

CSE 440 AA

1c: Revised Project Proposal

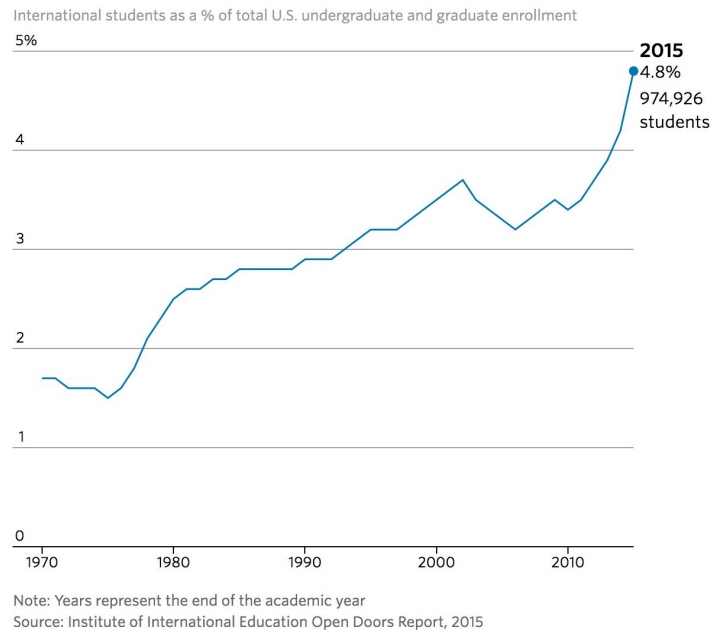
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Revisions explained

After discussing our proposal in class, we decided that we needed to abstract the problem to a higher level. For international students facing travel and immigration issues, finding information is important but arguably the biggest concern is mitigating the fear that comes with the information. We focused more on how to distinguish our ideas from services that are already in place; it's important to identify that we are not just trying to aggregate information and news, but try to help fearful, panicked students deal with this information. We also brought up how the services offered to international students from a school like UW could be very different than those from a smaller, more conservative school, and we were sure to emphasize this more in our proposal. Currently, UW offers a lot of concise, informative support, but this is not characteristic of the entire country, so our problem extends past just our area.

Design Problem and Motivation

The population of international students traveling to the U.S. for college is rapidly increasing (see graph on the right); at the same time, political tensions surrounding immigration issues are extremely high. In this chaotic and polarized time, international students can have difficulty in finding correct, reliable, and unbiased news information. Furthermore, once news is found that a user considers trustworthy, they must struggle to understand how to apply that information to their own personal situation. While the UW International Student Services provides up-to-date information for students to help make sense of policies that affect them, many international students at campuses across the country are not afforded this knowledge so readily. Many major universities do not have services set up to accommodate the needs of international students, and those that do are often not diligent in providing information for their students. This issue involves many different stakeholders: students, legal professionals, campus organizations, government, media houses, non-profit organizations and campus faculty all play a role in making it easier for these students to access information.



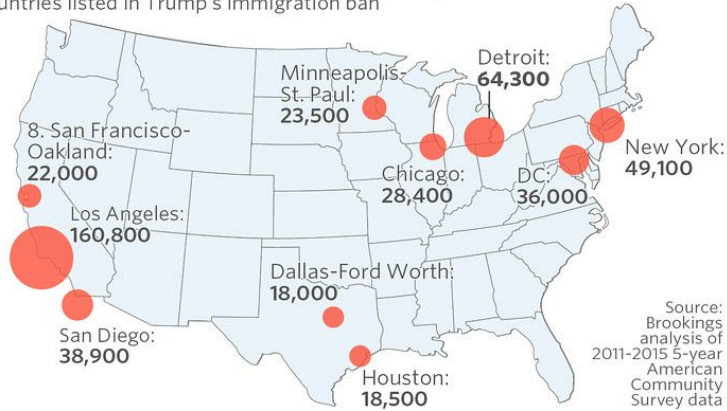
Analysis and Example

Hypothetical scenario: An international student has heard recent rumors about changing visa statuses for students and wants more information. He/she quickly Google searches “F-1 visa change” but is met with a stream of incoherent, sometimes contradictory and outdated, information that would take hours to sift through and make sense of, or possibly a legal background that the student doesn’t have. At UW, the next option is to contact an International Student Services advisor, but it often takes three days to hear back, and the student is now becoming panicked. Many other schools do not have the same resources for international students as well. The student turns to other international friends, but they are unclear on the current situation as well and can only share more rumors or heightened emotions.

Designing for this situation, and many like it that international students encounter, has various positive and negative aspects to take into consideration. At the highest level, we must mitigate the fear and panic that these students are feeling about their circumstances. Providing a source of information that aggregates disparate news sources presents challenges in credibility, cohesiveness, and adaptability to constantly changing information. A student that is panicked needs correct information that is accessible and seemingly instantaneously. Further, current news doesn’t explain HOW changes in policy directly affect the students. Often this information can be provided by campus entities, but students at UW are very fortunate to have a variety of outlets for help, and campuses that lacks these resources will pose a challenge for

Cities with the highest total population of residents affected by Trump's ban

The 10 metro areas with the highest number of legal residents born in the seven countries listed in Trump's immigration ban



this system.

Nonetheless, the negatives provide space for positive impacts. The large population that is affected by policy changes means that there are many students that could benefit from this information system both on UW and across the nation (see map on the

left). The growing culture of resistance also implies that many stakeholders including lawyers, faculty, and student organizations, would be willing to participate in such a system, yet this depends on a specific campus's culture. The gap in information leaves room for huge opportunity in benefiting the livelihood of this population, but will require a well-designed system that is sensitive to these specific needs.