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INLS 718 Group Presentation  
4/22/2018



# Sakai Forum Tool

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# Conceptual Model



# Scope and Goals of Forum Tool

- Allow instructors to hold online discussions for their classes
- Give students a place to respond to course materials and each other
- Grade and give feedback to students from instructors



# System Design Goals

- Improve navigation
- Reduce confusion over function of various parts of tool
- Improve aesthetics
- Make grading easier within tool

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# The Users of the System



# Users

- Students
  - Range of computer literacy, expected to be at least novice
  - Have high school education or more
  - Working toward degree
  - Taking class(es) that make(s) use of Sakai Forums, usually for a grade
- Instructors
  - Range of computer literacy, expected to be at least novice
  - Teach in person and online courses
  - Use Sakai forum to enable online discussion for multiple, varying objectives
- Student Instructors (ex. TAs)
  - Grad students taking and teaching classes
  - Hybrid

# Personas

- Stacey
  - English Professor
  - Novice computer user, skilled with certain systems
  - Finds using Sakai forums time consuming
  - Goal: Enrich students' knowledge of English lit
- Larissa
  - Undergraduate Psychology Student
  - Skilled computer user
  - Sakai forums are frequently used in her online classes
  - Goal: Pass all of her courses and graduate
- John
  - TA
  - Experience using Sakai forums as a student
  - Gets frustrated with the complexity of creating discussions on Sakai



(Photo by Flickr user: [dr.coop](#))



CollegeDegrees360, "A female College Student in the park on a summer day" February 18, 2018 via Flickr, Creative Commons Attribution





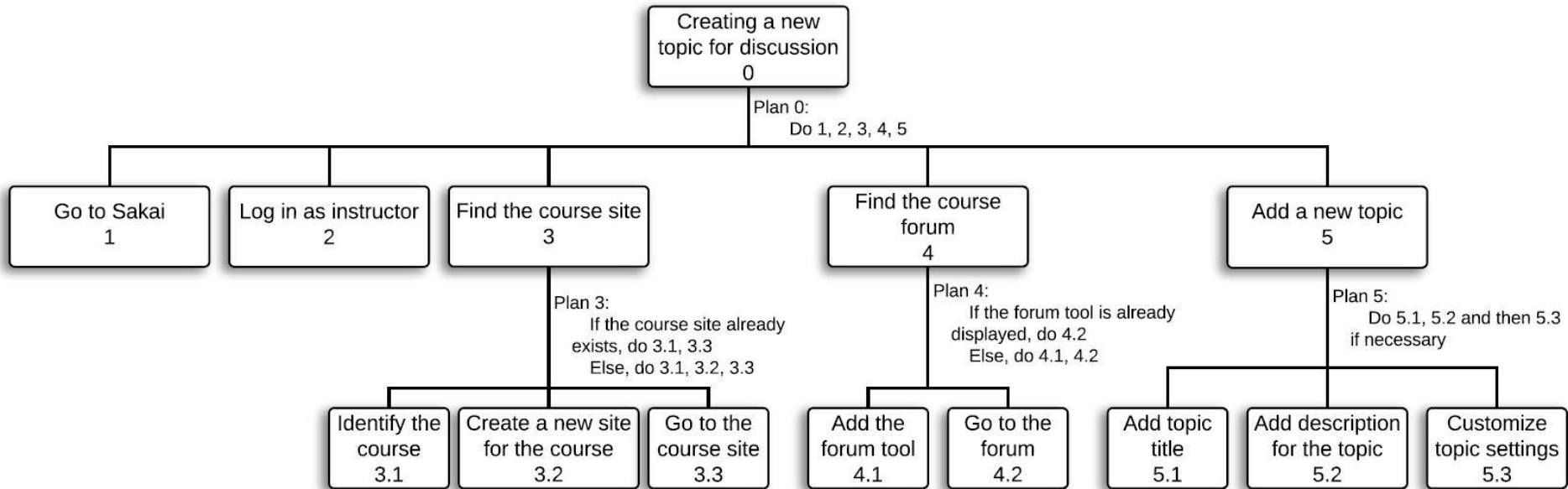


# User Research

- Usability tests
  - 2 Faculty members
  - 2 Students
  - Tested people who hadn't used Sakai before in the demographics for Sakai users
- Experience working w/Sakai

