Focus Group Study for the UB Portal Site

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A summary of discussions conducted at the CCTS office on February 17th, 2005.

Overview

The School of Information Arts and Technology, through its Research Methods class, held three focus group sessions to assist the University in its redesign of the MyUB portal.

Objectives

1. Assess which services students need most.
2. Assess how students are currently using MyUB and other online, school-related sites and services.
3. Assess which school-related services students would like to be able to access online that are not currently available.
4. Determine how to make online services more accessible and usable for UB students.

Methods

Twenty-one participants, all currently enrolled in classes at UB, were divided into three groups of seven. There were twelve women and nine men. Eleven participants identified themselves as graduate students, seven as undergraduates, and three did not report their status. Participants ranged in age from twenty to sixty.

During the meetings, participants discussed their experiences performing school-related tasks using UB websites, particularly MyUB. We asked participants to name and discuss school-related activities they currently do online, activities they have wanted to do but were unable to for whatever reason, and activities they would like to be able to do in the future.

A copy of the focus group discussion guide (Appendix B) and a table outlining our participants' demographics (Appendix A) are included at the end of the report.

Results

While participants expressed a desire and in many cases a need to use online services, there was a significant amount of frustration over their understanding of the tools provided by MyUB, the time it took to perform tasks, and the occurrence of errors and failures that required them to call or go to campus. Despite this frustration, participants did express a desire for more services online. When the group was asked if there was anything they currently do online which they would prefer to do on campus and in person, they responded by shaking their heads and with a chorus of comments such as "No–why?" and "Not if I don't have to!" Many noted that they have difficulty coming to campus during business hours. They saw web services as a great time-saver that could potentially spare them inconvenient trips, telephone calls, and standing in line. For these reasons, being able to access online services easily, quickly and efficiently is critical.

What Do Students Currently Do Online?

At the beginning of the discussion, participants were asked to identify school activities they regularly performed online. The most frequently mentioned were:

- Checking grades
- Checking account balance and paying bills
- Registering for classes (including checking schedules and class status)
- Browsing campus events (including the campus calendar)
- Accessing and using Prometheus

Other common activities included:

- Using e-mail
- Downloading forms
- Submitting timesheets
- Changing a password
- Changing personal information
- Performing research (using the library, Lexus Nexus, and Weslaw)

Students also mentioned going online to learn more about the school and its services, and buying books.

What Do Students Wish They Could Do Online?

We also asked participants to tell us about activities they wished they could do online, but currently cannot.

Participants wished they could build community and communicate more effectively through discussion boards, chat rooms, and resources for departments and student organizations. In general, many participants did not appear to be aware of existing listservs (such as Astro), and asked for easy-to-use mailing lists and discussion boards as a means to control what kinds of e-mail they receive from the school. Discussion boards were also seen as a way of reducing the bureaucracy of getting permission to use UB email to reach the community-at-large.

Participants also wanted to be able to:

- Actively search a faculty directory for contact information and office hours
- Have centralized access to UB departments, as well as colleges throughout the University System
- Access major-specific job postings
- Apply for graduation
- Order a parking pass
- Manage their identification cards (library, validation)
- Have online interaction with advisors: make an appointment online, view the advisors' schedules, get advisors' phone numbers, and receive confirmation or cancellation of an appointment.
- Apply for a bookstore credit

What Are Students' Priorities?

In summary, participants' primary concerns were:

- Clear and efficient navigation
- Integration of UB services
- Managing user ID's and passwords
- Searching, browsing, and registering for courses
- Instructions
- Accurate information
- Managing e-mail
- Fostering a sense of community
- Accessing research services
- Accessing financial account information
- Managing personal information
- Accessing grades

Key Recommendations

1. What should be on the portal homepage?

We asked participants to review all of the features and services they had discussed during the course of the focus group–whether these were currently available online or not–and asked them to choose the top six things they wanted to have access to from the MyUB Portal. The following list of links is by no means exhaustive, and only represents the most popular ideas. For a proposal of what the content and organization of the MyUB homepage could be like, please see the screen mockup included with this report (Appendix C).

- Browse and register for classes
- Financial account information
- Check grades
- E-mail
- Change password
- Prometheus
- Libraries
- Community-oriented services, such as news, mailing lists, and discussion boards
- Look up faculty and staff
- Get parking passes

2. Navigation and Labeling

When portal features are self-explanatory they can be used with the minimum of help and documentation. Place the most important and frequently accessed components or navigation elements on every page and at locations where viewers will find them immediately. Redesign tasks to be accessible with the fewest clicks. Use descriptive, everyday language for links and menus to let users know where they will go or what will happen when they click.

