

**RE-IMAGINING THE :
STUDENT SERVICE :
EXPERIENCE: : FINAL REPORT
A PARTICIPATORY : DECEMBER 19, 2011
DESIGN STUDIO :**



**BUSINESS
INNOVATION
FACTORY**

UtahState
University



RE-IMAGINING THE STUDENT SERVICE EXPERIENCE: A PARTICIPATORY DESIGN STUDIO

CONTENTS

Introduction	04
About This Report	06
Methodology	06
Primary Research Findings	08
Existing Site Review	10
Target Audience	12
Experience Framework	14
Conceptual Prototypes	
Aggie Dock	16
Aggie Intelligence	26
Aggie Scene	32
Final Words	42
About the Business Innovation Factory	44

INTRODUCTION

In the spring of 2011, Utah State University (USU) in collaboration with the Business Innovation Factory (BIF) conducted a unique experience to put students in the driver's seat of a new kind of student-led R&D effort to transform education. Working in teams, 15 undergraduate students - ranging from freshman to graduating senior - took part in a design studio to develop novel ideas to help USU and its students better track and communicate the competencies and capabilities students acquire during their education experience. Ultimately, the goal of the studio was to find fresh, new approaches to support student success and timely and appropriate progress toward degree completion.

At the conclusion of the semester, students presented their research and ideas to a group of University officials that included faculty members, advising and career services department heads, the University provost, deans and assistant deans, and other USU administrators.

From day one, the students were informed that their voice, their research and their ideas have merit. And it was the University's intention to rely on their work to begin to improve the overall student experience at USU. Indeed, one of the solution ideas - the "Aggie Genome Project" - was selected by the University for conceptual prototyping.

The "Aggie Genome Project" bridges the gaps of engagement and communication between university resources, the students, extracurricular groups, and faculty. All information throughout the university about the student would be accessible to the student and to any part of the university that needed it.

During the Fall 2011 semester, returning students from the first phase of work along with a group of new students came together to envision an entirely new experience framework and interaction model for the delivery of student services — to conceive of a web-based, one-stop shop model that transforms the student services experience from a siloed, institutional focus to one that's customer-focused and seamless across university services.

Using BIF's student-centered participatory design approach, students learned and applied principles of design thinking in real-time as they moved past the discovery phase and the search for solution ideas conducted in the first studio towards a detailed experience design phase where they designed, generated and tested conceptual prototypes of an e-student service solution.



ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report summarizes the results of the student-led participatory design studio. It presents a vision of the future for a holistic student service delivery model that is both seamless and democratic. The assignment for students: Create a web-based “one-stop-shop” that is tightly linked to a student’s (changing or evolving) personal, strategic, academic and financial objectives.

The delivery model students sought to design would:

- **Connect independent support services together to learn from and engage with one another for the betterment of the student;**
- **Provide an easily navigable process for student self-discovery and self-actualization; and**
- **Allow students to conveniently build their own personal web of support based on need, issue or circumstance.**

What follows are the results of primary research conducted, an experience framework that depicts the foundational principles of the new site as well as three conceptual prototypes for possible implementation.

METHODOLOGY

The goals of this year-long student-led participatory design studio were straightforward:

- **Bring the student experience to life in a way that makes their voice central to USU’s conversation about transforming the education system to improve the experience and outcome of students;**
- **Provide students with the tools, methodologies and processes to develop innovative design concepts to improve the student experience; and**
- **Provide new life and learning skills for students.**

Methodology is broken down by design studio:

Design Studio 1, Spring 2011

Using a qualitative research approach enables stakeholders to see the experience through the lens of the student, to better appreciate the dynamics of the educational system through the student’s eyes and to more readily identify opportunities for intervention and innovation. During the first design studio, students followed a “research-design-ideate” cycle of discovery.

Students were required to:

- **Conduct secondary research to help inform their design problem;**
- **Formulate a primary research plan;**
- **Conduct field research into the experience of fellow students;**
- **Interview experts both inside and outside the university;**
- **Analyze their findings to reveal patterns, trends, and key insights; visually interpret these findings into an “experience map”; and**
- **Generate ideas for new solutions informed by their primary research.**

At the conclusion of the semester, students presented their research and solution ideas to a group of University officials that included faculty members, advising and career services department heads, the University provost, deans and assistant deans, and other USU administrators. A solution was selected for conceptual prototyping and students were again asked to lead the R&D process.

Design Studio 2, Fall 2011

During the second design studio, students followed an “immersion, iterative design, specification” process for experience design. We began with the immersion phase which is intended to envision a transformed student services experience by building a deep understanding of both the experience design process and the context of the student services ecosystem and the people who play a role in it. We worked with research from the first design studio along with additional secondary research and expert panels to build this understanding. From this phase, individual product briefs were created that defined (at a high level) an experience framework to tackle during the next phase.

During the Iterative design phase, individual product briefs were consolidated into a working brief that the prototype designs would be based upon. Ultimately, three unique interaction models were created and students were divided into teams to conceptually design and prototype their models. Digital prototypes were then taken into the field to test with students. Findings from these evaluations were used to refine the prototype. Outcomes of this phase also included a set of user scenarios.

Finally, a series of experience specifications were written for each prototype to ensure that they properly demonstrate the functionality of the e-student service experience as envisioned by the teams. The experience specification will also help the implementation team clearly understand what is intended in the experience design. Documentation details the site’s information architecture, user experience guidelines, page level schematics for each distinct page type and specification of features and functionality.

PRIMARY RESEARCH FINDINGS

Upon arriving at Utah State University, students must match interests and passions with an academic program and make important and often difficult or challenging decisions about what courses to take and when to take them. Yet many students struggle with these choices and have little knowledge of the long-term consequences of their decisions.

Additionally, students often have limited information about how elective courses or extracurricular activities fit with their chosen majors and/or programmatic or personal objectives. Many are frustrated or confused by incorporating work-based or extracurricular learning. For some students, the pathway between degree and career is bumpy and they require mentoring. For others, financial aid and all its complexities hinder or stall success. Still others are in need of role models or community groups but have no idea where to find such services.

Primary research activities conducted in the Spring and Fall 2011 semesters revealed that while students at USU have access to many services to aid them through their college experience, many either do not take advantage of these services or do not even know they exist. This perceived “engagement gap” is an insight that students were able to significantly build upon because it demonstrated that Student Services does not need to create new information to answer student questions; they only need to direct to existing information and services more effectively.

It was found that this engagement gap exists because of:

- 1) **A general misunderstanding of the different services offered and their respective functions;**
- 2) **A lack of general knowledge of what the students were expected to utilize;**
- 3) **Inadequate advertising and communication;**
- 4) **Current (and incorrect) student view of the resources;**
- 5) **A lack of connectivity between resources;**
- 6) **A lack of functional organization of the existing information; and**
- 7) **A limited time frame in which students could receive the university information.**

Overall, the majority of students studied felt overwhelmed with the current state of student services. For example, many online services have isolated information as well as isolated locations. Many services are static, when the lives of students are fluid and ever changing. Often times, students go to the wrong service with a question because it’s not clear what function each service serves. Descriptors such as “goose chase,” “mangled,” “overwhelmed,” “run around,” “ping pong,” were used to describe the current experience students go through during their interactions with student services.

From a digital perspective, many of the websites for the individual student services are either not directed specifically toward students or information heavy, thus intimidating the students at first glance. With this ineffective site experience, students inevitably choose to give up on seeking information online. Students then travel to the service in person, leading to the individual student service feeling like they are “bursting at the seams.”

At the same time, research also revealed that students enjoy feeling autonomous, knowing that they can find answers for themselves. They seek a communication avenue that is dynamic, personal and changeable. Students who feel connected to their school are more likely to stay in school and be successful. It is the aim of all student services to increase this connection.

Misinformation, Misconceptions, and Misnomers

Research activities revealed that student service team members are effective and work diligently. All departments said that they love working with students and are constantly striving to find ways to better meet student needs. All services are willing to make sure the student is satisfied when they leave their offices; often times connecting students to other departments where they can be best helped. Many of the stakeholders interviewed wanted to do things more efficiently and that better meet the students’ needs, but did not have access or resources to what exactly needed to be changed.

Additionally, while student services work together on an institutional level, they are less intuitive when it comes to relating to students. Several student services—University Advising, the Academic Resource Center (ARC), the Student Involvement and Leadership Center (SILC) and others—stated that a fundamental difficulty their student service has in service delivery is students’ misconception, or complete lack of understanding, of what function the specific service performs.

For example, out-of-state students were informed by the registrar when they register for classes that they have to pay out-of-state tuition. Later, when students apply for residency, they go to the registrar’s office for help. However, this office has no involvement when it comes to student’s residency.

Still more examples include when students travel to University Advising asking about Financial Aid or travel to the Academic Resource Center asking about Counseling and Psychological Services.

Miscommunication or confusion also leads to unnecessary overcrowding of the offices by students who need help from a different office. Student and staff experience frustration when a student can’t be helped, and feelings of helplessness and discouragement occur on the student’s part, contributing to the engagement gap.

A powerful insight, however, is that students are seeking information that actually exists, and it is not fictitious or “in planning.” The research revealed that when students do communicate their needs in person, Student Services staff are able to problem-solve and direct the student down the appropriate path.

The Bridge Between Offline and Online

Even with clear efforts having been made to improve the physical image of the services, many students remain intimidated. Often, they do not fully understand where the service is located and what services are offered - even when travelling to the physical office of the service.

For example, many of the expert stakeholders interviewed mentioned that students are deterred from visiting them simply because their main offices are located on the third floor of the t and students feel unsure about “what is up there.” Student interviews reached similar conclusions. In the student’s mind, the floor is seen as a place that “elite” students go. Lower classmen are typically afraid to venture up. That is where the student government offices and the average student feels like they don’t belong because they are not part of ASUSU or directly involved with any of the organizations located there. This is a clear point of disconnection between the student and student services.

While there is little that an online experience will be able to do about physical location, we aim to make the virtual web location of these services much more appealing and inviting to all students.

EXISTING SITE REVIEW

Primary research related to Utah State University's website finds an overly complex and cumbersome experience such that students and sometimes staff and faculty avoid it.

To navigate many of the necessary portions of the website (Banner, Aggimail, Touchnet, etc.) the students need to enter their password information multiple times.

Many of the pages are text-heavy and require time to dissect in order to find the information needed. Yet students are busy and need to find information quickly and efficiently, and if it can't be found fast, they will go without.

Furthermore, each service has a personality or image that they are trying to portray to the students. Whether it be "open and inviting", or "efficient and painless" each service wants students to know what kind of atmosphere they can expect when they come in to use the service. This is difficult or impossible for many services to portray through their current web page. For example, the Access and Diversity Center wants to portray an image of being open, inviting, fun, and being "for everybody." However, every service is bound to a formatted style of web design, which, in the case of the Access and Diversity, does not allow them to create a warm and friendly webiste.

Another substantial experience design hurdle to overcome is that many of the websites, for example the Financial Aid website, contain a lot of technical writing. Unless a student is a financial expert, they are unlikely to understand it. This may create the impression that the Financial Aid office itself will be confusing. While it is necessary for the site to contain this information (required by law in the case of the Financial Aid office), it intimidates and impedes students who are looking to use the site's information.

Navigating the USU website can be additionally burdensome as some information is not clearly divided into appropriate categories. Especially problematic are the names of many of the services; names seem to frequently misinform the students as to what the service is offering. For example, the Access and Diversity center has nothing to do with Access (Banner), yet one of the more frequent misconceptions they face is that their office handles Banner.

The search engine on USU's main page is also inefficient. When the search engine is used, it can yield irrelevant and outdated results. Students are quickly discouraged and leave without finding the answers needed.

Another disconnection is the intended usage of the sites. Many of the services noted that their information on the website was geared towards serving other entities, such as other universities looking for information. While this is necessary, it does not benefit the student.

Home Page: Text-Heavy and Static

The screenshot shows the Utah State University website for Student Services. The header includes the university logo, navigation links (USU home, A-Z index, MyUSU, calendars, directory, contact), and a search bar. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for Prospective Students, Current Students, Alumni & Friends, Faculty & Staff, and Community & Visitors. The main content area features a large banner image of students walking, followed by a 'Student Services' section with a search bar and a list of services: Departments, Mission Statement, Student Code, Contact Us, Interactive Map, and Aggie Recreation Center Project. Below this are four service tiles: Academic Resource Center, Registrar's Office, Access & Diversity Center, and Retention and Student Success, each with a small image and a brief description.

Bound to One Style Format

The image shows two examples of website banners. The top banner is for the 'Advising Center' and features a large image of three students walking in front of a building. The bottom banner is for the 'Taggart Student Center' and features a large image of a modern building. Both banners use a consistent style with a large image and a text overlay.

Irrelevant Search Results

The screenshot shows a 'Page Not Found' error message. The message reads: 'The web page you requested was not found. To find what you are looking for, please use the Quick Search area below, or click on the search panels above.' Below the message is a search bar with a 'Search' button. At the bottom, there is a link to email the university: 'If you have any questions or concerns about Utah State University Web site, please feel free to email US.'

Misconceptions About What Service Offers

(Access and Diversity Center confused with application called Access)

The diagram illustrates a misconception about the Access and Diversity Center. It shows the Utah State University logo and the Access & Diversity Center logo. Below this is a search bar and a 'Page Not Found' error message. Below the error message is a banner for the Access and Diversity Center featuring a collage of diverse students. The banner includes a rainbow flag, an American flag, and a group of students.

TARGET AUDIENCE

By taking advantage of all that USU has to offer, students will begin to make powerful connections with the school while forming life-long skills. This is why it is imperative that the relationship between students and the school is enhanced.

There are two very clear stakeholders who will be affected by these proposed improvements. The first is the student. This is a student-centered approach. Consider a market for goods and services, where the student is the consumer, while the school is the supplier. The student is looking for what value they can gain from the university, and the university is looking to see what value it can provide. The more value provided to the students, the higher the satisfaction rate will be. With this in mind, the student is the primary stakeholder looking to benefit from our project.

This is not to say, however, that the needs of Student Services are not important. Each Student Service has a business objective that must be met, and each is looking for ways to more efficiently and effectively provide their service. The aim of our endeavor is not to hinder student services in any way - rather we want to find ways to benefit the student and the service simultaneously.

