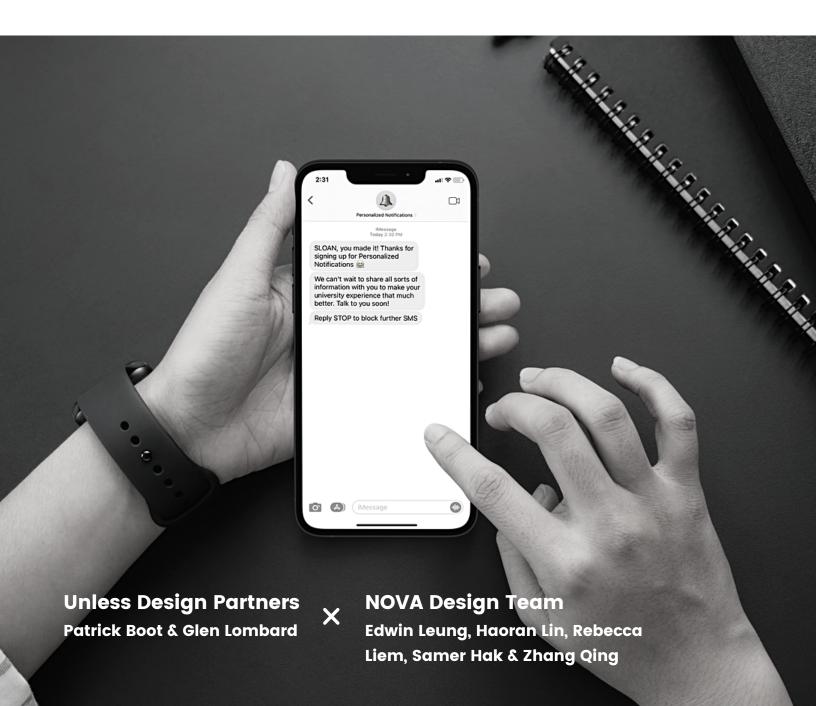
### 2022

### PERSONALIZED NOTIFICATION SYSTEM REPORT



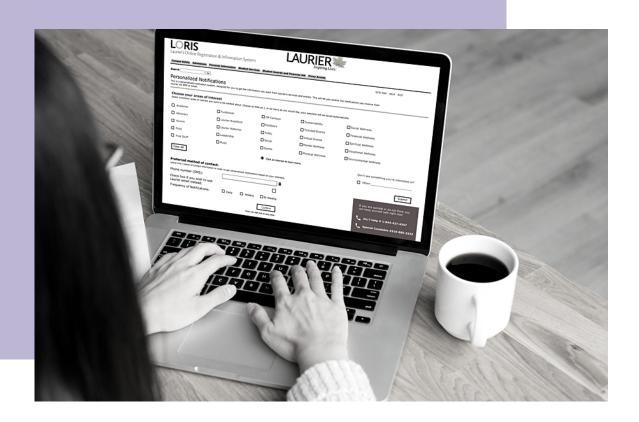
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- The Problem
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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Personalized Notifications is a way for students to navigate messages and information from Laurier. This design tackles wellness initiatives by making sure students are receiving the information that they want, when they want it. Personalized Notifications directly impact students by giving them the power to filter information about events, clubs, extracurricular activities, the wellness center, and more, which reduces their stress and anxiety.

This report outlines the entire breakdown of our 8 week-long project, giving you the information about where we started to where it ended. Our project was based on the multi-campus review report provided to us by Unless Design Partners. This report will show our research methods, user interview/user testing findings, prototypes, and the final iteration of our design that we believe will best help students' wellness.



### THE PROBLEM

Unless Design Partners came to us with the issue that students at Wilfrid Laurier University lack the information they need to improve their wellness. At Laurier, students are not aware of the services that are offered or what information is relevant to them. Ultimately, their wellness begins to get neglected and becomes an afterthought. Our team soon realized that the problem students were facing was regarding the amount of information they are bombarded with daily. The information that should have been helping the students improve their wellness is negatively affecting their well-being.

