

# NJIT MEMORANDUM

**Date:** April 15, 2007  
**To:** Dr. David Ullman, Vice President of Technology, NJIT  
**cc:** Dr. Nancy Coppola  
**From:** Catherine Racette  
**Re:** Recommendations for usability improvements for NJIT website

Students in the current PTC 601 course (*Advanced Technical & Professional Communication*) recently evaluated the NJIT website. Using Jakob Nielsen's Ten Usability Heuristics and Severity Ratings, the class uncovered several areas in need of attention. Some issues are more critical than others, but all impact the usability of the website. We understand that the NJIT website is already in stages of redesign, and some of these issues may already be scheduled for development. These issues are prioritized in this memo for your consideration to determine which items you and your team may want to address.

For additional information about how these results were obtained, please see the attached report. I will follow up with you next week to discuss these recommendations. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

## Summary of Recommendations

High Priority	
Issue	Recommendation
Layout of home page and sub page designs are inconsistent.	Although some pages have received the new design, the ones that remain should be developed in an order that gives priority to those pages intended to attract students, such as <i>Academics</i> and <i>Lifelong Learners</i> .  The newly designed home page is wider than other newly designed sub pages. Make the new design consistent across pages by making the layout width of each page the same.
Menus on home page and sub pages are inconsistent.	Menus on the sub pages should be reviewed and modified to match what is on the home page.
Return navigation when launching PDF documents and other websites is difficult and confusing.	Open House Schedule page (launched from the CPE site), and others like it, should be redesigned to allow the user to use the browser's Back button.  Launch external sites and PDF documents in a separate window to maintain the availability of the NJIT site navigation.
Medium Priority	
Issue	Recommendation
Prospective students' needs not being addressed.	Give priority of page redesign to pages that are of interest to prospective students ( <i>e.g.</i> , <i>Academics</i> and <i>Lifelong Learners</i> ).

	Add a link on the <i>Info For</i> menu on the right side of the window for prospective students. Currently it only contains links for current students and parents, but not prospective students.
No help available.	Add a help link on every page that provides information on navigation and performing common tasks. Help should include FAQ's.
<b>Low Priority</b>	
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>
<i>Contact Us</i> information is limited on sub pages.	Contact Us is more prominently placed on the newly designed pages. Continue to ensure this link appears on all new pages.
<i>Home</i> link needs to be added	Although the NJIT logo returns users to the home page, a <i>Home</i> link is also an important standard to adhere to. A Home link currently appears on newly designed pages. Continue to ensure this link appears on all new sub pages.

Attachment