Student Characteristics and Attributes

Different types of students attend USU and their attitudes and patterns of gaining knowledge must be taken into account with this new online experience. The service must be accessible by all!

From the student who is very motivated and willing to find answers on their own to the student who feels that they need to be constantly directed through the process of finding help, students need to know what services are offered and need to be motivated toward different levels of engagement. They should have access to this knowledge in an appealing and approachable manner.

The student must also feel comfortable with this new mode of obtaining information. A student must have ease of access as well as a desire to visit the product. They need to feel that they are important and the primary focus of the service. We are also cognizant that student services cannot be “stretched too thin” otherwise the quality of the service may decrease. If students were more prepared to interact with a service by visiting it online first, a more efficient face-to-face interaction would ensue. In essence, student services require more advanced and engaging ways for students to have access to information and resources, but in a way that isn’t watered-down or impersonal.

Finally, students want information that is easily accessible. They want help with their daily issues. They also want to be connected into a campus community. We seek to create an experience that will point students to exactly what they are searching for, through individualized design profiles and tacit delivery of information.

KEY STUDENT SERVICE BUSINESS DRIVERS

**PORTRAY ACCURATE IDENTITY,
APPEAL TO STUDENTS TO GET THEM TO USE THE SERVICE,
EFFICIENCY, RETENTION, SATISFACTION,
SELF-HELP ENABLER,
STUDENT PREPAREDNESS, DATA COLLECTION,
POSITIVE FEEDBACK – PERSONAL COMPLIMENTS,
GRADUATION, POSITIVE EXPERIENCE, LIFE PREPARATION**

EXPERIENCE FRAMEWORK

The student and business objectives outlined in the research describe where the student service delivery model must go – moving from a digital environment where knowledge and expertise is insulated and siloed to an environment where knowledge is connected, shared and personal to the student.

The research linked the goal of a “one-stop shop” to an experience framework that outlines several core principles we must adhere to:

PRINCIPLE

DESCRIPTION

Make the Experience Personal

Avoid one-size-fits-all solutions. Use personalization to present relevant content and reveal relationships among people, information and activities throughout the university. Enable the system to respond to explicit information given and to remember student actions on the site and to respond appropriately.

Entice Participation

Provide a fun, entertaining, visually-oriented, and original experience that appeals to students and increases their desire to engage with student services.

Establish Interconnectivity

A purpose-driven, academic social network must provide access and connection to all levels of expert help—both formal (student service) and informal (student). It must provide a seamless flow of experience that allows all students the opportunity to understand how a set of complex student services relate to one another.

Embrace Simplicity

The experience must be easy-to-follow, well-organized, and self-explanatory.

Provide Anytime, Anywhere Access

Bring the system in line with an increasingly mobile and digitally connected student-body.

Make It Dynamic

Replace static content delivery with content that changes over time, or content that adapts to the student’s context or preferences or any combination of the two. Increase the interactivity of site content.

Promote Integrity

Champion transparency in the system to build trust and credibility among students. Provide opportunities for students to experience professionalism in their interactions.

Support Self-Sufficiency

Students seek pathways to self-discovery and self-actualization. Build in self-help and self-assessment features that make students feel smart, knowledgeable and empowered. Enable the system to respond with both preventative information and opportunities to be proactive.

INTERACTION MODELS

Student teams have developed 3 potential interaction models for the new Aggie e-Student Service platform strategy.



Interactive PDFs of the prototypes are available at

<http://www.businessinnovationfactory.com/files/pdf/aggie-dock.pdf>

<http://www.businessinnovationfactory.com/files/pdf/aggie-intelligence.pdf>

<http://www.businessinnovationfactory.com/files/pdf/aggie-scene.pdf>

Model 1: Aggie Dock

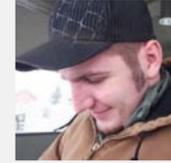
All Aggies know how overwhelming it can be to keep track of all the important things in college: financial aid, registration, club meetings, etc. To put it plainly: students are busy! With full class schedules, work, and social lives, they don't have time to sift through the university website to find what they need to register or make an advising element. To make things easier for students, we've created Aggie Dock: a website that has everything students need and want in one place. Aggie Dock, like the showroom in a store, presents many different options and services to students in an organized and convenient way. A key feature, the Aggie Genius, acts as a customer service associate who learns about the student and suggests information and elements based on the student's needs. Aggie Dock uses elements, like the Aggie Genius, to make information useful as it allows students to navigate important processes, like registering and filling out forms quickly and painlessly. Each element opens a new web page rather than linking the user to a web page which makes it easier for users to customize their pages.

Aggie Dock is Personal

Each student will experience Aggie Dock differently because Aggie Dock uses a feature called the Aggie Genius that personalizes content based on the student's needs, personal preferences, and student information available through Banner. Aggie Genius interprets a student's needs and preferences through simple feedback such as rating systems (Rate My Semester), profile information (interests and career goals), and other simple surveys.

To get essential information out to the entire student body, students start out with a basic set of elements and widgets that deliver information about registration, advising, and financial aid. For example, students close to graduation will automatically get a graduation element to help them navigate the process, fill out the appropriate forms, and keep track of their progress while new students will get elements that will familiarize them with school policies and help them complete necessary processes, such as registering for classes.

Meet The Team



Wesley Collins
Sophomore, Economics and Philosophy
wesley.collins@aggiemail.usu.edu

Wes is from a small town, and is proud of his cowboy roots. He is an Honors student who enjoys learning as much as he possible can. His greatest obsession is thinking about how people think and what motivations they have. Wes enjoys doing just about anything from demolition derbies to operas. He is married to an amazing woman who also happens to be his best friend in the world.



Samantha Gregson
Junior, Public Relations, Marketing
sgregson4@gmail.com

Sam loves flipping through home magazines for interior design trends and ideas, watching re-runs of Criminal Minds, and anything involving Taylor Swift. After graduation, she hopes to move to the east coast and work for a PR firm.



Katie Rincon
Senior, Technical & Professional Writing and Law & Constitutional Studies
katieirincon@gmail.com

Though she is an American, as a child, Katie and her family traveled throughout the country of Mexico for months at a time as her father gathered material for a book he was writing about Mexican history. She's interested in reading books, following politics, and singing. Though Katie strongly believes that happiness is to be found within the pages of a book, she also enjoys conversation and black coffee.



Danielle Probst
BA, Technical Writing
danie.probst@gmail.com

Danie just graduated from USU with her bachelor's in Technical Writing, and although she will sorely miss the Merrill-Cazier Library, she is looking forward to (hopefully) finding a job. Her hobbies include comedy improv, reading, and knitting. And she and her husband aspire to one day own a golden retriever named Rodney.



Dallen S. Hansen
Senior, Sociology, Economics, Mandarin Chinese
dallen.hansen@gmail.com

Dallen could graduate pretty soon; but by "pretty soon" he means "what opportunities would he have to miss to graduate?" Dallen also realizes that at some point, his sweet wife Rachael will probably want to live somewhere other than a one-bedroom apartment with a dog. So, while he is reconciling these forces, he takes great joy in hard work, learning new things, being wrong to learn, being right to encourage, and loving and being loved by his dear wife.

Aggie Dock is Customizable

Every Aggie Dock is truly unique because each student organizes the personalized content in a way that makes sense to that student. With the exception of the required elements, students can easily add or delete elements and widgets on the dock as well as move the elements around on the same page or relocate them to other pages. The Aggie Store has a variety of elements that help students with academic processes (Advising, Financial Aid, Athlete Service) as well as living "student life" (Budgeting, Aggie Deals and Coupons, and Things to Do in Logan).

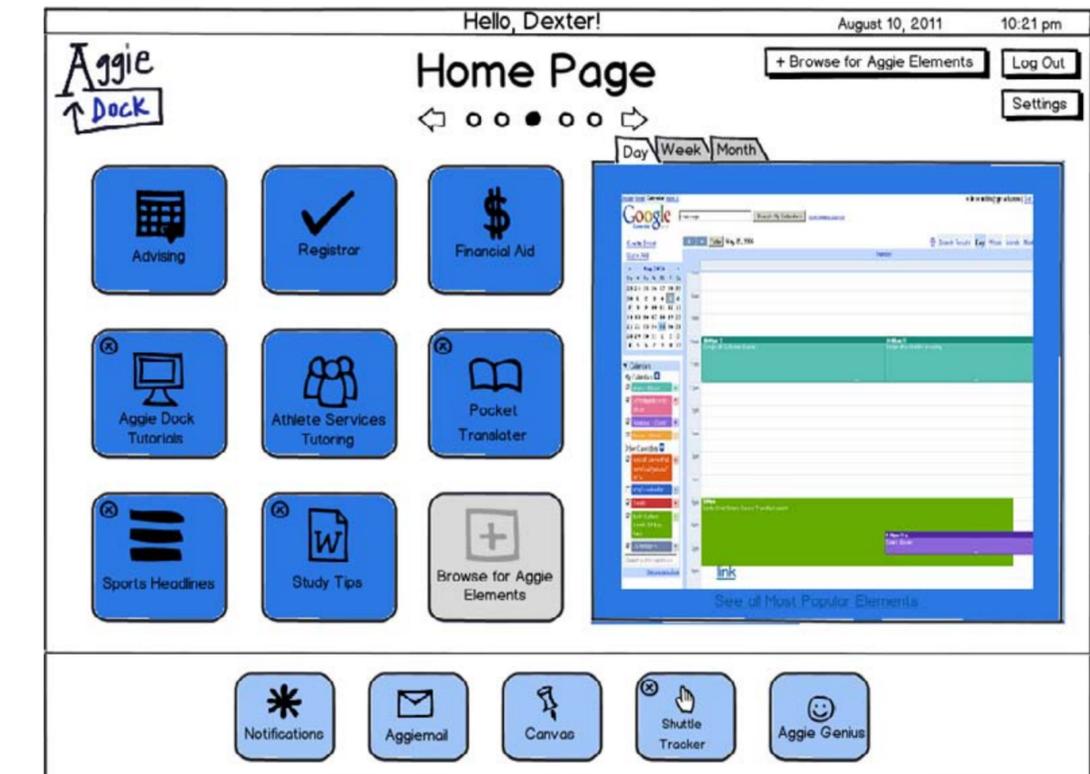
Aggie Dock is a unique student experience that makes college manageable and fun for students. Students want more than anything to save time and get things done, and Aggie Dock can help them do that!

Aggie Dock Features

Navigation

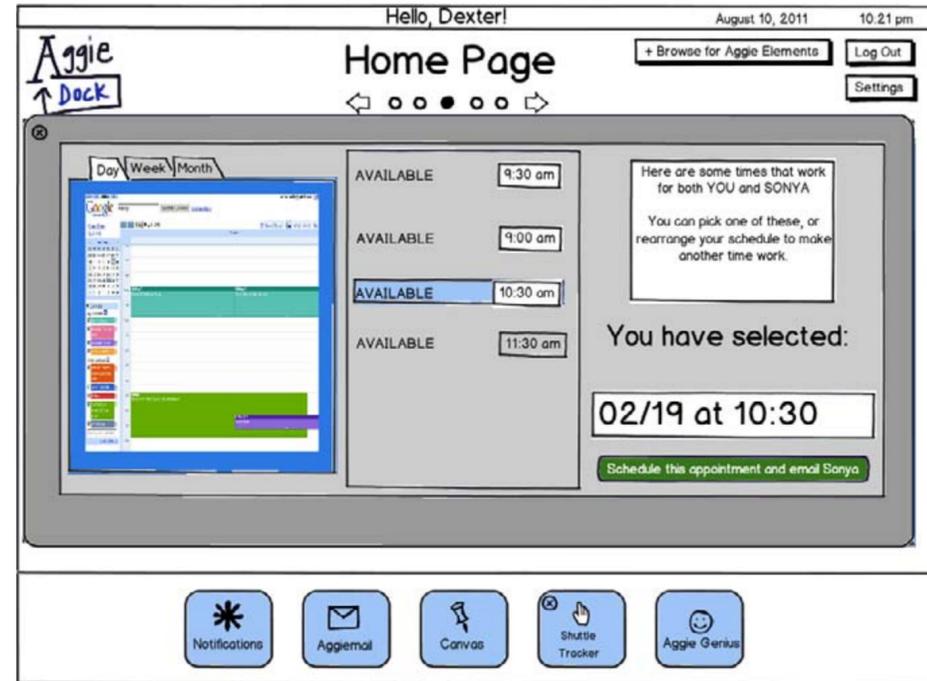
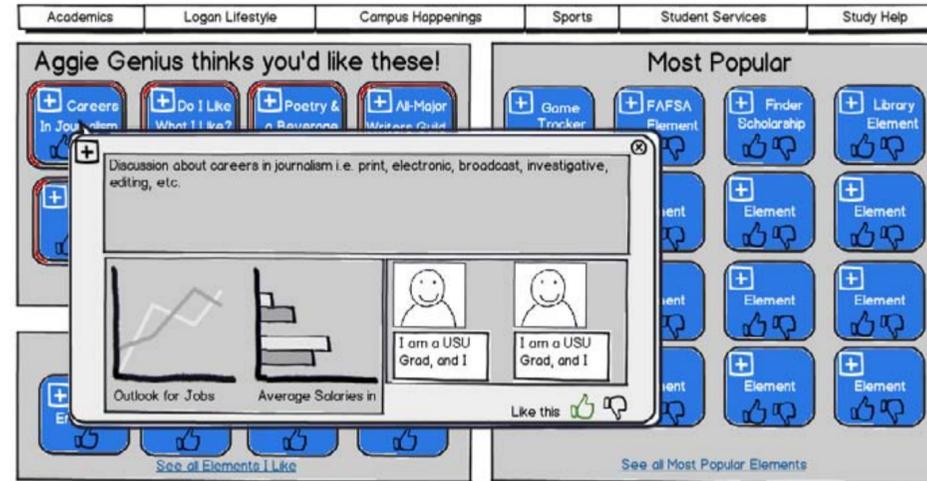
The following section describes the navigation of the Aggie Dock site.

