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HCI & UX

## BSCHOOL Usability Report

### **Introduction**

BSCHOOL.HOWARD.EDU is a centralized information repository for prospective and current School of Business majors.

A College of Engineering student conducted a virtual usability test over Google Hangouts. The participant was sent a link to the website. Then the usability test administrator had the participant share their screen. The session analyzed the first impression of the site and then the navigation choices when looking for specific components.

### **Methodology**

#### **Sessions**

The test administrator contacted and recruited a participant via text. The participant chosen was a first-degree connection. These texts consisted of a request to participate in a ten minute study over Google Hangouts. The participant who agreed responded with the date and time that was most convenient for their schedule.

The session lasted approximately fifteen minutes. During the session, participants were asked to give their seven second first impression of the homepage. After the test administrator proceeded to read a navigation task and have the participant find the information on the website.

During each task, the participant was encouraged to think aloud and describe how they were feeling trying to complete each task. Afterwards, the participant was asked to rate how easy it was to complete the task on a 5 point scale. 1 being incredibly difficult to 5 being very intuitive.

At the end of the study, the test administrator asked the participant to provide an overall rating for the website in the following categories, using the same 5 point scale as before:

- Ease of navigation
- Ease of finding information
- Overall site layout & organization

Before concluding the study, the participant was asked to provide recommendations to improve the website.

#### **Participants**

There was only 1 participant in the entire study. This participant was female, English major in the College of Arts and Sciences, and between 20 and 25 years old.

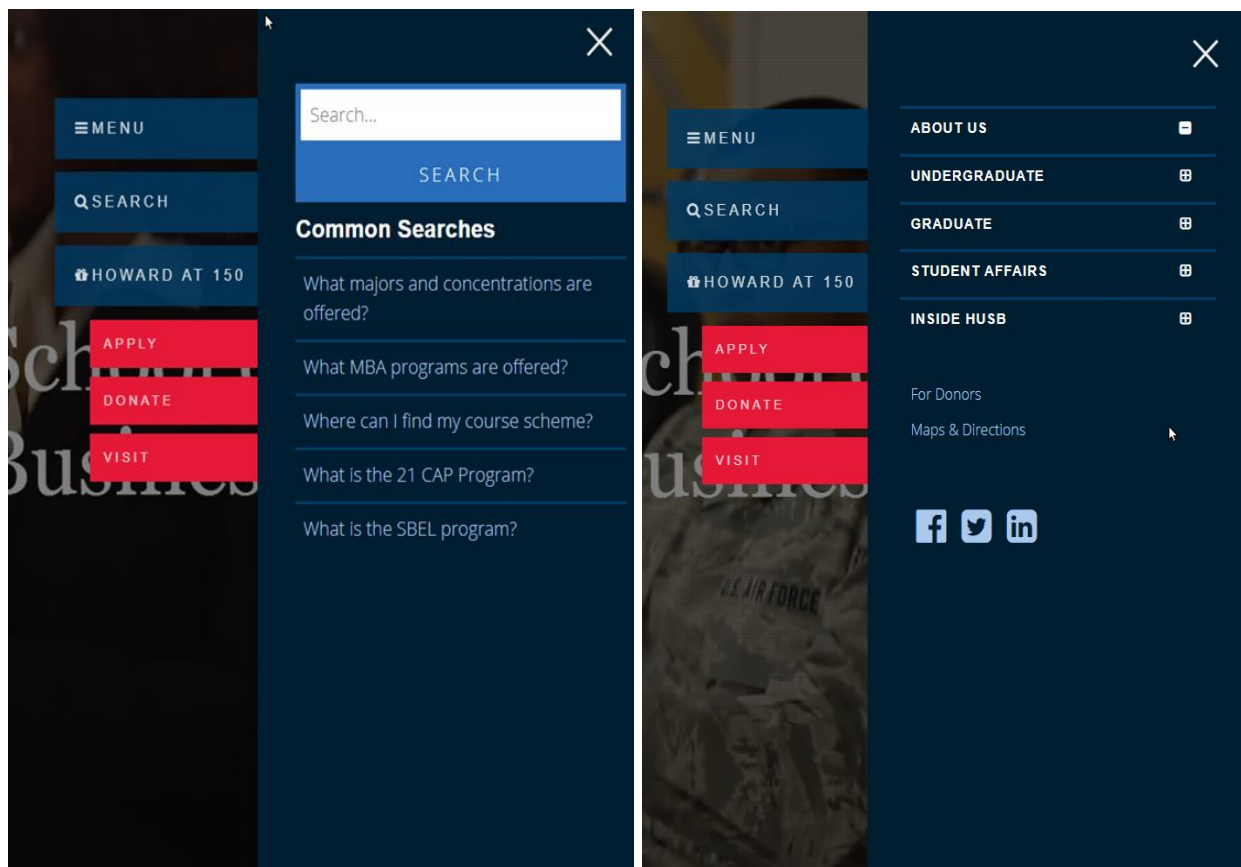
She attempted to complete each of the following tasks:

- Find a list of available majors
- Find the major scheme for Computer Information Systems Majors

### **Results and Discussion**

The participant successfully completed Task 1 and 2. Those tasks were to find a list of majors and the major scheme for Computer Information Systems. Both tasks had a rating of 5 for ease of finding information; however, only Task 2 had a rating of 5 for ease of navigation. Task 2 received a 4, because the homepage consisted of needing to scroll down three times. Two times down, and then once back up once she realized she passed the majors button. This participant is a fast scroller and has a tendency to skim. Placing the Quick Start section 3 scrolls down, makes it easy to miss and counterintuitive. This participant doesn't want to look for the start. Perhaps a rewording of this section would be helpful.

The overall site layout & organization is a 3.5. The primary critique was the double navigation bar, in which the search bar was nested inside.



Several things were noted here:

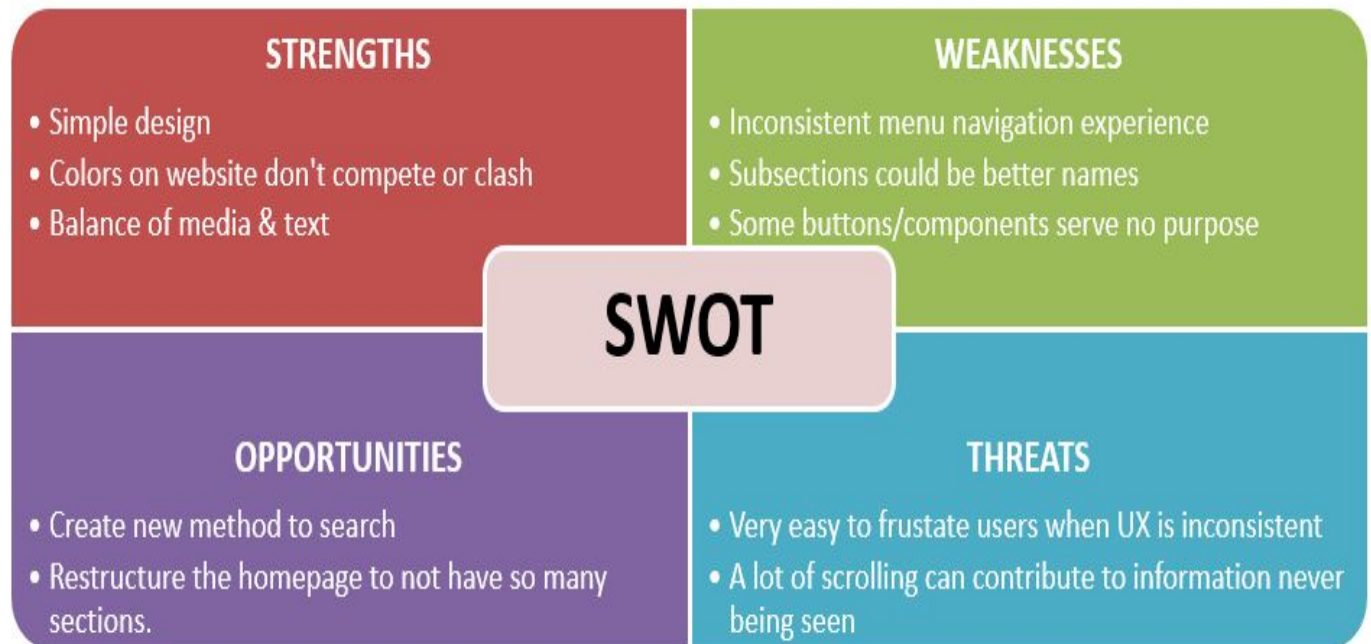
1. Depending on where the cursor was when she hovered over to the menu determined which navigational screen she would see. This lack of consistency was frustrating.

2. It was more intuitive to click the search option, just like how the Howard at 150 went to an external page. It was confusing that Search didn't do anything when clicked.
3. The Menu option also looked as if it should have been clickable or a drop down. The Menu button served no purpose, because nothing was nested underneath it. It was inline with everything else.
4. Exiting the search window closed the entire menu navigation. The search and menu shouldn't be linked together.

### **Conclusion (Recommendations & SWOT Analysis)**

The following changes were recommended:

- Move and/or rename the Quick Start subsection
- Create a consistent Menu navigation experience
- Make sure everything serves a purpose
- Unlink the menu & search navigation
- Reduce the total number of sections on the homepage



The participant found BSCHOOL.HOWARD.EDU to be nice to look at overall, especially as a non School of Business student. The website for the College of Arts and Sciences doesn't look as clean. Implementing the recommendations above will enhance the ease of navigating the website and increase the overall user experience.