### **HOW MIGHT WE**

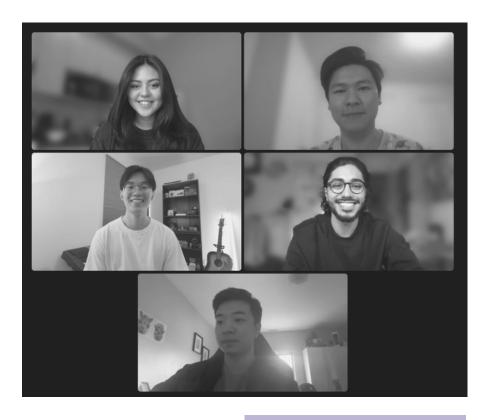
How Might We...

ensure that students are getting the info they want/need at the appropriate time in a clear way?



## INTRODUCTION & PROJECT BACKGROUND

Wellness is a broad category that includes various topics like; financial wellness, spiritual wellness, physical wellness, mental wellness, etc. Our team wanted to ensure that Laurier students find information on wellness and other school events or opportunities without the hassle.



Our project focuses on alleviating the noise that university emails create and instead, allows students to have specifically tailored notifications. We created a page in LORIS, which is an already existing system that students need to use to find out their course schedules, official grades, tuition, etc. On this page, users can choose specifically what information they want to hear regarding school events, activities, important dates, or wellness-related content. The student can then receive their tailored messages via their university email or text message.

Our goal is to relieve students of overstimulation and stress when they need information about Wilfrid Laurier University. An increase in the overall student experience allows students to feel connected and alleviate anxiety. This will increase the signal on all important information and will ripple through the system.

"Relevance of information doesn't align with the timing of when students need it"

- Unless Design Partners, 2021

### RESEARCH PHASE

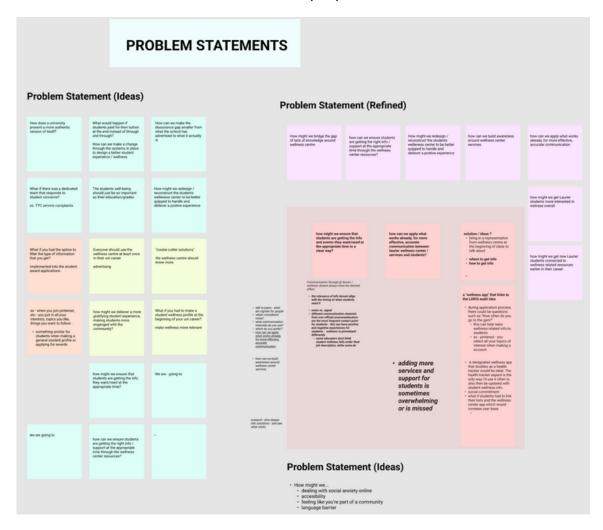
Unless Design Partners gave us a summary of their research and questions related to student wellness and welfare, which contained many exciting questions encompassing all aspects of students' lives in university. However, there were two issues in the report that stuck out to us.

"Negative messages get more traction than positive ones.
Additionally, there are mixed messages coming from sources of influence - from official and unofficial channels. Some students experience more 'noise' than 'signal' as it relates to wellness-related communications and Laurier communication in general."

"Relevance of information doesn't align with the timing of when students need it."

Reports From Unless Design Partners **Executive Summary** CONFIDENTIAL DO NOT SHARE Equity-deserving students at Laurier experience university life inherently differently than other groups. Their wellbeing isn't consistently or appropriately addressed by traditional services and approaches which, in many cases, do more harm than good. recourse, indigenous, soulist up, and intermotional students at uponer a adequate service and supports. Many of the units and offices formed to support these equity-deserving groven-helmed, under-resourced, bare a significant burden in helping to edu broader campuses, and face significant change resistance from the domi Laurier operates.

