

College App Research Plan

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Background: Making the decision to go to college is a big step, especially when you are on your own to research and come to a conclusion on where to commit for the next four years. Most incoming students are overwhelmed and end up changing their major in college, costing them time and money. This suggests there is a lack of guidance and information to compare where to go and what to study.

Objective: Identify the process of researching/choosing a college and the negative experiences along the way.

Research Questions:

1. How do people decide where to go to college?
 - a. Do they look up colleges online and write down information about each to compare?
 - b. Do they talk to their friends and family?
 - c. Do they schedule appointments at different colleges to tour and talk to advisors?
2. Do people know what they are committed to studying before they start, or do they also take the time during their first semester/year while in basic classes to really make a decision?
 - a. Would people like to be confident before they start college? Or do they not mind taking extra time to make a choice?
 - b. Did they change their major? If yes, how many times?

Methodologies:

User (semi-structured) interviews (5) and survey to assess demographics, understand pain points and behavior toward choosing a college and what to study. Usability testing (10) to observe any issues and allow for feedback.

Participants:

- Ages 18-25
- Want to go to college, or have
- Own a smartphone or PC

Recruiting Methods:

- Ask participants in Slack chat if they're interested in taking survey
- Ask those who qualify if they're interested in an interview

Schedule:

- Survey goes out July 18, 2022
- Survey closes July 26, 2022
- Interviews conducted July 22-25, 2022
- Prototype finished and usability testing August 3, 2022

- Results delivered August 5, 2022