

Chapter 19. Aiming for the Sweet Spot: A User-Centered Approach to Migrating a Community-engaged Course Online

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Abstract: Aiming for the Sweet Spot: A User-Centered Approach to Migrating a Community-engaged Course Online illustrates how the PARS approach helped facilitate the migration of a community-engaged writing course from a synchronous face-to-face format to an asynchronous online format. Using a personal, accessible, responsive, and strategic (PARS) approach to course redesign, this chapter makes specific recommendations for hitting the sweet spot in online writing instruction through user-centered instruction and place-based user experience architecture.

Keywords: Community-engaged course, community engagement, modality, service learning, user-centered instruction, place-based user experience architecture

As argued by Borgman and McArdle (2019) in their recent book *Personal, Accessible, Responsive, Strategic: Resources and Strategies for Online Writing Instructors*, the principles and practices of user experience can (and should) be applied to online course (re)design approaches. In fact, user experience (UX) design and user experience architecture (XA) are expanding well beyond the fields of software design and computer programming and into larger ecosystems, like online writing instruction (Borgman & McArdle, 2019; Moore, 2017; Potts & Salvo, 2017). In an effort to attend to Potts and Salvo's (2017) call to move UX/XA "beyond isolated tasks of writing, designing, and programming" (p. 5) and build on Borgman and McArdle's work, this chapter demonstrates how the PARS approach can be used to migrate a community-engaged writing course from a synchronous face-to-face format to an asynchronous online format.

Using a localized, case example from my time as an adjunct instructor at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) in Fall 2017, I argue that the "sweet spot" in online writing instruction (OWI) is treating students as the central users of instructional spaces and documents (Blythe, 2001; Borgman & McArdle, 2019; Greer & Harris, 2017).¹ In the game of golf, the "sweet spot" is a specific area on

1. The student work in this chapter belongs to Abigail Birkner who took my Discourse 300 course as an honors student in Spring 2018. Abigail consented to her work being shared in this edited collection, and no compensation was awarded for her work.

a golf club face that should be hit for optimal results (i.e., a hole in one; or at the very least, meeting or beating par). For online writing instructors, the possibility “hitting the sweet spot” can vary based on the needs of the student population as well as course outcomes, department expectations, and the presence of a community or industry partner. While keeping mind the expected course outcomes, departmental policies, and community partner goals, this chapter uses my recent experience at UMKC to provide a model for prioritizing the needs of students as the central users of a community-engaged writing course during an instructional modality change and subsequent course redesign. Following Borgman and McArdle’s (2019) praxis-based chapter structure, I discuss my course redesign process in three sections:

1. First, I describe the context of my localized case at UMKC in Fall 2017, and I provide a brief overview of the general education curriculum.
2. Next, I illustrate how the PARS approach helped facilitate the migration of a community-engaged writing course from a synchronous face-to-face format to an asynchronous online format. I also explain the exigency for an online community partner, and I provide examples of assignment templates and student work.
3. Last, I reflect on my course migration and redesign process, and I provide broad recommendations for shifting a community-engaged course online during times of austerity and crisis. I also preview how the community-engaged online course discussed in this chapter led to the development of additional online courses and interinstitutional partnerships.

Course Context: Localizing the PARS Approach

For nearly ten years, the University of Missouri-Kansas City’s general education curriculum required students to take a three-course sequence in writing and speech called Discourse (catalog.umkc.edu/course-offerings/undergraduate/disc/). (Note: This program is currently undergoing a “teach-out” as UMKC has revised its general education curriculum to increase transferability and cohesion with the UM System.) The first course in the sequence, Discourse 100: Reasoning and Values, focused on social, professional, political, and community discourse. The second course, Discourse 200: Culture and Diversity, engaged directly with academic research and the research process with an emphasis on individual, institutional, and cultural identities. The third course, Discourse 300: Civic and Community Engagement, sought to put the rhetorical and research skills from Discourse 100 and 200 into practice in an interdisci-

I’m thankful for her excellent contributions to this chapter and her willingness to share her coursework with the WAC community.

plinary and intercultural service-learning project with a designated community partner.

Discourse 300 was taught as a “linked” speech and writing course where students enrolled in an “anchor” class that covered specific subject matter (e.g., anthropology). While an anchor faculty member served as a subject matter expert in a specific discipline, a Discourse 300 instructor would provide writing and public speaking instruction and guidance on a discipline-specific project that focused on community-engaged writing and/or public speaking. In 2016, discourse classes were delinked from anchor courses, and community-engagement placements and logistics became the responsibility of discourse instructors, which were largely contingent faculty and graduate students.