> **Quote:** *"…as a student, I'm interested in 'find your transcript,' 'how to register,'… I don't want to have to click through…I don't even know what 'SA self serve' is… this is confusing."*

Needless clicks caused by poorly marked navigational paths, unintuitive hierarchical structures, and imprecise labeling all frustrate users and waste time.

3. Integration of Services

While we realize that it is not feasible or even possible to truly integrate systems from different vendors (some of which are used by the entire University System), clear, easy access to all major systems could be provided on the MyUB homepage.

The portal should make student research easier by featuring links to various research resources. Students wanted quick access to the research databases and card catalogs available on the Langsdale and law library sites as well as access to other school databases in the University of System of Maryland.
Allow users complete online access to their personal and demographic information, and provide line-item explanations of charges in users' online accounts.
Students repeatedly expressed frustration with the number of usernames and passwords they had to keep track of. This complaint is a symptom of MyUB's inability to connect to or interact with other online services.

> **Quote:** *"If MyUB would be the portal to Prometheus, that would be great. If MyUB would be the portal to the library, that would be great. But in each case you have to log in….And each class has a separate password to get to your course [reading] reserve list [at the library]."*

4. Changing, Using, and Resetting Passwords

No one can underestimate the need for security, which includes regularly changing passwords. However, in this case we may be experiencing too much of a good thing. Participants said that login failures were a major frustration before someone finally told them that passwords expire every 180 days. This creates situations in which students find they cannot register for classes after a semester or summer off.
Passwords should not be changed without user solicitation. Instead, notify users that their passwords will expire and should be changed within a specified window of time which takes the school calendar into account.
Provide students with a clear and easily accessible means of changing their password online.

> **Quote:** *"…[It's frustrating] when you're trying to register for a class… and you go on and your password's changed and you don't know what to do. That's happened to me."*

5. Searching, Browsing, and Registering for Courses

Redesign the course browsing/registration search interfaces to conform to visual and functional standards most often encountered on the internet, including simple searches by keyword. Create an interface or tool for

browsing the entire course catalog. For example, a link such as "Browse by Department" followed by a page listing UB departments would allow students to explore course offerings more easily.
The class schedule should be posted on both the UB website and on MyUB to make it more accessible.

> **Quote:** *"The first time I enrolled in classes I had no idea as to what I was doing and had to call in to enroll–I know how to do it now, but [only] after someone gave me instructions [on] how to do it".*

> **Quote:** *"The class schedule they have online, it's a little…it's a lot quirky. What number do I put in?"*

6. Help

Effectively implemented help will make students more self-sufficient and reduce calls to the Help Desk. Although the UB website offers many pages of instructions for using MyUB (via a link to "Instructions for using MyUB" it was striking how often students were unaware of their existence. Our recommendation is to make instructions for specific tasks (register for classes, check grades, etc.) available at the point in MyUB where students are trying to complete those tasks. For example, provide a link to instructions for checking grades on the grade checking page. The list of task-specific instructions currently accessible from the login page might be more visible to students if included on the page students see after logging in.

Consider providing a short tutorial to guide new users to the features of the portal and how to use them can be made accessible. There should be a quick way to see frequently asked questions as well as a way to post new questions that have not yet been answered.

7. Accurate Information

Integrating UB systems and establishing more thorough checks on information accuracy would significantly improve the convenience and efficiency of the University's online services, but these are longterm goals. In the meantime, incorporate an easy way for students to report inaccurate data or to ask questions via a link to contact a Records department staff member.

8. E-Mail and Community-Building

Since it may not be feasible to revamp the current email system, a reasonable alternative is to foreground the forwarding feature that currently exists, thereby providing students with an easy way to integrate UB email with accounts they already use. Although there is a link to the forwarding feature on the email login page, this feature also needs to be easily available once students have logged in.

Provide students with an easily accessible means of managing subscriptions, such as a page where students can see a list of which mailing lists are available and which types of messages they would like to receive.

Allowing students to filter their e-mail and control subscriptions will ensure that they receive vital feedback from UB and not regard it as junk mail.

Message boards where members of the community can post various academic and social topics could be used to bring together the entire UB community, allowing 'commuter students' to overcome barriers of time and space.

These recommendations are based on the following problem areas described by participants during the discussion.