We conducted multiple rounds of brainstorming on the questions to determine what was most relevant to Laurier students' everyday situations.



We came up with several points from the wide range of questions:

- Student wellness
- Noise vs signal
- Events

The **entry point** for these questions was: **Laurier students looking for information**.

With this, we finally decided on the direction of our research and our How Might We statement.

During the research phase, we started by understanding the main usage habits of the users. We first investigated where students got information about Laurier from. We conducted user interviews and got feedback from 13 users, through 6 different channels, including;

- Friends
- MyLearningSpace
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Email



#### The results showed that

- Students get their information from their friends or through word of mouth.
- Most students are accustomed to using social media to ask groups of friends for answers to their questions.
- Laurier students are left to passively receive recommendations from the school, such as the weekly news.

#### Where do you get your news about Laurier from?



Most common to least

- · friends (6)
- email (5) IG (2) FB (1)

When asked "Which communication channel would you prefer to receive important info or any info about the school and why?"

The most frequent response was text messages.

Which communication channel would you prefer to receive important info or any info about school?

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One of the participants explained,

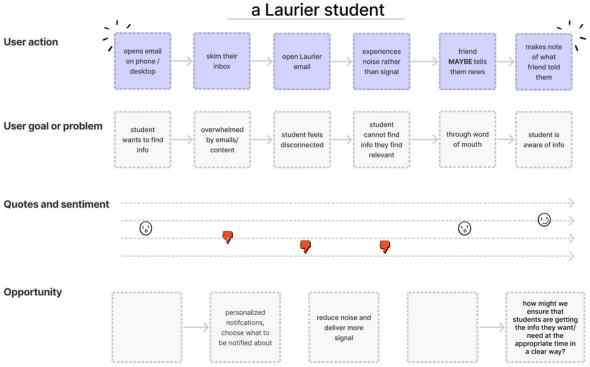
"I get so much info I miss and just don't look at. I'm always on my phone,
never check emails, I'll always read a text."

The information obtained from the above results shows that Laurier's efficiency in using email to disseminate info is low. We went on to get to the heart of the matter, trying to understand the main pain points of Laurier students' daily email checking experience. When asked about their experience with email, one participant said.

### "I hate getting spammed, especially when I get all these emails; I usually never check them."

With our problem statement in mind and the data from our user interviews, we began by creating a journey map of what Laurier students might currently go through when they are trying to find information





We asked users how they currently find information that is relevant to them from Laurier. Through our user interviews, we noticed some things about the current flow for students and were able to build a journey map to show you what the current experience is for students.

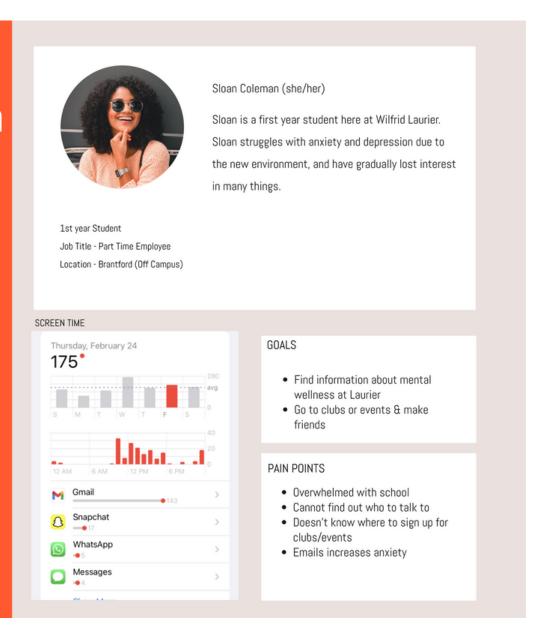
One pain point we noticed for students when they were skimming through their inboxes was that they were developing notification anxiety. They were receiving too many emails and spam - students were overloaded with the amount of information and failed to see important details.