During my tenure as an adjunct faculty member at UMKC, I taught 13 sections of Discourse 300, most of which were face-to-face. But, in Fall 2017, I was asked to develop a fully online and asynchronous section of the class. While this was a daunting request for a part-time instructor, I had over six years of experience teaching online, and I had close ties with community organizers and nonprofit organizations across the Kansas City metropolitan area because of my work as a community organizer (Austin & Stone, 2020; Stone, 2019). Since this important groundwork was already laid, I was able to focus less on coordinating outside community connections and more on designing an online course that benefitted my central users: undergraduate students from over 15 different majors. In other words, I focused on “hitting the sweet spot” by putting the PARS approach into practice.

Hitting the Sweet Spot: Operationalizing the PARS Approach

In order to develop an online, community-engaged writing course that centered the needs of students, I used the PARS approach. Admittedly, the Borgman and McArdle’s book wouldn’t be published until 2019, but Borgman had shared details about the four-part approach during our Ph.D. classes and professional development sessions at Texas Tech University. Like Borgman and McArdle (2019), I believe that instructors should be personal, accessible, responsive, and strategic in the design, facilitation, and administration of their online writing courses. As an instructor of Discourse 300 at UMKC, I had the additional responsibility of ensuring students had the opportunity to create meaningful relationships in the Kansas City community and build a writing and learning community all within an asynchronous online space (Warnock, 2009). In the four sections below—aptly named for each part of the PARS approach—I illustrate how the PARS approach helped facilitate the migration of a Discourse 300 from a synchronous face-to-face format to an asynchronous online format. I also explain the exigency for an online community partner, and I provide examples of assignment templates and student work.

Personal

According to Borgman and McArdle (2019), personalized online writing instruction often focuses on developing a recognizable course presence, approachable instructor profiles, and sometimes, respective administrative practices. I extended Borgman and McArdle's definition of personalized online writing instruction to meet the individual, and sometimes disciplinary, needs of students. To make the content and assignments of my online Discourse 300 personal and user-centered, I developed an online, pre-course survey for students to complete upon registration. I asked questions about the genres of writing they used in their discipline (e.g., engineers use technical reports), and I inquired about the kinds of practice skills (e.g., usability testing) they were interested in gleaning from the course. In their responses, students emphasized their desires to learn practical skills and make connections within the greater Kansas City community that might help them obtain jobs or internships. Based on this data, I worked with our community partner, Code for Kansas City (codeforkc.org), to develop accessible course assignments and community interactions that would benefit each students' individual goals and meet the objectives of the course.

Accessible

On the most basic level, an accessible writing online writing course is “universally inclusive” and ethnically addresses the needs of all learners (Borgman & McArdle, 2019, p. 36). But I take up Borgman and McArdle's invitation to expand the definition of access further to include removing unnecessary barriers like the cost of course materials or the modality of a community engagement site. Redesigning a community-engaged course for an online learning environment meant ensuring my students had an accessible community partner who could allow them to complete their service-learning projects completely online and asynchronously. Since students often choose online classes for their “convenience and access” (Salter, 2012, p. 213) and because UMKC serves a primarily nontraditional student population with multiple time commitments and often inflexible schedules (Austin & Stone, 2002), my users (students) were to partner with a fully online community partner. Over the summer, I had collaborated with one of the core team members of Code for Kansas City, a brigade chapter of Code for America (www.codeforamerica.org) that is dedicated to bridging the digital divide through civic hacking and open data. Using Moore's (2017) heuristic for place-based user experience architecture, I met with the Code for Kansas City core team and its community coders to determine the kinds of digital, field-based projects my students might be able to work on. Together, we chose CommunityKC (codeforkc.org/#project-list), an asset mapping project that connects people and resources across Kansas City. Since the site was already existing and needed some additional user experience research and content development, it was a great project for

advanced online writing students to practice place-based experience architecture (Moore, 2017) through low-stakes, online field research and usability testing. I discuss the UX project and how the students interacted with Code for Kansas City more in the section on Strategic OWI course redesign.

In addition to securing an accessible community partner, I increased the accessibility and affordability of the course by using all open educational resources, including textbooks, coding tools, and software. While my course required a considerable amount of time for writing, speaking, and community-based projects, students were not required to spend any additional money on course materials. We used the first iteration of Suzan Last's (2019) open-access textbook, *Technical Writing Essentials* (pressbooks.bccampus.ca/technicalwriting/), to learn about the basic concepts of technical communication, and I relied on other open educational resources like Usability.gov ([usability.gov](https://www.usability.gov/)) to help students understand the basic principles of user experience and practical frameworks for usability testing.

