

Study Bond

Andrea Valdes



PROJECT OVERVIEW

- The product
- The problem
- The goal
- Role and responsibilities

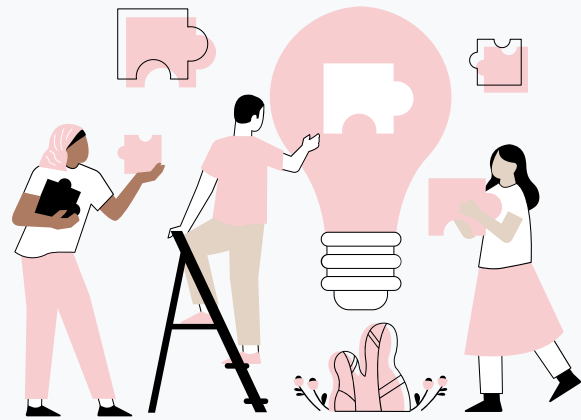
PROJECT OVERVIEW

THE PRODUCT

The Study Bond website is a safe space to find study partners within the Merson Floyd Online University community. It gives it's students an easy way to connect with each other, keep one another accountable, share notes and study tips, have one on one study sessions or group study sessions and more! To make studying more enjoyable accomplishments were added, and light colors to make it a relaxing space.

PRODUCT DURATION

December 2021 - February 2022



THE PROBLEM

Lack of available options to find study partners of diverse subjects and knowledge. Finding groups of people to study with without constant distractions is difficult, as well as dearth of motivation to study.



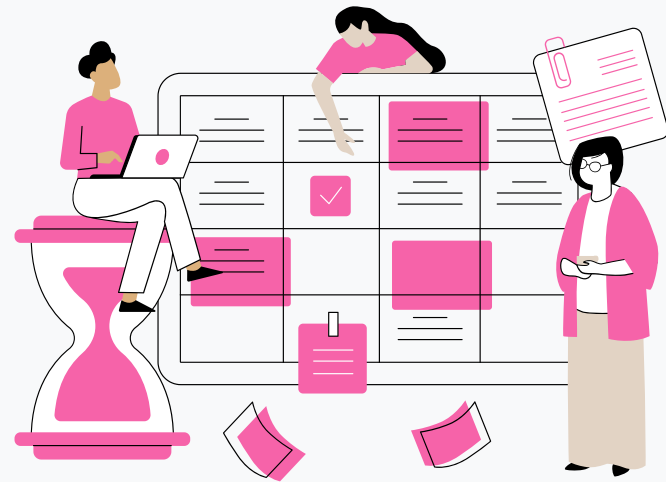
THE GOAL

Design a online space to make students feel motivated to study and offer an easy way to connect with other students in order to have study sessions and join study groups.



MY ROLE

Lead UX designer from conceptualization to delivery.



RESPONSIBILITIES

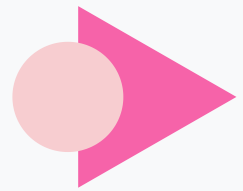
Conducting foundational research, design research, post-launch research, interviews, paper and digital wireframing, low and high-fidelity prototypes, conducting usability studies, accounting for accessibility and iterating on designs.

UNDERSTANDING THE USER

- User research
- Personas
- Problem statements
- User journey maps

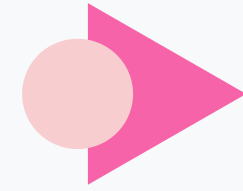


USER RESEARCH :SUMMARY



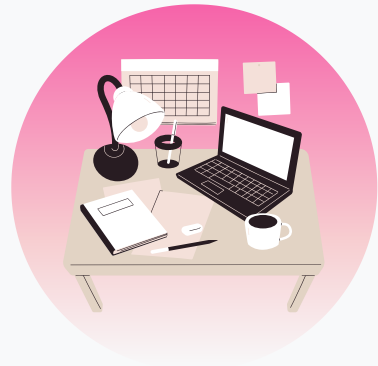
I started by conducting interviews in order to find each pain point participants have while having to study and finding others to do so.

Our primary user group would be university students.



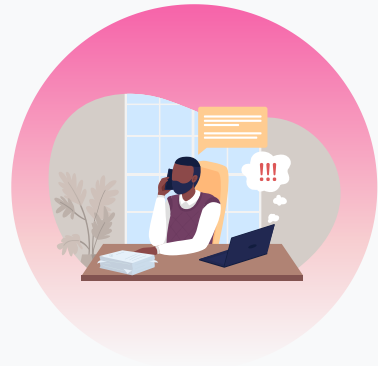
As the study proceeded a continuous problem participants mentioned were the lack of people to help them study and finding it difficult to concentrate while studying in group settings as they quite often get distracted.

USER RESEARCH :PAIN POINTS



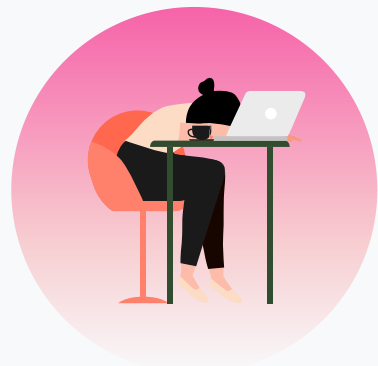
FINDING OTHERS TO STUDY WITH

"Studying with another person can be helpful. Someone who is in a higher grade and can help. But most times my friends and family don't know about what I'm studying and I don't know who else to ask."



DISTRACTIONS

"I regularly study alone, that way I can concentrate easier, because others tend to distract me."



LACK OF MOTIVATION

"Studying is difficult but at times other peoples input can make it easier."

USER JOURNEY MAP

Persona: Maria
Goal: Find a study partner in order to review their notes for their exam.

Action	Ask friends to study with	Figure out a time and date to study	Gather information	Study	Take the exam
Task List	A. Ask each friend if they are available to study. B. Ask if they have prior knowledge about the subjects that will be studied.	A. Agree on a date, time and place to meet up and study. B. Go over a list of supplies they will need. (Ex. books, notes, flash cards, etc.)	A. Exchange knowledge and study tips. B. Look up any questions they have. C. Write study guides and flashcards.	A. Go over information. B. Quiz each other. C. Take practice exams.	A. Go to the exam location. B. Answer exam questions.
Feeling Adjective	1. Worried they won't find anyone who can guide and help them studying the desired subject.	1. Nervous there won't be enough time to study everything. 2. Anxious on not being able to find a date they can both meet up.	1. Stressed by not being able to have their questions answered. 2. Confused with all the information.	1. Distracted by the other person because they talk about other things instead of studying.	1. Nervous when taking the test. 2. Unprepared.
Improvement Opportunities	Create an app that lets users find several people with knowledge in different subjects to partner up to study.	With the app previously mentioned add different times and dates to choose from to study with a partner or give the option to request a certain time.	Create an app that lets users find several people with knowledge in different subjects to partner up to study. Include a small library of information on the app.	Have a feedback section after each study session with the chosen person.	