As the student looks through the email, there's another pain point of there being more noise than signal. For students, the amount of information received in their Laurier emails is much more noise than any signal, which also causes a feeling of disconnect. Reaching out to their friends is also a pain point because it adds yet another communication channel.

We also created a persona based on our research in order to keep our focus throughout the rest of the project:



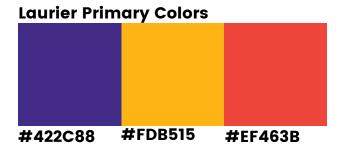
### Persona



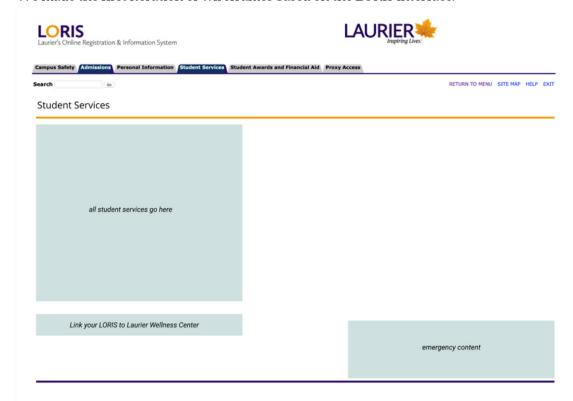
A lot of communication during the workday is delivered to students' Laurier email. This results in students receiving vast amounts of emails from the school in a single day or on consecutive days. On top of that, if students link their MyLearningSpace notifications to their school email, the total amount of emails they receive can even double. In addition, most email applications on smartphones are tied to more than one email address. Multiple email addresses, a massive amount of daily emails, and only one phone as an inbox will lead to being bombarded with emails. Students will experience avoidance behaviour and unnecessary tension when receiving emails or hearing notification sounds. So based on the above findings, we decided to build a personalized notification system that allows Laurier students to filter out noise based on existing platforms and mental models.

## PROTOTYPE PHASE

Leaving the research phase, we started working on the first iteration of the prototype on Figma. Since we chose to use LORIS as the basis for our existing platform, the page design followed LORIS' clean style and layout. For the colours, we referred to the Laurier style guide and used the Primary Laurier Palette: purple, gold and red; for the typeface, we chose the Calluna font used by Laurier.



We made the first iteration of wireframes based on the LORIS interface.



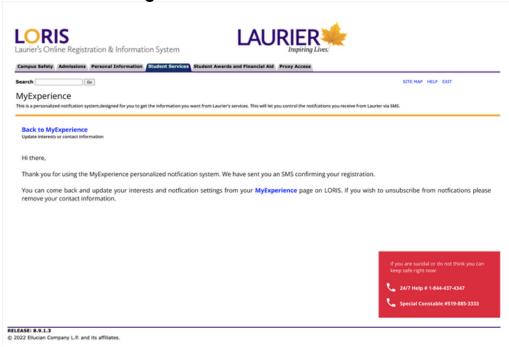
With the foundation of the wireframe, we started to make the first iteration of the prototype.

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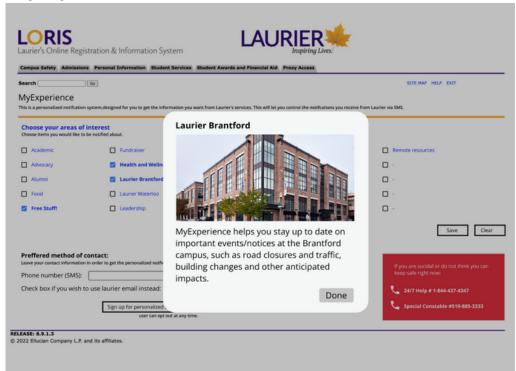
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After completing the skeleton of the first version of the prototype, we started adding details. This included confirmation pages, pop-ups, the look of messages received on the SMS end, and the look of emails received on the email end. This gave us the first version of the untested prototype.