Similarly, students retained the intellectual property rights to all of the deliverables they produced in collaboration with our community partner. To combat the tendency for service-learning courses to become hyper pragmatic and focused only on the deliverables for the community partner (Scott, 2004), a significant portion of the course was spent on reflective, collaborative work where students focused on articulating our iterative and agile development process, not just with one another, but with our community partner. When their schedules permitted, online Discourse 300 students were invited to join the community coders at Code for Kansas City during their weekly hack nights to work on the CommunityKC map synchronously and in-person. As my undergraduate co-author, Jasmine Amerin, and I discussed in a recent Intercom piece (2019) about the benefits of Code for America as a service-learning site, it's important to follow Scott's (2004) "suggestion to use participatory design principles and an intercultural inquiry process that mirrored the values of cultural and community rhetorics" (p. 30) to ensure a mutually beneficial collaboration.

Responsive

Responsive online writing instruction and course (re)design have a lot to do with habits of mind, time management, communication patterns, and student feedback (Borgman & McArdle, 2019). All of these components are infinitely important to student success and satisfaction in an online writing course. Another facet of responsive online writing instruction is addressing the complications that can arise when migrating an online writing course from face-to-face format to an online format. As Warnock (2009) argues, it's simply not enough to port over face-to-face materials into an online writing classroom. Similarly, Borgman & Dockter (2018) point out that "this act of migration can be troublesome when online teachers don't consider the unique opportunities that exist within the online domain. The assumption is what works in in one teaching

context will work equally well in another” (p. 96). During my initial course redesign, the shift in location and modality caused some concern—not just for how I might maintain the authenticity of the assignments, but also for how an online learning modality might impact our relational work our community partner, Code for Kansas City.

As mentioned in my introduction, the sweet spot in online instruction is treating students as the central users of our instructional spaces and course documents. But, accommodating a shift in instructional location and modality is not always a part of the online course design process. All too often, writing studies departments and writing program administrators will construct one predesigned version of a course for all contingent faculty or graduate teaching assistants to teach instead of allowing instructors to incorporate their expertise and located ethos (Simmons, 2010; Stone & Austin, 2019;). Because UMKC recognized the importance of faculty expertise, ethos, and academic freedom, I was able to be responsive to the needs of my students when I migrated Discourse 300 online. Keeping my students in mind as my central users, I made adjustments to the course foci to accommodate the location change, as outlined in Table 19.1.

Table 19.1 illustrates how a shift in course location and instructional modality warrants a shift in the course foci and community engagement site. In other words, an online course requires a more easily accessible, online space for community-engaged coursework. In previous semesters, my face-to-face Discourse 300 students had been required to engage synchronous, face-to-face version of Discourse 300 required students to engage with a local community problem or issue in Kansas City (e.g., food insecurity) through a specific community-oriented nonprofit organization. Oftentimes, students would partner with an organization they were already connected with or one that was facilitated by their anchor course faculty. In my Fall 2017, asynchronous, online version of Discourse 300, my students engaged in a user experience and usability analysis of CommunityKC, an online community and nonprofit resource mapping site designed by local community-based coders. This responsive approach to community engagement and service learning in an online writing course helped facilitate an impactful learning experience for my online Discourse 300 students.

Table 19.1. Course foci adjustments to accommodate location change

	Face-to-face, Community-engaged Class	Online, Community-engaged Class
Course Focus	Engaging with a local community problem or issue in Kansas City (e.g., food insecurity) through a specific community-oriented nonprofit organization	Engaging in a user experience and usability analysis of an online community and nonprofit resource mapping site designed by local community-based coders

Strategic

Strategic online writing instruction and course (re)design are “focused on the user experience of the students” (Borgman & McArdle, 2019, p. 71). By shifting my online Discourse 300 students’ required servicing-learning component from face-to-face environment to an online space, I was able to accommodate their schedules while maintaining the integrity of the community-based course. Because I was working from the liminal space of a community-engaged adjunct (Long, 2008), I was able to strategically restructure my course by creating opportunities for my students to engage in a civically engaged project that was built for and works in an online community space. This attention to user-centered design principles in my course redesign process improved student learning outcomes and provided a pathway for future scenarios where I might have to relocate community-engaged projects and/or classes . . . like the COVID-19 pandemic just a year later (more on this experience in my Final Thoughts and Application section).

To accommodate the shift in instructional modality (from face-to-face to online), I made strategic changes to the assignment design and structure in my Discourse 300 class, as illustrated in Table 19.2.

