

### **Company and Team Overview**

Pearson is an education company, located around the world, offering k-12 and higher education products and services mostly geared toward students, teachers, administrators, and tutors. I work within the higher education team located in and focused on the U.S. Our focus is to build new pages/sites and to implement updates. This includes products, campaigns, events, and other informational and promotional pages throughout the higher education section of Pearson's main U.S. website ([www.pearson.com/us](http://www.pearson.com/us)).

### **Team Structure**

My team consists of about 30 people. All creative focused, but split into web, print, content, email, video, and Project Managers. Each of these teams also has a manager. There is also a top manager above the whole team. My immediate web team consists of my manager and 3 other people. Among the 4 web team members, there are only 2 of us, myself and one other person, that works on the main site ([www.pearson.com/us](http://www.pearson.com/us)) through a CMS called Adobe Experience Manager. My other 2 team members work on old legacy sites that have not yet been migrated over to AEM. They will be, eventually. My team members are all in different states including New Jersey, Texas, Iowa, and Boston. Among the larger team, it is even more dispersed. My manager is also of Irish decent and one of my team members is of Indian decent.

### **The Project**

Pearson Students is a section of the higher education site offering a variety of products geared toward students. The scope of this project is to change the voice to cater to a larger audience by changing “student” to “learner.” Also, to redesign some of the products, on the main page, to highlight them more.

## **Introduction**

Pearson's ideas behind changing the focus from students to an all-encompassing learner focus, is smart. This will help to capture a wider audience of learners, since not all are students. Even Pearson itself pushes for its own employees to constantly expand their knowledge and take advantage of learning opportunities. This being said, I am thrilled to be a part of this transition by converting the existing Pearson Student's section of our web site. With this project currently taking place, I am seeing reoccurring hiccups with Pearson's process around web based projects. Using Pearson Students as the prime example, this proposal will discuss exiting processes, limitations, and possible improvements.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Pearson Student's project is to change the voice of the content to cater to a wider audience because not every learner is a student.

The purpose of the proposal is to dive into the process issues surrounding this project and many other web based projects.

## **Scope and Rationale**

Project scope and rationale is to make updates to the Pearson Students section of the higher education site to change the focus from "student" to "learner."

## **Goals**

Project goals include updating all student focused content to learner focused content as well as changing page URLs, site tree organization, and SEO information for all pages within this section of the site. Secondly, updating the product designs on the home page to better highlight them.

## **Timeline**

The project started on April 1<sup>st</sup> and final was due by May 9<sup>th</sup>. The project has currently gone over this timeline. It is now pushed back to May 24<sup>th</sup> for final and go-live date.

## **Products and Deliverables**

Project deliverables included updates to these 5 web pages, the Learner's Home Page, Get Course Materials, Student Ambassadors, Students Blog, and Become a Blogger.

## **Current Overall Team Process**

My current perspective of the overall team process, when a creating and requesting a project, goes something like the following:

- Stakeholder submits a request to the Creative Manager (maybe they have a kick-off meeting).
- Creative Manager creates a JIRA ticket with overall description of the project, then assigns it to the Project Manager team lead.
- PM team lead assigns to most available PM.

- PM designs what sub tickets need to be created and does so (for example, one ticket for content, graphic design, and web).
- Content ticket is assigned to Content Manager, then assigned to most available content team member.
- Graphic design ticket is assigned to their manager, then assigned to most available team member (could be imagery or pdfs).
- Content and graphic design kick-off meetings happen, if necessary (usually around new or big changes).
- Content doc is created and sent off for alpha and beta review.
- When final approval is in from the Stakeholder for content, the tickets are assigned for web to start work.
- Web pulls in approved content and graphic design pieces and send off for first internal creative review (my internal team only so graphic and content people can see it before CM or Stakeholder).
- Internal review edits are made and then is sent off for CM and Stakeholder alpha review.
- Complete alpha review changes and send off for final review/approval, unless bigger and needs a beta review and changes made.
- Final review and approval received (all team members tagged throughout the process, but Stakeholder has ultimate say over everything). Once approved by the Stakeholder, it is pushed live.
- CM closes out the tickets.

