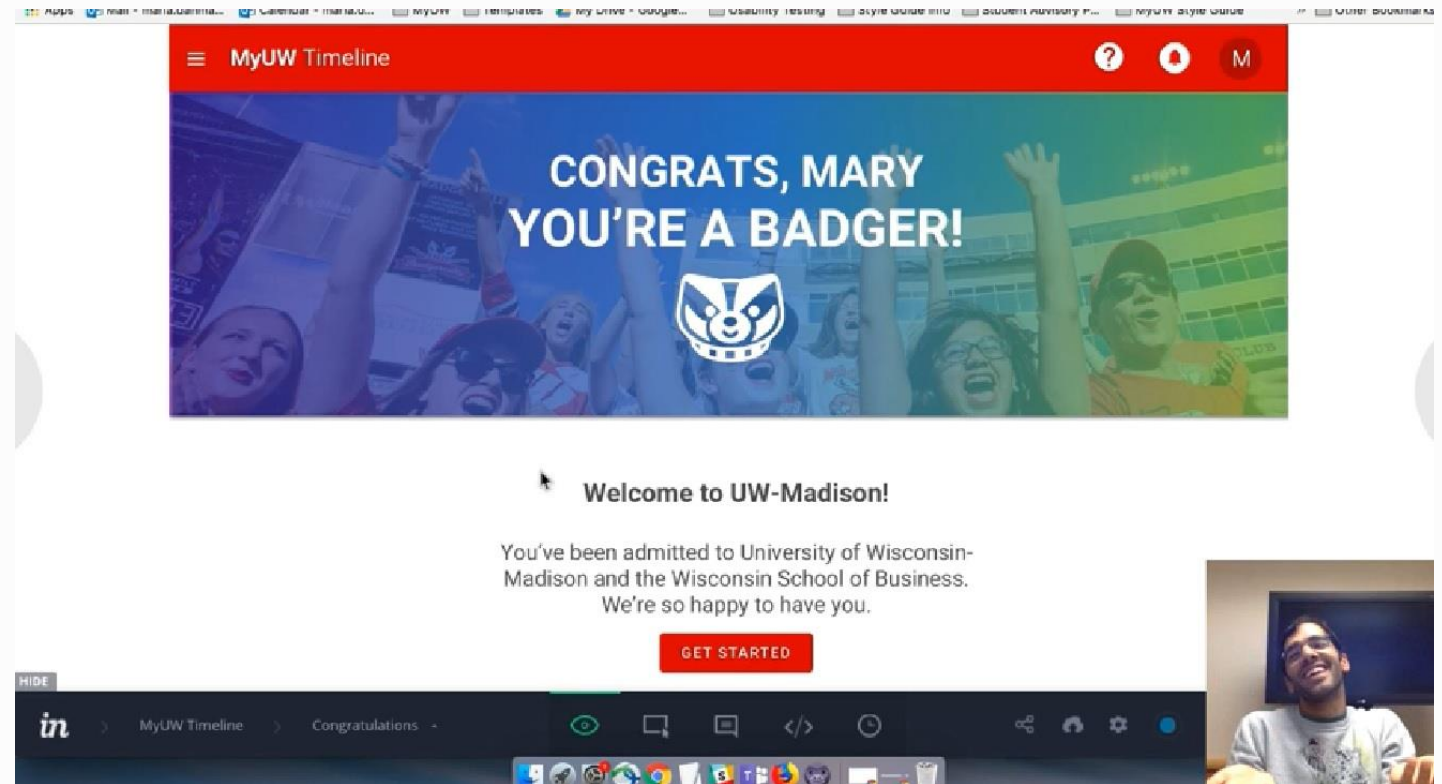
- Effective data can help make a case when a new solution is needed.
- Don't have to wait until the solution released.
 - Paper Prototypes
 - “Wizard of Oz” Testing
- “Release” doesn't mean “Done”.
 - Iterative approaches to development work very well



Testing

Live testing and evaluation brings better results than a simple form does

- Tone
- Facial reactions
- Intent



Showcase!

Showcase

Challenges

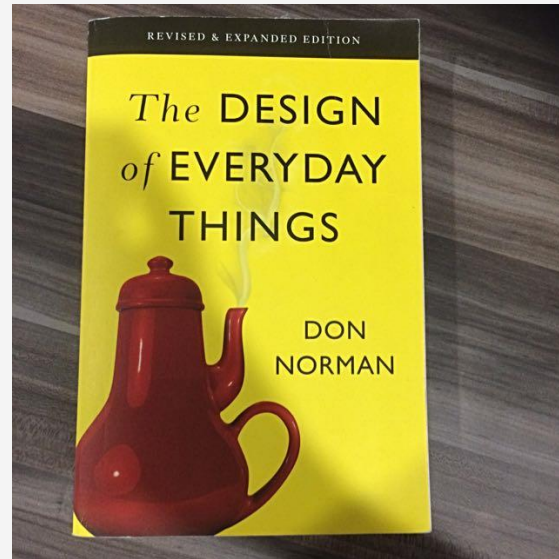
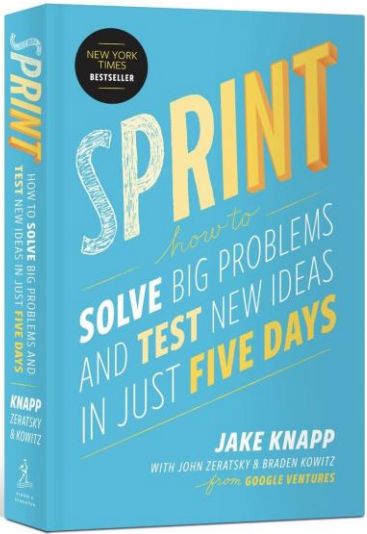
- Data needs
- Conflicting business practices
- Demand for “more”

Iterative Approach

- “Release” doesn’t mean “Done”
- A lot of tasks still left to be included
- Expansion to Transfer and International students
- More “personalized” versions

Assessment

- Standard “does it work” feedback
 - Identify bugs and other improvement opportunities
- First-semester assessment
 - Overall enjoyment of life on campus
 - What they wish they knew
 - Study skills/development
- Data of yield and retention from deposit through the first semester



Additional Resources

“Sprint! How to Solve Big Problems and Test New Ideas in Just Five Days” Book (Jake Knapp)

- Find out more about the design sprint process and how to start one
- Design exercises to help move along projects

“Design of Everyday Things” Book (Don Norman)

- Examples (good and bad) of UX Design in everyday objects and situations we encounter today
- A great resource for non-designers interested in the process of User Experience Design

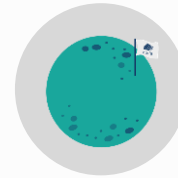


[“It's not you. Bad doors are everywhere.” - Vox & 99% Invisible](#)

Discussion/Q&A



What challenges are you facing for your own offices' needs?



What advice have you found that was helpful that may not have been covered?



What do you think of the application/questions about it?

Yes, you are a UX Designer. What you do may not be digital, but we design experiences for our students all the time with our programs. A lot of the same thinking comes into play in digital experiences as well



Thank you for attending!

Project Updates: go.wisc.edu/fy-timeline

Contact Me:
chris.diorio@wisc.edu

Please complete your session evaluation and return it to the volunteer. Thank you!