- **Sign In/Login:** The user must first sign in or login to the site. Logging in once is all it takes for the user to access the Aggie Dock, a personalized student services web-based application with customizable features such as elements and widgets reminiscent of the Smartphone or the iPod. After logging in to the Aggie Dock, the user can access student services such as Degree Works, Banner, Canvas, and Aggie mail. Logging in will take them to the Home Page.
- **Home:** Clicking the Back to my Dock button will return the user to the Aggie Dock Home Page, or My Dock Page. The Back to My Dock button appears at the top right of each page.
- **Elements:** They represent the main features in the site. They open a new page instead of linking the user to a page. Elements are programs the user can access by clicking on a blue square on any page of their Aggie Dock. Notifications will be denoted on each individual element and appear on a separate page when the notification link is clicked.
- **Search Aggie Elements:** Our search function works on analytics (like Google's search function), deciphers results and becomes more intelligent the more it is used. For example when users enter the term "dropping out" in the search box, it results in a page displaying Elements like the Registrar, Guidance Counselor, or



Academic Resource Center. Search results in the Aggie Dock are personalized. They're based on what the user has chosen in the past, what their major is, or where they are in their education. The search function appears at the top left of the Aggie Element Page.

- **Page Navigation Dots (five dots at top center of each page):** This bar will notify users of which page they are on. For example, the Current Page Notification Bar on the Home Page says "Home Page," in the top center of the page in a large font. The Current Page Notification Bar appears at the top center of each page within the site.
- **A group of five circles** with an arrow at each side appears at the top center of the home page to navigate the user's personal settings such as my elements.
- **Log out:** The user can log out of their Aggie Dock from any page. A log out button appears at the top right of every page in the Aggie Dock
- **Add Elements:** A user can choose to add more elements to their Aggie Dock by first clicking the add more elements button that appears on each page with the elements the user has already added, marked with a plus sign, or by clicking the browse for more elements button that is located at the top right of the homepage. A user can add elements by clicking and dragging them from the Aggie Elements store.
- **Settings:** A user can change the settings on their Aggie Dock by clicking the Settings Button. They are able to change their preferred university-wide email, text size to accommodate vision impairment, or the language preference of their Aggie Dock. The Settings Button is located at the top right of the Home Page under the Logout Button.
- **Element Size Selector:** This feature allows the user to automatically re-size an element based on how many total elements the user wants to appear on the current page. Widgets have their own sizes upon installation (typically small, medium, or large). The Element Size Selector is located at the top right corner of each element or widget.
- **Calendar:** The calendar on the Home Page is divided into sections like day, month, and year. The different aspects of the calendar can be accessed by clicking tabs located at the top of the calendar.
- **Confirmation/Feedback Boxes:** A box will pop up in the middle of the screen after a user has submitted information such as sending a message to a guidance counselor, or performed a function such as adding an element. Confirmation/Feedback boxes contain the statement: "Success! Your ____ has been ____," The information within the box will change depending on the type of function or



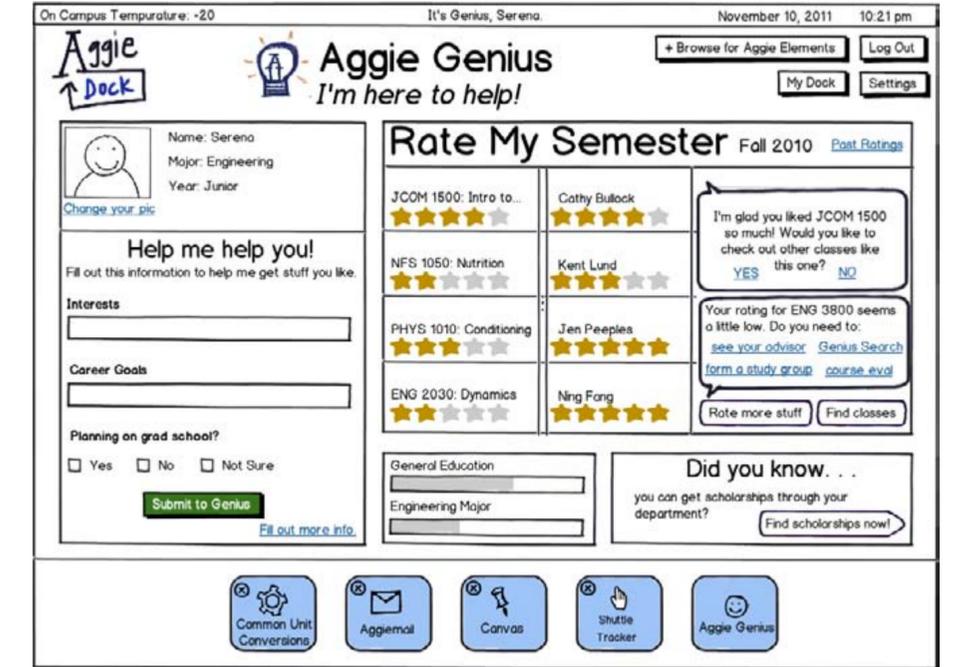
information submitted by the user. Clicking the "OK" button will close the box and return the user to the screen they first accessed the function from.

- **Fill-Out Form with Send Built-In:** Forms delivered by the Aggie Dock will specify that the user must complete them. Upon submission, the completed form will be automatically sent, and a confirmation message will appear in the center of the user's screen notifying them that their information was successfully submitted or if an error occurred in the process.
- **Aggie Genius:** Once the user completes the Rate my Semester Survey, the system will recommend classes, scholarships, student organizations, and activities for the user to sign up for based on the results of the survey. Aggie Genius is set up to help the student choose a career path and stick with it, similar to the Degree Works program but with more facets.

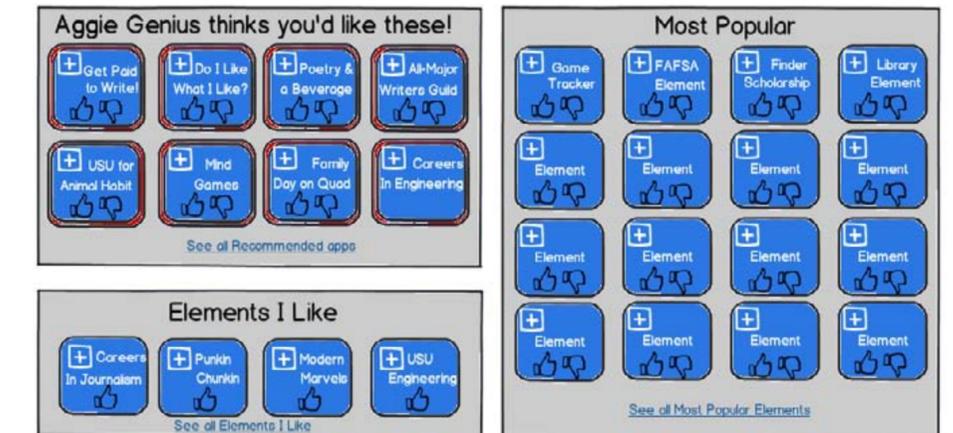
Pages

The following section describes the pages in the Aggie Dock website that house elements and widgets used in our scenarios.

- **Login:** The user logs in to the Aggie Dock by accessing its link from the main USU website. The user enters their A Number and Password to the fields provided then clicks the Login Button.
- **Home Page:** The home page is the first page the user sees when they login to their Aggie Dock. The home page of the Aggie Dock has the user's main elements listed in the center of the page, the user's calendar, and Page Navigation Dots the top center that lets the user access their "My Elements" page.
- **The Aggie Elements Store:** The user can access and add more elements from the Aggie Element Store page. The elements on the Aggie Store page are organized into three categories, recommendations based on what the user has previously selected, most popular based on what others have chosen, and recommendations based on minors the system thinks the user might be interested in.
- **Club Sports:** Displays information about different clubs or sport groups on campus the user might be interested in.
- **Aggie Genius:** The most important concept on this page is the Rate my Semester Function. Once the user completes the Rate my Semester Survey, the system will recommend classes, scholarships, student organizations, and activates for the user to sign up for based on the results of the survey. Aggie Genius has links to Guidance Counseling, and is set up to help each student choose a career path and stick with it, similar to the Degree Works program but with more facets.



elements



- **Aggie Elements:** The My Elements page stores the overflow of the elements the user wishes to add to their Aggie Dock.
- **My Stuff:** Shows different study groups a user can join. A user can send a message to a study group member through the My Stuff page much like a user can send a message to a group member through Canvas or Black Board.

Elements

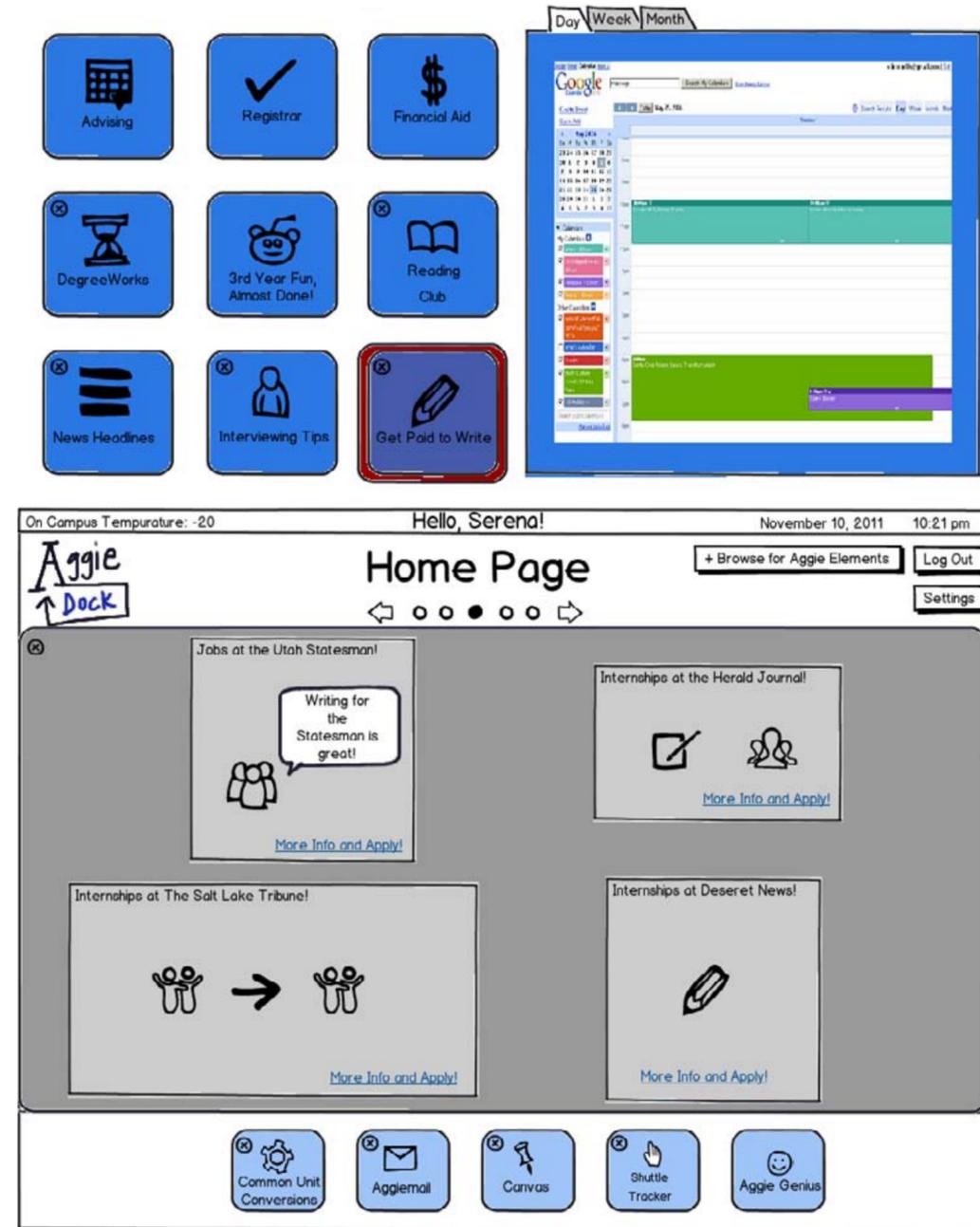
Listed below is a list of elements that could appear in The Aggie Dock. We've divided our list of elements into permanent and customizable categories. Elements have properties of apps and are customizable. Some of them can be added or dismissed from a user's Dock, while others are required or permanent. All elements can be moved around within the user's Dock. Our user testing revealed that many students are unfamiliar with the setup of the phone or the iPod because they don't have either device, but everyone we talked to had access to a computer. With the potential user in mind, we agreed it would be more practical to give The Aggie Dock more website qualities than those of an iPhone or iPod application.

Permanent Elements

Permanent Elements are Elements the user is required to have in their Aggie Dock. The permanent Elements are distinguished from the Customizable Elements by the absence of the black x in the upper left corner of the element that signifies to the user that they are allowed to add or remove the Element. The Permanent Elements are Academic Resources, Access and Diversity, Advising, Aggie Mail, ASUSU, Canvas, Career Services, Degree Works, Disability Resources, Distance Education, Financial Aid, Guidance Counselor, Registrar, Shuttle Tracker, Tutoring, and Tutorials. Most of them are located at the bottom center of each page, while others appear on the Home Page.

- **Academic Resources:** The user can access services offered by the Academic Resource Center such as a list of reasons why they should not drop out, and strategies for coping with the pressures experienced in college.
- **Access and Diversity:** The student can access information about programs and services offered to provide means of support for nontraditional students, veterans, and other diverse students.
- **Advising:** The advising element is permanent. The user can access a calendar and messaging system to set up an appointment with a guidance counselor and send a message specifying what they want to discuss at the meeting with the guidance counselor. The calendar alerts the user if there is a scheduling conflict with one of their classes or previous appointments.