COMPETITIVE AUDIT

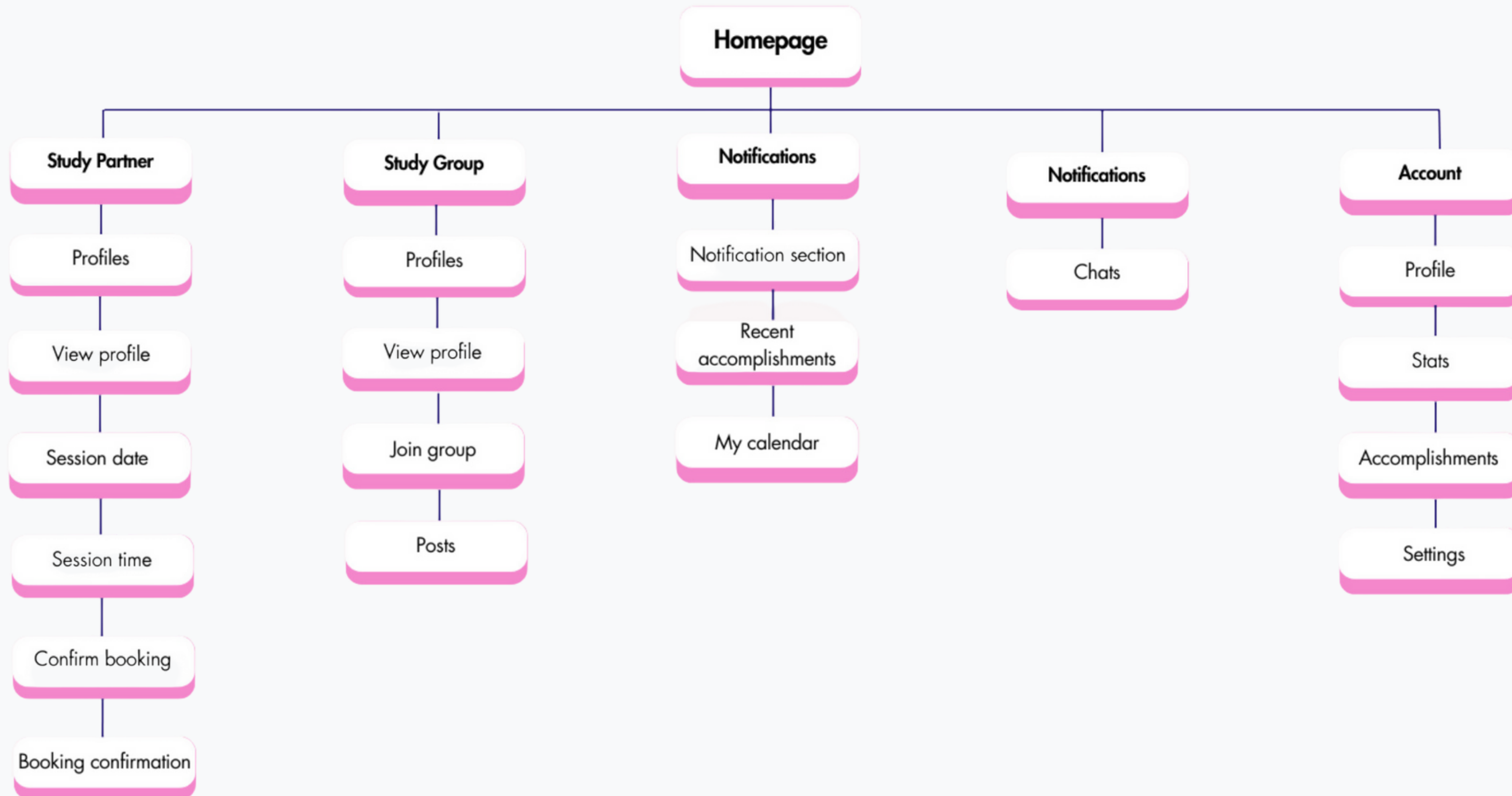
Competitive audit	Identify and compare existing study partner websites											
	General information											
									First impressions			
	Competitor type (direct or indirect)	Location(s)	Product offering	Price (\$ - \$\$\$\$)	Website (URL)	Business size (small, medium, large)	Target audience	Unique value proposition	Desktop website experience	App or mobile website experience	Features	Accessibility
MoocLab	Indirect	-----	Free community website which provides forums to connect about online learning, offers suggestions, help, reviews and guidance.	Free	https://www.mooclab.club/home/	Medium	Students	• Forums • Courses • Study budy • Study groups	Good + Organized + Detailed + Clear hierarchy - Overwhelming	-----	Outstanding + Account option available + Find a study buddy or browse + Detailed description of study buddy + Wide range of study groups + Reasources + Filters + Monitored study groups - Lack of assitive technology	Needs work + Varierty of languages in stu - Small white letters - Lack of assistive technolog
StudyStream	Indirect	More than 180 countries	An online community to study live with others by entering Zoom meeting room	Free	https://www.studystream.live/home	Medium	Students at both university & school level	• 24/7 "focus rooms" • Discord community • Hosts events	Outstanding + Clean and organized + Easy to understand + Clear hirerarchy + Visuals and graphics	-----	Good + Newsletter + Live introductions + Focus rooms + FAQ section - Lack of assitive technology - Cannot create an account	Okay + Dark mode - Lack of assistive technolog
StudyGang	Indirect	-----	Platform for finding and creating Virtual Study Rooms	Free	https://studygang.app	Meduim	Students	• Blog • Study groups • Study statistics and goals • Pomodoro Timer for sessions	Outstanding + Engaging + Well designed + Easy to use + Several graphics + Includes explanitory video	-----	Outstanding + Profile and account + Daily update + Dashboard (hours studied, points earned, current and longest streak) + Study report + Public and private study roomss + Lack of assistive technology	Needs work - Lack of assistive technolog
UX (rated: needs work, okay, good, or outstanding)												
ssions	Interaction								Visual design		Content	
pp or mobile website experience	Features		Accessibility		User flow		Navigation		Brand identity		Tone	Descriptiveness
-----	Outstanding + Account option available + Find a study buddy or browse + Detailed description of study buddy + Wide range of study groups + Reasources + Filters + Monitored study groups - Lack of assitive technology		Needs work + Varierty of languages in study groups - Small white letters - Lack of assistive technology		Good + Clean user flow		Good + Straightfoward navigation		Okay + Clear branding - Monotone		Informative	Outstanding + Easy to understand + Statistics + Clearly grouped together
-----	Good + Newsletter + Live introductions + Focus rooms + FAQ section - Lack of assitive technology - Cannot create an account		Okay + Dark mode - Lack of assistive technology		Good + Intuitive user flow		Good + Call to action buttons are clearly visable + Staightfoward navigation		Outstanding + Strong brand identity + Graphics match the brand		Welcoming	Good + Clearly grouped texts - Lack of a proper discription of what the page is
-----	Outstanding + Profile and account + Daily update + Dashboard (hours studied, points earned, current and longest streak) + Study report + Public and private study roomss + Lack of assistive technology		Needs work - Lack of assistive technology		Outstanding + Intuituitive and clean user flow		Good + Call to action buttons are clearly visable + Staightfoward navigation		Good + Graphics math the brand		Intuitive	Outstanding + Clear Introduction + Statistics + Clearly grouped texts



STARTING THE DESIGN

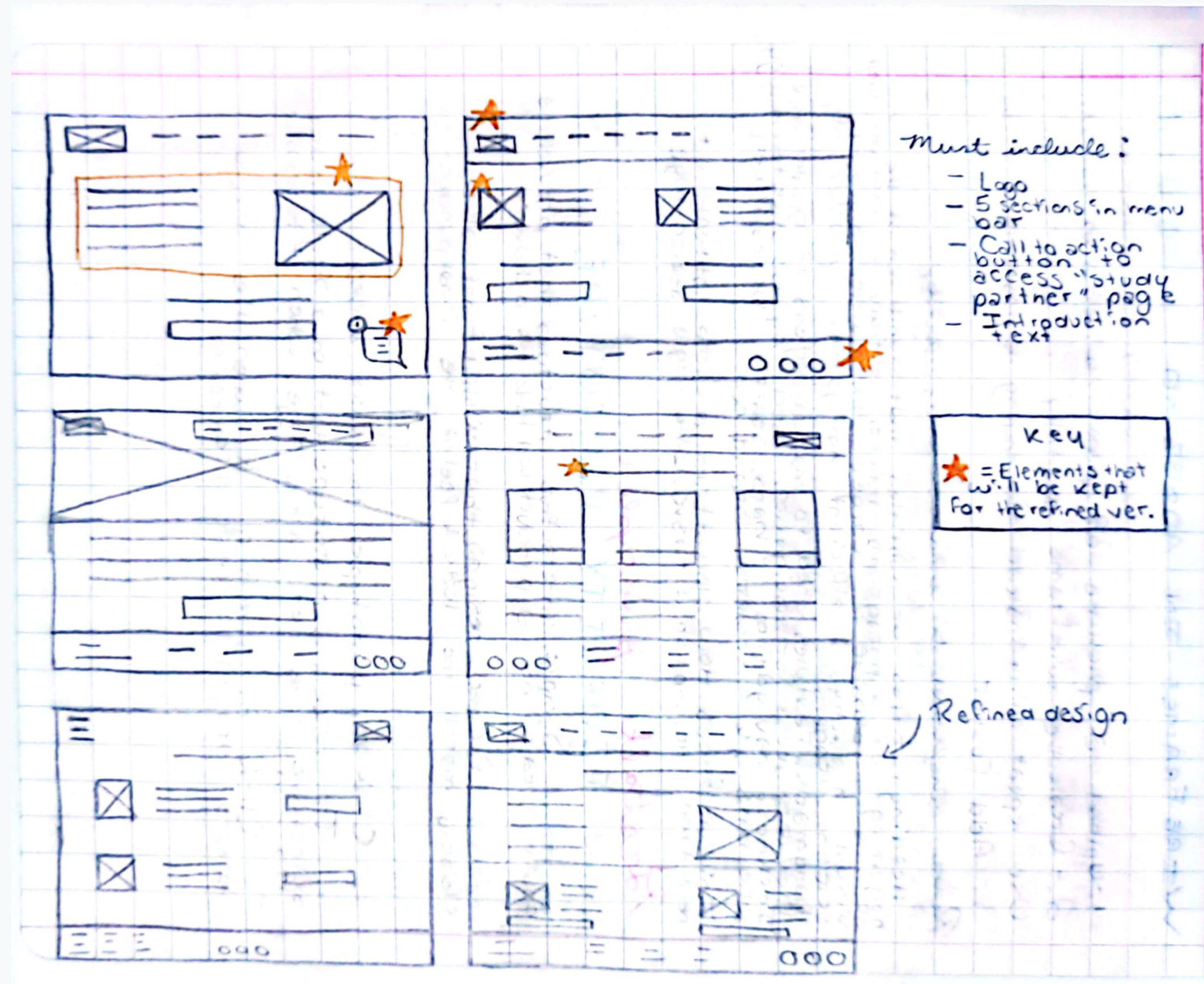
- Paper wireframes
- Digital wireframes
- Low-fidelity prototype
- Usability studies

REQUEST FLOW



PAPER WIREFRAMES

In order to have a congruent responsive design six paper wireframes of the main page for desktop were created first. This conducting to take the refined design and convert it to a paper wireframe for smart-phones.