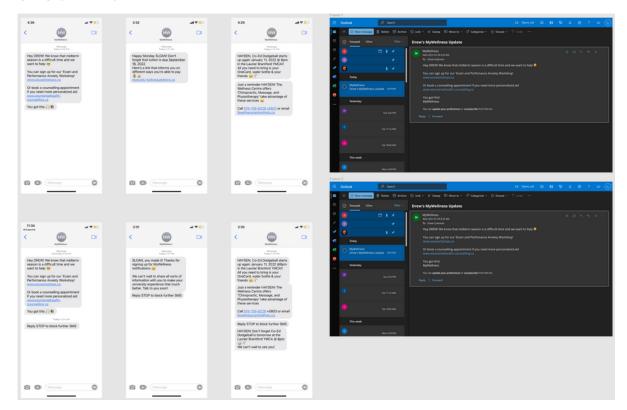
#### **Confirmation Page**



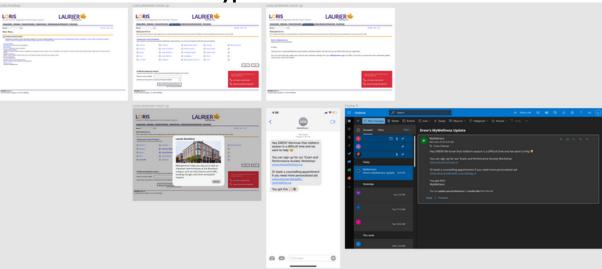
#### Pop-ups



#### SMS & E-mail



### **Overall Look of First Prototype**



### **TESTING PHASE**

Our goal was to make the design easy to use and intuitive during the testing phase. We set up two rounds of usability tests to identify issues in the prototype. We gained critical insights into the participants' initial thoughts on the product and observed how the design worked while they navigated through it. We conducted 2 rounds of cognitive walkthroughs and one round of A/B tests. In the cognitive walkthroughs, participants were asked to use the think-aloud technique to say what they saw and thought when solving the problem and performing tasks.

Our first round of usability testing included 13 participants. The second round included 9 participants, of which 6 took part in A/B tests. All participants were informed of the process and purpose of the test and understood that the testing process would be recorded. The tasks they were asked to complete in the cognitive walkthrough include:

- Where would you go to get notified?
- · How would you update your interests?
- What would you do if you were not sure what these tags meant?
- · What do you think happens if you click an interest?
- What would you do if an interest you have is not there?
- How would you add your contact information?
- How would you remove your contact information?

#### Some additional questions include:

· After going through everything, can you tell me what the purpose of this service is?

We also had to decide on the arrangement and organization of the tags. We prepared two designs for the A/B test and let the participants decide which one suited them better. The question we asked is:

Which design works better for you and why?

#### **Notes on Results**

#### Cognitive walkthrough feedback

#### Were would you go to learn about your experience / personliaed notifcations?

- · Clicked "Student Services"
  - · confused by the name "MyExperience", didn't read the description
  - Navigator
  - · change the font/colour doesn't look the same
  - · put it in alphabetical order

#### How would you update your interests?

- · went back to MyExperience page and clicked "Clear"
  - · confused why clicking "Clear" also cleared their contact info
  - "Why did it also clear my contact info?"
  - · reopen the myexperience
  - · the buttons shift on some screens

#### What do you think happens if you click an interest?

- · more information
- "I only clicked it because you told me to. If the sentence at the top said "Click on an interest to learn more about it, I would be more likely to click it."
- · wants to click one interest at a time
- · wants to read the interest before clicking it

#### What would you do if an interest you have is not there?

· can't click on them sometimes

#### How would you add your contact info?

- · clicked phone number / email
- · Capitalize the "user" in the sign up thing underneath