Table 19.2. Assignment structure changes to accommodate shift in instructional modality

Assignment Description	Synchronous Face-to-Face	Asynchronous Online
Preliminary Assignment	Project proposal	User experience (UX) exploration and analysis
Speech 1	Defining specific community problems	Instructional video about the community site
Midterm Assignment	Research project progress report	Existing organization profile update; creation of new organization profile
Speech 2	Advocating solutions for a particular population	Progress report
Reciprocal Contribution to Community Partner	Public writing for self-identified community group	User experience (UX) recommendation report for website
Summative Assessment	Community-focused research paper	Community-focused research paper

All assignment redesigns were done in collaboration with core team members of Code for Kansas City, specifically the community coders who were working on the CommunityKC map. Using Moore’s (2017) heuristic for place-based experience architecture to create opportunities for students to conduct place-based field research about the people, places, and resources of Kansas City, I was able to ex-

tend Potts and Salvo's (2017) call to move UX/XA "beyond isolated tasks of writing, designing, and programming" (p. 5). Because building a place-based XA in "local communities requires familiarity with the tempos and geographies of the citizens" (Moore, 2017, p. 155), my working knowledge of Code for Kansas City, as both a community organization and a community of knowledge-workers, was beneficial to the students enrolled in my online, asynchronous section of Discourse 300. As part of their collaboration with the CommunityKC mapping team, my online students were able to learn about the diverse communities and lesser-known organizations within their neighborhoods and around the UMKC campus. Maintaining a place-based and geographical connection to the Kansas City community, even while working in a completely online environment, was important for a course whose history was rooted in civic and community engagement.

As outlined in Table 19.2, Discourse 300 students in both the face-to-face and online course formats completed six major writing and/or public speaking projects. The objectives for each project remained the same; only the location and modality shifted. I'll spend the next few paragraphs outlining each assignment in the online version of Discourse 300, being careful to identify how each assignment engaged in strategic learning activities and outcomes. When appropriate, I will link and discuss assignment templates and student examples from a student who took the second iteration of my online Discourse 300 class (see Author Note).

First, online Discourse 300 students worked individually to conduct a user experience exploration and analysis report of the CommunityKC site. They composed a report intended for the community coders that provided observations of how the site functioned for a first-time user who was unfamiliar with its purpose and audience. This assignment engaged all four of the PARS elements, but most specifically, it was personal. During the pre-course survey, students has requested to learn new skills that would help them in their future jobs or internships, and user experience exploration and analysis certainly fit that request. Not only is user experience a growing career field, but nearly all businesses and nonprofits benefit from having someone on staff with a working knowledge of usability testing and user experience design. Appendices A and B offer examples of the assignment template used for this report (Appendix A) as well as a completed student example report (Appendix B). After submitting their reports, the students discussed their findings as a class in an asynchronous discussion board where they identified portions of the site that needed additional instructions, which informed the second assignment: an instructional video about the site.

Because discourse students were also required to produce 18+ minutes of polished public speaking, two digital speeches needed to be integrated into the design of the online course. In small groups, students produced an instructional video and corresponding transcript for the site users that gave additional directions for portions of the site that were identified as troublesome. For example, one student created an instructional video for how to search for a specific community project on the CommunityKC mapping site, while another student showed site users

how to search by project type, as shown in this student example video at [youtube.com/watch?v=1TJP-jGqMqo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TJP-jGqMqo). A full transcript for this video can be found in Appendix C. This project taught students how to design accessible deliverables through a hands-on, creative process. Each instructional video was provided to the community coders, and with students' permission, they have been able to use the instructional videos on their site. As mentioned in the previous section, students maintained the intellectual rights to all of their deliverables, and none of their work was used by the community partner without proper attribution.

As part of their community-engaged research assignment for the class, each student interviewed a community partner featured on the website to update their contact and organizational information. Moore's (2017) step-by-step instructions for how to teach and implement a place-based XA were extremely helpful as I worked to navigate this new instructional modality and occupy the liminal space of both a community volunteer for Code for Kansas City and an instructor-collaborator. Additionally, students were responsible for locating one new Kansas City organization that was interested in being featured on the site. Students interviewed a member of the new organization and helped them create their own organizational and project-specific profile on the site using a Google Form which fed into a spreadsheet for the Code for Kansas City coders to access. Students were invited to attend optional and ungraded coding meetings to work on data input, troubleshooting, and the like.