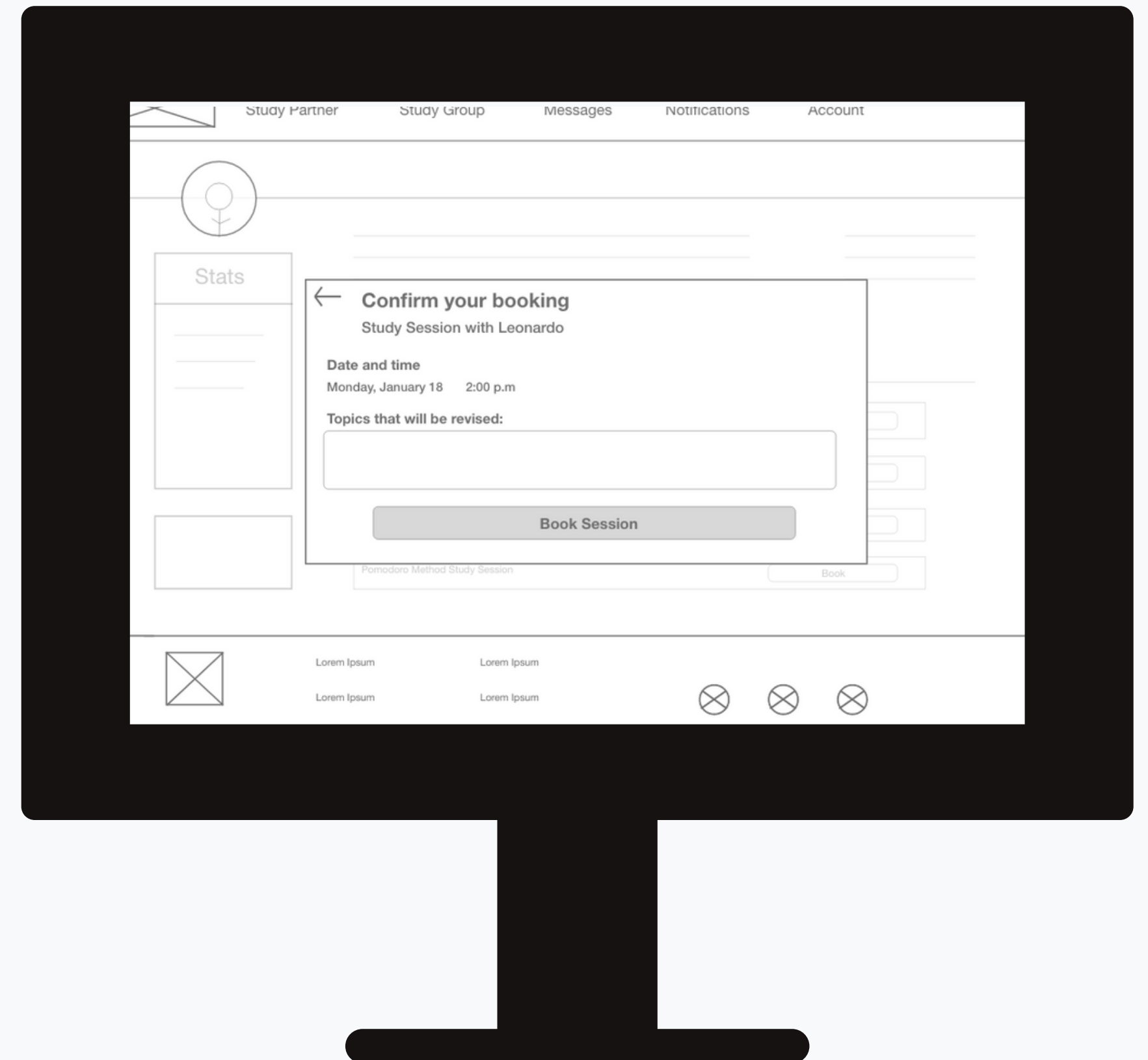
DIGITAL WIREFRAMES

The paper wireframes were made digital wireframes. By doing so a rough prototype could be introduced to participants in order to determine the changes needed to be made.



DIGITAL WIREFRAMES BEFORE USABILITY STUDY

Originally while booking a study session a text square was available to specify the topics that would be revised. The text square could double as extra notes related to the studied topic or questions.



UX RESEARCH STUDY PLAN

Introduction	● Title: Usability Study for StudyBuds ● Author: Andrea, UX designer, UX researcher ● Stakeholders: Merson Online University ● Date: 01/02/2022 ● Project background: StudyBuds was created to provide a safe online space to share study tips, notes, find study partners and join study groups. By using StudyBuds users can easily schedule a study session with an available study partner or join a Focus room. By doing so facilitating what most consider a boring or hard task known as studying. The more progress earned by studying and joining sessions users can unlock accomplishments they can share on their profile, encouraging learning. ● Research goals: Receive user feedback, identify problems users might encounter and see if it encourages studying.
Research questions	● Can users complete the end goal of booking a study session easily? ● Are there any recurring issues users face while using the website? ● Do users encounter problems when using the site on different screen sizes? ● Does the site encourage learning and studying? ● Does the user consider the page easy to navigate?
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	● User error rates, drop-off rates ● System usability scale (SUS)
Methodology	● Moderated usability study ● Location: Mexico, remote (the participants will go through the usability study in their own home) ● Date: sessions will take place on January 3rd. ● Five participants will each individually be asked to complete certain tasks using the prototype and narrate their process. After said tasks a System Usability Scale will be sent to each participant to get further feedback. ● Each session will last 15 minutes, and will include an introduction, a list of tasks and a short questionnaire.
Participants	● Participants who are currently undergraduates. ● Two female, two male, and one Nonbinary, all aged 18 - 28 years old. (One user of assistive technology. ● Incentive: thank you card.

