

Wolverine Work: Project Proposal

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I. Project Overview

This website application revolves around the idea of students within the University of Michigan, being able to share their creative endeavors, hence our project's title, "Wolverine Work". Our team wants to create a "central hub" for students to be able to showcase creative and academic work, such as art projects, different types of writings, such as research papers, and project presentations. We believe a website that dedicates itself to this purpose can be extremely beneficial in enabling students to display their talents to their peers and potential employers as well as gain recognition within their community.

For this project to be successful, we propose our overall format for this website to be very similar to sites such as Pinterest and Instagram, but with a more student and academic focus. We want this site to be as user-friendly and visually appealing as possible within our development period. Due to this, our targeted audience and main users will mostly consist of university students and staff, potential employers, and overall casual viewers interested in seeing student work. Our targeted audience and main users can use this website as a supplementary tool for developing their own personal skills, and provide chances for possible networking, internship, and job opportunities.

II. Literature Review & Competitive Analysis

We have identified several key aspects of our project, "Wolverine Work," and compared it to existing websites and platforms that offer similar solutions in the academic and creative sharing space.

Existing Competitors:

- **Behance** is a well-known platform where individuals, including students, can showcase their portfolios. It primarily focuses on visual arts, design, and artistic projects. It has a global user base and offers features for networking and collaboration.
- **LinkedIn** serves as a platform for professional networking and job opportunities. Students and professionals can showcase their academic and career accomplishments, but it is not tailored for creative endeavors.
- **ResearchGate** is an academic networking site for scientists and researchers to share publications, research papers, and collaborate with peers. While its primary focus is on academic research, it also allows the sharing of various types of scholarly work.

Unique Features and Novelty of "Wolverine Work"

- **Academic and Creative Fusion:** "Wolverine Work" uniquely focuses on both academic and creative work, catering to a diverse range of talents and projects. This fusion allows students to showcase their versatility, which is not a primary feature of the platforms mentioned above.

- **Student-Centric:** While other platforms are more general in nature, “Wolverine Work” is exclusively for University of Michigan students, which can create a more tightly-knit and community-oriented environment.
- **User-Friendly Design:** The intention to mimic the user-friendly and visually appealing format of sites like Pinterest and Instagram will set “Wolverine Work” apart from other academic and creative platforms. The familiar interface is likely to attract younger users and enhance the overall user experience.
- **Targeted Networking:** By focusing on potential employers and facilitating networking opportunities, “Wolverine Work” aims to bridge the gap between students and the job market. This feature distinguishes it from traditional academic and creative sharing platforms.

III. Implementation Plan

For our proposed website idea to become a reality, our team has created a plan for implementing the website’s core components which includes the main functionalities our users will be able to conduct. Below are our current modules/entities.

Module 1 - Student Information & Validation

- This will contain the login and register elements of the website that the student users will utilize. The website will need to verify that the user is a student through their provided email address. All student information will need to be protected and stored in a database.
- Each student will have their own profile page where they can see their information, such as account details and their own posts/submissions they have uploaded to the website.

Module 2 - Student Showcase Network

- This module includes the main homepage of the website, where all users will be able to view uploaded student submissions.
- This can be filtered through a drop-down selection (i.e. “Most popular” or “Latest Submissions”) and/or through a search bar function.

Module 3 - Student Submissions

- This module would include all the necessary components needed for students to successfully upload their creative work. This will have to account for multiple different types of submissions, including uploading images, Word and PowerPoint files, and potentially video files as well. At the very least, the website will need to be able to upload images and texts.

Operations

Create: Students and faculty are able to post their academic work and comment on other user’s posts.

Update: Profiles can be updated i.e email addresses, name, picture, bio, etc.

Search: Users can search for specific types of posts, i.e. academic papers on a specific topic, in the search bar.

Read: Users can view all the posts on the main page.

Delete: Students and faculty with accounts are able to delete their posts and comments.

User Roles & Access

Registered User: This type of user will be a University of Michigan student, who possesses a umich email address. They can create a profile and update account details, submit their work, and utilize search and filtering.

Unregistered User: This type of user will typically be faculty, parents, employers, and any other casual viewers. They can access the uploaded content without registering and view student submissions and also utilize the search and filtering function.

Admin: Admin access would be given to a few trusted users who would be able to take down content in the event something inappropriate was posted. They would have all the same privileges as a registered user.

IV. Individual Workload Division

Everyone will be responsible for testing and helping out the other team members when needed. Emily will work on the database, creating tables for user profiles, posts, and comments. Taylor and Kylie will work on the backend implementation involving connecting the database to the website and all CRUD operations on the database and application. Mnahil will be responsible for the front end, creating the layout of the website, and picking the colors and format of the text and icons.

V. Review on Feedback

Our instructor and TA provided valuable input and suggested we narrow our scope and specify our modules and components. To address this feedback we decided to scale back on some of the initially planned modules to ensure we could complete our goals in the given timeframe and also ensured that our implementation plan places a strong emphasis on specifics. After our presentation on our proposal to the class, a student peer also questioned the different types of access users would have which we specified in User Roles. Lastly, we also utilized ChatGPT using a variety of prompts. ChatGPT shared similar opinions with our TA and peers and suggested we prioritize our scope. The best and most useful new feedback we received from ChatGPT was when it mentioned we should give a more detailed technical plan.

Overall, we considered all types of feedback valuable and gave the highest-rated feedback to our instructor and TA (5/5) because of their in-depth understanding of the project. We gave our peers and ChatGPT a 4 out of 5.