## Limitations and Preliminary Findings

Project limitations included the following:

- Constraints of using Adobe Experience Manager and set templates. For example, I could not make TM and R actual superscripted symbols with no option in AEM.
- Special images for product highlights were requested. These followed new design requirements, a different style. Making them work with the page took some work.
- Why are some pages still titled “Students?” Shouldn’t Student Ambassadors and Students Blog be changed to “Learner” as well?

Process limitations included the following:

- New Creative Manager assigned that is not very familiar with company processes.
- The special images requested for the products followed a different approval process than usual. The reasons why they followed a different process were confusing, therefore, approval wasn’t done correctly.
- Graphic designers creating the new special images worked separately from the web designers. No input from each other.
- Content team constantly giving design suggestions. Content should stick to content.
- Brainstorming meetings, all the way up to the Stakeholders, are done in separate meetings. Why can’t we all be involved in all meetings throughout the process to give input? Makes more sense to have graphic, web, and content expertise from the get-go.

- Too many rounds of revisions. Alpha then beta aren't always committed to. Goes into rounds of beta.
- We use feedback docs to capture all comments during reviews. Some don't use these and post comments elsewhere (for example, within project tickets), which makes tracking of outstanding or completed changes difficult.
- Final approval doesn't ever seem to be final. Content is approved before design, yet content changes still happen throughout the design process.
- What happens at the Stakeholder level or even beyond the Stakeholder? We don't ever hear about this information. Do these requests actually come from research? If so, what type of research? I know we have research teams, but not so sure one is part of our team. Shouldn't we be working with them thoroughly? We have UI teams that work with researchers closely, why doesn't our web team?
- Very little, if any, analytics being done behind the scenes. They have been "wanting" to fill this position for a while. How do we know what is really working?
- Little is known, at least at my level, about the Stakeholder and initial requirements. Why do they have so much control over the final say of the project and not the actual specialists working on it?

Team limitations included the following:

- Web, graphic design, and content teams all located within different states. Scheduling meetings with different time zones and communication, in general, can be difficult.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, Pearson seems to have the right idea when it comes to changing the voice from student to learner, but their processes could use a lot of improvements. Having an ethnographic study done within Pearson, and it's process across the board, would be highly beneficial. I am coming from a perspective of web, within the higher education U.S. side, which is only a small piece of the puzzle. Pearson's k-12 and global teams are sure to have their own set of issues. One process enhancement that the global side has already taken on, is the implementation of an agile environment. The U.S. side has discussed this, but no efforts have been made to implement this. I believe that implementing a new process, like agile, could really help to open up the minds of others and the possibilities of great change. Improvements have been made little by little, but until we can allow for ethnography-type experts to come in with a more etic perspective, obtain trust between Pearson employees and experts, research and re-evaluated company process, and get the right people on board to accept big change, I'm afraid our current process limitations will remain in place.



# Project Imagery (these project changes are not yet live)

## 1. Learner Home Page with Product Highlights

The screenshot shows the Pearson Learners homepage. At the top, there is a dark blue navigation bar with 'United States' on the left and 'Sign In', 'Contact Us', and 'Bookbag' on the right. Below this is a white navigation bar with the Pearson logo and links for 'PreK-12 Education', 'Higher Education', 'Industry & Professional', and 'About Us'. A search bar is located on the right side of this bar. A secondary dark blue navigation bar contains links for 'Subject Catalog', 'Products & Services for Teaching', 'Products & Services for Institutions', 'Customers', 'Events', and 'Why Choose Pearson?'. The main content area starts with a breadcrumb trail: 'Higher Education > Customers > Pearson Learners'. Below this is a large hero banner with a group of four smiling students. The text on the banner reads: 'Learners welcome' and 'Because life is hard enough, finding the resources you need to succeed shouldn't be.' Below the banner are three product highlight cards, each with a distinct background color and an image. The first card, 'Get my course materials', features a stack of books and a laptop. The second card, 'Get online tutoring or resume help', shows a laptop displaying a website. The third card, 'Create digital flashcards', displays a smartphone with the 'Pearson Prep' app logo, which consists of a blue checkmark inside a square with rounded corners.

United States

Sign In Contact Us Bookbag

Pearson

PreK-12 Education Higher Education Industry & Professional About Us Search

Subject Catalog Products & Services for Teaching Products & Services for Institutions Customers Events Why Choose Pearson?