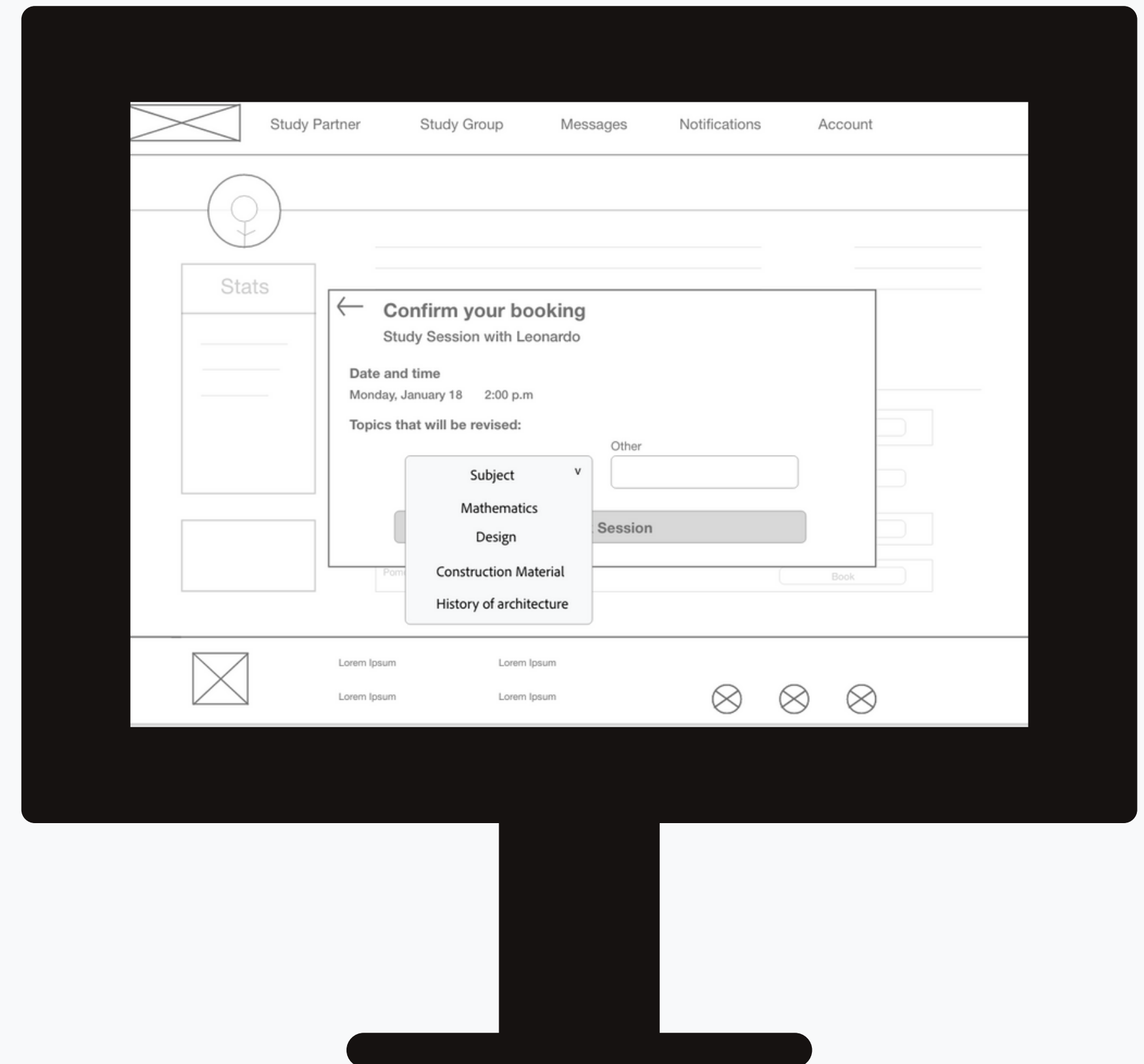
	● Introduction. ● Welcome and thank you for participating! ● Before we begin, do I have your consent to take both audio and video recordings of this interview? ● I would like you to know there is no right answer, none of your responses will be considered wrong. This is only to collect data for a website for students to find study partners and study groups for sharing information, notes, tips and tricks for studying and keeping each other accountable on studying.
Script	● If you have any questions don't hesitate to ask! ● We will start with a couple questions: 1. How often do you study with others? 2. Do you consider it hard to find others to study with? 3. Have you ever joined a study group? Prompt 1: From the homepage go to the Study Group section and use the custom filter to find a group that would best fit your needs. Do your best to walk me through the process. ● Prompt 1 follow-up: Was the task easy or difficult to complete? Would you add any other option to the custom filter? If so, what would they be? Prompt 2: Book a general study session from the Study Partner section. ● Prompt 2 follow-up: How would you describe the process of booking a study session. Prompt 3: Go to the account section. ● Prompt 3 follow-up: How did you feel when you were completing the activity? Prompt 4: Explore the website prototype. ● Prompt 4 follow-up: What are your thoughts on the site? Would you make any changes? If so, what would they be? Have the participants complete the System Usability Scale. Participants are asked to score the following ten statements with one of five responses ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree: I think that I would like to use this website frequently. I found the website unnecessarily complex. I thought the website was easy to use. I think that I would need the support of a technical person to be able to use this website. I found the various functions in this website were well integrated. I thought there was too much inconsistency in this website. I would imagine that most people would learn to use this website very quickly. I found the website very cumbersome to use. I felt very confident using the website. I needed to learn a lot of things before I could get going with this website.

USABILITY STUDY

Participant Information					First Impressions		Booking a Study Partner			Use our website again?	Overall Observations				
P1		University Student	Part time worker	Not a fan of studying.	Finds it fun to use and innovated.	Is confused at times.	"It was easy to do."	Liked the simpleness of the booking.	Click path did not stray away from task.	YES	Felt tranquil while booking the session.	"This actually makes me what to study."	Would use the app regularly.		
P2		University student	Takes online classes	Likes to be quizzed when studying.	Has trouble with navigating the prototype.	Nice layout.	Considers it intuitive.	When choosing a subject to study w your partner, instead of a text box a better idea would be to have a list of subjects to know what they offer.	It would be better to have your study groups and study partners displayed.	The menu is very complete.	YES	Confident while completing the task	The click path did not stray away from the task at hand.	Likes the idea	Tech savvy.
P3		Full time worker	Would like to get another degree.	Doesn't have much time to study.	Easy to navigate through	Slightly confused by the menu section	Tries to click on things not yet available in the prototype	Thinks it's agile and fast	Could not locate the confirmation page	Would like there to be an email confirmation for appointment.	YES	Click path strays, and at times clicks frantically not knowing where to go.	Seems nervous.	Completed all tasks.	
P4		University teacher	Would like for their students to study more.		The filter for finding study groups is easy to use and complete.	The navigation is intuitive.	Things are easy to find.	Getting a study session is fast and easy	"I think a quick way to get sessions is what most people look for."	Very simple.	Yes	Knows where to click and go.	Focused on the task.	Likes the simplicity.	

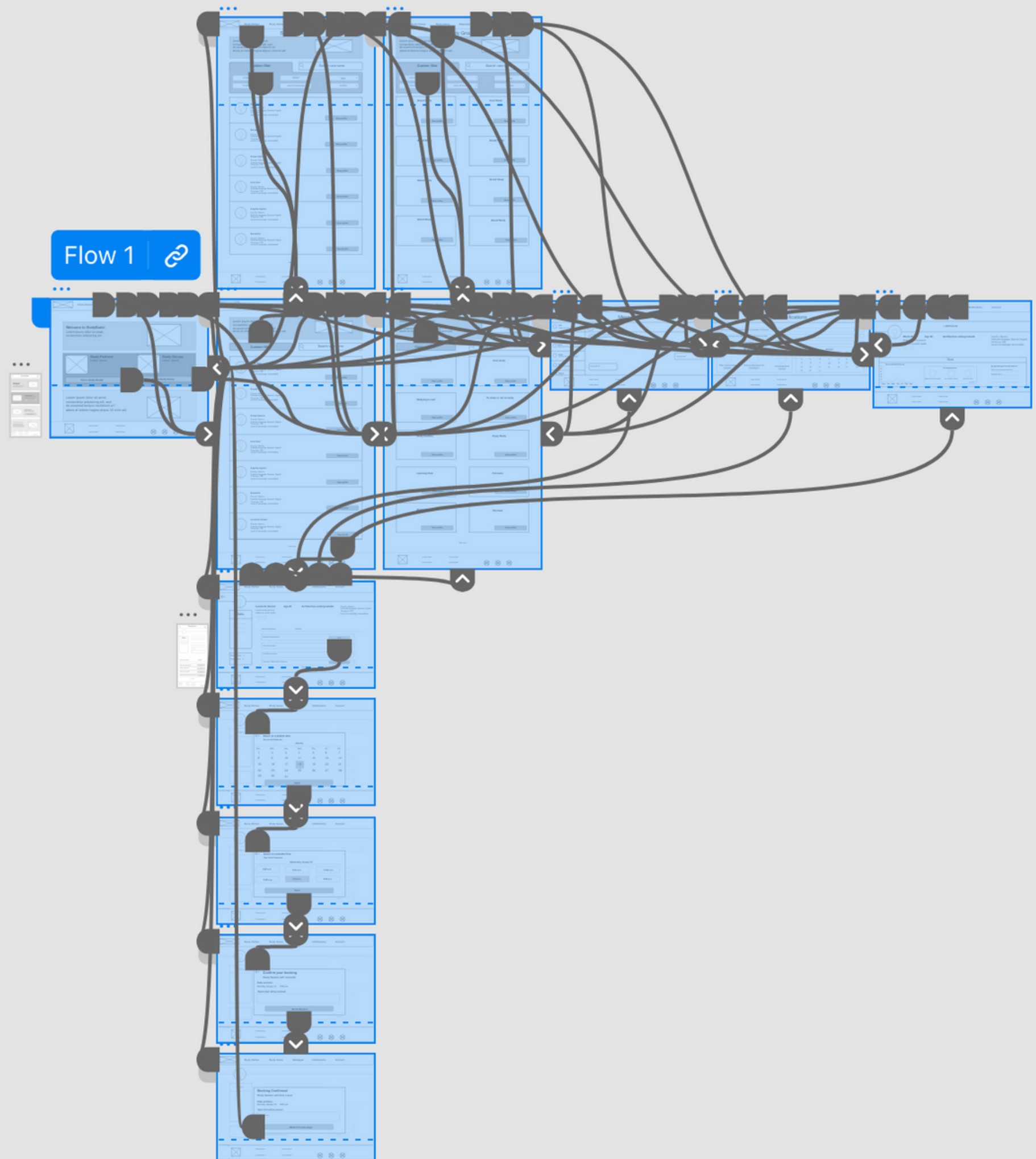
DIGITAL WIREFRAMES AFTER USABILITY STUDY

After much participant feedback it was noted the text square could be missed used or confusing. It was better to add a dropdown bar with predetermined topics the study partner could offer help with



LOW-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE

A low-fidelity prototype was made after incorporating the feedback gotten from the usability study. By doing so the design could be perfected and turned into a mockup.



USABILITY STUDY FINDINGS

Two usability studies were conducted. One to help guide the wireframe designs into mockups. A second one in order to refine the aspects of the high-fidelity prototype.