- **Aggie Mail:** Once the user has logged in to their Aggie Dock, they can access their Email account by clicking the Aggie mail Element which is located at the bottom center of each page with the other permanent elements.
- **ASUSU:** The user can access information about the different clubs offered on campus.
- **Canvas:** Like the Aggie mail Element, the Canvas Element is located at the bottom center of each page with the other permanent elements. Once the user has logged in to their Aggie Dock, they can access their Canvas account.
- **Career Services:** The user can access information about programs the Career Service Center has to offer.
- **Degree Works:** This page is set up so that the user can access the Degree Works Program that is already in place at USU without needing to sign in. The Degree Works Element is permanent.
- **Disability Resources:** The user can access information about resources that are available for students with disabilities, such as how to sign up programs such as note-taking for deaf students.
- **Distance Education:** The user can access information about attending classes at USU's satellite campuses.
- **Financial Aid:** The user can access their financial aid information such as their award offer and unfulfilled requirements. Once the user has logged in to their Aggie Dock account, they can access most of their student information, but they do receive feedback to let them know thatv they are entering secure areas and in order to address security concerns, the user is still required to log into Touchnet.
- **Guidance Counselor:** The user can set up an appointment to speak with their guidance counselor. The guidance counselor element has a calendar that shows the dates and times the user's counselor is available to meet with a student. The student has the option to send a brief message through their Aggie Mail account explaining their purpose for meeting with their counselor.
- **Registrar:** The user can access the course catalogue, sign up for classes, apply for graduation, and view holds on their transcript. Once the user has logged in to their Aggie Dock account, they can access most of their student information, such as grades, contact information, and class schedule.
- **Shuttle Tracker:** Every one of the test subjects who participated in our user-testing appreciated our Shuttle Tracker Element. Accessing the Shuttle Tracker



Element allows the student to access a program that exists in the USU website today. The Shuttle Tracker allows the user to track where the Aggie Shuttle is in real time based on a GPS mechanism located in each bus.

- **Tutoring:** The user can access scheduling and other information about tutoring for their classes.
- **Tutorials:** The user can learn how to use their Aggie Dock by watching video tutorials that are available the first few times they log in then phase out over time.

Customizable Elements

The customizable elements are distinguished from the Permanent Elements by the black *x* located in the top left corner of the element that signifies to the user, when they hover over it with their mouse, that they can add or dismiss the Element.

The following elements listed are recommended by the Aggie Genius system that generates results based on the classes the student has registered for and how they rated previous semesters with the Rate my Semester Survey. The possibilities for customizable or optional elements are endless, but some of them could include a Pocket Translator, Interviewing Tips, News Headlines, Health and Wellness, Know your Campus, Wheelchair access on Campus, and Aggie Basketball.

- **Aggie Basketball:** Aggie Basketball is a huge deal here at USU because our team's consistent success. Fans of Aggie Basketball could keep up to date on the latest scores and news about their favorite team.
- **Health and Wellness:** A Health and Wellness Element might provide useful information for the user to stay healthy through cold and flu season, lose weight, or become more physically fit.
- **Interviewing Tips:** An Interviewing Tips Element will help a user to learn how to improve their performance in a job interview situation.
- **Know your Campus:** A Know Your Campus Element will provide the user with a map or directions to get around campus.
- **News Headlines:** A News Headlines Element will help the user to keep up with what's going on in the world outside of the university.
- **Pocket Translator:** The Pocket Translator Element would be valuable for an international student who needed help feeling confident about speaking English, or for an English-speaking student to learn phrases to communicate with people in other languages.
- **Wheelchair Access on Campus:** The user can access a detailed map that shows all of the wheel chair ramps on every path and elevators in every building on every USU campus.

Widgets

Listed below are some possible widgets that the user could add to their Aggie Dock. All widgets are secondary in nature to the elements because their function is to calculate or organize information. Some possible widget might include a Calendar Widget, an Expense Calculator Widget, or an Interactive Map.

- **Calendar Widget:** The Calendar Widget will help the user to plan their activities such as guidance counseling appointments or assignment due dates. The Calendar Widget will notify the user when an event is approaching on the page accessible by the Calendar Widget, as well as in their notification bar that appears on each page, in the form of exclamation points. In our prototype, the calendar widget is available on the homepage.
- **Expense Calculator:** The expenses calculator widget could help the user to decide if they have enough money saved to cover their expenses while they attend the university. An expenses calculator could help the user to figure out an accurate budget by listing and then adding the prices of various things such as weekly groceries, monthly utilities, semester tuition, and yearly expenses such as rental contracts or meal plans.
- **Interactive Map Widget:** The Map Widget shows an interactive campus map. The user can access the map by hovering over the element, or the user can click the widget to access more information. The user will be able to plot points on the map in order to personalize it.



User Test Results

The Aggie Dock concept design is based on simplicity of use. During the testing phase of the prototype, test participants responded positively to this concept.

Some of the ideas our test subjects came up with to improve the design related to navigation. Most people seemed confused by or didn't even notice the row of five dots in the top center of the home page, and when they did notice them, they had no idea what they were for or what the dots would lead them to. Our improvement involved keeping the dots but adding arrows to both sides of them (<- ->) to indicate users can go to different pages. The function of the dots is to show the user where they are in the site.

Many of our test subjects didn't have experience using Smartphones, iPads, or the iPhone, but they were all still able to navigate the site and provide helpful input to improve the navigation and concept of the project.

The test subjects who had experience with iPads, Smartphones, or the iPhone figured out quickly what the presentation was meant to be. Their input involved how to how to make our product more like a design such as the iPhone.

Almost all of our test subjects were confused about the function of the elements or how it would be possible to add or to take them away. One tester thought that "element" stood for "appointment", where if he were to click it, it would lead him to an appointment-making screen. Others didn't even notice that the word element appeared anywhere in the site. Most test subjects didn't know what an element or a widget was, or that there was any difference between them. It was apparent that some modification was necessary to clarify the purpose of the elements and widgets.

Each of our users was able to see that the Aggie Dock was personal and customizable, but there was concern about having that much personal information such as financial aid or contact information all in one place without needing to log in several times. One tester, named Monica, a senior in Health Education, suggested that we should offer some kind of feedback to ensure that a user's privacy is secure when crossing between programs such as financial aid or Touchnet. Other test subjects liked the idea of not needing to sign in more than once.

We instituted the following changes to clarify the purpose and the function of the prototype based on what we found out during testing:

1. Almost everyone noticed the calendar we had placed on the homepage first and disliked it. In later versions of the prototype, we changed the setup of the calendar by adding more details such as different-colored tabs.
2. Everyone liked the idea of a one-stop-shop for student services but not everyone felt comfortable about having all of their personal information such as financial aid and credit card number accessible after just one login. In our later versions of the prototype we added features such as confirmation/feedback boxes to alert the user that had either submitted information successfully or were crossing into a protected area and their personal information was safe.
3. Everyone liked the idea of the real-time Aggie Shuttle Tracker.
4. Most of the test subjects liked the idea of customization, but were confused about the specifics such as how it would work. Some didn't ask us to clarify how it would work.
5. Some of the test subjects were confused about what the red notification circle we had in the testing prototype was for. Some test subjects were unfamiliar with the concept of notifications. Others expressed their dislike for notifications. Some test subjects suggested that notifications might be some kind of update for an element. Some admitted that they understood what the elements were for, the appearance of notifications in the top left corner was a good idea, but they thought the red circle was misleading or confusing. In the later versions of the prototype, we removed the formal notifications and attached them to the elements themselves.
6. Some of the test subjects suggested that having some sort of tutorial video and/or labeling throughout that gradually phases itself out upon user interaction would be helpful for the user to get used to how the system works "There is 'common knowledge' for people that have used element devices, yet none for those without, aside from the knowledge they exist," Dallen admitted.
7. Good design should explain itself, and the system should not have to be figured out, it should be intuitive with every step. Most test subjects agreed that adding labels or a tutorial element that explains how the system works to new users the first few times they log in or so might help to make the design more usable for less experienced users.

Dexter is leaving home where the primary language isn't English, and is going to a primarily English-speaking school. His grades aren't great and he has to keep them decent to maintain the football scholarship that keeps him in school; his family couldn't afford it otherwise. He's worried the teachers will just write him off as a "dumb jock" and not invest in him.

Dexter is worried and doesn't know what to do. He's done SOAR on campus, he's signed up for Connections, but he still doesn't feel any better about what really worries him. During SOAR, Dexter remembers being shown Aggie Dock, where he was told that it is the hub for all of campus life; academics, entertainment, questions, and help. He remembers SOAR had him login to it, and remembers they told him if he had any questions to check it out again. With questions and feelings of nervousness and intimidation, he goes to Aggie Dock...

Dexter logs into Aggie Dock. The first thing that pops up is a welcome message saying, "Welcome to Aggie Dock Dexter! We know you had a chance to look over things during SOAR, but we wouldn't want you to forget anything. We want to make things as easy as possible for you, so we've done a few things already that we think you'll like." Dexter clicks "Continue". The message continues to tell him the Tutorial is always available, and asks if he would like to view the Aggie Dock in another language and provides a link to change it. He decides to stick with English for learning purposes, but feels relieved that he can always change it to a more comfortable language if need be. The Tutorial continues on how Aggie Genius works, he then confidently clicks "Finished." He is taken back to the Home Page where all of the Aggie Elements that are relevant to Dexter are displayed (Advising, Registrar, Financial Aid – Scholarships, Aggie Dock Tutorial (because he's brand new to Aggie Dock), Athlete Services Tutoring, Pocket Translator, Sports Headlines, Study Tips, and Genius Recommendations). He clicks on the notification for the Athlete Services Tutoring Aggie Element. A supportive message from his tutor pops up and suggests that he signs up for an appointment time. He clicks "Make Appointment" and chooses from the times where they are both available. A confirmation message appears and he clicks "OK". He is brought back to the Home Page where there are no more notifications.

Dexter wants to explore the Aggie Genius page and clicks on the Aggie Genius element. Although school hasn't started yet, Aggie Genius wants to get to know Dexter so it knows how best to help him. He fills out his Interests and Career Goals. Genius asks if he would like to see what clubs and activities he could participate in at USU, and he clicks yes. (*This prototyping tool does not have the capability to perceive and react to form fills or check marks. Click the "yes" checkmark*). Genius notifies him that a few suggestions have been made on the Aggies Elements page and give him the option of going there now or after answering the questions. He clicks "Go to Elements later". Dexter is asked a question about his interest in Photography, he clicks "Submit to Genius" and he is told that recommendations have been put in his Recommended Modules section. He clicks "Continue to Aggie Elements" and is taken to his personal Aggie Elements page. He sees the most popular apps, several of them are on his Dock home already, and that comforts him. The Club Sports app immediately catches his eye. He knows from the tutorial that if he hovers over it, an information box will pop up and tell him about what it does (*This prototype tool does not have "hover over" functionality. For this scenario test, click the Element*). He hovers over it and the information box pops up, clicks the + to add to his Dock. He is brought to his Dock home and clicks the Club Sports Element where he is shown the sign-up page. He returns to his Dock home. - It takes him to the club sports sign-up page. To try to ease some of his academic fears, he types "class study help" in the Search Bar. (*This prototype tool does not have text-enter response like Google search. For this scenario, click the search box*). Study Smart kits from the Academic Resource Center, the different tutoring services, and on the right, a module for "find or create study groups" come up. He clicks on the + to add the Study Group element. He is prompted on the option of making it a widget and clicks "Install as Widget". On his home page, the widget asks him if he wants to "Find a Study Group" or "Create Study Group". He clicks "Find a Study Group". All of his classes pop up, and since he is the most unsure about his Nutrition class, he clicks that class and sees that there is one study group already. He clicks "Join this Group". There are no meeting times yet. He can schedule a meeting time, but instead he clicks "Not Now". Dexter returns to the "My Stuff" page and satisfyingly clicks "Log Out".

Serena thought she wanted to pursue engineering, but surprisingly hasn't liked her engineering classes. She dealt with her classes because she thought they were necessary but then she took a journalism class as a general education requirement and loved it. Serena is now a junior and she is used to Aggie Dock. Aggie Genius has given her recommendations and suggests elements to add. She's added a few Engineering elements, and followed an Engineering club activity, has not strayed far from this interest. Now that she is having doubts, she wants to revisit the Aggie Genius to see if it can help.

Serena clicks "Log In" and sees that nothing needs her attention on her Home Page. She has left some of Aggie Dock's non-removable Elements on her Dock home. She's chosen to customize spaces like DegreeWorks, an Element specifically for 3rd year students, Reading Club, News Headlines, and Interviewing tips. In her Quick Access Bar she's placed Common Unit Conversions, Aggiemail, Canvas, Shuttle Tracker, and Aggie Genius. She clicks on "Aggie Genius Element" in her quick access bar, and goes to her Genius page. Her most recent semester is listed under "Rate My Semester." There are two messages from Aggie Genius relating to her Semester ratings. The first one is addressing the low rating of her last Engineering class and recommends different resources to click on ("Advisor", "Genius Search", "Form a Study Group", or "Course Evaluation"). The second message is addressing a high Class Rating for Journalism and asks if she would like to check out similar classes. She clicks the "Course Evaluation" link. She is able to view all of her evaluations that she's made on the class, the teacher, and her grades. She has done well but she simply enjoyed journalism more. She closes the "How you rated your class" bubble. She goes to the Genius Journalism suggestion bubble and selects "yes". In a confirmation bubble, Genius gives her a link to see the suggestions made for her in Aggie Elements. After being prompted, she clicks on "Likes and Dislikes" and it navigates her to the "Help me help you" part of her Genius page. She fills out her interests and clicks "Submit to Genius". It gives her another confirmation message to let her know that new suggestions have been added to the Aggie Elements page, so she clicks the link for that. The new Elements are "Careers in Journalism", "Do I Like What I Like?" (a

career services module for students possibly changing their major), "Poetry and a Beverage", "All-Majors Writers Guild", "Mind Games" (a module that has problem-solving games in it), "Family Day on the Quad", "Careers in Engineering" and "USU Students for Animal Habitats". Serena selects the "Careers in Journalism" Element. After looking through everything the page has to offer (different career options, journalism career income statistics, USU grad bios), she gives the page a "thumbs up". She has option to return to Aggie Dock home via the "My Dock" button in her Dock banner, or she has the option to return to Aggie Element via a "Back to Aggie Element" button, and chooses the latter. The Aggie Elements page, it has been shifted to her "Elements I Like" section because she gave it a "thumbs up," and the element "Get Paid to Write!" is suggested, so she selects it. Below her Dock Bar, she selects the Deseret News internship link and a pop-out page appears with a form filled with her basic information. Aggie Dock has filled the form already so she clicks "Submit". She selects "Thumbs up" for the Work-study and Internships pages. She returns to the Elements page and selects the "Aptitude Test" link. Upon completion, there are options to "Submit to an Advisor and Make an Appointment" or "Remind Me Later". She selects "Submit to an Advisor and Make an Appointment." An Advising scheduling pop-out box appears and she selects the time that works best for her. After confirming her appointment, she selects "My Dock" to go home. She clicks "Logout" and is excited for what's to come.

