The focus of my final class project is to analyze the website College Lifestyles and to re-design a new website that would be able to be used to replace the current site. College Lifestyles is an online magazine that produces journalistic content for college students. Staff members who upload content to the site and users who view that content have experienced several issues with the site; therefore, this project will be to analyze what those problems are, how to fix them, and then create a re-design of the site for the company to use.

1. Define the project/topic for which you are going to create the interface. What will users accomplish with the interface?

The project entails working with a company called College Lifestyles. I will be analyzing their current site to see what users and staff are having issues with and then I will redesign the site to address these problems. Users should be able to know what the site is about by looking at the site’s homepage. The users should be able to access content more easily; they will not have to spend time looking through the site to find the information they need. Navigation, efficiency, and clarity in language are the prime areas that will be re-designed so users are able to read and find material that is posted to the site.

2. Why do you want to develop the interface? Or what will the interface accomplish?

After previously working with the site myself, it was easy to see how inefficiently the site had been designed. This inefficiency has led to a decrease in the number of users who view the site and it has led to many staff members becoming frustrated and not wanting to work with it. By developing the interface for College Lifestyles, I hope the new interface will allow both users and staff members to have better access to the content created and a more pleasant user experience browsing and finding information on the site.

3. What are the primary tasks users will perform with the interface?
The primary tasks users will perform with the interface are searching for articles posted from a specific satellite, finding articles that are about a specific topic, finding information on internships and jobs, and sharing the content they find with their social media accounts.

4. What services/features will users want?

Users will want to be able to share content they find to their social media accounts so the site should give users the opportunity to do so. The site should be viewable on different devices so users can view the site wherever they are whether they are viewing it on a computer or on a phone or other mobile device. Additionally, users will also be able to easily find content from different satellites, or on different topics. The site should also provide information about where to advertise, how to apply for a job or internship, and information such as how to start a new satellite.

5. What are the primary goals of the interface?

The primary goals of the interface are to have users be able to navigate easily and be able to find the articles they want to read. They should be able to comment on articles, share material to social media, and interact with the website without spending excessive time finding content.

6. What value will the interface provide to users?

The interface will be a source that provides content to the user. The interface will be valuable because the users will be able to easily obtain the information they want quickly wherever they would like either on a mobile device or computer.

7. Based on your response to question 6, write a value proposition statement that explains the value of the interface (or the product you are creating) in one sentence or less. This statement can help guide your design and development efforts.

The interface will allow users to obtain journalistic content quickly and easily on any device.
8. What do you want people to think of when they think of your interface?
When people view the interface I want them to think that the site is geared toward college students but is modern, professional and contains high quality material that users would want to share.

9. Who are the intended users? Summarize their key characteristics? What do you know about them (age, computer expertise, connectivity, disabilities, etc.) and their activities or tasks –as related to your topic/project?
The primary users of the site are college students who are between the ages of 18 and 25. They are tech-savvy, socially connected individuals who enjoy reading information on college life, jobs, lifestyle and fashion. These individuals may or may not have disabilities. These users have various college degree concentrations and are in different years of their college career.

10. If this project is an existing interface (e.g., website), then what is inappropriate, ineffective, or inefficient about the way the interface supports the tasks you defined in question 3 above and why would people benefit by switching to the interface you propose?
The site’s interface is disorganized and full of unnecessary content. Users are unable to find where material is located, old material is mixed in with new material, and the quality and excessive amounts of advertising do not portray a professional news magazine. People would benefit from switching to the new design I propose because the interface will be organized, appealing, easy to navigate, and professional in its presentation. Users will benefit because they will have an enjoyable experience browsing the content on the site and will feel more inclined to share material to social media because the site will look reputable.

11. How do you plan to approach the design problem? What methods, approaches, designs, ideas, etc. do you have that will enable you to improve the design (if a site already exists) or the current situation.
To approach the design problem I plan to analyze the problems that users find with the interface then determine how to address those problems and implement any suggestions the users have into the re-design of the site. I will then create sketches and wireframes and test those
designs with users and staff members to see if the problems are solved or if other problems still exist. The designs, methods, and approaches I have that will enable me to improve the design of the current site are to first significantly decrease the amount of content on the homepage, fix the navigation by making it more organized and systematic, and make the logo more prominent. Additionally, I would like to make the purpose of the site known to users who visit the homepage, and create an appealing and pleasant design to draw the users in so they view more content.