Round 1 findings

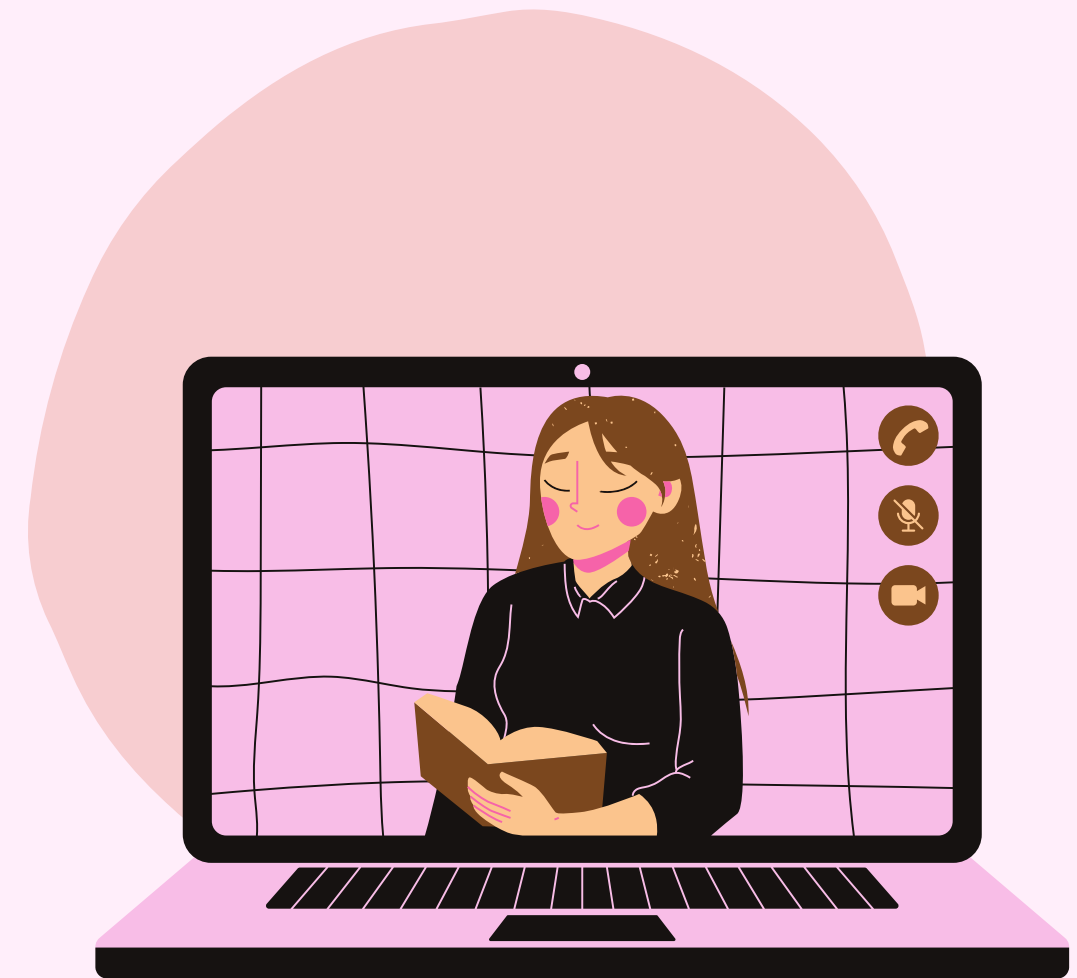
-  Users want an easier to use and read menu.
-  Users want the confirmation page to be either sent to you by email or more noticeable.
-  Users need a more comfortable way to select a subject to study for when scheduling a study session.

Round 2 findings

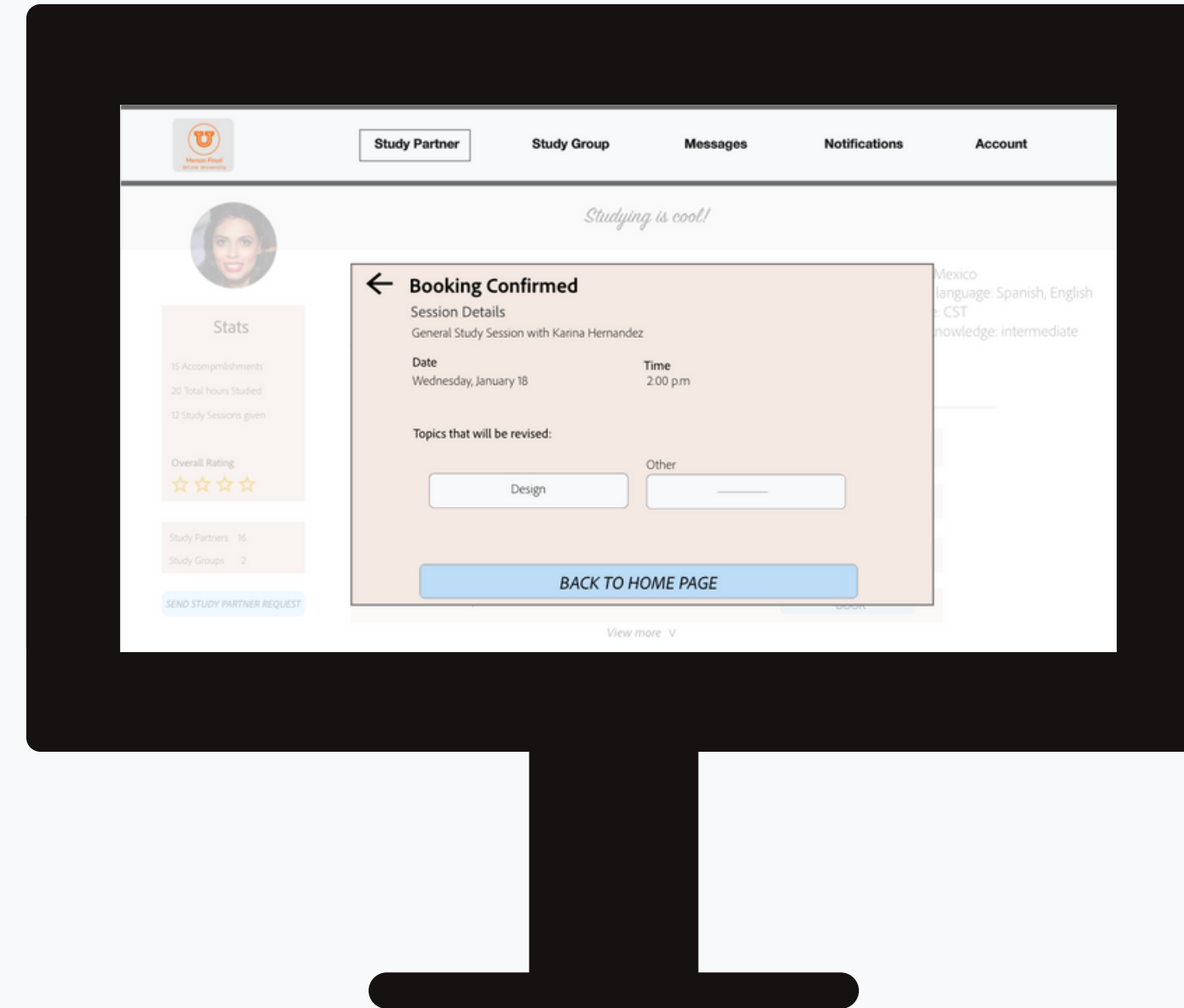
-  Users would like a more calming and creative color palette.
-  Users would like bold text to differentiate subtext and call to action buttons.
-  Users want an easier way to locate their study partners and groups.