Expectations, Concerns, and Difficulties

The discussion revealed several areas in which the organization and capabilities of the UB websites did not match participants' expectations of what they should be able to do or how online services should work. These areas are detailed below.

1. Navigation and Labeling

A significant concern cited by the participants was the difficulty of navigating MyUB, particularly given the little time that students had to spend on anything outside of class. Our discussions made it clear that in many instances information was not easily available, or that it required a lot of clicking to get anywhere.

Many participants felt that the labels used on the MyUB site were unintuitive. They reported finding their way through trial and error and calling the Help Desk. They also described having to memorize where everything was and what everything did. When there was a long enough period between uses, the memory of the proper navigation route faded and they had to learn again.

> **Example:** *One participant pointed out that the link to reset an expired password was labeled "Forgot My Password." If the user has received the system message that their password has expired, it might not occur to them to click on that link unless someone tells them (e.g., after a Help Desk call) or as a last resort.*

> **Example:** *It was frequently suggested that the MyUB 'main' page should contain "quick links"; links that lead directly to most frequently used functions such as "check grades" and "register for classes".*

> **Quote:** *"When you log in, [it would be better if] you get like a quick summary of the most important information [read: links] right there."*

> **Example/Quote:** *One student pointed out that a page of quick links was in fact available inside the MyUB portal, but was difficult to find. Many students did not realize this page existed:*
>
> *Participant 1: "I just wanted to say… this page provides you with quick links to everything."*
> *Participant 2: "Where's that?"*
> *Participant 1: "It's hidden."*
> *Participant 2: "See? All I want is something like that!"*

> **Quote:** *"As a grad assistant, I had to do my time sheet and that is a disaster… You have to keep going and going and going to submenu and submenu…"*

Some participants wanted to be able to customize the MyUB portal, for example with a list of most frequently used links. We believe that the desire for this type of customization may be a symptom of the navigation difficulties described above. Participants want to customize their MyUB interface because they cannot easily access the services and tools they need most. Clear, effective navigation and labeling will benefit all users without the need for yet another tool to learn.

2. Integration of UB Services

The lack of integration among MyUB, Prometheus, and the Library was another source of frustration. Participants strongly wanted to be able to access major services in one place.

> **Example:** *A participant pointed out what he called the "disconnect" between MyUB, Prometheus, and the Library systems. He expressed frustration at the lack of line items in MyUB's billing system. He once saw additional fees on his account, but had no idea what they were, and had to call the Business Office for more information. It turned out they were library fines.*
>
> *He also told us: "I couldn't do a keyword search on 'Prometheus' and find the Prometheus website. I had to know exactly what the Prometheus URL was so I could get to it–I couldn't do that." Another participant agreed, explaining that she had a similar experience: "I shouldn't have to go looking for it," she said.*

Password and login management were a related concern. Many participants wished for a single login and password for MyUB, the Library, and Prometheus. With so many separate sites and portals in the university network, the number of usernames and passwords that someone has to keep track of and remember was frustrating to many users–especially to newer and many non-traditional students.

> **Quote:** *Participant 1: "… there are too many ID's: MyUB is different, e-mail is different, Prometheus is different."*
>
> *Participant 2: "There's another one: e-Recruiting."*
> *[Someone else brings up another login for the Langsdale library].*

> **Quote:** *"I have two passwords and it depends which way you go in the thing–the new one worked only on certain instances and the old one on others. Depending on what I am trying to do, I have two separate passwords."*

> **Quote:** *"If you're not careful, you'll have a password for every individual process."*

> **Example:** *After some comments/gripes about the frustration of needing separate passwords and usernames for some different UB sites, one member explained that that was because each [portal] existed on its own network and was not a part of the whole.*

3. Changing, Using, and Resetting Passwords

Participants did not like that their passwords can and have been reset without request or notification, and that they cannot change passwords to what they want without Help Desk intervention. They also commented on the difficulties and delays in getting new passwords for MyUB and rallied for a simple and easy way to change a password.

> **Quote:** *"Once I tried to change my password–it took me five days."*

> **Quote:** *They changed my password! Without even telling me!…It was a bunch of numbers!"*

4. Searching, Browsing and Registering for Courses

Many participants had significant difficulty with finding and registering for courses online.

> **Quote:** *"It has been frustrating and takes a lot of time that is precious to students. I don't know about you, but I don't think I have that time."*

> **Example:** *A participant mentioned that the system did not provide her with feedback about why she was unable to enroll. She learned that the class was full only when she arrived on campus.*

Participants were often unsure of how to use the search interface to find the information they needed. For example, participants frequently assumed that semester and class codes had to be looked up or memorized prior to using the interface. None of the participants indicated they knew they could search on a blank field, or that they used the lookup feature. Many said they didn't feel they could simply browse for a class.

