

The registration system at KSU may not be easy to use but there are deeper reasons behind this apparent difficulty. Key issues that need to be addressed include the "mainframe" feel that is lackluster for users, feedback claims that the registration system is not easy to use, and the site is not aesthetically pleasing. By addressing these issues, research should be able to tell how to create a system that works much better for the end user.

In order to have purposed research, objectives must be established. Are the classes easy to register for? What issues are there with current mainframe? Does the site need a new look or are there issues with the navigation of registering? What about the site could be considered outdated apart from aesthetics. These answers to these questions through research will provide a direction for the project.

Surveys are a low cost way to gather information on an intended audience. Wilson states, "Surveys explore the problems people have with Web sites by asking questions..." (Wilson, 2009, "Surveys", para. 4). They will provide insight of what types of users are using the registration system and any correlations between the survey answers. When surveys are answered and returned it will be apparent what type of user is using the site. Questions that will be on the survey include...

1. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being best, 1 being worst) how easy is it to register for classes?
2. What year are you in school?
3. What features would make this system easier to use?
4. On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the best, 1 being the worst), rate your computer skills.

The participants will be students from all grade levels at KSU with an even population from each grade. A month will be needed for surveys to be taken and data to be analyzed. The surveys will be handed out before a participant is directly observed which will allow for a more efficient timetable and high survey return rate.

Direct observation will also be utilized in this research. Goodwin states, "Watching people interact with their usage environment reveals physical clues about the tasks they perform and the problems they may be having" (Goodwin, 2009, "Competitive User Research Methods", para. 11). The goals of observation will be to find how users are reaching their goal (whether that be to find a certain professor or class) and find where they are having issues completing their tasks. All grade levels should participate, as with the survey. A sample size of 15 students from each level would give a population of 60 to study, though more will need to be contacted in order to achieve this sample size. In order to collect names, gather individuals for this research, and organize notes taken, a month will be needed for this phase of the project.

Competitive analysis will be able to be utilized in examining other sites with registration systems such as Skillshare and Lynda.com. Not only will other sites be compared and contrasted but analyzing competitors will aid in idea generation for the KSU registration system. Wilson states, "...competitive analysis should be used for idea generation, but ideas you develop will need to be corroborated with feedback from users" (Wilson, 2009, "Competitive Analysis", para. 5). Using this method ties in perfectly with surveys and observation. This analysis will be helpful in finding out what works and does not work with similar students. It will help develop new ideas for the KSU registration system, and discover shortcuts to cut down time spent designing the new system. The biggest questions that should be asked and answered during this phase include how are other registration systems operate, what their interface looks like, and what works/does not work about the site. This phase should be given a few weeks to complete and done after or during the surveys and observations.

After the collection of data, it will need to be organized appropriately. Survey results will be to be placed into graphs and observational data can coincide to see where there is overlap. Once that data is analyzed it should be judged against the competitive analysis data to examine for further overlaps. Any differences should not be disregarded. With the analysis of all the data collected, key issues with the site should be able to be properly addressed with solutions.

	<b>Research Goals</b>	<b>Why this technique will support research</b>	<b>Sample Items</b>	<b>Recruiting</b>	<b>Time Table</b>
<b>Observation</b>	<p>Find how users are reaching their end goal, such as registering for a class, finding a professor, or even finding assistance</p> <p>Revealing what issues users have while trying to reach their goals</p>	<p>In observing, notes will be able to be taken on how users are navigating</p> <p>“...reveals physical clues about the tasks they perform and the problems they may be having” (Goodwin, 2009, “Direct Observation”, para. 1).</p>	<p>How students are navigating? Are there faster routes they should take?</p> <p>How long it takes to finish a task ex) find a prof or class</p> <p>If they need outside assistance -How is that accessed?</p>	<p>All grade levels freshman through senior 15 of each grade level -Larger population will be contacted until there are 15 students of each level in the study They can be contacted via school email lists. -Fliers will have email to respond with interest to be used since there needs to be a direct response</p>	<p>Recruiting, observing, and collecting/analyzing data will take a month. This will coincide with the survey time line.</p>
<b>Survey</b>	<p>Find out what types of users there are</p> <p>To find correlations between time in school and technical skills</p> <p>If their year in school and/or technical skills relates to how easy the site is to use</p> <p>This will be useful to judge against observation</p>	<p>Asking targeted questions will help identify who the users are.</p> <p>Using likert scales will help to verify any correlations in collected data</p> <p>Collection of survey data will aid in judging against what kind of data is collected in observation</p>	<p>On a scale of 1-5 (5 being best, 1 being worst) how easy is it to register for classes?</p> <p>What year are you in school?</p> <p>What is the first search item you look for?</p> <p>On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the best, 1 being the worst), rate your computer skills.</p>	<p>The same recruiting will be done for surveys as with observation since participants in observation will also take the survey. Ideally there will be 15 students from each grade level. They will be contacted directly and indirectly via email and fliers to generate interest.</p>	<p>Recruiting, survey taking, and collecting/analyzing data will take a month. This will coincide with the observation time line.</p>
<b>Competitive Analysis</b>	<p>Find how other registration systems operate</p> <p>What features of competitors work and do not work?</p> <p>Analyze how competitor sites compare to current registration system</p>	<p>Other systems will show what works and what does not work without having to make those mistakes in the design project</p> <p>It will generate new ideas for the redesign of the registration system</p>	<p>Looking at their user interface, how classes are paid for, how a person registers</p> <p>What is the first impression? Are these sites easy to use? What make them great?</p>	<p>Skillshare (site for learning different skills online)</p> <p>Lynda.com is a similar competitor</p> <p>Other sites that involve registration or events</p>	<p>Researching different sites, collecting and analyzing data across different competitors could take up to six weeks. This could also be done during the observations and surveys.</p>

## SUMMARY

### **Key Issues:**

- The “mainframe” feel is lackluster for users
- Feedback claims that registration system is not easy to use
- Not aesthetically pleasing

### **Objectives/Goals of Research:**

- Are classes easy to register for?
- What issues are there with having a mainframe? Does this mean that the site only needs a new look?
- What could be considered outdated about the site aside from aesthetics

### **Conclusion:**

After the collection of data, it will need to be organized appropriately. Survey results will be to be placed into graphs and observational data can coincide to see where there is overlap. Once that data is analyzed it should be judged against the competitive analysis data to examine for further overlaps. Any differences should not be disregarded. With the analysis of all the data collected, key issues with the site should be able to be properly addressed with solutions.

Goodwin, K. (2009). *Designing for the Digital Age: How to Create Human-Centered Products and Services*. Wiley.

Wilson, C. (Editor) (2009). *User Experience Re-Mastered: Your Guide to Getting the Right Design*. Morgan Kaufmann.