REFINING THE DESIGN

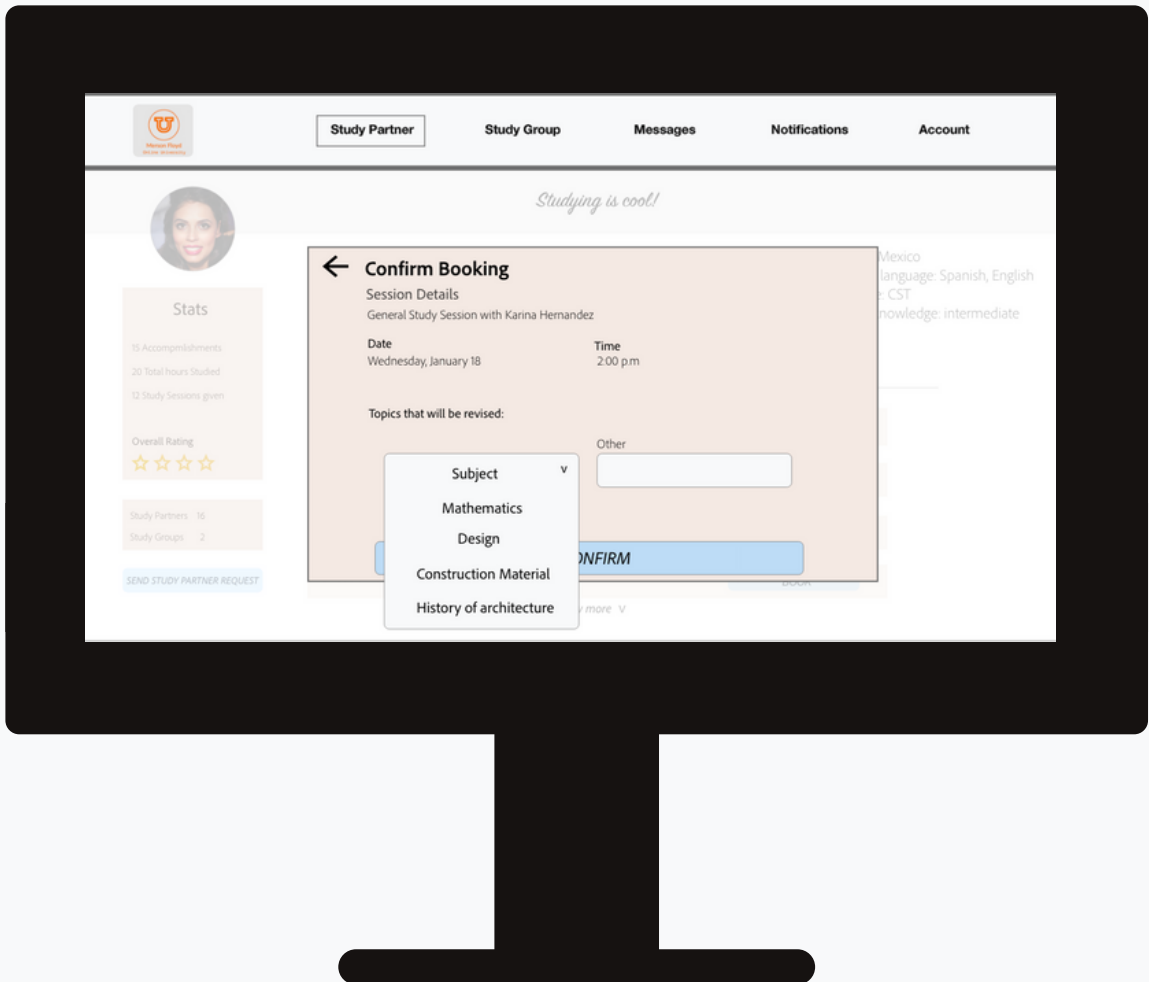
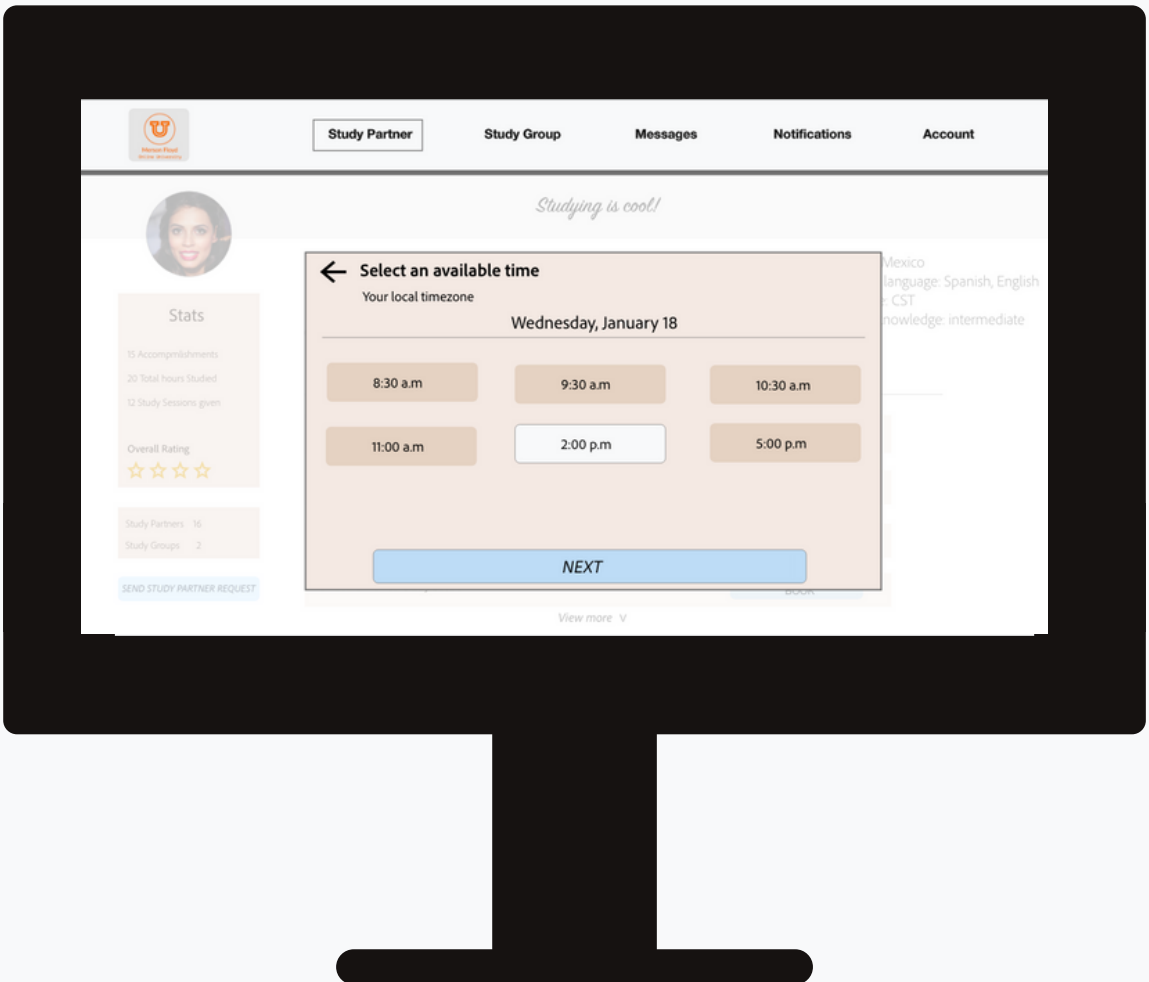
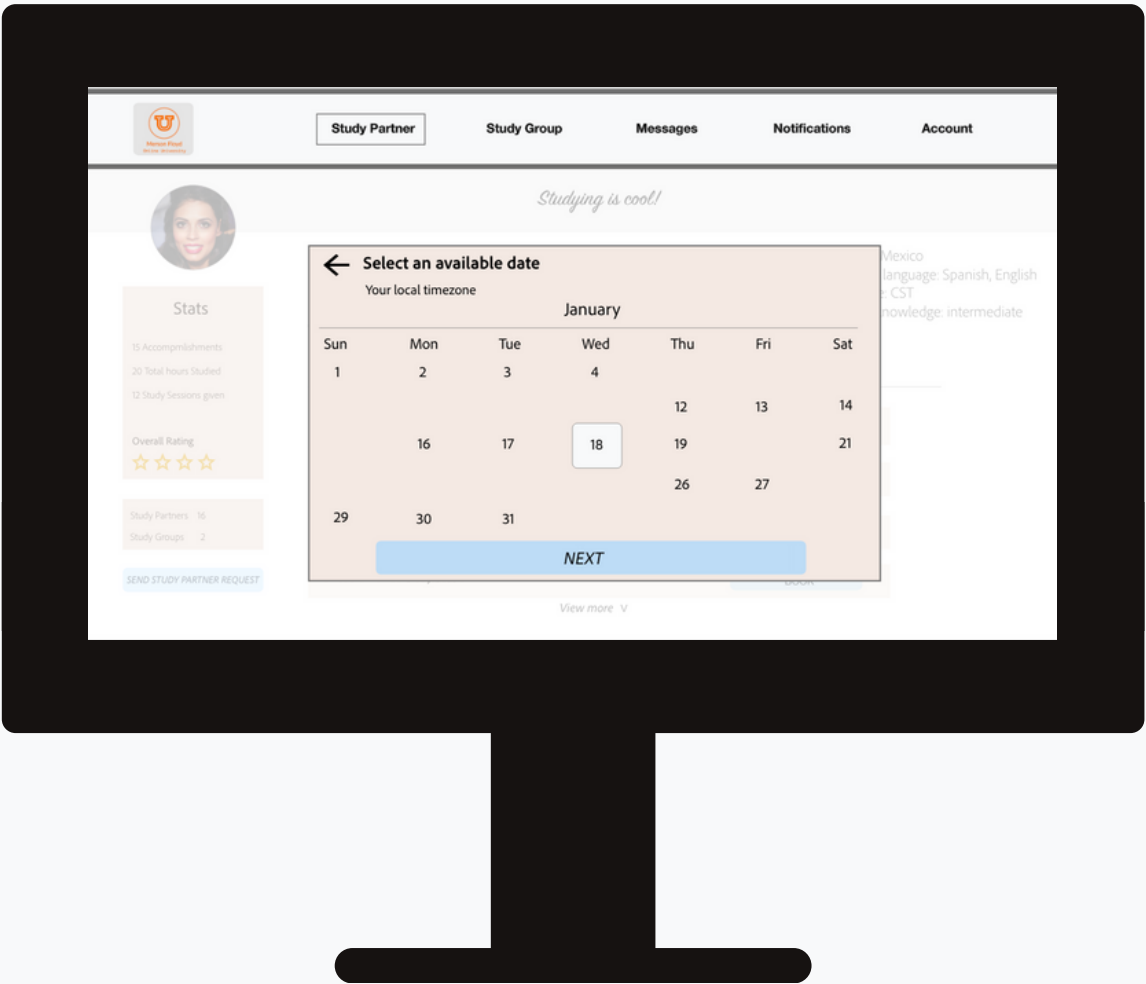