#### How would you remove contact information?

- · slight confusion how to remove contact information
- · maybe add a garbage icon
- Block the text sender on the phone
- No interest in clicking "save", only clicked "clear" and assume it's been recorded

#### Additional notes

- for the pop ups when users click the interest for more infomation they think its a advertisement
   a change class but too feet the sight that the sight class (does but too.)
  - change close button from top right "x" to bottom right close / done button
- · spelling and grammar
  - make sure to use "professional language"
  - "I associate LORIS with professional language"
- update text / language on final conrimation page
  - maybe prototype all buttons
- for the pop ups when users click the interest for more infomation they think its a advertisement
  - change close button from top right "x" to bottom right close / done button
- spelling and grammar
  - · make sure to use "professional language"
  - "I associate LORIS with professional language"
- update text / language on final conrimation page
  - maybe prototype all buttons
- A scrollable list with each tag sorted in alphabetical order

#### What would you do if you were not sure what these tags meant?

Copy the tag and google it

(pop ups were not working in the prototype)

#### After going through everything, can you tell me what the purpose of this service is?

Helping students choose courses

Helping students understand their future interests

#### Notes on Changes & Fixes

#### Cognitive walkthrough Revised changes / fixes

#### **QUESTION 1**

- · make the font match: Verdana
- move it between "Student Services" and "MyLearningSpace"
- · change the name to something that relates more to "notifications"
  - · Personalized Notifications
- · put "MyExperience" in the "Student Services" page
  - · click the "Student Services" tab on the top or in the Main Menu
  - · goes to "Student Services" page
    - · "MyExperience" is in the list
  - · move entry point in middle of main menu not at bottom

#### QUESTION 2

- · trash can beside contact info
- · after clicking "Save" there's a confirmation saying "Your interests have been saved" underneath
- after clicking "Clear" there's a confirmation saying "Your interest have been cleared" underneath
- · Idea to have the interests appear in a bar



#### A/B test on this idea

- · remove the save and clear buttons + replace it with this idea and test both see what peeps think
- · right when they click "MyExperience" it shows 2 checkboxes
  - · add a page after the first screen that prompts a screener question are you from wlu or brantford?
  - · what about Milton, Kitchener and Toronto campuses?
    - · then it shows interests

#### QUESTION 3

- · zack/eddie suggest putting a small info beside each interest for more info
- · hover over an interest and it underlines
  - · small poop-up window on the side that displays more info
- · info icon with description
  - "Click on an interest to learn more about it, I would be more likely to click it."
- · prototype so that you can click the text to show pop-up before having to click the checkbox

#### **QUESTION 4**

- · test the feedback option
- · prototype so that the checkbox beside works

#### QUESTION 5 -

- · make a screen to show the email option
  - "We have sent you an email confirmation"
- remove "Hi there," unprofessional
- add a one liner above contact info that lets user know either SMS or laurier email those are the choices
   or both

#### QUESTION 6

REFER TO QUESTION 2 CHANGES

### **ITERATION**

After the first round of cognitive walkthroughs, we found that the product was lacking in many areas. However, while most of the participants were disappointed with the prototype, we received valuable feedback, which can be summarized in the following categories:

#### Naming Issues

• The name does not allow users to quickly determine the function

#### Visual Issues

• The font does not match the LORIS font

#### **Functional Issues**

• Clearing and saving functions

#### Lack of necessary explanations and hints

• Users are not clear about the meaning of some tags

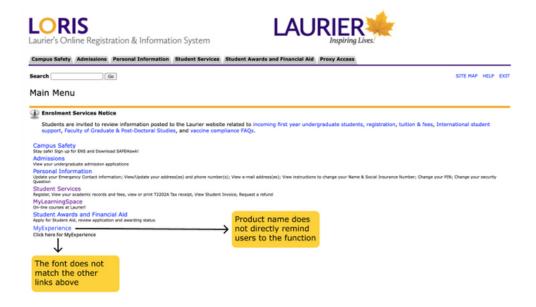
#### Low fidelity and usability of the prototype

• Some buttons are not available and shift on some screens

Users understood the functionality of the design, but a few minimal changes were made to clear some minor confusion. Based on feedback from the first round of testing, the following changes were made.