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# The Task Being Supported by the System





# Scenarios for Sakai Forum

- Add a new topic
  - John
    - Clicks new topic
    - Fills in Assignment info
    - Checks box so students can't read other topics till they post
- Create new conversation
  - Larissa
    - Spends several minutes looking for the right button to click
    - Types in her response to the reading
    - Posts reply



# Scenarios for Sakai Forum cont.

- Grade student responses
  - Stacey
    - Clicks on “Statistics & Grading”
    - Wishes it would take her straight to “Statistics & Grading by Topic”, instead of by user, Clicks button to get there
    - Selects the topic she wants to grade
    - Enters in the grade and topic she wrote by hand for each student



# Task Characteristics

- **Task:** Creating a new topic for discussion
  - Created at the beginning of the semester.
  - Frequency depends on course design.
  - Task not complex but difficult due to terminology and design problems.
  - Mandatory for online courses, optional for face-to-face
  - Higher Ed context: task takes place in offices or at home
  - Support is provide through online help and support personnel

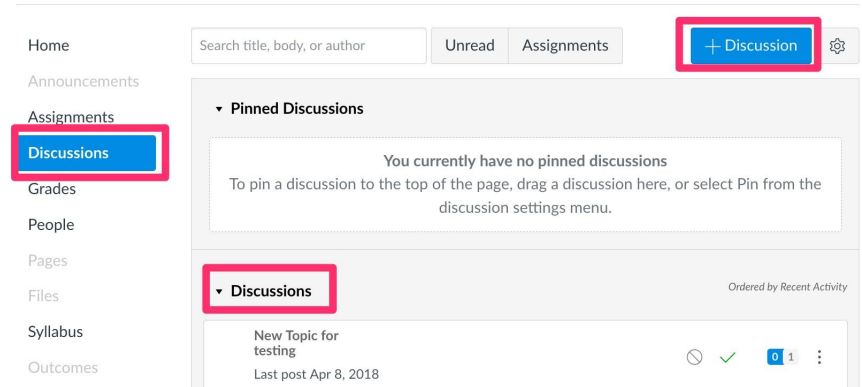
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# Interface Design Decisions



# Improving Terminology

- Renamed tool to Discussions, renamed Topic task to Discussion
  - Consistent with natural language
  - Consistent with other tools
  - Reduces terms used to describe similar tasks
  - Reducing options is more efficient and reduces cognitive load.



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**Discussions**

Grades

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Assignments

**+ Discussion**

**▼ Pinned Discussions**

You currently have no pinned discussions

To pin a discussion to the top of the page, drag a discussion here, or select Pin from the discussion settings menu.

**▼ Discussions**

Ordered by Recent Activity

New Topic for testing

Last post Apr 8, 2018

🕒 ✓ 0 1 ⋮





# Improving Terminology

- Changed save options for creating a new topic to Cancel, Save & Publish, Save
  - Fewer options are needed to accomplish the tasks required.
  - Reducing options is more efficient and reduces cognitive load.