> **Quote:** *"There are times when you have to match things exactly…"*

> **Example:** *One participant described a time when he wanted to register for class but did not know the semester code. He did not know how to look it up, and had to call campus the next day for help.*

A search interface that often requires several pieces of highly specific information in order to conduct a search can be cumbersome:

> **Quote:** *"If you want to search for a particular class, there's at least one menu [screen] that requires you to enter two selections [form fields to search on?], and the selections they give you [aren't] relevant to the selection process of finding a class you need…Just give me the course, the different sections and times, and I'll choose it there."*

Instead of relying on semester and course codes, participants wanted to be able to search using keywords or topics (e.g. Sociology) meaningful to them. At various points in the search process, they also seemed to expect or hope for a list or menu of relevant items from which they could choose.

> **Quote:** *"I also didn't understand the function of advanced search because it didn't do anything as far as I could tell. It seemed to me like that they would give you a drop down window [menu] or a smart window or something so you could have an item to pick, but it did not."*

Several participants shared a method of coping with the system: they would print the PDF of the course catalog to find the numbers they needed to enter to search for courses and register online. However, it was clear this was not preferred:

> **Quote:** *"And as far as registering for class, I'm thinking, their weird funky coding system they have going on…for one thing, if we're at home wasting paper printing out the courses for the semester, looking for those numbers that don't make sense to any human–the only people they make sense to is PeopleSoft–but it probably would have been a costly event to make it cater to students. At the same time, I personally feel I would pay extra tuition to see it be better."*

Participants also noted an inability to go back (to make changes) or recover from errors:

> **Quote:** *One participant told us it was "too difficult to get to a semester's schedule" and discussed her experience: "…sometimes when I get on MyUB, and I'm searching for a class or something and I wanna, like, go back, it'll say 'Page Not Available'." [Everyone chimes in that they have also experienced this.]*
>
> *Moderator:* "Do you mean when you click the Back button in the browser?"
>
> *[Paricipant 1 and the rest of the group confirms this.]*
>
> *Participant 2: "So you have to go all the way back to the beginning and step down to get back to where you were. It doesn't just let you go back one step."*

The process of registering for classes is especially burdensome for undergraduates, who are more likely to take courses from multiple departments and/or Schools. Because of the way the course selection and registration is structured, students believethey must restart the process from the beginning for each change of department or School.

Participants couldn't understand the reason for requiring people to log onto the MyUB portal simply to view or browse the schedule of classes. They preferred that it instead be posted on the public website so it would be available to anyone interested in taking classes at UB.

5. Help

Our discussions revealed that many participants didn't know where or how to get help online. There seemed to be a general feeling that providing instructions on how to use MyUB features is greatly needed. Online help does exist, but many of our participants had not found it.

> **Example**: *Several participants said that they called or went to the campus for help in situations where it was too difficult to accomplish tasks on MyUB.*

> **Example**: *Several other students acknowledged that they had found help on MyUB, but that instructions tended to be posted at the bottom of pages and required one to scroll in order to see them.*

> **Quote**: *"I am lucky I live on the next block. I have called the records people and told them I cannot do this, can I come there and [can] you help me do this because I have spent hours. It is an absolute nightmare. It is so unfriendly, you cannot find anything."*

> **Quote**: *"There's no documentation! …[there needs to be] better communication…"*

6. Accuracy of Information

Another challenge participants identified is the existence of incorrect information on the portal.

> **Example:** *A participant told us MyUB claimed she owed money for a semester she never attended, but when she called in to ask about it, the Business Office's records did not show her owing money from that semester.*

Participants noted instances when the course schedule information was incomplete or outdated:

> **Quote:** *"The schedule they had was a PDF posted under a typo, and when I downloaded it, half of the classes had no time associated with them and no course [number] associated [with them]. That was just bad design."*

Changing demographic information can also be difficult. Participants noted that despite the ability to change personal information online, it seemed old overwrote the new changes, or they reported seeing a mix of the old and new. Several participants expressed concerns of having mail delivered to a wrong address.