#### **Before**



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#### **After**



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#### **Before** LAURIER! Laurier's Online Registration & Information System Campus Safety Admissions Personal Information Student Services Student Awards and Financial Aid Proxy Access Unclear call to action MyExperience Naming issue ction you want from Laurier's services. This will let you control the notifications you receive from Laurier via SMS. Missing the feature to add undisplayed Choose your areas of interest Select whichever areas of interest you want to be notified about. Choose as little as 1, or as many as you would like, and hit save to save your selection. interests Mental health check-in □ Academic ☐ Fundraiser Housing □ Remote resources Physical health □ Advocacy ■ Health and Wellness ☐ Wellnesss Support □ -☐ Alumni ■ Laurier Brantford □ Virtual peer support Health services o . ☐ Food ■ Laurier Waterloo □ Counselling Confusing button ☐ Free Stuff! ☐ Leadership ο. meanings Remote wellness check-ins □ Social Unusable Buttons shift on checkboxes some screens Missing tips Save Clear Some tags have similar meanings Preffered method of contact: Unclear call to and are listed in the wrong order Phone number (SMS): Check box if you wish to use laurier email instead: 24/7 Help # 1-844-437-4347 Missing the feature Sign up for personalized notifications user can opt out at any time. Special Constable #519-885-3333 to adjust frequency of notification RELEASE: 8.9.1.3 © 2022 Ellucian Company L.P. and its affiliates.

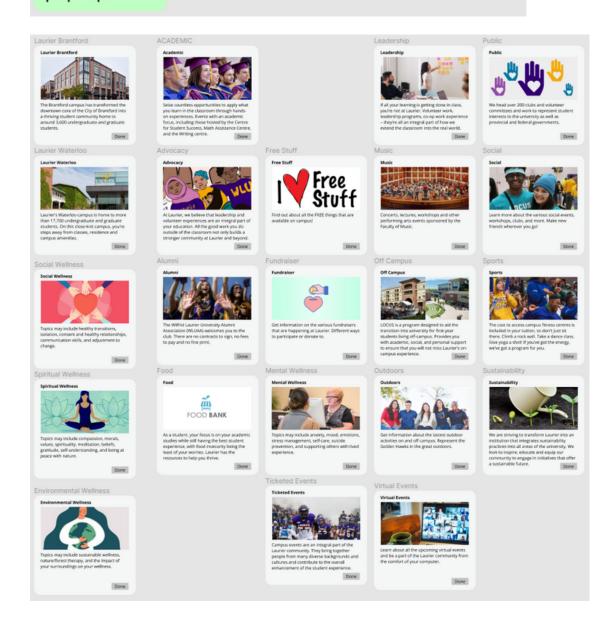
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Clear All Change the "save" and "clear" buttons to "clear all" and "submit" and reposition them		• Click an interest to learn more.  Add tips fix "button shifts" issue		fix "button shifts" issue	Don't see something you're interested in?			
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heck box if you wi	sh to use					If you are suit	cidal or do not think you	
aurier email instead: Frequency of Notifications:  Daily  rewording the sign up button		ng n up	Weekly Bi-Weekly for Confirm S S			can keep yourself sale right now:  24/7 Help # 1-844-437-4347  Special Constable #519-885-333		

### **Functional Pop-ups and Details**

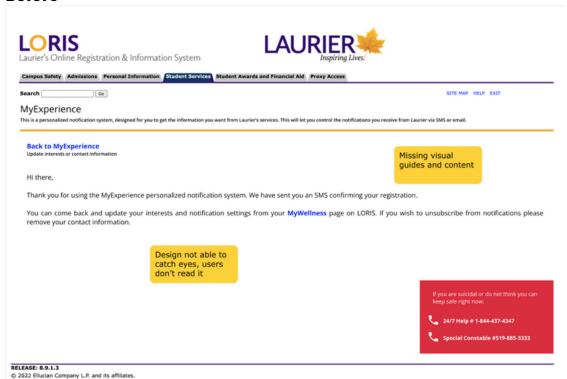
Thank you for suggesting an interest. Your response has been recorded, please continue!