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Cancel

Save & Publish

Save



# Accordion Design for Advanced Options

- Collapse advanced options by default
  - Minimize users' effort to scroll
- Add chevron icons to indicate collapse/expand
  - Choosing right icons and locations reduces task time
  - Aesthetically appealing
- Give users the option to expand/collapse any or all
  - Inform users of what options they have with simple words
  - Filter extra details of what user do not need to see

expand all | collapse all

▼ Attachments

▼ Topic Posting

▲ Availability

Show immediately

Specify dates to open (show) and/or close (hide)

▼ Grading



# Update Breadcrumb Trail and Remove Button

[Forums](#) / [Discussion 2 SMPL101 Forum](#) / General Discussion 



- Replaced / with >
  - Conform to web standards
  - Improve aesthetics with flat design
- Remove button for simplicity
  - Users didn't use it
  - Repeats the functionality of the hyperlinks in the breadcrumb trail



# Update Grading Integration
















- Combined Statistics and Grading into a single screen
  - Having this data in a single place reduces recall
  - A single place for grading is more efficient

← Discussion Participation & Grades

STUDENT	PARTICIPATION	GRADE	PT
 Chris Casper	1 Comment   No Replies	-- / 20	0
 Zoe Spooner	1 Comment   No Replies	-- / 20	0
 Bruce Lopez	No Comments   1 Reply	-- / 20	0

# Improve Aesthetics with Flat Design 2.0

- Implement metaphor/ icons/ colors that focus on functionality.
  - Functions are well identified
- Utilize Flat Design 2.0 to improve visual navigation.
  - Content hierarchy is clearer
  - Visually appealing

FORUM		SMPL202 Spring 2017		Topics	Posts	Last post by
	<b>Week 1 Discussion</b> In week 1, we focus on analyzing the design issues existing in the current systems.	  	10	23	 <b>Jacob Young</b>	
	<b>Week 2 Discussion</b> This week, we go through different readings and discuss how to improve design styles.	  	7	19	 <b>Mike Adams</b>	
	<b>General Discussion</b> Ask any questions you have about the course and assignments here.	  	2	4	 <b>Linda Smith</b>	

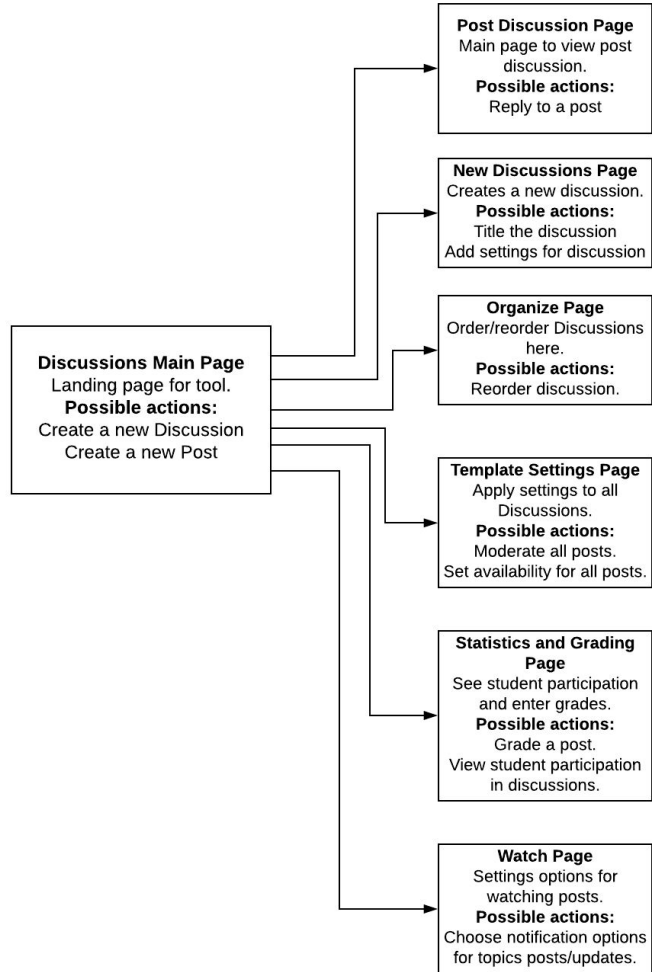
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# Interface Design Descriptions