> **Example:** *A participant told us she went to the demographic information section of MyUB to change her address, but could not: "That feature was not available to me." She called campus the next day and requested the change, but found they left her old apartment number in her records. She also found her bill as represented online was inaccurate, and had to phone in to conclude payment.*

> **Quote:** *"When I moved, that changed my current information, but it looks like it [MyUB] carried my old information from the old system…there is no option for me to change, so I have my current address and my mailing address [in the system the] same as the address I had in the past five years."*

Another concern was for the accuracy of financial and billing information:

> **Example:** *A participant mentioned that the financial records needed to be more detailed in order to have a good understanding of the account activities. This person also mentioned that there was a lapse of time before some of the records were updated. Two students commented that their financial records had incorrect information and wondered when that would be resolved.*

> ***Quote:*** *"I get tuition payments from the military so it will subtract [them], but will not show me how much it subtracted, and it will just show me what is left and not how much and when it was paid."*

7. E-mail

In one of the focus groups, the participants reported that they did not use their UB e-mail accounts regularly, if at all. E-mail did not appear on lists of school-related activities they do or have done online, and was first mentioned in the context of having to manage too many passwords. UB e-mail was described as "cumbersome" by one participant. Issues included:

- The inability to find help or instructions for working with UB e-mail. One participant said he found information, but it was "buried."
- The desire to get e-mail forwarded to an account they do use.
- Frustration over the inability to filter e-mail and at getting e-mail from every department. For example, undergraduates described getting messages from the Law School; others told about receiving notices to turn in their timecards, even though they were neither staff nor employed by the school.

Appendix A: Participant Demographics

Participant	Age	Sex	Major	Undergraduate/ Graduate	Full Time/Part Time	How Often MyUB is Used
Evan	43	M	Business	Graduate	Part Time	1-2 times per day
Marc	22	M	Business Administration	Undergraduate	Full Time	1-2 times per day
Dawn	–*	F	Human Services Administration	Undergraduate	Part Time	1-4 times per month
Chris	26	M	Applied Information Technology	Undergraduate	Part Time	[not stated]
Kevin	25	M	Law	Graduate	Full Time	1-2 times per day
Jana	24	F	Law	[not stated]	Full Time	1-2 times per day
Bob	52	M	Masters in Public Administration	Graduate	Part Time	1-4 / week
Stephanie	24	F	Management Systems	Undergraduate	Full Time	many times/day
Chanell	35	F	Business Administration	[not stated]	Part time	1-4 times/month
Josh	33	M	Corporate Comm.	Undergraduate	Full Time	1-4 times/week
Jim	47	M	Public Administration	Graduate	Part Time	many times/day
Celia	–*	F	Criminal Justice	[not stated]	Part Time	1-4 times/week
Danny	20	M	Government & Public Policy	Undergraduate	[not stated]	[not stated]
Charise	35	F	Corporate Comm.	Undergraduate	Full time	1-4 times/week
Caroline	36	F	health systems	Graduate	Part Time	Many times per day
Chen	26	F	MS finance	Graduate	Full Time	[not stated]
Pat	55	F	MFA Creative Writing	Graduate	Full Time	1-2 times per week
Bonnie	60	F	DCD	Graduate	Part Time	Many times per day
Nancy	–*	F	Corporate Communication	Graduate	Full Time	[not stated]
Muhammed	33	M	Health Systems	Graduate	Full Time	[not stated]
Mary	27	F	Publications Design	Graduate	Part Time	1-2 times per week

*Not stated.

Appendix B: Focus Group Discussion Guide

Informed Consent

The assistant goes over the following with individual participants as they arrive.

Hello, I'm _____. Before we get started, there is one small piece of business we need to take care of. This is a form that describes your rights as a person participating in this kind of research, and also gives us permission to videotape our discussion. Please read and sign it

If a participant is reluctant to sign:

If you're uncomfortable with being videotaped, you don't have to sign it, but unfortunately we'll have to ask you to leave before we begin.

Introductions

Hi, everyone. Welcome and thanks for coming tonight. My name is _____, and this is _____ and Kathryn. We represent the School of Information Arts and Technologies at UB.

We're here to help UB learn more about how its web site, MyUB, can better serve its students, but we're not part of the team that actually builds and maintains it. Since neither of us has any emotional or personal attachment to what we're going to be talking about tonight, you can say whatever you want – no one is going to be offended.

What we're going to do tonight is talk about some of your experiences in using MyUB and get a few ideas for ways to improve it so that the site can better serve students like you. It's going to be a pretty casual conversation, but there will be some times where I'm going to ask you to focus on certain things.