While the audience for the first speech was the community coders and eventually the CommunityKC website users, the audience for the second speech was me: the instructor. I asked students to schedule a synchronous meeting with me to deliver a short progress report speech. This assignment required students to compose a progress report where they reflected on their course progress toward curriculum-specific objectives as well as how the course was meeting their expectations for an online, community-engaged course that worked with a community partner in a nontraditional, mostly asynchronous, space. This assignment allowed both me and my students the opportunity to engage personally and responsively with one another. During these informal speeches, I learned where students were struggling the course as well as how I could improve my course design, facilitation, and assessment.

In an effort to ensure a reciprocal contribution to our community partner, students composed a memo intended for the community coders that provided recommendations for how to improve the site for its intended users: citizens of Kansas City. This recommendation report included observational and field data from all of their interactions with the site users as well as their own extensive use and testing of its features. For example, one student suggested that CommunityKC should have an events calendar added to their site, which has since been implemented by the Code for Kansas City coders. This aspect of the course was strategic because it combined all of the students' previous work on CommunityKC content and required them to engage with a vested audience. Additionally,

this memo gave students the opportunity to see what it might be like to work directly with a client in a future job or internship.

As their final assignment for the course, students conducted a formal research project on a systemic problem identified by one of the community partner organizations featured on the CommunityKC site. For example, one student had been working with a site user who focused on mitigating neighborhood blight, so her research project focused on Kansas City's history of racism and redlining in residential real estate. Another student had created a new community profile for a faith-based group during the midterm assignment, so his research project investigated how faith-based groups in Kansas City support the work of other nonprofit organizations. While this last assignment did not interact specifically with Code for Kansas City or the CommunityKC websites, it strategically fulfilled the requirement for students to complete an academic research paper by the end of the course.

Final Thoughts and Application

As I reflect back on my user-centered migration and redesign of Discourse 300, I see many implications for our current time of increased austerity and crisis in the field of writing studies, in higher education, and around our fractured country. The COVID-19 health crisis as well as sustained civil unrest have left most of us feeling drained, at best. If I were to repeat this migration and redesign process during this precarious time—or make general recommendations to another faculty member who is considering migrating a community-engaged writing course online—I would prioritize students as the central users of online spaces and documents through a PARS approach.

In order to design a course that is personal and responsive, develop an online survey for students to complete when they enrolled in the course that asks about their goals and preferences. If you're contemplating a course survey to center students' lived experiences, consider surveying students throughout the course to increase agency and respond to student concerns about instructional content, course pacing, or assessment practices. Once you've reviewed the students' responses, you can share them with the class to demonstrate that you're listening and justify any changes you might make to the course design based on their feedback.

To create an accessible and affordable online course, use all open educational resources, including textbooks, coding tools, and software. I understand the concept of open educational resources can be overwhelming, but adapting and adopting open educational resources can be incremental. The open access movement is not all-or-nothing, as evidenced by the WAC Clearinghouse's (wac.colostate.edu/about/) incremental approach to supporting and growing open access research within our own field! As a first step, consider adopting ready-made textbooks from resource sites like Open Stax (openstax.org), the Open Educa-

tion Network's Open Textbook Library (open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/), or one of the many titles available through Press Books (pressbooks.com). When you're comfortable adopting an open textbook, you might consider using open courseware or open source software (St. Amant & Still, 2007).

Antiracist and Inclusive Pedagogical Changes

While there are many choices I would repeat in a subsequent, user-centered course migration and redesign, there are some pedagogical changes I would make if were to repeat this migration and redesign process in 2020 and beyond. I describe a few in this section; although, I'm sure I will think of additional changes after this book has been published. After all, user-centered course (re)design is iterative, reflective, and ongoing.

As someone who is sincerely invested in the work of recognizing, revealing, rejecting, and replacing (Walton et al., 2019) racist practices, policies, and pedagogies that harm Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), I would work to recenter the lived experiences of multiply marginalized populations in my online, community-engaged classes. As a first step, I would be explicit and intentional in my syllabus, readings, and assignments about the social, economic, and racial contexts that undergird students' access to technology (Haas, 2012) as well as their exposure to digital literacies (Byrd, 2019; Kynard, 2013). In my face-to-face Discourse 300 course, I taught about Kansas City's racist history (e.g., redlining) and the systemic inequality that remains as a result. When I shifted the course online, this important sociocultural context slowly slid out of focus, especially as more of my energy and time went to coordinating with our community partner and managing the online components of the course.