Model 2: Aggie Intelligence

Putting the Student in Student Services

*I wish that there was someone I could talk to about my major.
How do I find jobs after I graduate? What's a graduation packet?
Where can I get study help? How can I get involved?*

These statements all point to the same notion: I (the student) need help. Many students find themselves asking these questions, but do not know where to turn to find the answers. Fortunately, there are places that can help them answer these questions and yet, not many students know how to find the resources that can help. There is a wide chasm between how students view student services, and how student services view themselves. The services see themselves as providing the needed resources to students, whereas the students don't even know these services exist. This is where Aggie Intelligence comes into play.

Aggie Intelligence is an online resource for students to connect with the student services offered at USU. It will bring the student services to the student and will be a system where the student, advisors, administrators, faculty, and staff can connect to each other; it will be academic networking! The students, staff, and faculty will be able to send and receive personal messages as well as general announcements related to their progress in the university. The concept will be built upon the needs of the people using it rather than trying to fit people into an unmoving system.

The general format of the site will be a dashboard that allows the user to change various features and aspects of the site. Embedded in the model is an "Artificial Intelligence" factor which would direct, notify, or otherwise contact a student about services and events relevant to their personal status as a student at Utah State University. This will be seen in suggestions to the student and the basic format of the site, while the student will still have the ability to make changes to their own dashboard to fit their personal needs.

This model will give students straightforward and easy access to the information they need in order to be successful in their college journey. We want students to feel autonomous as they navigate through the site by making each page personalized to their wants and needs. Aggie Intelligence will provide a connection between the various student services and the student, thus, giving the student a better understanding of the cornucopia of services offered at the university.

Meet The Team



Matt Cook
Junior, Biology (Pre-Dental)
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Matt plans on applying to Dental School when he is a senior. He enjoys fishing, hiking, hunting, playing sports, and spending time with his wife. One day he would like to own several businesses and travel the world.



Sara Hegsted
Junior, Communicative Disorders
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In addition to her major, Sara working towards her minors in Family Finance and Organizational Communication. She loves to rock climb, hike, play the piano, cook, read, and just laugh. She enjoys trying new things and sharing the stories that come from her experiences. She is unsure what she plans to do when she grows up but figures that will be yet another experience that will turn into a fun story.



Kyle Heywood
Junior, Biotechnology
heywoodkyle@hotmail.com
Kyle hopes to combine his two passions, biology and design, by working in the Biomimicry field upon graduating from Utah State University. Kyle works with special needs students at an elementary school and also employs eight people through his own tutoring business in Cache Valley. He loves athletics, especially basketball, and enjoys the outdoors with his family.

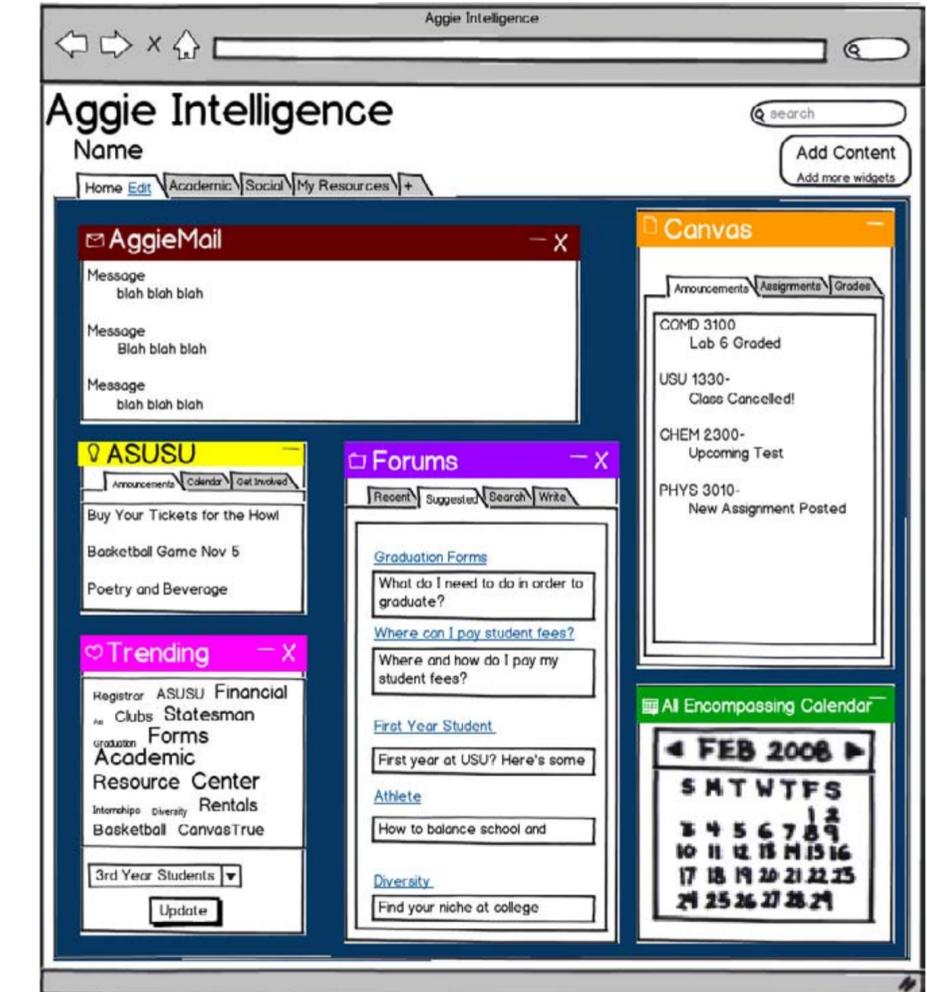


Abigail Kingsford
Junior, Communication Studies, Political Science
abigail.kingsford@aggiemail.usu.edu
Abigail loves to keep her self busy through being involved with the College of Humanities and Social Sciences student council, the government relations council, and serving as a student-at-large on the Student Fee Board. When she's not doing school work or in meetings with her councils, Abigail enjoys playing cards, going dancing, and keeping up with her favorite TV shows on Hulu.

Aggie Intelligence Features

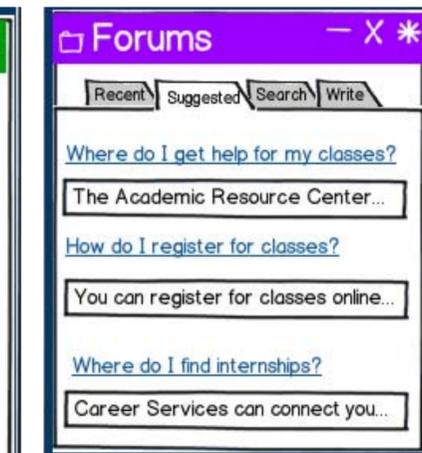
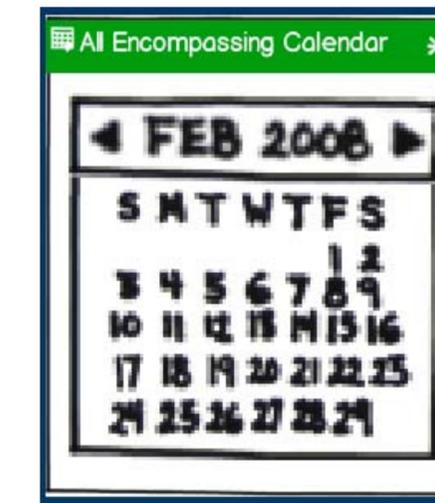
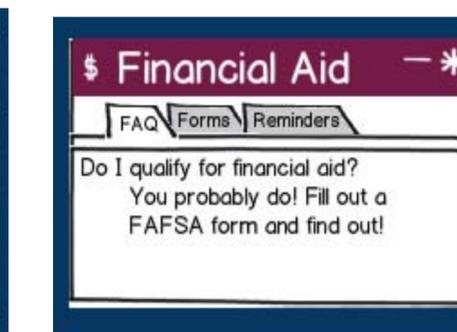
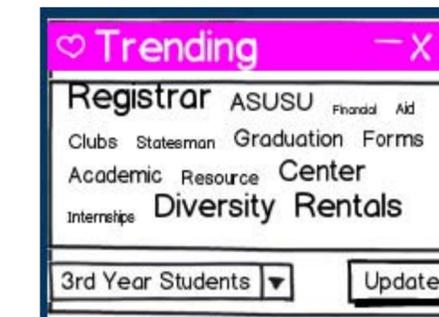
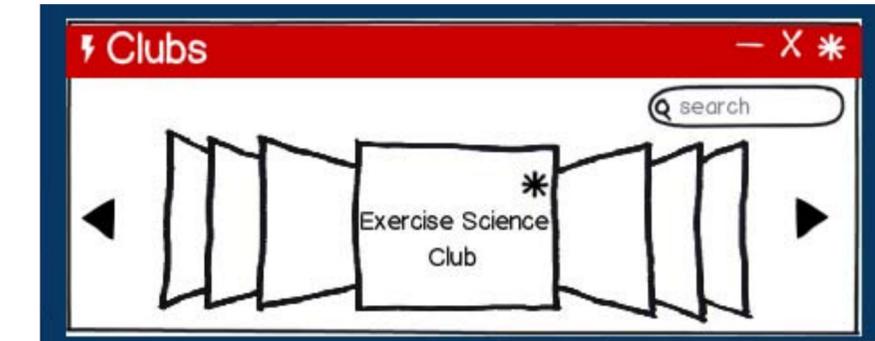
- **Most visited tab:** This feature brings together the student's most used applications and widgets on the website. The student will have the ability to add or delete applications to this page. Additionally, the website will intuitively add applications to the most visited tab as the student frequents them.
- **Academic tab:** This feature brings together all of the widgets and applications dealing with academics. Some examples of features on this page would be Banner login, Registrar's office, Financial Aid, and Canvas.
- **Social tab:** This is where a student can go to view the non-academic portion of the student experience. The page features a cover flow for the various clubs, ASUSU, advising, access and diversity, campus recreation, forums, ORC, and calendar sections for the student to obtain a social view of the student services offered.
- **My support tab:** This tab connects students to the individuals who are here to help them maneuver the university. Each section allows the student to email, set up appointments, or otherwise get in contact with one-on-one help.
- **My advisor:** The advisor and student are able to send messages back and forth much like Facebook. for both students and advisors.
- **My career coach:** Many students have no idea they have a career coach assigned to them. This will show them who they can go see as well as what career coaches offer.
- **My professors:** Students can send a message to any professor with whom they are currently taking a class. The professors may choose whether they receive the message via email, canvas, or both.
- **Add new tab:** This tab will allow students to make as many new tabs with different topics that they desire. The new tab can include any features that the student feels falls under the tab's specified category.
- **AggieMail:** From the AggieMail feature on the dashboard, students will be able to see their unread messages. It will be refreshed like the other feeds, so that students can see their newest messages. By clicking on a message or the feed itself, the student will than be taken to their AggieMail. (This feature can also be extended to other commonly used email services for students who have a different preferred email.)
- **Registrar:** The registrar window will give the student tabs for each aspect of the registrar that the student might or need to engage with. The tabs would include pay, register, and graduation forms.

Aggie Intelligence



- **Academic Resource Center:** The academic resource window would feature basic essential information that a student would want to access in an efficient manner. There would be three tabs consisting of tips, tutoring, and appointments. On the tips page the student would be able to access the study plans offered by the ARC on their website. On the Tutoring tab students would be able to access real time information on the various tutoring labs and their current availability. The final tab of appointment the students would be able to make an appointment with a learning specialist.
- **Math Tutoring Bar:** The math tutoring bar is a progress bar that is under the tutoring tab of the ARC window. This progress bar will show the current status of the tutoring lab and how close to capacity they are.
- **Campus Recreation:** The campus recreation window will be featured under the social tab. In this window the student will be able to see real time information about the current recreation programs on campus such as fun, fit, forever, intramurals, and club sports.
- **Add to most visited or delete buttons (* or x):** On each window there are asterisk and x buttons that allow the student to add the content to their tabs or remove content that they do not find relevant to their student experience.
- **Banner Login:** This feature will be a quick shortcut to the banner website. It will allow the student limited access to banner information like class schedules and transcripts.
- **ASUSU:** This feature will give the student quick access to the activities and programs that are happening on campus. This will be facilitated through the announcement and calendar tabs that will feature upcoming events. It will also show students opportunities to get involved.
- **Clubs:** While the other features are mostly feed or text-based, this feature is more visually focused. It will graphically list the clubs and when the student clicks on the picture it will take them to the respective club's website. It will also have an option for the student to pin the club to their Aggie Intelligence profile.
- **Advising:** This feature will have a feed where the student's advisor can make announcements about the student's academic progress and when they need to meet or worry about registration, etc.
- **Appointment Setter:** To set an appointment with an advisor, career coach, etc., the student would click on the appointment setter. This feature would then pull up a calendar where the student would select the preferred date for the appointment. Once they selected the date, it would bring up the available appointment times. The student would then select the preferred time and click "Submit". The appointment would then appear in their calendar.