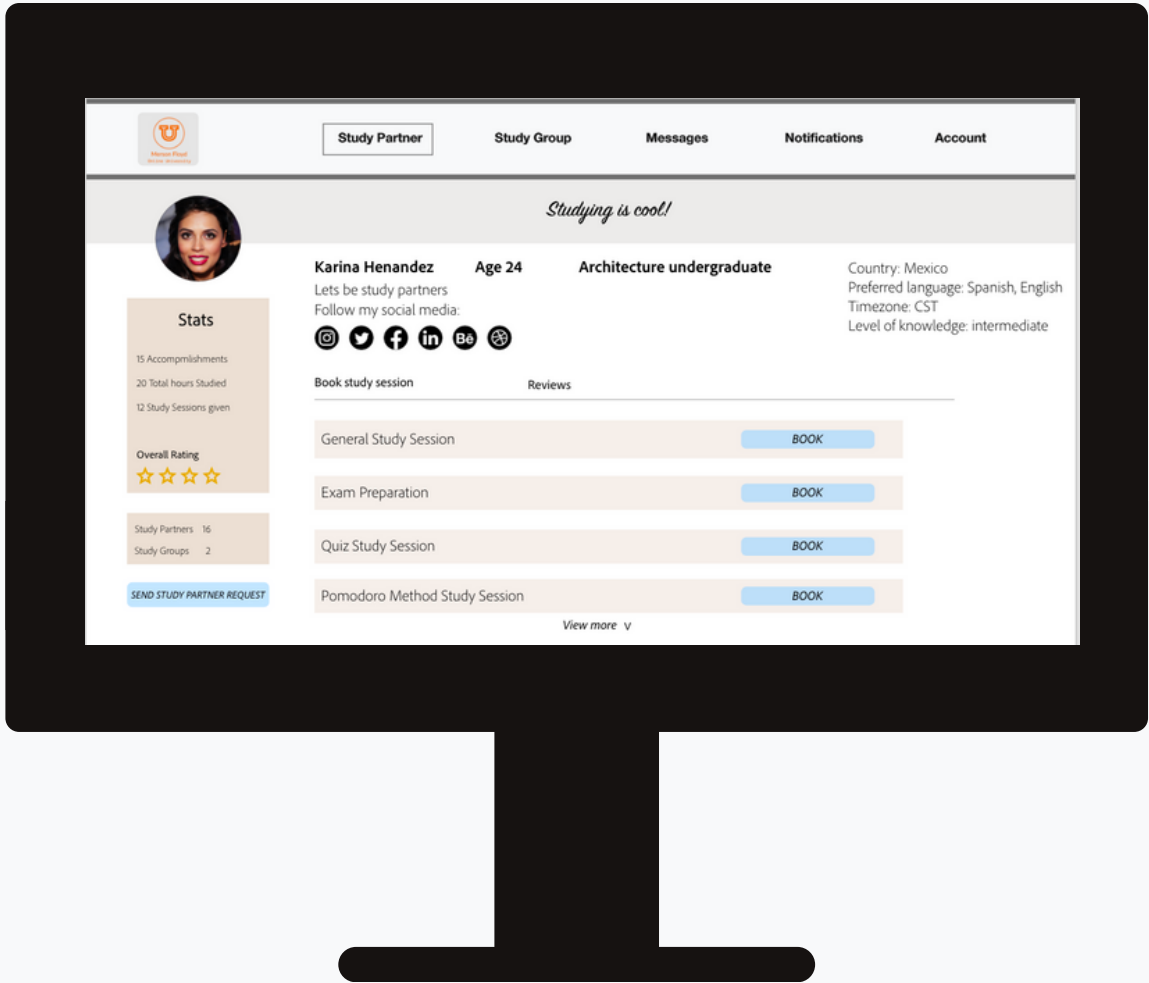
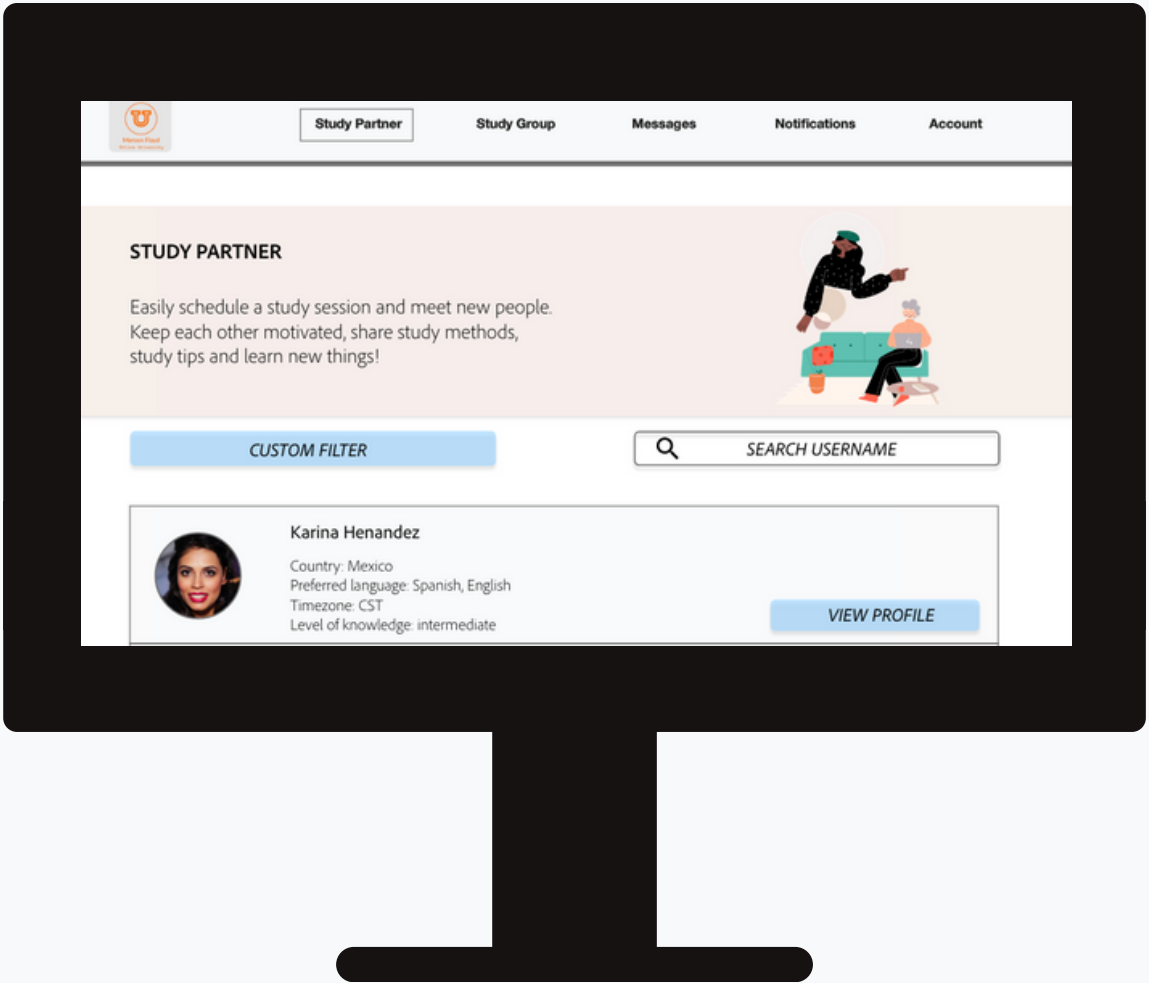
- Mockups
- High-fidelity prototype
- Accessibility



