Personas

Fictional characters used to represent our core users. Your prototypes should address their needs—you will decide how to prioritize their needs.

Prospective Percy

Percy
Age: 28
Occupation: Marketing Associate
Location: Denver, CO

Goals
- Interested in finding a graduate program that will allow him to occupy a technical role at a software company and eventually move into a leadership position.
- Wants to know career paths available to him when completing a cs masters program and if it's worth the investment of time and money.
- Wants to find a fulfilling and engaging next step in his career that will give him job security and allow him to support a family in the future.

Curious About
- What's the experience of a student like (full time, part-time)?
- What's the experience of a graduate like? Is there a large spectrum?
- Is it hard to find a job after you graduate? What's the process like?
- What classes are available?
- Can he specialize based on his interests?
- What are the instructors like?

Frustrations
- Difficult time knowing the types of jobs available after getting a CS masters degree and if it's worth investing the time and money in graduate school.
- Concerned that background skills may not have prepared him for a switch into a CS program—has never programmed before.
- Is overwhelmed by the number of options for post-secondary CS education—bootcamps, workshops, masters programs—it's unclear which path to take.

Bio
Studied biology and philosophy in college. Doesn't like his current job at a marketing agency and knows software is eating the world—there are tons of jobs at software companies and some of his friends talk about how they enjoy their jobs as engineers or product managers. He enjoys reading fantasy novels, volunteers at a local hospital a few times a month, and likes to ride his bike outdoors for exercise and commuting.

Student Samantha

Samantha
Age: 30
Occupation: Full-time MPCS student
Location: Chicago, IL

Goals
- Wants to succeed in her classes and make the most of her 12 months enrolled as a student in order to land a job at an algorithmic trading firm in downtown Chicago.
- Would like to make sure the classes she takes are the ones that will be most effective for her career, providing her with foundational knowledge and skills she can rely on for years to come.
- Wants to connect with other students professionally and socially in order to deepen her experience on campus and create a strong network for post graduation.

Frustrations
- The information she's looking for on the MPCS website is generally not available directly on the homepage and requires at least one or two page loads, plus scrolling.
- Has to manage multiple websites for classes—sometimes it can be difficult to know where to go, with all of the different campus websites she has to manage herself.
- Receives a lot of emails and sometimes misses information on events, social gatherings, and on-campus interviews.
- It can be difficult to get into the classes she wants with the current course registration system—she doesn't feel like she can make a compelling case to take classes that will be critical to her future..
- She doesn't know that many people in the program and would like to know more about each class, directly from students, so she knows the difficulty level, time commitment, quality of instructor, etc.
- Sometimes taking 3 classes can be stressful and she doesn't know what campus resources are available to her to help her with stress management and wellness.
- Is nervous about job interviews in the spring and doesn't know how she should start preparing.
- When she's on her phone she needs information quickly—usually about classes at the beginning or end of the quarter to help her find where they're located and plan her next quarter.

Bio

Samantha just finished taking the immersion courses over the summer. She has an MBA and decided to enroll in this program so she can work on a technical team at a financial trading firm in Chicago. She's ambitious and extremely driven, knowing that a high GPA will give her a chance to interview with her top employers. She does yoga exercises at home a few times a week and enjoys seeing movies at the on campus theater, Doc Films.

Administrator Alaina

Alaina
Age: 44
Occupation: University Administrator
Location: Chicago, IL

Goals
- Create a positive experience for current students and ensure they are all successful in the program and fulfill their post-graduation goals.
- Recruit prospective students to the MPCS and grow the program over time.
- Manages the admissions process and recruits students that are the best fit for this program.

Frustrations
- Answers the same questions often from both current and prospective students about programs of study, degree requirements, details about specific courses, on-campus resources, and hiring resources.
- Email is her main mode of communication and wishes some of the things she does could be automated or scaled in some way so that she doesn't have to send emails all day.
- Has to create and maintain websites and marketing materials for existing and prospective students as the program evolves, classes change, and new student needs arise.
- Finds it difficult to engage alumni to create a strong network for current and future students in the program.

Bio

Alaina is from the east coast and came to Chicago because she wanted to be closer to family and find a stable job at a large institution. She loves working with students—helping them achieve their goals, overcome obstacles, or motivate them to aim higher. She knows how quickly computer science is growing around the world and wants to ensure her program remains relevant, useful, and compelling to current and prospective students. Alaina exercises on her treadmill at home, has two young children, and is a huge fan of college basketball.

Persona needs addressed -

Prospective Percy
- What are the instructors like
- What Classes are available
- What's the process to find a job after graduation (Networking with alumni and career counseling)
- Address concern about never having programmed before

Student Samantha
- Enable her to connect with other students professionally and socially in order to deepen her experience on campus and create a strong network for post graduation
- Information as a weekly calendar to help organise with all the events happening on the campus

- Information about classes of this quarter and the next as quick links
- Guidance on career preparation through career counselling.
- Information about each class and instructor through previous students enrolled in the course

Administrator Alaina
- Help her answer repeated questions with link to FAQs
- Engage alumni through an alumni page