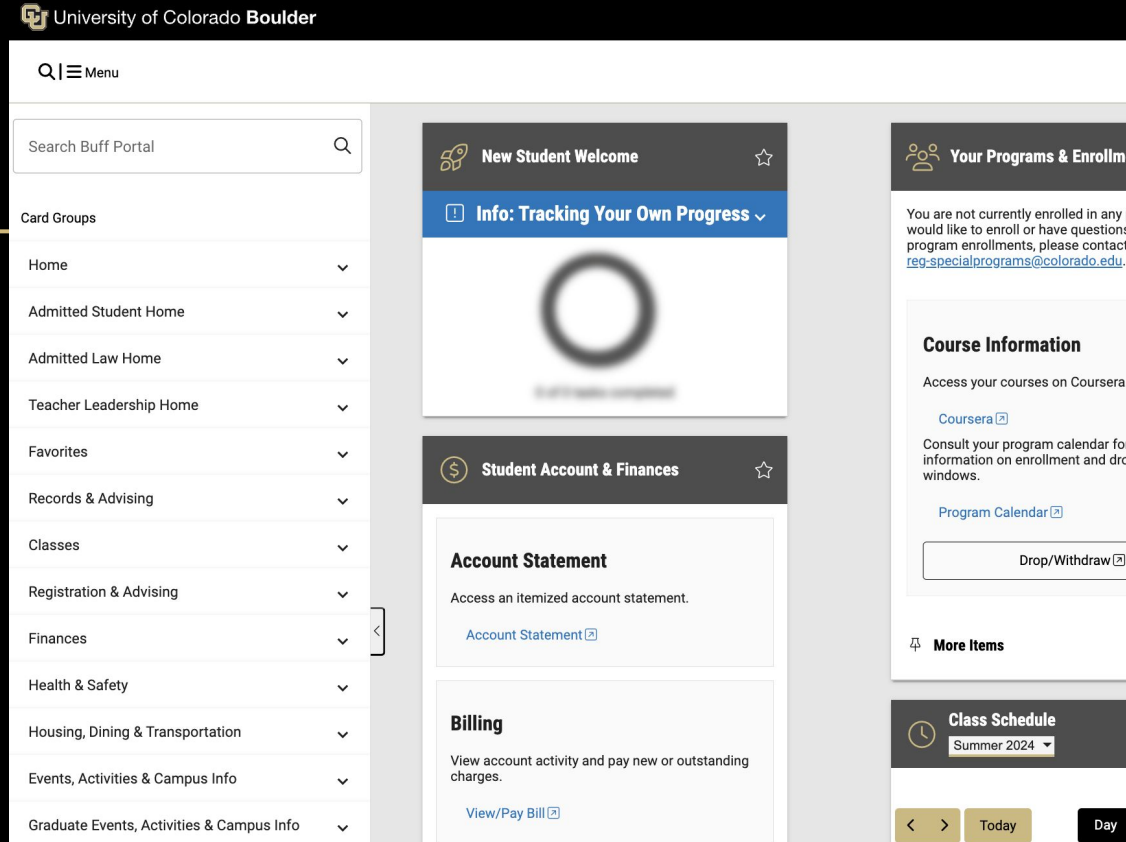


Information Architecture in Buff Portal at CU Boulder

A Case Study
by Chelsy Albertson



Project Overview



The product:

Buff Portal (BP) - CU Boulder's official student portal



Project duration:

June 2023 - Nov. 2023

Central Question



How can we make the IA of BP more navigable?

[Note: Ongoing data that is collected by our team showed that students at CU think Buff Portal is not easy to navigate, which prompted this IA overhaul.]

Project Overview



My role:

UX Content Designer & Researcher



Methods:

Card Sort

Surveys

Thematic Analysis



Responsibilities:

Analyze past research on Buff Portal IA

Create Card Sort in Optimal

Recruit participants and craft messaging

Conduct follow-up surveys to Card Sort

Conduct internal Card Sort on UX Team

Synthesize and analyze results

Implement IA changes

Hurdles



The team did not easily agree on if we can put more than (7 +/- 2) items within each nav menu group, because it would deviate from historical BP practices.



Some campus departments expressed concern if they believed their information was not centered enough in the new IA approach.

Solution Approaches to Hurdles



I researched current UX literature and community forums to gather data on if (7 +/- 2) items in nav menus is still considered the best approach to IA navigation for online platforms. I found that it is considered a bit of an outdated approach, and that each UX team should consider their unique platform's functionality and purpose, first and foremost.



Our UX Team met with concerned campus departments to listen to them, collaborate with them, and find solutions that combined user-focused information architecture with their business and communication needs.

Impact



An improved, concise IA in Buff Portal based on student input

More precise naming conventions which improve findability

Positive feedback from students about the changes

Many student
participants told us
that they liked knowing
their input matters.

What I learned



I learned how to build and conduct a Card Sort study.

I learned that it's ok to pivot during a study if something isn't working.

I learned to negotiate and collaborate with important stakeholders to ensure widely beneficial outcomes.

The End

Q | Menu

Search Buff Portal

Q

Card Groups

Home

Admitted Student Home

Admitted Law Home

Teacher Leadership Home

Favorites

Records & Advising

Classes

Registration & Advising

Finances

Health & Safety

Housing, Dining & Transportation

Events, Activities & Campus Info

Graduate Events, Activities & Campus Info

Professional Development

All Cards

New Student Welcome

Info: Tracking Your Own Progress

Student Account & Finances

Account Statement

Access an itemized account statement.

Account Statement

Billing

View account activity and pay new or outstanding charges.

View/Pay Bill

Refunds

Expecting a refund? Follow drop/withdraw deadlines and set up direct deposit.

Direct Deposit

1098-T Tax Forms

Your Programs & Enrollment

You are not currently enrolled in any programs. If you would like to enroll or have questions related to your program enrollments, please contact reg-specialprograms@colorado.edu.

Course Information

Access your courses on Coursera.

Coursera

Consult your program calendar for more information on enrollment and drop/withdrawal windows.

Program Calendar

Drop/Withdraw

More Items

Class Schedule

Summer 2024

Waitlisted

Today

Day

5-Day

List

July 22 - 26

	Mon 7/22	Tue 7/23	Wed 7/24	Thu 7/25	Fri 7/26
Other					
8 AM					
9 AM					
10 AM					