But pedagogical practices don't only exist within instructor-created documents; exemplars and templates are imbued with the values and lived experiences of their authors. To further center BIPOC experiences and cite inclusively when discussing UX/XA, I would assign exemplar texts authored by public-facing scholars of color to highlight the kinds of technical and professional communication (TPC) that exist outside of the academy. Specifically, I would assign Iyama's (2019) article that maps space-making and the lived experiences of Black people onto the five phases of the UX design process (define, research, synthesize, design, implement). I would also assign McKoy's (2020) digital dissertation chapter that uses her theoretical framework, Amplification Rhetorics, to increase the value and exposure of public-facing TPC genres and practices (e.g., TrapKaraoke) that are typically confined to historically marginalized communities.

By adapting Moore's (2017) heuristic for engaged in place-based experience architecture, I pushed the boundaries of XA and encourage reflective practices and projects within a community-engaged online writing classroom. In addition to using Moore's heuristic, I would build upon Hurley's (2018) concept of spatially-oriented course (re)design. Even if an online writing course doesn't

engage with a *community map*, like my online Discourse 300 class *did*, a spatially-oriented course makes “the intersections among spatialities visualities, technologies, subjectivities, and communication practices more apparent” (Hurley, 2018). Admittedly, Hurley’s methodology wasn’t published at in Fall 2017, the semester I migrated my community-engaged writing course online. However, my willingness to continue to read and reflect on my own course over time reiterates both how and why a user-centered course (re)design is iterative, reflective, and ongoing.

Iterative, Reflective, and Ongoing Application

In alignment with the iterative, reflective, and ongoing revisioning process of user-centered courses, the migration and (re)design of Discourse 300 in Fall 2017 led to the development of additional community-engaged online courses at UMKC (see Amerin & Stone, 2019; Stone 2019) and one in-process, interinstitutional research project with Antonio Byrd at UMKC. Just one year before I left Kansas City to begin my new role at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), Antonio was hired at UMKC as an assistant professor where he has continued the English Department’s collaboration with Code for Kansas City, specifically within ENGL 430WI: Advanced Technical Writing. Following Simmons’ (2010) model for extended community writing projects, Byrd and I have continued to work together to consider how community-engaged technical writing courses can be designed iteratively across semesters, institutions, and student populations. Meanwhile in Murfreesboro, I’ve been making inroads with Code for Nashville (codefornashville.org) as a potential community partner for MTSU’s new Bachelor of Science in Public Writing and Rhetoric (PWR). When the MTSU writing studies team begins to design community, digital, and technical writing courses for the PWR major, I will refer back to this chapter to ensure our online PWR courses are inclusive, user-centered, and (okay, I’ll say it...) hit the “sweet spot.”

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Appendix A. Usability Report Template

To: Erica Stone

From: YOUR NAME

Subject: CommunityKC User Experience Exploration and Analysis Report

Date: FILL IN SUBMISSION DATE

Website Impressions

Based on your first impression, what is the purpose of this website? How would you use it if you stumbled upon it during an internet search? Be specific and feel free to use any of your salient points from our first two discussion boards.

Positive Attributes

What are some positive attributes of the website? Be specific and feel free to use any of your salient points from our first two discussion boards.

Negative Attributes

How and where does the website need improving?

Which features are confusing? Describe, in detail, the issues that you encountered?

On average, how many minutes did you spend using the website before getting frustrated?

Be specific and feel free to use any of your salient points from our first two discussion boards.

Recommended Users

Who do you know that would like this product? How would they use it? Be specific and feel free to use any of your salient points from our first two discussion boards.

Summary of Feedback for CommunityKC

Based on your responses above and your discussions with classmates, share your initial recommendations for the CommunityKC developers. Be professional and specific. As with the other sections, feel free to use any of your salient points from our first two discussion boards.

I will share this section of your report with the team lead, and we will use these parameters to help us determine the work we will do on the site this semester.

Appendix B. Example Usability Report

To: Erica Stone

From: Abigail Birkner

Subject: CommunityKC User Experience Exploration and Analysis Report

Date: 10 February 2019

Website Impressions

Based on my first impression of the website, I would say that the purpose of the website is to connect people or organizations to community service opportunities and efforts to revitalize neighborhoods in Kansas City. I would personally use it to increase my awareness of projects and needs in the community and learn how to get involved to meet the needs of people in my community better. I would also potentially use it to direct other people who want to get involved to the needs in their community and projects they can engage in.

Positive Attributes

The site has a really great backbone and the beginning of some good ideas. I appreciated the map because it saves people time of looking up event locations in relation to where they are. It helps to make the site more interactive and engage others as well. I also appreciated how they list all of their projects, and within the listing, give the background and contact information for organizations or the organizing person for the project. They have a color scheme for the website, and it is organized with tabs containing different fields of information. Overall, the idea for the website is wonderful, and it could be incredibly impactful for service projects and collaboration between different organizations and people with some restructuring.