- **Add content button:** This button allows the student to see all of the widgets and applications available for them to add to their individual dashboards. Students can then drag the widget or application into their dashboard. This would allow the student to make their dashboard have as much or little information as they desire. Additionally, this feature will allow the website to grow and change as the needs of the students and the university changes.
- **Career Services:** This application features Career Services. It includes tabs such as Announcements, FAQs, and the services provided.
- **All encompassing calendar:** This calendar will include all dates that the student chooses to add to their calendar. Some things, such as a class schedule and appointments that they set up will add automatically, while the student will have to select other events to add to the calendar (ASUSU events, Club meetings, etc)
- **Outdoor Recreation Program:** This application features the Outdoor Recreation Program. From this feature the student can view upcoming trips, rentals, and tips from the staff at the Outdoor Recreation Program.
- **Financial Aid:** This feature will give students access to upcoming financial aid deadlines and FAQ.
- **Canvas:** Will display the most used sections of canvas such as assignments, announcements, grades, and a link to each class' canvas section.
- **Forums:** Students, faculty, and staff are able to ask questions, post feedback, and discuss aspects of the university in the forums. Posts may be made anonymously or by first name.
- **Access and Diversity:** Students can explore the different programs they are interested in joining and receive messages from those programs they connect to.
- **Search Bar:** The search bar will search material found within the dashboard first and foremost. If nothing is found under the search, the student will have the option to open the search to the internet.
- **Trending:** This feature will show the features that are most used by all students at Utah State University. The student can also filter the trending based on other criteria such as first-year students, seniors, veterans, etc.
- **Edit:** The edit link allows the student to personalize the page to their visual preference. Colors, background, and column numbers and organization are included here.
- **Profile:** The Profile page is where the student can input general information in order for Aggie Intelligence to best use its intelligence algorithm and make suggestions to students based on their interests, needs or desires.

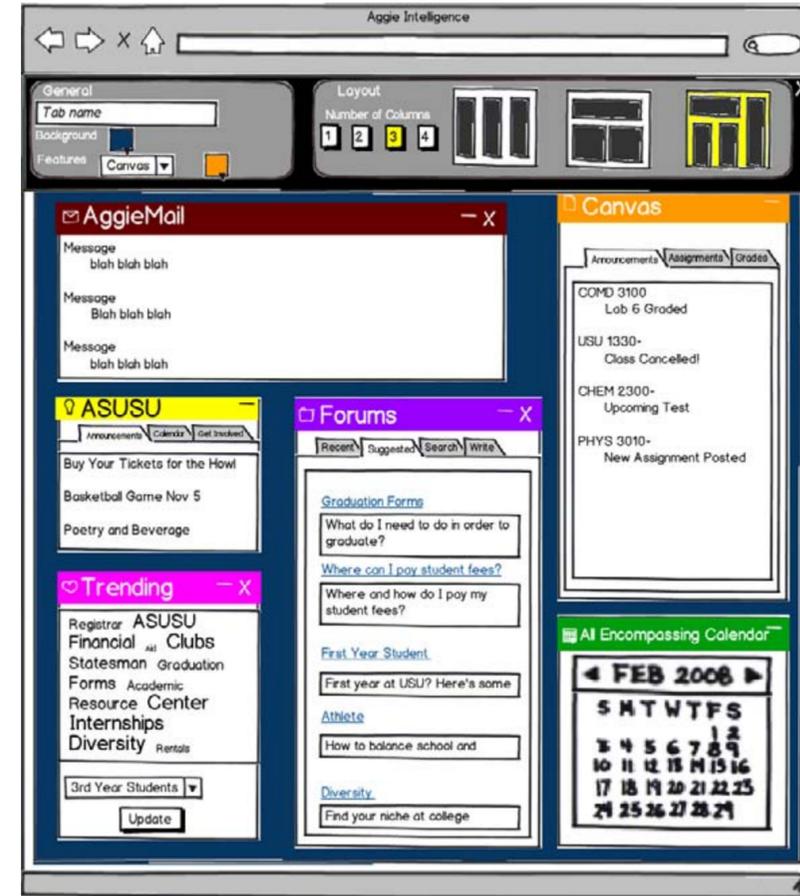


User Test Results

The concept of simplicity came up many times during our concept testing. One student said, “Even a four year old could use it.” It was interesting to see how students would want to set up their individual profiles. Some students spoke of different applications that they would want to add, while others wanted to simplify the page and get rid of several applications. Many students requested to have outside applications and features to put into their personal site. They wanted to have applications like CNN, Facebook, etc. added to their page. While we doubt that we want to add these outside features to this particular site, it was good for us to hear that the students could see themselves using this site to the extent that they wanted to include other aspects of their web experiences.

One student commented that the site filled a need that he didn’t even know he had. He pointed out that some businesses fill needs that are already known, while others create a need (like Apple). This student also wondered why a website like this hadn’t happened years ago. As he experienced the simplicity of this site, he realized that the way he currently accesses information is “ridiculous” in regards to how many pages he has to navigate through. Other students said that they are ready switch over to this website right now.

Students liked that they could combine the cornucopia of activities here at Utah State – academic, student services, and extracurriculars all in one place. All of the students really appreciated the idea of having a window for Canvas and email because these are features that they use often, and having quick access to recent announcements and updates to those sites. However, many students expressed that they would want other email programs (Yahoo, Gmail, etc) available on this site as well. The students also commented that it would be beneficial to have access to activities on campus and an easy way to communicate and set up appointments with advisors. Most of the students commented on the cover flow for the clubs, and one of our first year students said that he wished that that feature had been available to him when he first came. He had tried to find out about clubs but hadn’t been successful in learning about them.



Scenarios

Download the interactive PDF of the Aggie Intelligence prototype at <http://www.businessinnovationfactory.com/files/pdf/aggie-intelligence.pdf>

Jessica has been at Utah State for several years and is excited to graduate in the spring. She is very busy in her last year with classes, internships, and her social life. Jessica has heard people talk about graduation forms, but has no idea what they are, when they are due, or even where to find them, so she keeps putting off trying to find them until she “has time”. Jessica logs on to her Aggie Intelligence account to check her email one day, and she remembers that she needs to figure out graduation. Jessica uses Aggie Intelligence for the basic essentials, many of her applications are minimized and she has not added extra applications, so she goes to the search bar at the top of the page and begins to type in graduation. The site begins drop down a list of topics that deal with the word she typed, and one of the options is graduation checklist. Jessica decides that that could probably give her the information she needs, and she clicks it. The Registrar feature is minimized in Jessica’s Academic tab, so she is redirected to that tab, the Registrar feature is highlighted, and the requested information is displayed. Jessica reads the checklist and learns that she can apply for graduation online or pick up the form from the Registrar’s and then she will have a packet to complete. Jessica decides to stop by the Registrar’s on her way home from class tomorrow to get the application for graduation. She finishes checking her email and goes back to homework, glad that Aggie Intelligence provided a way to get the information quickly and that the search option was intuitive and could suggest her needed topics.

Sophie’s Organic Chemistry lab was cancelled today. She decides that she would spend an hour exploring the University a bit before heading home for an early dinner. Sophie uses Aggie Intelligence often to keep up to date with what is going on at USU. Her Home and Social tabs are filled with applications, and her calendar has been linked to many activities offered from different organizations around Utah State. However, Sophie isn’t feeling satisfied with some of her classwork and is wondering if biology is the correct major for her. Sophie remembers that the My Resources tab is for specific questions and individualized interactions, so she decides to see if she can find information there. While scanning over the page, the question Would you like to explore your Major options? in the Career Coach feature catches her attention. Sophie immediately clicks on the “Set up an appointment” link and schedules an appointment for tomorrow afternoon. She is impressed that she is able to get in to see her coach so soon and how easy it was to schedule. After scheduling the appointment, she is directed to fill out a small questionnaire so her coach will be prepared with information pertinent to Sophie’s needs.

Model 3: Aggie Scene

The goal of the Aggie Scene model is to create a student website that is a welcoming, customer service-oriented “one stop shop” portal of information. It would be a guide tool, as students only see information that is pertinent to their personal situation. Consistent with the current spherical student services model, this site would allow for services to connect to one another in an unrestrained manner and have student needs at the center of the information flow. To reflect this, instead of information being dispersed to different pages, all resource information would now be accessible from one unified portal of information, without students necessarily knowing which student service the information or resource is housed under. (I.e. finding an aptitude test without looking on career service’s page) This would help students feel self-sufficient, would allow for resources to have their features better utilized, and also creates cohesion and personalization of opportunities that different resources offer.

To accomplish these goals, the proposed “Aggie Scene” model uses three “hubs” of information that assist the sifting through of information: academic hub, resources hub, and social hub. These hubs allow students to understand where to look for certain types of information as opposed to the individual resource pages where the features would be housed. Along with these hubs, there are also the “bridges” which link each component to one another to create optimum cohesion. All “hubs” are located on the main reel.

Academic Information Hub: This hub, or “My Desk Top,” houses all students’ academically helpful information. This information is currently housed in banner, canvas, etc.

Resource Information Hub: This hub, or “Student Services” page on the reel, creates a concise home for resource information and includes access to individual resource pages within the site.

Social Information Hub: This hub or “Corkboard” is social in that students can see what other students are doing on campus in terms of activities and clubs the students are a part of as well as the features they are using on their “Corkboard”, according to privacy settings.

Bridges: These are the features which allow each hub of the site share information with each other. There are bridges such as the Search Bar, Reel, Tips, and Map, whose purpose is to integrate the three hubs for easy access and information retrieval.

Meet The Team



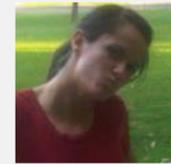
Dani Francis
Senior, Technical Writing
danielle.fran@hotmail.com

Dani loves music, winter, and dancing. In her spare time she enjoys baking. In the future she would like to travel to Europe, but for now will focus on making it through her final semester without getting senioritis.



Taylor Halversen
Sophomore, Communication Studies
taylor.halversen@aggiemail.usu.edu

This is Taylor’s second semester on the USU/BIF project. She loves to learn and expand her perspectives of the world, and by doing so, hopes to become a more well-rounded individual. She loves to perform, anything from piano and singing, to acting and public speaking. She is addicted to all things Irish, is always willing to try something new.



Rachael Hansen
Senior, Psychology
wickerrk@gmail.com

Rachael’s has various interests, skills, and abilities. She taught herself how to knit and crochet, worked laying tile, occasionally puts her massage therapy license to good use, and loves her work as a family teacher in a treatment home for teenage girls. While Rachael enjoys exploring the wonders all around her with her husband, she is excited to find a passion in which she can direct all her efforts.



Trent Morrison
Junior, Communication Studies Major (Psychology Minor)
trentmorrison09@gmail.com

One day, Trent hopes to receive a PhD in Industrial-Organizational Psychology running his own private practice. Trent enjoys sports, graphic design, family/friends, and long walks on the beach. Although he lives in Utah, he is an Oregonian to the core. Being full of passion, Trent tries to live each day with laughter and enthusiasm.



McKelle Tobey
Junior, Psychology and Political Science
mckelle.tobey@aggiemail.usu.edu

McKelle is currently writing her senior thesis on the perception of physical activity and the effect it has on childhood obesity; as well as doing research in the animal behavior labs to discover the changes in behavior that come from drug consumption. In her spare time she enjoys hiking, traveling, watching movies, and sitting in front of the fireplace with her roommates.

These aspects coexist and cooperate fluidly in their design. Within this model, students are able to use and prioritize the resources they desire, as some students may favor certain zones over others. Also, each zone has the capability of expanding in function with more and diverse features upon using edit options, suggested tips, and inputting information in bridging zones. While some aspects of each zone and the bridges remain stationary because of student need, they are malleable to fit student desires, particularly with tips functions, edit functions, and Corkboard widget functions.

Students have different preferences and methods of obtaining information. Some students desire a mentor figure, while others desire independence, and others still need to be bombarded with information for retention. Within each zone, this portal has the ability to take inputted information (i.e. profile, feedback options, and calendar) and process it intuitively for individual need. It provides information in an easily accessible way, yet has the ability to be expounded with more information readily available within the site, thus taking care of each of the student needs.

The portal would have virtualization or “gamification” aspects in the visual layer of the site. Gamification describes the interaction model that allows users to interact with information in a visually engaging, instantaneously gratifying manner. When students input information into the site, they are able to see their site instantaneously mold to personal need, which offers a deeper level of engagement with the university and its resources. The gamification features serve the purpose of an entertaining customer-service based approach and allow students to have a personalized, relationship-building experience with the information in an instantaneous and visually gratifying manner.

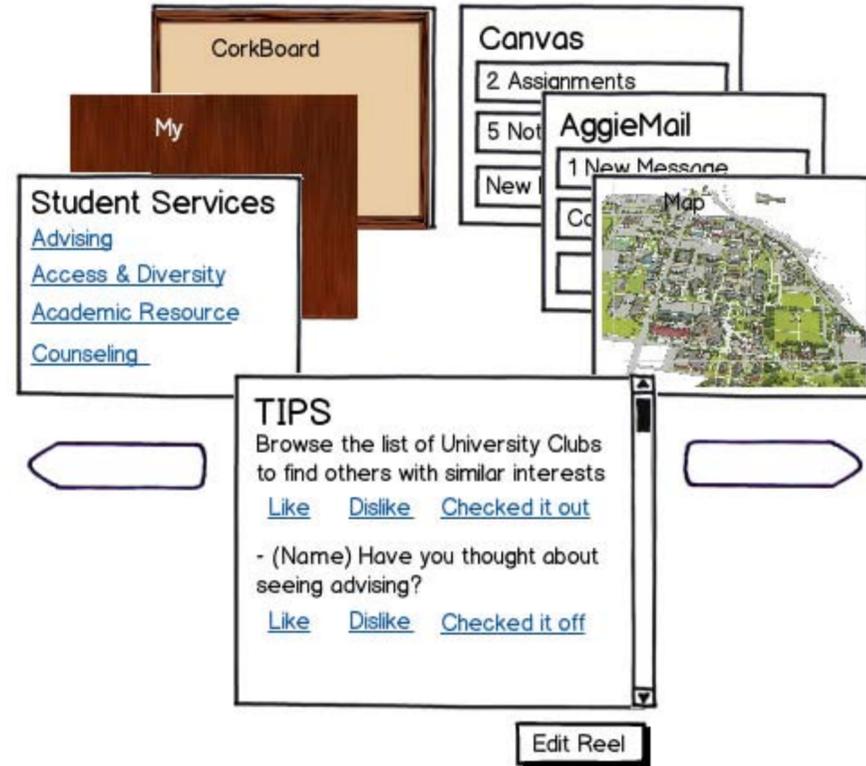
Aggie Scene



The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Aggie Scene" with the URL "http://www.aggiescene.com". The page features a search bar, navigation links for Home, Settings, and Log Out, and a notification bell showing "2 Notifications". A central dashboard area contains several floating widgets: a "CorkBoard" widget, a "Canvas" widget showing "2 Assignments" and "5 Not", an "AggieMail" widget showing "1 New Message", a "Map" widget, a "Student Services" widget with links for Advising, Access & Diversity, Academic Resource, and Counseling, and a "TIPS" widget with a list of university clubs and a "Checked it out" button. A "NEWS FEED" on the right shows updates from corkboard features, calendar, etc. At the bottom, there is a calendar for April 2011 and an "Edit Reel" button.