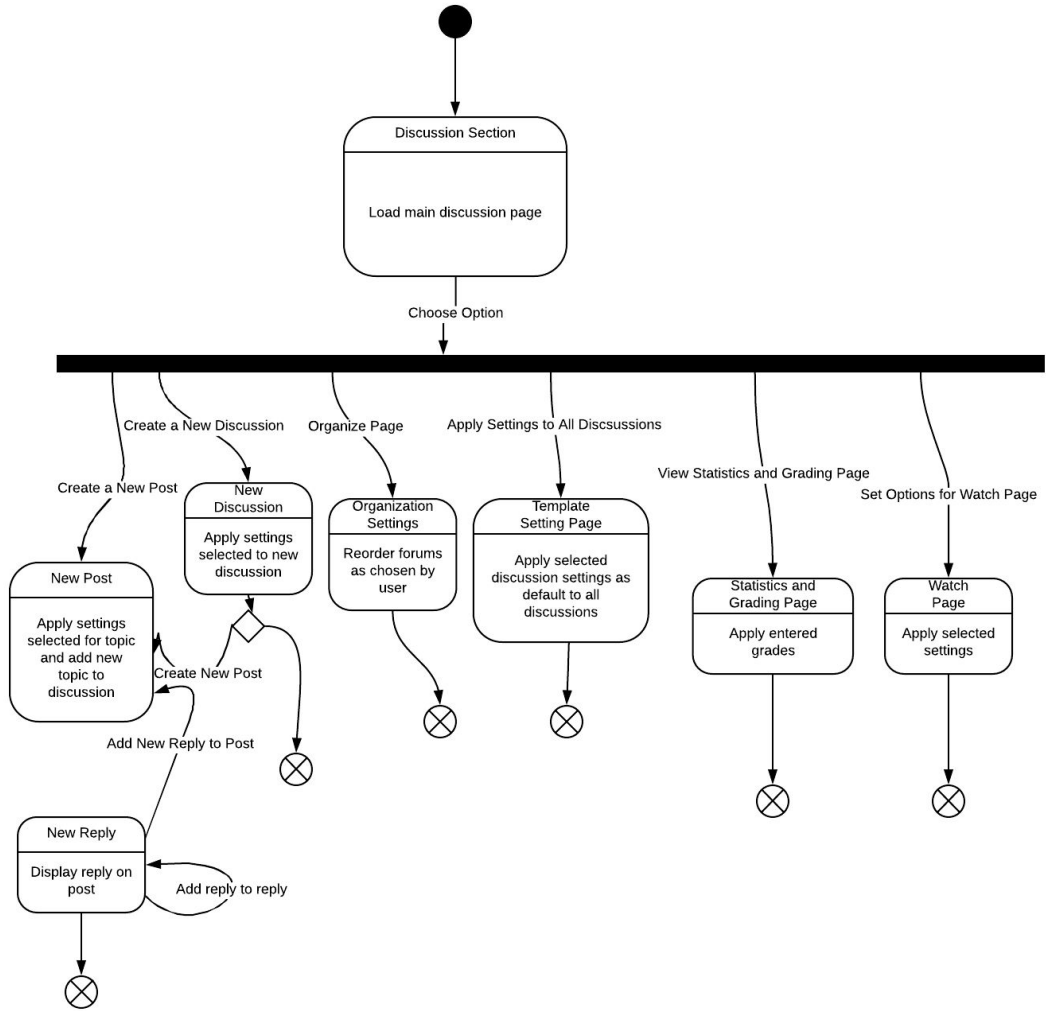


# System Architecture

- Diagram showing functionality of system
- Simplified state diagram
  - Show flows for different states of system
  - Simplified for readability, possible to transition back and forth between states









# Prototype

- Photoshop
- High Fidelity - Show flat design ideas
- Meant for usability testing



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ORGANIZE

TEMPLATE SETTINGS

STATISTICS &amp; GRADING

WATCH

NEW DISCUSSION

POSTS

LAST POST BY



Week 1 Discussion



23



Jacob Y.