Negative Attributes

While I love the idea of the map, I think that it slightly distracts from highlighting the purpose and use of the website by being the front page. I felt that the

website seemed to lack some personality/heart, and I think the map being the front page does not help with it being personal and engaging from an understanding of the depth/purpose of the website. And while it has a backbone, I feel as though it is slightly bare from an aesthetic perspective, which is why I felt like it lacked a personal experience. The events/projects are also seemingly outdated, so if there were some way to keep it updated, I think that that would be a good draw for people because they would not have to sift through so many outdated projects, which would have frustrated me had I been using it to find a project. I also feel like it lacked being personal to me because the “about” page includes a very general email and number. There is no information about the founders or why it is important to them or how to contact them, so I feel like the heart does not seem as though it is there, which is what would draw me to an organization or something like this website personally.

Recommended Users

I personally think this website would be incredible for collaboration between non-profit organizations and other groups who exist for community service/to meet the needs of the community. I also feel it could be incredibly beneficial for mentor/mentee programs like the Kansas City Public School’s Success Mentoring Program to get involved in. They could advertise the program on CommunityKC, but they could also use it for mentors/mentees to get involved in together. It would really help mentor/mentee relationships to grow while serving the communities that the mentees live in together. It serves as a way to help the students in the program who are at risk of dropping out, failing out, etc. in a more holistic manner.

Summary of Feedback for CommunityKC

While the purpose for the website is wonderful and the backbone is there, it seems to be lacking a personal draw. By updating the projects/adding more current ones and finding a way to make the “about” page and aesthetic of the website more personal, you could potentially increase viewer draw and retention time on the website. In conjunction to that, moving the map to another tab on the website could help to decrease confusion and focus in on the purpose so that visitors can understand and appreciate the purpose and then engage at a greater depth. Overall, the purpose is wonderful and could be incredibly impactful for the local community with some restructuring to increase clarity, draw, and retention.

Appendix C. Student Example Transcript

Hi there! Today, I am so excited to be giving a tutorial on CommunityKC’s website. And I’m so excited because this website CommunityKC is a fantastic tool that aims to connect projects, people and resources. Its vision is for the revitalization of local neighborhoods. Some that might even be in your neck of the woods, which is why I had to give you a tour that will spark awareness and engagement

for CommunityKC's mission and for the betterment of the local communities in Kansas City. If you follow along with my career. So I hope you'll see that this homepage contains this map here. And this map here is a wonderful tool that they have created to help show you the regions in which the projects are located. And then as you can see, there's a key right here to the right, which tells you about the project types.

You have a little guide here telling you about the recently added projects, oops, sorry for that. And you have up here, their logo, their slogan, and the little sections that tell you all of the information that is located on this website. So, it tells you about this map right here. You can see events and you can add the event. You can view all projects out a project and see some frequently asked questions and an about page. We will go over all of these tabs at one point in a moment. Um, you can also see that you can log in to add the event or register to get more information and things of that nature sound here. You have three of the main people who helped to start this website and are working on it. Now, I want to tell you about more about CommunityKC and what it is and what they do.

So, this mapping tool was created to design and was created and designed to help connect people with each other because after all, when you're working on community projects and you're volunteering, things like that, you're better together. When you can add your resources, it will help to go much further than alone. And so they are really trying to identify potential partners and pair them up for greater collaboration within the community. It also helps local people to become more informed of their local projects and the initiatives going on in their neighborhoods or neighborhoods of, out of them. This will help to avoid duplication of efforts, animal help, to network and share information about what's going on so that you can better serve the community. And again, it helps to show you that there are so good things in the world and good people who are just wanting to help people.

It is really just such a great mission and being to be a part of. So, as you can see, I just went over all of this kind of stuff. And there's more about the map and how it was launched when it was launched. You can read more about upcoming and events and what they plan to do next with the website here at this link. And then you can also see that the community projects in this range there from large products, completely redevelop neighborhoods or small projects like community gardens. They really honestly, um, have such a wide range to fit the skills and abilities of people in the local community. Um, really the, the projects highlighted in this map, as you can see here, engage and empower residents to make a difference in the community. Cause honestly, if we can come together and be engaged, we are more likely to do better.