MOCKUPS

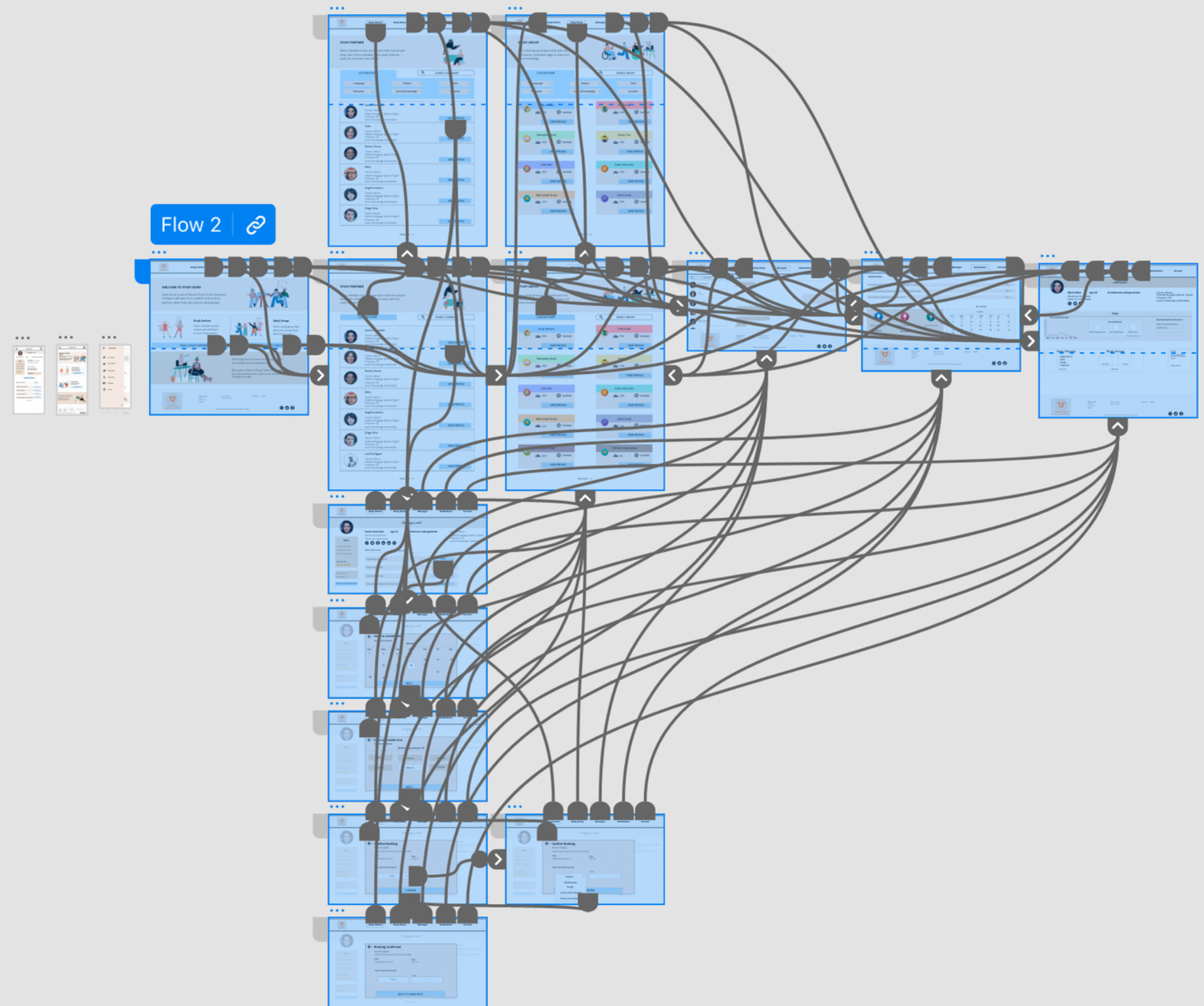


When creating the mockups accessibility was heavily taken into account. All call to action buttons have a specific color, dark bold letters were used to specify importance and hierarchy, and a calm inducing color pallet was used in order to create a stress-free study zone.

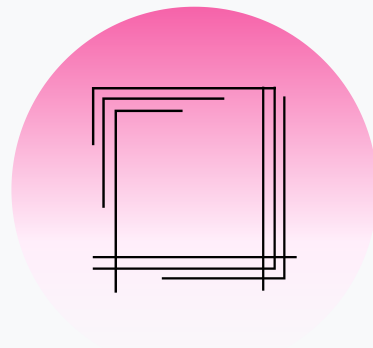


HIGH-FIDELITY PROTOTYPE

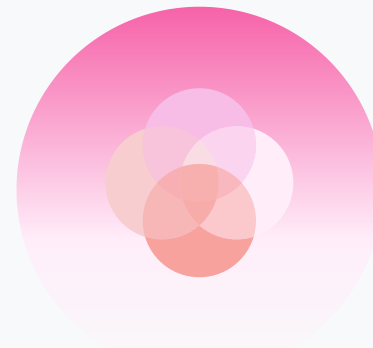
The final high-fidelity prototype was created after more usability studies to refine the mockup.



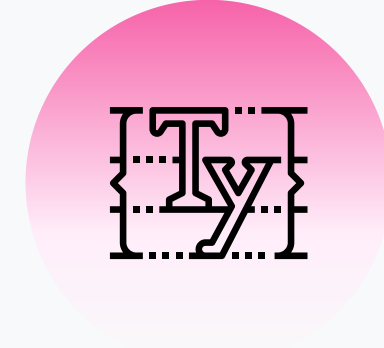
ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS



Defining borders were added to specify sections and make a cleaner easier to use website.



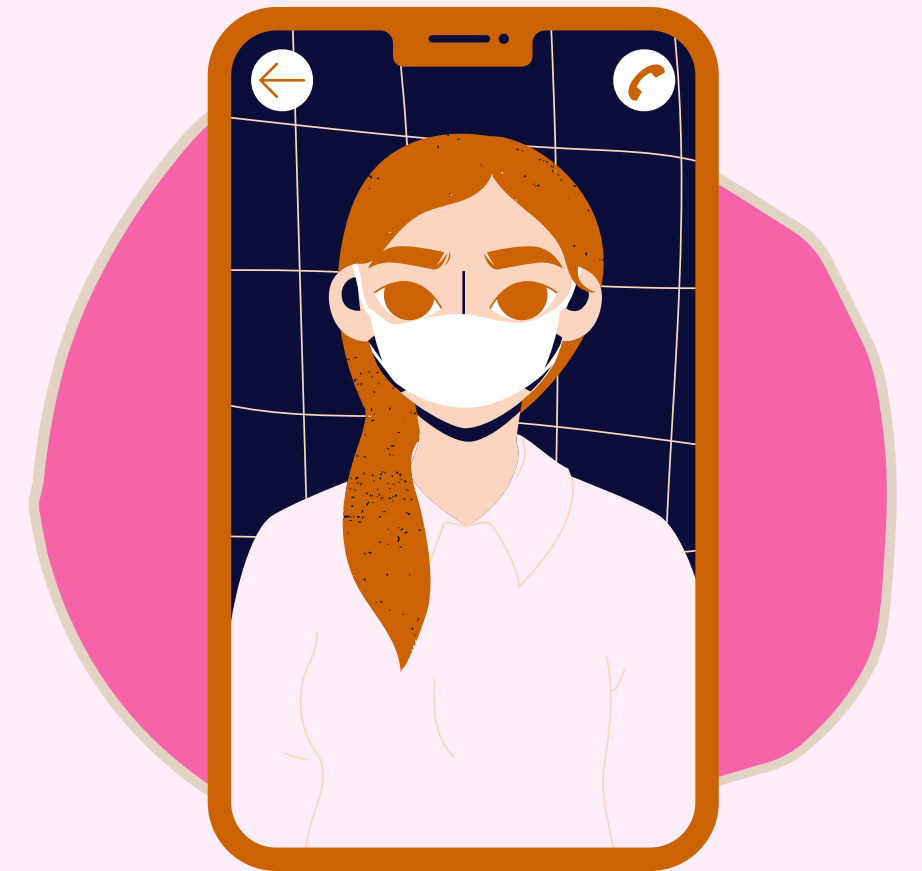
Contrasting colors were used to create a better user flow.



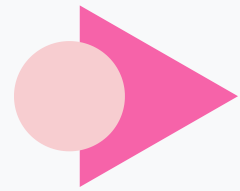
Bold and simple typography was used to make for easy reading.

GOING FORWARD

- Takeaways
- Next steps

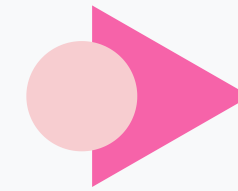


TAKEAWAYS



Impact:

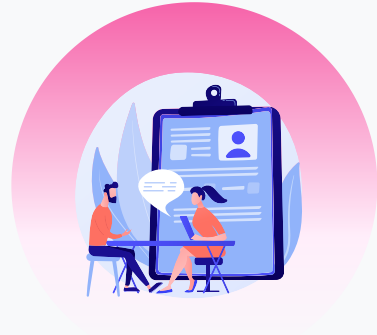
"It feels like a cool place. I wish I could have used it during online learning, it would have been a great platform to use and connect with others online when it wasn't possible in real life."



What I learned:

I was able to practice responsive design and my interview skills. I was able to work without a general bias and take better notes, feedback and apply those changes to my designs.

NEXT STEPS



Focus more on larger usability studies to make sure all standards are being met.



Continue improving making the page a safe, calming, fun place to study and bring people together.

**THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
TIME!**

