

Project Milestone: Persona Update and Project Problem Statement

Data Analysis

All the personas I've interviewed had one common pain point, which is the lack of support provided regarding helping the users throughout application or financial aid process. There were few common themes identified based on the interviews conducted.

Overwhelming Navigation and information structure: Participants found that the website was overwhelming with information which made it difficult to navigate. The labels and organizing of data were also unclear.

Unfamiliar technologies used: Participants also complained that it was difficult for them to understand few technologies and terminologies used across the website. The consistency of these terminologies was minimal as well.

Lack of interactive tools: There are only few interactive support tools present in the website. FAQ section is one of them. But users usually prefer getting their questions answered as soon as possible through tools like Live Chat or Phone helpline.

Persona Update

Name: Kayla

Occupation: Undergrad Student

Age: 19

Gender: Female

Backstory: Kayla is a first-generation college applicant who is eager to pursue higher education. With limited guidance at home, she relies heavily on the university's admissions and financial aid website to understand the application process and funding options. Overwhelmed by the information, but still determined, Kayla is navigating college resources on her own.

Motivation: Kayla is driven by her goal to be the first in her family to attend college, viewing it as a pathway to a better future. She aims to secure financial aid to make her dream affordable and find a program that aligns with her career aspirations.

Frustration: The website's complex structure and overwhelming content make it difficult for Kayla to find clear instructions. As a first-generation applicant, she often struggles with unfamiliar terminology, leading to confusion and worry about missing important information or making mistakes.

Ideal Experience/Goals/Aspiration: Kayla's ideal experience includes a user-friendly website with step-by-step guidance for admissions and financial aid. She values clear, accessible instructions, visual aids, a glossary for complex terms, and resources specifically for first-generation students. She also wants reliable support options, such as live chat or virtual workshops, to help her feel supported throughout the process.

Analysis Report

The interview data revealed that users had difficulties navigating the admissions and financial aid website and understanding the available resources due to the complexity of the information structure and unfamiliar terminology. Main requirement was for clearer instructions, preferably structured in a step-by-step format, which would reduce the memorizing load and make it easier for first-generation students to apply for financial aid confidently. The identified themes emphasize the importance of designing a website that balances information with accessibility and user-friendliness.

Integrated Prioritized List

Due to the overwhelming experience reported by users, improving the information visualization of the website is prioritized to make key sections that are frequently visited easier to locate.

Providing clear, organized steps for applications and financial aid processes is critical for user confidence and success. This should include visual aids, checklists, and explanations which is easier to comprehend for first-generation students.

Easy access to support can alleviate user confusion, especially for first-generation students. Live chat, FAQ sections, and online resources, such as webinars, would address individual concerns effectively.

Reasoning behind prioritization: The areas addressed are main obstacles for accessing and understanding the admissions and financial aid sections. By simplifying navigation, offering structured guidance, and expanding support options, the website can better meet the needs of its wider audience, which ensures the users to feel confident and supported throughout the application process.

Problem Statements

Navigation Complexity: The current website structure lacks proper navigation, making it challenging for users, especially first-generation students, to locate important information. Simplified and organized navigation will help users access admissions and financial aid resources more effectively.

Lack of Step-by-Step Guidance: Users need proper, step-by-step instructions for completing the admissions and financial aid processes. By providing guides, visual aids, and checklists, the website can have an easier and more confident application experience for all users.

Insufficient Support Resources for Diverse Needs: The absence of immediate accessible support resources (such as live chat, detailed FAQs, and webinars) limits users' ability to address specific queries and challenges. Enhanced support options would provide essential guidance and assist first-generation applicants in successfully navigating the application process.