The, the communities in which we live and the ones that are neighbors to us, um, sparks a chain reaction of positive change. And as you can see here on the "about" page, they also have information. So, they have an email that is info@communitykc.org. Again, that is info@communitykc.org that you can contact

them with questions, or you can call them at eight one six five zero two nine two eight or nine five eight, four, I'm sorry. That is nine five eight four. So again, that number is (816) 502-9584. And when you can speak to someone about more questions than you have about this website, you can also visit their FAQ page as shown and you can access it on the link from the about, or you can access it at the top at the taps. And these frequently asked questions are about who should use it.

What is considered a CommunityKC project? How do you use the mapping tool? How can this help my organization to collaborate? Who developed the tool and what are future plans for the tool? And so I'll just run over briefly each of the sections. So who should use it. This map was created for any organization working in the community neighborhood revitalization. So that includes, you know, people who just want to get involved, civic groups, faith-based groups, and computer community improvement districts, and even funding organizations. So it's really just anyone who is looking to engage or has an organization or knows of an organization that is really working to better.

Community projects are ones that occur on a regular basis. To some extent, either annually or monthly or things of that nature. A lot of things, these ones are not. And just once one time, they're really trying to invest in the community. So they should be projects that are occurring on a regular basis. Some examples of that are cleanup events. There are community gardens to help, you know, throughout through the use of a garden that can educate kids who may not have the best access to food or things of that nature on how to grow good produce, and it can help. So that are the communities that don't have as great access to resources. And again, literacy projects, cultural skills, training, things like that. Those are considered community projects. You use the mapping tool. I will give you a little brief overview of it in a second.

And again, it really helps to collaborate. And I really want to highlight that the people who divulged CommunityKC, the majority of them are all are working on this on a volunteer basis. They have a real passion and a heart to invest in this, and they are so excited about it. And I am excited about it too. And to be telling you about it today, now I'm going to give you a brief little tour of the website. So again, on the home page, do you have the map on the map? You can click on any of the numbers and then it will help them spread and show different projects that are within that region. Again, they are color coded and some of them have more than one project type under the events and add an event. You can add an event here. So, your login or your register with one of the following, will help to submit an event and create one that can turn into a project.

And now they have, if the map is kind of like fuzzy for you to work in, they have a project listing, which I love, because if you go, I'll show you the last page of it. There are 11 pages of projects that are going on. And if you click on them like this youth leadership development, one, it gives you the organization type. It gives you the address, the lead person. So name of someone that you can contact and their email address, which is really great. It really helps to connect you direct-

ly to the people who are working the projects. And, and it tells you again, whether it's annual, what kind of project it is like the sole focus is on education and sports programming for Metro kids. The city participants now operate sports leagues and afterschool programs, and they conduct workshops and health nutrition, really serving to be mentors to better the community.

Now I would like to show you how to search for a project by project type. So if we go back to the map, there's a key here that tells you different types of project types. So you can search for a project type. If you're looking for like a capacity building the red ones, as you see here, and, or you can go right here and you can search by say, you want a public health and safety project to work on and be involved in and you can hit, um, I accidentally hit gun map for you. I'm so sorry. You can plug in that project type right here. And you can hit submit when you hit submit once will pop up. So the yellow is public health and safety. And as you see this, the gives the project type listing right here, and the public health and safety is also healthy living or physical activity.

So, it can have different categories and different product types. Like this one is listed under public health and safety. It's a neighborhood crisis response team is something that works on CPR, fire safety, and crime prevention in local communities. That is such an awesome thing to be knowledgeable, knowledgeable about and be conducting workshops on. So it's super exciting. And just, again, as a reminder, the project types can be more than one. So if you see a color, you're not thinking that's what it is. It probably is there. And like this project right here is also public health and safety it's, um, garden farm, which is really awesome. Again for the betterment of the community. Now, if you down like the map, you can go to the list view right here, or you can have you all projects. So I'm going to click go to the list view.

And on the last few, you can do the exact same thing. Public health and health and safety hits the net and the projects will pop up and improve deliverability. You have safe routes to school or things of that nature. Um, again, in the emergency response team, community, garden, redevelopment, crosswalk, and healthy campus, different things that are really aiming to spark change in the communities. And so, again, this is the CommunityKC website. I just really want to reiterate to you on their "about" page, that the project highlighted are to engage and empower residents, to make a difference in their community. These people are volunteers they're truly wanting to connect people and resources and to spark change and create a better life for future generations. If you have any, if this tutorial like left gaps or questions or things like that, please feel free to contact us at info@communitykc.org. Again, that is info@communitykc.org or call at (816) 502-9584. Again, that night number is (816) 502-9584. I really appreciate you watching this and I hope you will. I hope this has helped to increase your awareness about the projects going on in local communities in Kansas City. Thank you. Have a great day!