Aggie Scene Features

- Homepage:** The homepage would be organized in a 3-column layout. The left column is dedicated to student information inputting, which the site would use to personalize information and resources for the student. The Left column features include Student Profile via an avatar, a progress bar and a calendar. The right column would be the “output” center, where the site can feed information pertinent to the student in regards to academics, activities & friends (social), and resource events. The right column feature includes a Newsfeed. The center column or “Reel” would be the major source of cohesion in the site and would house all hubs, as well as many bridge features and “gateways” to outsourced pages such as “Aggiemail” and “Canvas.”
- Reel:** Each page within the reel feature, when clicked on, would bring up a “pop-out” window of the feature, which can be closed to reveal the home page again. The display of “gateway” pages such as Canvas and Aggiemail would be notifications before being clicked on and expanded views of the resource once enlarged to full view for better access. Features such as the Map, “My Desk Top”, and “Corkboard” would be shrunken images of the feature’s full visual state. The user would have the ability to move around the reel by using the arrows or clicking on the desired page.
- Edit Reel:** This button would allow students to eliminate pages they feel are irrelevant to desired usage, and add others found to be more useful from an expanded view of possible pages to add, much like an “app store” for the reel. Set pages on the reel would include the “My Desk Top”, “Corkboard”, “Map”, “Tips”, and “Student Services”; these cannot be eliminated from reel.
- Notifications:** The notification feature would include upcoming appointments, important dates and deadlines, and messages specifically for the student, directed from different resources. These will appear as a conversation bubble above the avatar as well as on the post-it notes on “My Desk Top”. A more detailed description of specific notifications will appear in a “pop-out” window, much like the reel pages, after clicking the speech bubble.
- Newsfeed:** The Newsfeed allows the student to see upcoming activities based on the clubs that they have joined, university-wide events, events that friends are attending, and other chosen categories. Each of the categories can be viewed individually or all together, through the different tab options.



- Newsfeed Tabs:** These “tabs” located at the bottom of the Newsfeed allow students to look at only specific categories of “news” if they so wish. These categories are personalized by the student and can include, but are not limited to, Activities, Friends, Classes, or Specific Clubs.
- Progress Bar:** The progress bar is broken up into two parts: General Education and Major Requirements. This bar shows how much (percentage wise) a student has completed toward graduation. It is also serves as a link to the academic folder. This appears on the homepage, as well as every subsequent page in the site with the Avatar and Calendar.
- Avatar/Character:** This is a quick link to the student’s Profile Page and personal information. This customizable character not only appears on the homepage, but on every subsequent page in the site.
- Profile Page:** In this page, students can input personal information that will help the site run intuitive to need. Some of the features of this page include changing Avatar to match student (a gamification feature), a concerns box, an interest box, a “rate my classes/professors” box, and other data boxes related to student feedback of the University.

OCTOBER 2011							Month	Week	Day	To Do List
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY				
1	2									
3	4 PRA @ 3 PRA Food-Drive	5 PRA Food-Drive	6 Habitat @ 7 PRA Food-Drive	7 PRA Food-Drive	8	9 Soccer @ 12 Football @ 5				
10	11 PRA @ 3	12	13	14	15 Volleyball @ 7	16 Football @ Fresno				
17	18 PRA @ 3	19	20 Habitat @ 7	21	22 Soccer @ 5	23				
24 31	25 PRA @ 3	26	27	28	29 Habitat Halloween Party @ 7	30				

- Calendar:** The master calendar appears on every page of the site as a main feature and can be accessed at all times. It is an all-encompassing bridge that is personalized by student activity input. The events on the calendar are also displayed on the Newsfeed located on the homepage.

Features within the Calendar

- Checklist:** Subcategories that are created by the student that reflect different types of activities. (i.e. – “classes,” “friend’s shared activities,” “appointments,” etc.) The student can then decide whether or not to have each individual category show on the calendar at any given time; editable from settings.
- “Schedule an Appointment” Button:** Brings up a scheduling window showing different resource contacts with whom the students can create an appointment. After choosing the person a student would like to schedule the appointment with, they are then able to pick the time, which time slots are controlled by the individual offices. Upon setting the appointment, the student receives personal advice from the resource about preparing for the appointment. The appointment would immediately be added to the student’s calendar and map.

- **Add Events Button:** Leads a student to a browsing window where they can find clubs/events that they are interested in. They can add individual events to their calendar or join a club and receive their events.
- **Different Views:** The calendar can be viewed by looking at month, week, or an hour-by-hour view. There is also a “To do” list that can be edited by the student including, but not limited to, the events on the calendar. This is similar to a “Google Calendar”.
- **Search Bar:** The search bar is an intuitive tool that is able to, from keywords inputted, guide students to desired features, thus eliminating the need for students to know within which resource features are housed. The results of the search bar are confined to information within Aggie Scene and not the entire USU site. It is a “bridge.”
- **Home Button:** Located on all pages in the upper-right corner, the home button takes the user to the original reel screen.
- **Settings Button:** Located on all pages in upper-right corner, the settings button allows for language changes and other logistic settings within the site.
- **Logout Button:** Located on all pages in the upper-right corner, the logout button allows the user to return to the login page.

Set Features on Reel

- **Tips:** A page on the reel with a constant feed of tips based on the information input and site usage of the student. Contains advice from upperclassmen, the student services, and faculty to help make the experience at USU easier. (i.e. – “Meet with your advisor before it’s time to register”, “Check out your progress on Degreeworks!”, and “Taking a P.E. class each semester really adds to your experience”.)
- **Map:** Clicking the Map page will open an expanded interactive version of the Map in a “pop-out” window. Within the interactive Map are key individual features.

Features Within the Map

- **Hover:** When the mouse hovers over buildings, a list of services/colleges within the building appear. From this list, the user can click on services/colleges and link to the services’/colleges’ page within the site.

- **“Where do you want to go?”:** Students will be able to type in a service or building and the Map will then direct the student to where the service is located via a descriptive bubble.
- **“What do you need to do?”:** Students will be able to type in a task they need performed. The Map will then match the service to the task and show the physical location of the service on the Map via a descriptive bubble.
- **Explore Campus:** Allows students to virtually “walk” around the Logan campus to see what the buildings and campus looks like (much like street view in Google Maps). Students will be able to control walking speed or simply skip walking and go straight to the buildings they wish to see.
- **Notification Flags:** A red flag with a speech bubble appears on the Map when a required action is needed, which notifications are the same as the “notifications” speech bubble on the home page. Clicking on the flag/speech bubble provides a mini-profile of the service needing action.
- **Speech Bubble:** Provides a short description of the action needing to take place. The bubble will disappear when the required action is performed.
- **Mini Profile:** The title of the service appears at the top and includes a description or message of/from service. Students will be able to set an appointment with service, which will be added to the student’s master calendar. Clicking the title will take the student to the full page of the service.
- **Directions:** Students will be able to add points of destination to find the quickest routes around campus, making navigation easier.
- **Aggie Shuttle:** The option to have the Aggie Shuttle tracker appear on the student’s Map for different routes.
- **My Desk Top:** Home of information concerning student’s academic standing and activity, major requirements, advising sessions, current academic notifications, planner & calendar, and all other pertinent academic information.

Features on My Desk

- **My Notes:** This file would be the home of all notes from previous advising sessions and any other notes the student would want to house in the file such as notes from SOAR and the University’s Connections experience. Would have the option for housing class notes as well. The advising notes would be accessible to advisors and resource centers to increase inter-communication between student services and the student.

- **My Planner:** This would be another link to the master calendar. However instead of pulling up the monthly view it would bring up a daily schedule for the individual to work with (there would still be the option of changing the views, this would only pull up a specific one).
- **Notification Post-its:** This tool would be a small port housed on “My Desk Top” that indicates pertinent academic notification such as registration holds and necessary advising appointments.
- **Go to Corkboard:** This button would allow for easy access to the Corkboard (social hub).
- **Academic Folder:** The location of all academic records, academic forms, reference sheets (major requirements, minor requirements, etc.), and resume information. Categorized by tabs for easy access.

Features Within Academic Folder

- **General Information:** Progress indicators for major(s), minor(s), and generals.
- **Current Tip:** A piece of advice geared towards academics that tell students about deadlines or opportunities based on academic info.
- **“Go to Degreeworks” Button:** Takes the student to Degreeworks to see their academic progress and options in more detail.
- **Other options:** A list of options that are catered to the interests of the individual students. These are based on where they are in their progress, the major/minor that they are in, or the academic activities that they have participated in (i.e. – internships, study abroad, service learning, etc.)
- **Portfolio section:** Would house major requirement sheets, general education requirement sheets, other requirement sheets, aptitude test scores, and all information regarding a student’s academic process. Would also have an area for resumes, both academic and professional.
- **Aggiemail Page:** A condensed view and usage tool of e-mail, much like an e-mail app for Apple products. Not confined to “Aggiemail” usage, but can translate to any e-mail site.
- **Canvas Page:** A condensed view and usage tool of Canvas, which allows students to see recent changes to Canvas as well as other more detailed functions with exploration.
- **Student Services Page:** A list of USU resource links to the redefined Service Pages within the Aggie Scene site (not the current USU page for the resource).

- **Service Pages:** Pages, much like Social Networking “Profiles Pages”, in which resources can present themselves to students in a way visually and conceptually independent from other services. Required information on the pages would include a short description of the service, tailored to students, and “make an appointment” or “see us” option.
- **Corkboard:** The home of all extracurricular information for students including clubs and organization information and interactions with other students at USU. In addition, the board provides entertainment purposes with different “widgets” or individualized feature options.

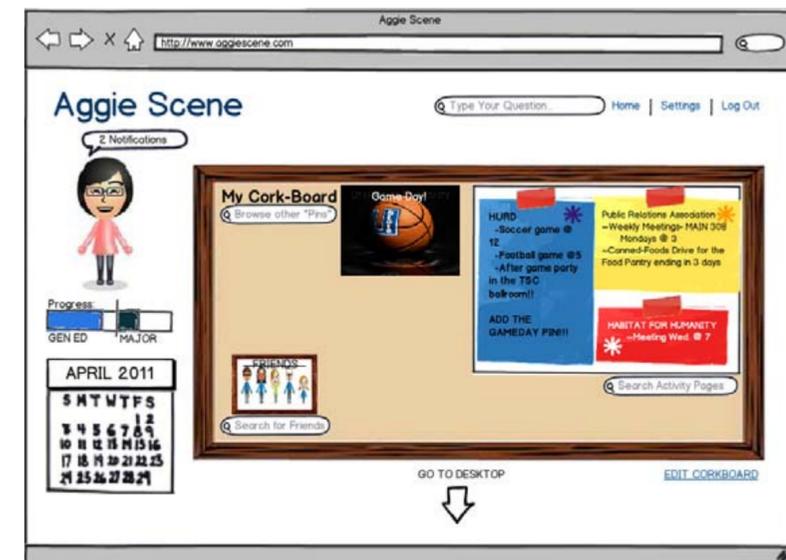
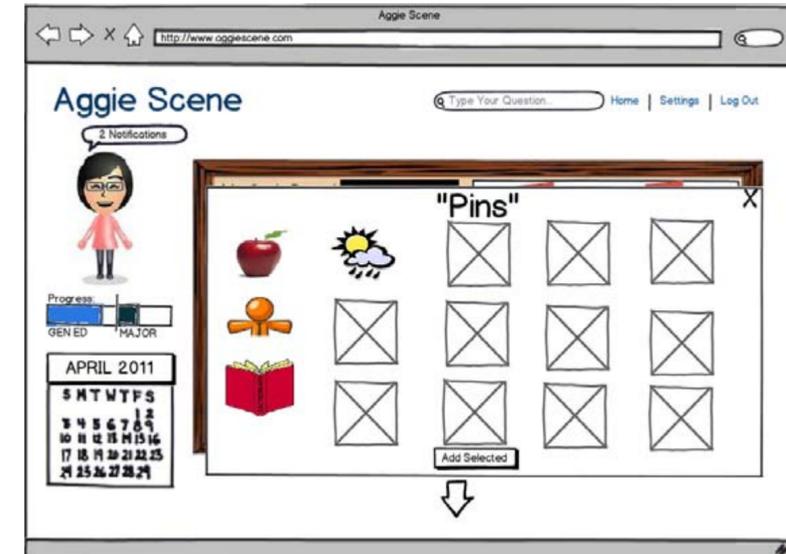
Features of Corkboard

Accessible from “edit Corkboard” and “search” tools

- **Go to “My Desk Top”:** This button would allow for easy access to the academic “My Desk Top”.
- **View Friends’ Activities:** This icon would allow access to browsing friends’ “Corkboards”, viewing the club and other information their peers have deemed “public”. This would allow for networking opportunities and inter-connectivity through extra-curricular organizations.
- **Activities Corner:** This would house links to a student’s clubs and extracurricular activities’ pages, as well as updates or upcoming events. Each club would create their own “experience page”, much like “Service Pages”, in which they can show pictures, post activities, and interact with members of the group via the site.
- **Search Tool:** Allows for user to search clubs and other extra-curricular activity pages, and have “quick adds” of features to the Corkboard without needing to use the “browse other features” section.
- **View Friends’ Activities Function:** This feature would allow students to find other student Corkboards for more student interaction.
- **Browse Other Features Section:** Within this feature, there is a view of little icons and titles representing the many optional features available to the student. While some of these features are academically based, others are more socially based.

