# Protocol for testing video chat
# CSCW Fall 2009

Susan German
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**Purpose, Goals, and Objectives**
The purpose of this test is to see if potential users understand how to use the video chat module of Sakai. Specific objectives are to see if the text and icons chosen for the system are intuitive; if features have value; and if there are any features that are missing or need to be changed to improve the module.

**Research Questions**
1. Do users understand how to set up the video chat and connect with their classmates?
2. Are the icons intuitive? Meaning, do they convey the function they represent?
3. Can users make changes to the settings of the system in order to configure the system to their liking?
4. Do users believe that the system adds value to Sakai?

**Participants**
We will be looking for participants who represent potential users of Sakai. Participants may be students, teachers, or fellow classmates (Considering the protocol is for a class project). Participants do need to have experience with the Internet, chatting online, and participated in an online class. All participants will be requested to fill out appropriate paperwork such as consent forms.

**Method**
The test will be ran using medium fidelity mock-up. Participants will not be using an actual module of Sakai. Participants will be requested to envision working as a participant of an online class that needs to connect with other classmates to work on a project. The script for the session is as follows:

**Introduce the goal(s) and purpose of the testing activities (Before starting Session 1)**

Thank you for agreeing to help us today so I can observe you interacting in Sakai. Sakai is a new Online Course Management System that we are testing here at the University of Missouri. Your experience here today, and our observations will allow us to better understand how students interact in and with Sakai when they engage in various online course-related tasks. Before I introduce to Sakai and the tasks you will work on today I would like to ask you some questions about your prior computer use and experiences (if any) participating in online courses.

[Collect background information for each subject:]

1. What is your name and major?
2. What type of computer do you normally use, PC or Mac? What type(s) of web browser do you most often use?
3. How would you characterize your skill and experience as a computer user (based on following questions)?
   a. I hardly ever use a computer.
   b. I use a computer at least once a week and usually browse the Internet.
   c. I use a computer and the Internet on a regular basis.
   d. I use a computer and the Internet on a regular basis and also use chat or messaging tools.
   e. I consider myself a very experienced computer and Internet user. My friends often rely on me for tech support.
4. Have you ever taken any online courses before? If so, which ones?
5. Have you ever used other Online Course Management Systems (such as Blackboard, WebCT, Shadow)? If yes, could you tell me about that use? How often? What courses?
6. Do you have any prior experience using Sakai? If yes, could you tell me about that use? How often? What courses?

**Introduce the goal(s) and purpose of the session 1 activities:**

There are several things I want you to keep in mind as you work on today's activities.

- You are not being evaluated. If the system is difficult for you to use or to understand we don't consider this a reflection of your personal performance or ability to use computers or the Sakai system. Rather, it means that improvements are probably needed in the Sakai system.
- Be honest in your responses. I did not create the system you are evaluating, so you won't hurt my feelings with any negative comments or criticisms.

I'd like to ask you to keep in mind several things while working on today's activities:

- First, constantly say aloud what you are thinking about while you perform the tasks, and talk about what you are attempting to do. We call this "thinking out loud".
- Second, please try not to ask me too many questions during this experience. Just try to perform the activities the best you can … however if you absolutely get stuck and feel you need some help, just say so.

Do you have any questions about the testing before we start?

Ok, now let's begin. Please start by reading the following scenario and  instructions.

[Give handout with instructions and scenario(s) to the student to read]

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## INSTRUCTIONS

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Imagine that you are enrolled in an online course called "Teaching Science II". The course uses Sakai as a course management tool to deliver course documents to provide a virtual learning environment to help you interact with your instructor(s) and with other students.

Imagine that today is the **first day of a new group assignment given to student groups of 3 or 4**.  Your group has scheduled a video chat time to discuss and plan for the assignment.  Do what you think is needed to access the video chat tool. Keep in mind that this is a medium fidelity mockup. It is best for our study if you try **to act as naturally as** you might if you logged into one of your own online courses from your home or wherever you access the Internet.  Look through the mockup and talk about how you would approach setting up the video chat.  Please take your time to think and please try to work as normally as you do in your regular courses.

**  Please constantly say out loud what you are thinking about while you are working in Sakai, what you are looking at, what you are doing, and what you are attempting to do.   Be sure to verbalize any confusion or problems you are having trying to understand the system, what to do next, or how to proceed.**

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## INQUIRY QUESTIONS

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Ask the subject to open the Power Point and get started.

- Subject should open the PowerPoint and look over the first slide
- Subject should be talking about what they are thinking and how they would log into the chat.

**Remember to say out loud what you are doing and thinking while you work**

During the activity subject indicates what he or she is doing or done: [Ask the following types of questions – phrase them to match the situation the user is encountering]

- Can you tell me what you were doing?
- How did you know how to do it?
- What might you have done if you kept working?
- Did you want to do something but didn't know how?
- What might happen next in this class?

**Debriefing Questions as you can and remain within the time frame.**
1. Do you think this system would be easy to use?
2. Does the system add value to Sakai?
3. Were there any features to the video chat that you thought were missing?
4. How can the video chat be improved?

**FEEDBACK**

Student 1: Positives

1. In terms of the instructions, they seem very detailed. As you provide the set of instructions to multiple users, it appears to be fairly structured. This helps to ensure that you receive consistent results.

2. Another positive aspect is that you provide expectations for the user before they proceed with a medium fidelity mock-up. This may be unclear to many users and may thus impact the results received from the usability test. An initial orientation helps to move the user past the initial confusion so they can focus on providing meaningful results.

Opportunities for Improvement

1. I see that you provide open-ended discussion questions as the end of the setting. However, I do not see any aspects that help to identify social aspects that might be important. If you look at module 2, Dr. Laffey provides a framework for possible social behavior. You might want to include questions that differentiates and elucidates factors as the individual, the community the individual works in, accountability, expectations of others.

2. I also noticed that your debriefing questions ask about usability aspect. This is an important aspect. However, it affords a 'yes' or 'no' answer rather than allowing users to comment on specific aspects. You might want to ask specific questions in regards to feature such as "What are your perceptions of the usability of the video upload feature?", "What are your perceptions of the usability of the archive feature? ", etc. Since the user is relying on memory during the debriefing session, it is possibly they may forget to remember all of the features they thought could have been improved. Specific questions identified beforehand may help to stimulate the memory and provide better quality feedback.

Student 2:  I think you have a very complete front end to your instrument, and you have all of the procedural bases covered really well.  You've set up the experiment up to a T., and it looks like you have some experience with that!

What I am not getting here is the connection to one of the frameworks, or maybe I am missing it? It seems to me you are collecting data that is valuable from a usability perspective, but it's just giving you one slice of the picture of the activity.  You do ask one question about adding value, but the rest are processes questions.

You've got such a great set-up, I think If you take one of the frameworks and see if you can come up with questions that address each concept in the framework, then you get a more complete picture of the activity and it's context than your current set of questions do.