For week 1, we will discuss the design issues existing in the current system.



Week 2 Discussion



16



Tony S.

This week, we go through different topics on design principles and discuss readings listed in the resources section.



General Discussion



4



Emily S.

Ask any questions you have about the course and assignments here.



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INLS718.001.SP18 &gt; Discussions &gt; Grading &amp; Statistics

Select a discussion: Week 1 Discussion ▾

STUDENT	POSTS	REPLIES	GRADE	COMMENT
Julian A.	3	5	<input type="text" value="92"/> / 100	<input type="text"/>
Emily C.	2	10	<input type="text"/> / 100	<input type="text"/>
Kim H.	7	8	<input type="text"/> / 100	<input type="text"/>
Michael K.	3	3	<input type="text"/> / 100	<input type="text"/>
Tony S.	5	2	<input type="text"/> / 100	<input type="text"/>
Jacob Y.	7	9	<input type="text"/> / 100	<input type="text"/>

Apply to all Ungraded

Save

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## DISCUSSION SETTINGS

INLS718.001.SP18 &gt; Discussions &gt; Discussion Settings

Required items marked with \*

\* Discussion Title

Short Description

Discription

▼ Attachments

[expand all](#) | [collapse all](#)

▼ Posting

▲ Availability

 Show immediately Specify dates to open (show) and/or close (hide)

▼ Grading

▼ Permissions

Cancel

Save &amp; Publish

Save



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NEW POST

DISPLAY CONTENT

POST SETTINGS

DELETE POST


PRINT

INLS718.001.SP18 &gt; Discussions &gt; Week 1 Discussion

## Week 1 Discussion

For week 1, we will discuss the design issues existing in the current system.

POST	POST BY	DATE
Lack of consistency	Jacob Y.	March 21, 2018 1:49 PM
Some text seems redundant	Andy L.	March 20, 2018 7:10 PM
I feel frustrated with the system...	Michael K.	March 20, 2018 9:27 AM
The navigation is horrible!	Emily C.	March 19, 2018 3:55 PM
Just too much information	Julian A.	March 19, 2018 1:22 PM

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NEW POST

DISPLAY CONTENT

POST SETTINGS

DELETE POST

PRINT

INLS718.001.SP18 &gt; Discussions &gt; Week 1 Discussion &gt; Lack of consistency



## Lack of consistency

Jacob Y. | March 21, 2018 1:49 PM

Reply

Email

Grade

Edit

Delete

This system gives me the impression that the overall design is not at all consistent. When I tried it out as a user, everything just seemed to be in different styles and was constantly changing. It bothers me. Does anyone feel the same?



## Re: Lack of consistency

Yuki T. | March 22, 2018 7:58 AM

Reply

Email

Grade

Edit

Delete

I feel the same way. While browsing through different places in the system, the navigation bar goes missing sometimes, and then appears again. Colors schemes are not consistent either with buttons flying around. I guess that's why it takes much time for users to find the right button to click.



## Re: Lack of consistency

Kim H. | March 22, 2018 11:13 AM

Reply

Email

Grade

Edit

Delete

That's one of the common issues with system design. I also find it annoying though.



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DISPLAY CONTENT

POST SETTINGS

DELETE POST

PRINT

INLS718.001.SP18 &gt; Discussions &gt; Week 1 Discussion &gt; Lack of consistency



## Lack of consistency

Jacob Y. | March 21, 2018 1:49 PM

Reply

Email

Grade

Edit

Delete

This system gives me the impression that the overall design is not at all consistent. When I tried it out as a user, everything just seemed to be in different styles and was constantly changing. It bothers me. Does anyone feel the same?

Reply Title

Text

Add attachments

Post



## Re: Lack of consistency

Yuki T. | March 22, 2018 7:58 AM

Reply

Email

Grade

Edit

Delete

I feel the same way. While browsing through different places in the system, the navigation bar goes missing sometimes, and then appears again. Colors schemes





Questions?