Preliminary List of “Pins” for Corkboard (Widgets)

- **Music Feed:** This “pin” would be run through Aggie Radio, and would play music live from the station. This would increase student awareness and involvement with the radio.
- **Game Day:** This “pin” would list the games going on that day the specifics of locations and times.
- **Networking:** This would connect to Career Aggie and would allow students to look at what other alumni are doing in different fields.
- **Brain Games:** This “pin” would contain “brain game” activities such as Sudoku, chess, and Tetris as well as games that would help the student get to know the university games. An example of a university game could be trivia games that students could earn prizes for getting high scores.
- **Student Health:** This “pin” would provide information to students concerning healthy eating habits, and would also include healthy, cheap meal recipes from the Student Wellness center.
- **Academic Tools:** Options to add “pins” such as a dictionary, thesaurus, calculator, etc.
- **Stress Relief:** Tips for stress relief, fed by the psychological services on campus. This “pin” would also include a place where students can put advice for how they overcome stress.
- **Video of the Day:** This would be a mini video clip “pinned” to the Corkboard.
- **Story of the Day:** This “pin” would be the “top story” of the day determined Statesman, which would increase student awareness of the paper and of current events on campus.
- **Quote of the Day:** This would be a “pin” that would have a motivational quote each day.
- **Compare My Interests:** Many students have diverse interests. This “pin” would allow students to look at how their interests correlate with other students and potentially show them different careers people have found enjoyable with their same interests.
- **Virtual Hug:** This “pin” would help on those days (weeks) where the student feels they cannot do it anymore.
- **Countdown:** A “pin” that could be customized for a particular date such as “last day of the semester”, “day you get married”, “Christmas”, etc.

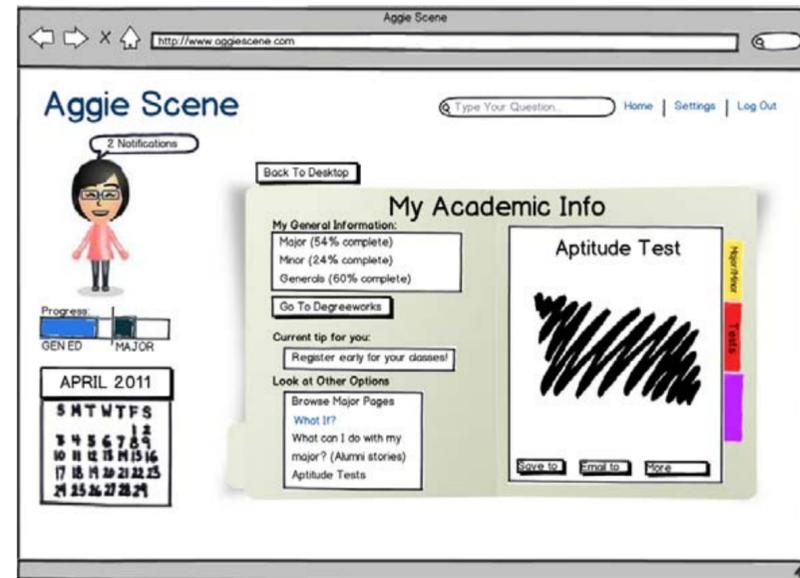
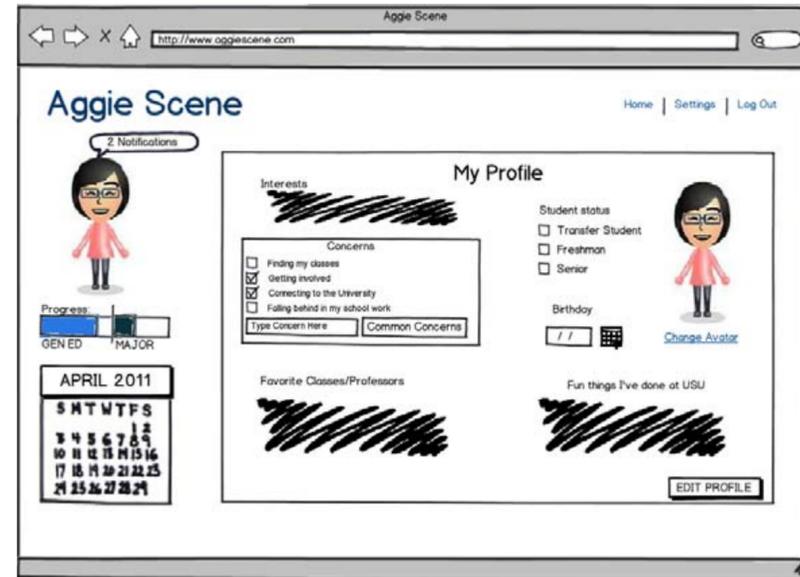


User Test Results

Overall, it was an eye-opening experience to see the diverse ways students of different academic stages, demographics, and technology exposure levels used the model prototype. Some students wanted to use the site purely for academic purposes (i.e.- Darrel: “Where are my classes?” repeated multiple times), while some enjoyed the social elements of the new portal, and others still utilized the more unique bridge and resource features such as the Map and academic folder.

Some student participants wanted more clarity within the prototype as they felt some features were too ambiguous, while others used it with ease and thrived off the ambiguity of different features, even to the point of expounding on our preconceived ideas of what the features would include. During testing, it was exhilarating to see the potential and to continue to develop ideas further and to push the boundaries of existing ideals, which highlighted the malleability of the site. The opportunity to develop features further was especially apparent concerning the Map, as it was vastly more utilized in the tests than anticipated. All of the students tested, once having some exposure to the prototype, saw the absolute potential for having the information accessible from a single portal, as well as the opportunities it presents for increased connectivity within university groups (i.e. – resources, students, and faculty). The different hubs were understood by most demographics tests and students enjoyed the visual aspects of the site.

Some of the key elements of our site were not as accessible as we had anticipated, and it was found that features, such as “Explore Map” and “Notifications” were being misunderstood and underutilized by our mock-users, which problems were taken into account and reformed visually and conceptually post-testing. We found a need to simplify and synthesize our ideas to become more concrete, agile, and intuitive to the findings of our testing. We found the need to remove the excess features and functions, such as “Aggie Bull Tracks,” that were inhibitory to the overall flow and usage of the site. There was also a present need to move features that disrupted flow, but were imperative to the site concept, such as moving the Corkboard feature to the reel to match the other hubs. Post-testing there was a push to expand conceptually and visually those features, which elicited positive attitudes from the participants, which features included mainly the Map, My Desk Top, and Corkboard. While there was some feedback for change in the flow, the overall reception was positive, and students left with expressed excitement concerning the site.



Scenarios

Download the interactive PDF of the Aggie Scene prototype at <http://www.businessinnovationfactory.com/files/pdf/aggie-scene.pdf>

Aimee is a freshman that decided to follow in the footsteps of her parents, alumni of USU, even though it means moving from Ohio. Coming to Utah State without knowing anyone has been difficult and lately Aimee has been feeling lonely and knows that getting involved would help, but does not know where to start.

Aimee logs onto her Aggie Scene to check her Aggiemail and notices the “Tips” page at the front of her reel. When she logged in for the first time, Aimee added “getting involved” to the “Concerns” box on her student information profile. Now, one of the tips that appeared for her on her “Tips” page, which is tailored from her personal information, suggested that she browse through the list of clubs. She follows the tips advice by clicking the adjacent link, which takes her to the “Club List” section of her Corkboard. She decides to add Habitat for Humanity, HURD, and the Public Relations Association, which then appear in the activities corner of her Corkboard so she can receive updates and notifications from the groups. She had also noticed while on the Hurd page a suggestion to add the “Game day Pin” to her Corkboard. While obtaining the “Game day Pin,” she finds others that she would like to have, like the Calculator, Weather, and Video of the Day.

While exploring Habitat for Humanity’s page she sees a post on their page about an event taking place over Winter Break. She wants to know more about the activity, sees a link to be able to e-mail the chapter president, which opens a view of “Aggiemail” as taken from the reel. She is able to easily e-mail the chapter president to find out more about the activity and is pleased with the interaction. As she looks over the recent personalization of her Corkboard and activity corner she feels reached out to and more connected to the university.

During the following week she has informed that the Public Relations Association is going to the football game together, meeting at the tailgate party beforehand, via updates on her Newsfeed and visual displays on her Map of the meeting places. At the game Aimee hits it off with some people she meets, so the next day she gets back onto her Aggie Scene and goes to her Corkboard. She searches for her new acquaintances and adds them to her “friends”. A category of her Newsfeed shows the activities her “friends” are attending and other information concerning their “public” (in regards to privacy settings) activities and “public” interests so she can stay connected.

Frank, a first-semester senior, knows he has an assignment due in one of his classes this week, so he logs into his “Aggie Scene” in order to get more information about it. Once Frank logs in, his “Notifications” bubble located near his avatar states that he has two notifications of importance. Wanting to resolve these important issues, he clicks on the “Notifications” bubble that expands to show a page devoted to in-depth information concerning pertinent notifications for him. The first notification says that he needs to fill out his graduation packet, while the other states that he needs to meet with an advisor. Because he is pressed for time, Frank decides to fill out his graduation packet later and clicks on the notification to meet with his advisor. When Frank clicks on the notification to see his advisor, it transitions to a pop-out screen with his advisor’s available times to meet, as well as what the advisor wants to meet with him about, which is ironically his graduation packet.

Frank finds a time that will work for him and clicks on the 1:00 p.m. available time slot. Once selected, Frank sees the confirmation of his appointment on April 2nd at 1 p.m., as well as text specifying what his advisor needs him to bring in order to be prepared for the appointment, which now appears on his calendar as well.

Frank closes the confirmation box and is directed to the Map via a picture on the advising page. Once he clicks on the Map, Frank notices a highlighted building with a bubble above it indicating which room in the building his advisor is located. With this new useful information, he clicks on the “X” to close the Map screen, which takes him to his homepage, which now sports a new “Notification” bubble message, “One Notification”.

Located beneath his avatar is his “Progress Bar” for graduation. Frank is curious about his progress and clicks on his “Progress Bar” to get to his “Academic Folder”. He is pleasantly surprised by the progress he has made and that it is easily viewable from one click away. He decides he wants a more in-depth view of his major requirements and the classes that he has already taken so he clicks on the “Major/Minor” tabs located in his academic folder portfolio. From here, he is able to see information about his major along with what classes are required and which ones he has already taken.

Frank now feels that he is prepared to meet with his advisor about the graduation application process for the next semester and returns “home” to check his canvas account for his homework assignment.

FINAL WORDS

If just one outcome is clear from our year-long initiative, it's the need for increased and consistent student choice and student voice in our education system. This participatory design studio demonstrates a new technique for engaging students in an ongoing internal innovation process that is both interdisciplinary and action-oriented. It's an important example of how any institution can proactively put students in the driver's seat of their own internal R&D activity.

We are ideally positioned to use this work to build a credible and public case for not only incorporating the student voice into ongoing conversations about innovation in education but also giving students the opportunity to reinvent their educational journey. Our thanks go out to the incredible people of Utah State University. You are a role model for the nation and, hopefully, a catalyst for transformation. The conversation about what it truly means to be student-centered begins at USU.

We would like to acknowledge and give thanks to all by saying:

To the supporters who helped us on our adventure,

This vision of student-led innovation in education could not be realized without the support and expertise of everyone in the system. We thank you for sharing your experiences, opening your offices and fulfilling the requirements of our challenge. You were the lynchpin of our work.

Michelle Bogdan, Noelle Call, Donna Crow, Chris Daley, Stephanie Hamblin, Eric Hawley, Charlie Huenemann, Debi Jensen, JanaLee Johnson, Dennis Kohler, Mary Leavitt, John Mortensen, Eric Olsen, Steve Sharp, Larry Smith, Roland Squire, Eddy Tsing, Linda Zimmerman

To the students of our first design studio,

We took a bold step forward to address the challenges and opportunities you face during your higher education journey. Yours was a semester filled with discovery and possibility; confusion and illumination; hard work and long hours. With your voices and ideas as our guide, we sought to live up to the possibilities you created. We hope you are pleased and proud of the result.

Mercedes Andersen, Kenneth Bennion, Kara Brooks, Wes Collins, Jesse Fowers, Ann Gray, Taylor Halversen, Dallen Hansen, Kyle Heywood, Becky Kelley, Erica Nelson, Jana Pincock, Braden Rindlisbacher, Andy Stricklan, Chenae Weller

To Lumina Foundation for Education,

The BIF Student Experience Lab began 2011 with an aspiration to experiment with new education models. We expected to follow the traditional design protocol that stipulates we (as the expert designer) must first understand the experience of those we seek to innovate for and then turn around, close the door, and create the innovation. It's a tried and true process that has worked for decades.

Then, a funny thing happened on the way to the forum. You posed the question: Why not let students be designers? Thanks to your catalytic financial support for the first design studio in the Spring, our adventure began. Sincere appreciation goes to Susan Johnson and Kevin Corcoran for believing in the idea.

And to Provost Raymond Coward, Dean John Allen, Professor Norm Jones and Vice President James Morales,

John Quincy Adams said, "If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." Your leadership and dedication to this initiative has afforded the students of this design studio, and now, hopefully, the student-body of USU, an opportunity to live up to the promise of higher education. Your belief in the ideal of student-led R&D was unwavering. And for that, we are eternally grateful.

Until next time, the teaching trio of

*Jennifer Peebles, Associate Professor, Communication Studies
Christine Costello, Design Director, Business Innovation Factory
Christine Flanagan, Student Experience Lab Director, Business Innovation Factory*



ABOUT THE BUSINESS INNOVATION FACTORY

The Business Innovation Factory (BIF) is a platform for transforming our most intractable systems, like healthcare, education, entrepreneurship, and energy, where players — both private and public — can design and test new solutions in a real-world environment.

We know how hard innovation is: Where will the great ideas come from? How will they be implemented and scaled? How do we evaluate them in the face of uncertainty? At BIF, we also know the power of experimenting in the real world with a network of collaborators with the audacity to change everything.

BIF's Student Experience Lab provides an integrated model of design research that directly engages students in real-world R&D. By breaking through the bottlenecks that exist within education structures, BIF is pioneering a pathway that takes student-driven research and design off the whiteboard and into the real world.

Using BIF's student-centered participatory design approach we seek to:

1. Put the student at the center of the innovation in education conversation
2. Develop and test innovative design concepts for new school experiences
3. Provide new life and learning skills for students

For information, visit www.businessinnovationfactory.com



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