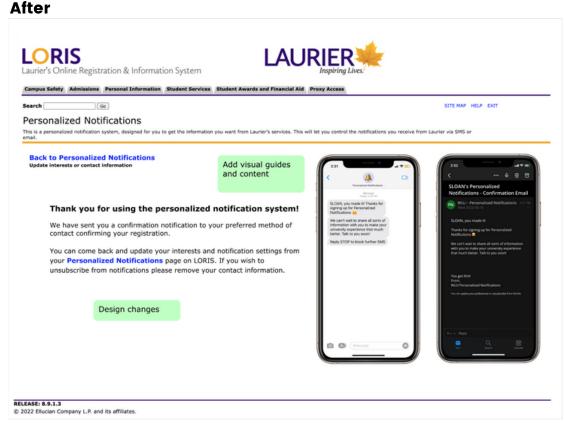
Back

Add new confirmation pop-ups

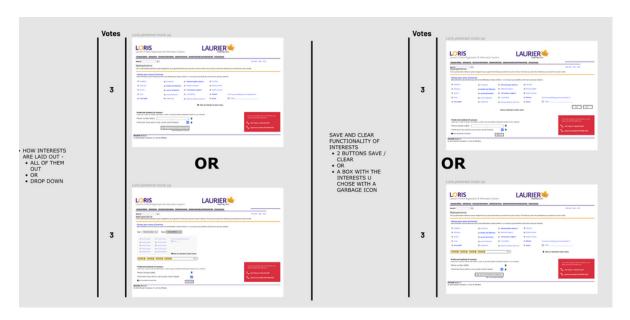


#### **Before**

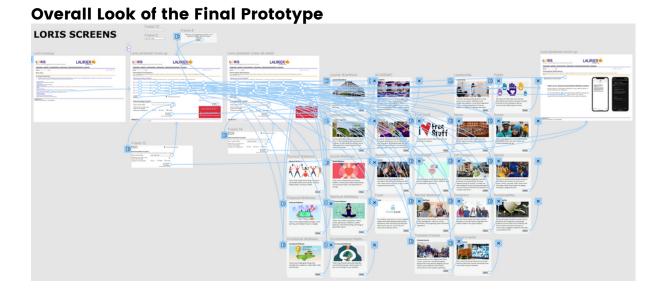




We then conducted a second cognitive walkthrough, and the test results did not reflect significant problems. We also conducted A/B Tests on the arrangement and distribution of tags. The data collected from a limited number of participants showed that half of the users supported the first option.



In contrast, the other half supported the second option. Therefore, we decided to implement the first design in case of a tie between the two solutions.



### CONCLUSION

Our team is proud of the implemented design that we created in these short couple of weeks. Our design has given students the ability to receive information and filter out the noise. We believe that this design will help reduce students' unpleasant and unnecessary psychological stresses of accessing information in their daily studies.

In the future, we will focus on involving the school and staff in this process, which is a critical and practical need. On the other hand, given the old and unappealing visuals of LORIS, we noted that possible next steps for this project would be to redesign and uplift LORIS.



Once students are actually using personalized notifications we expect the impact to go beyond our solution. By using our personalized notification delivery system, we plan to tackle more than the students just getting relevant information when they need it. With awareness comes an increase in the overall student experience, allowing students to feel connected and alleviate anxiety this increases the signal on important info and will ripple throughout the system.