While we're talking, it's important that you be as honest as possible. You're not going to hurt anyone's feelings, so please say exactly what you feel. We've asked you here because we want your opinion. No opinion is right or wrong, so if you disagree with something someone else says, that's OK—in fact, we'd like to hear why. But please speak one at a time.

We have a lot to cover in not much time, and since none of us wants to be here all night, I may need to ask you to wrap up a thought so we can move on.

Now over there in the next room [point] are some of the other researchers on this project, who will be listening in but not participating in our discussion, and _____, my assistant. Occasionally _____ may come in here with something we need, but really, you can ignore all of them. Just like me, they don't have an attachment to the site, so what you have to say won't be you won't be hurting their feelings, either. Like I said, we brought you here because we want to hear what you have to say.

The reason we have a video camera set up is so _____, Kathryn and I can focus on listening to you and not have to sit here scribbling notes. The video is only for research purposes. It may be seen by other members of our team, but it isn't for any kind of publicity, promotion, or broadcast.

Participant Introductions

Let's start out by getting to know each other a little! Let's go around the table and have each of you tell us:

- Your name
- What your major is
- What you like to do when you're not swamped with homework
- and Your favorite PG-rated thing to do while online, other than reading e-mail.

General Impressions

- What school-related things are people doing online now?
- What have they tried to do online but could not (for whatever reason)?
- What must they do on-campus and in person now, but wish they could do online?
- What would they prefer to do in-person?

MyUB should be projected at this point. Take a moment to confirm participants' recognition of it. Mention that we are also interested in tasks that they do in other areas of UB's website.

QUESTION 1:
All of you are here because you're students who have used or could use UB's web sites for university-related tasks and activities. What school-related things do you do or have you done online?

[ASSISTANT records answers on the whiteboard in a list.]

Probe: Could you tell us about that?
Probe: How did you accomplish that?
Probe: When did you do that? or How often do you do that?
Probe: Was your experience like his/hers?

QUESTION 2:
Tell us about a time you wanted to do something online, but couldn't—for whatever reason.

[ASSISTANT records answers on the whiteboard in a list.]

Probe: What happened?
Probe: Did anyone else have that experience? Please tell us about it.
Probe: Is it possible to do that online?

FOLLOW-UP FOR QUESTIONS 1 AND 2:
Of all these things [indicate the two lists], are there any that you would prefer to do in person or on the phone?

Probe: What makes you prefer that way of doing it? Does anyone agree? Would anyone rather do that another way?
Probe: Is there any way MyUB could make it easier for you to do that on line?

Has anyone *never* logged in? Why?

[ASSISTANT should note response(s), if any.]

QUESTION 3:
Who can tell me about a time when you had to go to the Business Office or another campus office to get something done, but wished you could have done it online instead?

Are there any other school-related tasks or activities that you would like to be able to do on line? (We don't want to limit this to strictly to administrative business, do we?)

[ASSISTANT records answers on the whiteboard in a list.]

Probe: How exactly did that work? What did you have to do?
Probe: How would you *like* it to work? *or,* If you could do that online, how do you think it should work?

What's Most Important?

Now that we have a list of possible activities and features, I want you to pick 6 things you'd most like to be able to do through UB's website. Grab a sheet of paper and write down your top 6 activities. They don't have to be in any particular order. [Give time for people to write.]

OK, let's start with _____. [OR: Ask for a volunteer.] Tell me one of your items. [WRITE it down.] Did anyone else put that on their list? [KEEP asking for items until no one has anything new to contribute.]

Probe as appropriate: What is most important about that item?

[ASSISTANT records answers on the whiteboard in a list.]

[As each item is read, the MODERATOR should ask who else had that item on their list, and the ASSISTANT should note that with checkmarks. Since not everyone will have an identical list, ask for another volunteer to list items from their list not already on the whiteboard, then ask who else made that same choice, etc., until everyone is covered.]

Probe: How did you decide to pick that item?

Probe: [note variations among the items provided by the participants.]
I notice you had some different items. What made you pick _____?

Wrap-Up

Does anyone have any final comments or last minute additions? Is there anything we forgot to ask that we should have asked? Are there any other thoughts or ideas you'd like to share? That's as much as we have time for tonight. I know we go on and on about this, but we need to wrap things up. If you have other ideas you want to share, or if you think of something on the way home, please e-mail us at: _____ [Write on whiteboard.]

I do have one final question for you: is there anything we could do better, in terms of conducting the interview, the scheduling, the time…even the snacks? OK, thank you very much for coming! It's been very informative and interesting, and we really appreciate your feedback. Have a great night!