

JDC Helper Biography – Jessica Promes

I created a bot that will help students in the Juvenile Defenders Clinic access information and get answers to basic questions in a quick and easy manner. The JDC Helper can be found at https://jpromes.github.io/ctl_final/jdchelper

Framing

As someone with no court experience starting in the clinic, I found the not only me, but all my peers felt unprepared and unsure of multiple things during the first few weeks. We all kept asking our supervisor the same questions over and over; defending juveniles in court was a huge responsibility and we wanted to get it right. After learning how to use QnA I thought at how useful something like this would have been at the beginning of my clinic experience. I decided I would compile all the necessary information that a new clinic student would ask and want to know into an easy QnA which would help alleviate some of the uncertainty.

Research

There was nothing really in place where a student could go and have access to all this information in one place. The documents kept in the server were minimal. By speaking to my supervisors, I was able to figure out what information would be convenient to have in one place. I gathered the few documents we had in the server and some that are available to us in court, used some of the documents provided for our seminar and also gathered cases and statutes from the state's website.

Ideation & Prototyping

After considering all the tools we learned how to use in class, I decided that for what I was trying to do QnA would be the best solution. My idea was to gather all this information available in various places and just have it in one place, easily accessible and digestible.

User Testing

Aside from myself and what I thought would be useful I also received feedback from my three supervisors. I met with all three of them separately and at different stages. I initially spoke about the project with Josh, he was excited about the idea and provided some input. From his feedback I decided to add important contacts to the QnA. I spoke with Dean McLaurin and she loved the idea, especially after seeing all that QnA could do so easily. She gave me some documents that might be useful to have in the QnA. Finally, I was able to speak to Vanessa who also loved the idea and want to continue working and improving it this upcoming semester. She also sent me some written feedback which is titled 'ProjectFeedbackVanessa' which can be found at https://jpromes.github.io/ctl_final/ProjectFeedbackVanessa.docx and it was sent to you via email on 12/15/18.

Refinement

I tried to integrate all the feedback into the final version of the project. From the feedback I reorganized the categories a few times, each time making it flow a bit better. However, for the purposes of the clinic, this will likely not be the final version since the plan is to work with it with my peers and keep refining it as we all take note of what works or what else might be useful to have. I uploaded some of the versions of my QnA in the .txt version, the final one being version 4. The final product in .html is simply named jdchelper. I only kept one html version in order to make the same link provided to my supervisors available.

Intro Pitch

The PowerPoint used for my intro pitch can be found at https://jpromes.github.io/ctl_final/ProjectPitch.pptx

Complexity/Robustness

My initial plan to use document automation for some of the documents in my QnA. However, after speaking with my supervisors we ultimately decided that it would be easier if it were not used. All these forms, aside from the opening and closing, are filled out in court. It would not make much sense to have automated documents in this tool.

Impact & Efficiencies

This QnA has the potential to increase efficiency in the clinic. Students spend time searching in different locations for all this information, and this tool has everything in one place. This will also allow supervisors to spend more time answering case related questions as opposed to a step by step on what happens on duty day, at least the first few weeks. I believe that, although specific to the juvenile defenders clinic, this is a tool can be adopted by others and easily changed to fit their needs.

Fit/Completeness

This QnA address the main problems I wanted to address. It answers the questions and provides the documents and information I would have loved to have day one in the clinic. As mentioned earlier, I will be working with Vanessa over the course of next semester to fine tune it even more since the plan is for it to be used by future JDC students.

Documentation

The QnA is pretty straight forward and all the necessary documents are in my project page. All the information used is easily accessible to any JDC student were they not able to get it through my QnA.

Real World Viability

The QnA is ready to use now. However, as I pointed out earlier, I will be refining it more next semester once my peers get to use it and provide me with more feedback.

Sustainability

Right now, I will be continuing to work on this in the up coming semester. Once there is a version everyone in the clinic has had a chance to provide input, I plan on making a quick tutorial in the case someone in the future would want to make changes.