Higher Education > Customers > Pearson Learners

### Learners welcome

Because life is hard enough, finding the resources you need to succeed shouldn't be.

#### Get my course materials

Access your print or etexts here, along with MyLab™, Mastering™, and Revel™. It's fast, easy, secure, and saves you big time \$\$.

#### Get online tutoring or resume help

Available 24/7, our tutors offer feedback on your assignments. Our career writing specialists provide resume and cover letter support that will help you stand out.

#### Create digital flashcards

Get the free app that automatically creates online flashcards from your notes, along with access to expert decks that align with your Pearson texts.

## 2. Get Course Materials

United States ▾ Sign In Contact Us Bookbag 🛒

**Pearson** PreK-12 Education **Higher Education** Industry & Professional About Us Search 🔍

Subject Catalog ▾ Products & Services for Teaching ▾ Products & Services for Institutions ▾ Customers ▾ Events Why Choose Pearson? ▾

Higher Education > Customers > Pearson Learners > **Get Course Materials**

**Pearson Learners**

[Get Course Materials](#)

Pearson Students Blog ▾

Pearson Campus Ambassador Program

Pearson Scholarship for Higher Education

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### 3. Pearson Ambassadors

United States ▾ Sign In Contact Us Bookbag 🛒

**P Pearson** PreK-12 Education Higher Education Industry & Professional About Us Search 🔍

Subject Catalog ▾ Products & Services for Teaching ▾ Products & Services for Institutions ▾ Customers ▾ Events Why Choose Pearson? ▾

Higher Education > Customers > Pearson Learners > **Pearson Campus Ambassador Program**

**Pearson Learners**

Get Course Materials

Pearson Students Blog ▾

**Pearson Campus Ambassador Program**

Pearson Scholarship for Higher Education

## Pearson Campus Ambassador Program

Imagine telling your future employers about this highly selective program (with the world's top learning company) where you had the opportunity to:

- work on a virtual team, where you can meet new people in your campus community and from around the nation
- learn new skills (like communication and public speaking) that help you grow — professionally and personally
- open the door to other professional opportunities through internships, travel, or conferences
- get real-world work experience (and get paid while you're at it)

[Apply now >](#)

## 4. Student Blog (Why not Learner Blog?)

United States ▾ Sign In Contact Us Bookbag 📁

**P Pearson** PreK-12 Education Higher Education Industry & Professional About Us Search 🔍

Subject Catalog ▾ Products & Services for Teaching ▾ Products & Services for Institutions ▾ Customers ▾ Events Why Choose Pearson? ▾

Higher Education > Customers > Pearson Learners > **Pearson Students Blog**

**Pearson Learners**

Get Course Materials

**Pearson Students Blog** ▲

Become a Blogger

Pearson Campus Ambassador Program

Pearson Scholarship for Higher Education

# Student Blog

You're more than a student. For an inside perspective of college life both inside and outside the classroom, our blog features student-written content that covers the topics that matter to you most.

Become a Pearson blogger/vlogger. Here are three reasons why you should start now.

- **Build some serious cred.** Position yourself as an authority on a topic and enhance your professional image while building your personal brand.
- **Express yourself.** Share your story and inspire others.
- **Become a better writer (and thinker).** By organizing your thoughts and putting your ideas to paper, you'll improve your skills along the way.


### Have an idea for a blog or vlog post?

Go ahead. Pitch it to us. We can't wait to hear what you're thinking.


[Submit your idea](#) 📧

### Looking for some inspiration?


Here are some ideas for [blog/vlog topics](#) to consider.



### The Art of Balance: Accepting Changes in Your Life's Blueprint



### Getting Experience in Your Chosen Career Field



### Thank you to Pearson

As a soon-to-be graduating senior, I'm

## 5. Become a Blogger

- Pearson Learners**
- Get Course Materials
- Pearson Students Blog ^
- Become a Blogger**
- Pearson Campus Ambassador Program
- Pearson Scholarship for Higher Education

### Ideas for blog/vlog topics

Interested in contributing to the blog but not sure where to start? Check out the monthly theme suggestions below as well as the list of ongoing themes we're looking for.

[Submit a pitch >](#)

### Monthly blog themes

January ▾	July ▾
February ▾	August ▾
March ▾	September ▾
April ▾	October ▾
May ▾	November ▾
June ▾	December ▾