

Semester Roadmap

Education

Background

The hypothesis emerged from observing that students with ADHD face challenges in Learning Units (LUs) at CODE University of Applied Sciences, particularly with focus and time management. This led to the design and facilitation of a process aimed at addressing these hurdles for others.

My Role

Researcher, facilitator, and designer

Results

As a result of the thesis and capstone project, a semester planning platform was created with students and faculty. Students and the university team were excited about the platform and how it can help both sides. I learned facilitation skills and applied work of accessibility and inclusive design.

Reflection

Reflecting on the project, I gained valuable insights into co-design and workshop facilitation. One of the challenges I faced was managing my time effectively within the constraints of both the thesis and capstone project.

co-design

interviews

wireframing

testing

Due to confidentiality agreements with research participants, some details have been excluded to protect the privacy of the sensitive group.

What is CODE University of Applied Sciences?

CODE University in Berlin, Germany, emphasizes project-based learning integrated with other disciplines (PM, SE, ID) over traditional theory. According to CODE's website and wiki:

- Learning Units (LUs) range from workshops to lectures, with styles set by faculty.
- Special accommodations are available for assessments and LUs, such as pre-sent materials.
- Students have full control over their studies, selecting LUs and modules to match their interests.



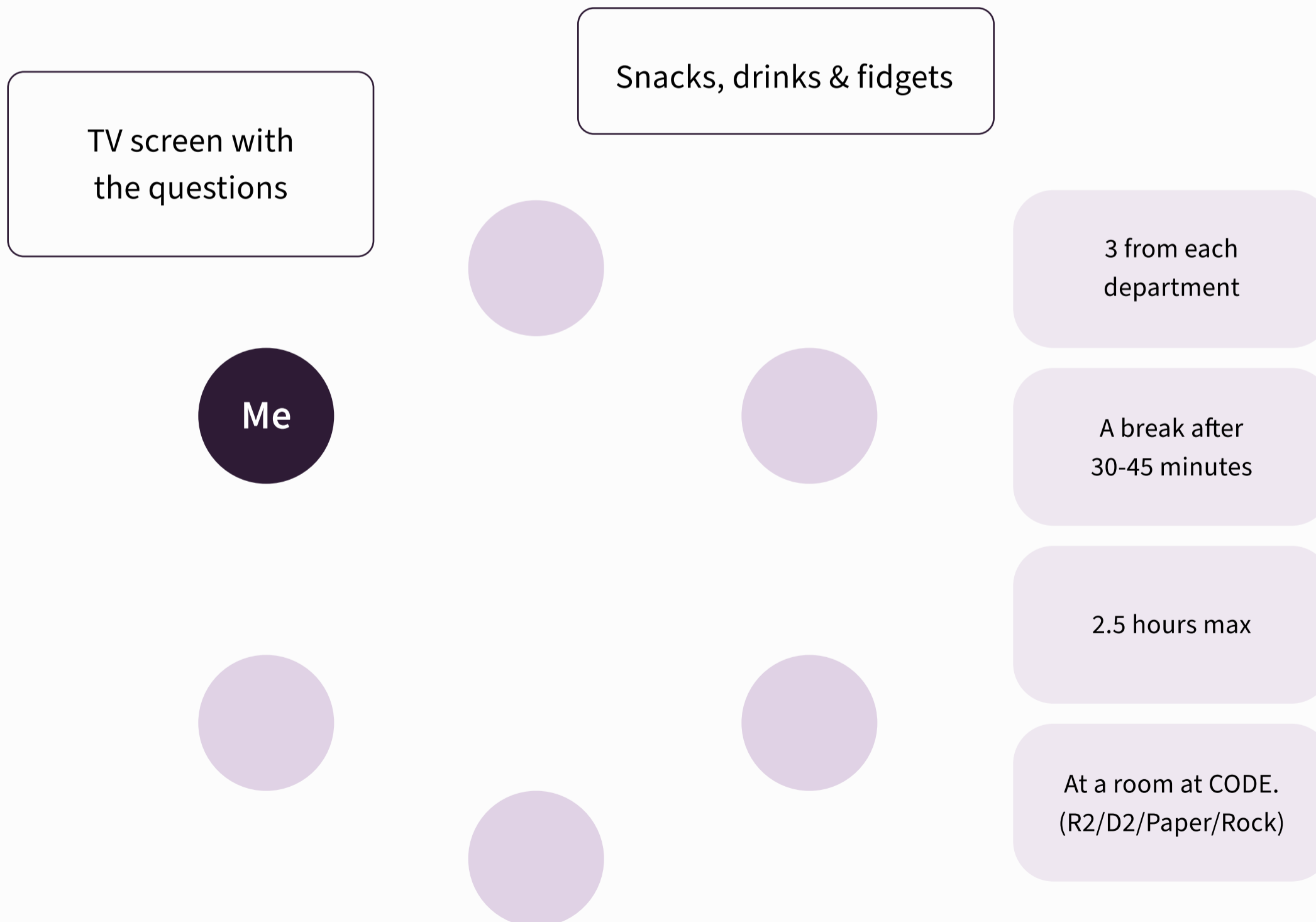
Our Students

“CODE is all about the students. We believe that surrounding yourself with an inspiring, diverse and ambitious crowd of people is one of the key ingredients for personal growth.”

Primary Research

A focus group was conducted with CODE University students with ADHD. Key details include:

- Participants: 2 interaction designers, 2 software engineers, and 1 product manager.
- Recruitment was done via CODE's Slack and personal connections, ensuring anonymity and signed consent.
- A TV screen was used to display questions, with refreshments and fidget tools provided for engagement.



Primary Research

Exploring key academic experience themes

The analysis framework explored experiences across three time frames: 'Before LU,' 'During LU,' and 'After LU,' covering both positive and negative aspects. Key findings include:

- Affinity mapping was used to examine experiences, leading to **three key themes**:
 - LU Structure
 - Platforms
 - Assessment Preparation
- Findings validated initial assumptions and highlighted interconnected themes within the 'During LU' period, particularly around:
 - Focus
 - Time management
 - Clarification
- The study included both in-person and online experiences.
- **The co-design team decided to focus on 'Before LU' process.** As it will help minimising the challenges that moves to 'During LU'.

Focus

I don't want to be different from everyone else.

Teachers being messy.

Haven't manage or think to organise this semester, feel like I'm floating through.

Time Management

LU registration It's one of the the most anxiety inducing experience for me.

Until deciding what I want to do, it's to late and all booked.

The more organising the better in seeing the full pictures. And that very helpful.

Clarification

Realised what I need to do. And only then I started doing.

What's the first one was, what second one? (on the screen in Miro)

I need to have a direction and like this idea of what LU's and modules I want to do.

Primary Research

Pain points & Solutions by the research

	Pain points	Solutions
Focus	<p>Not knowing vocabulary - <i>"Not knowing the vocabulary"</i></p> <p><i>"Getting answers from lecturers can sometimes be frustrating."</i></p> <p>Navigating between the slides/boards is overwhelming</p>	<p>Provide guidance – Faculty or mentors can direct students with ADHD to resources or examples, clarifying next steps.</p> <p><i>"I review the Miro board before class to follow the topics better."</i></p> <p>Presentations should be structured and not scattered</p>
Clarification	<p><i>"I could use my time better than attending this LU that didn't cover what I needed."</i></p> <p>Overwhelming presentations: too much information. <i>"What was the first one, and what was the second?"</i></p>	<p>Faculty need to balance between the topics of the LU and individual project consultation experience.</p> <p>Maintain visual anchor for the current topic. For ex. In the presentation, write the title on each slide.</p>
Time Management	<p>Student semester planning can be tricky: choosing LUs and timing. Conflicts often lead to, "I'll just miss the other one," causing missed learning.</p> <p>Semester planning from the faculty's side: Too many overlapping LUs.</p>	<p>Faculty must balance LU topics with individual project consultations.</p> <p>Faculty semester planning: Avoid overlapping LUs within the same study program.</p>

Learning Units (LUs) range from workshops to lectures, with styles set by faculty.

Secondary Research

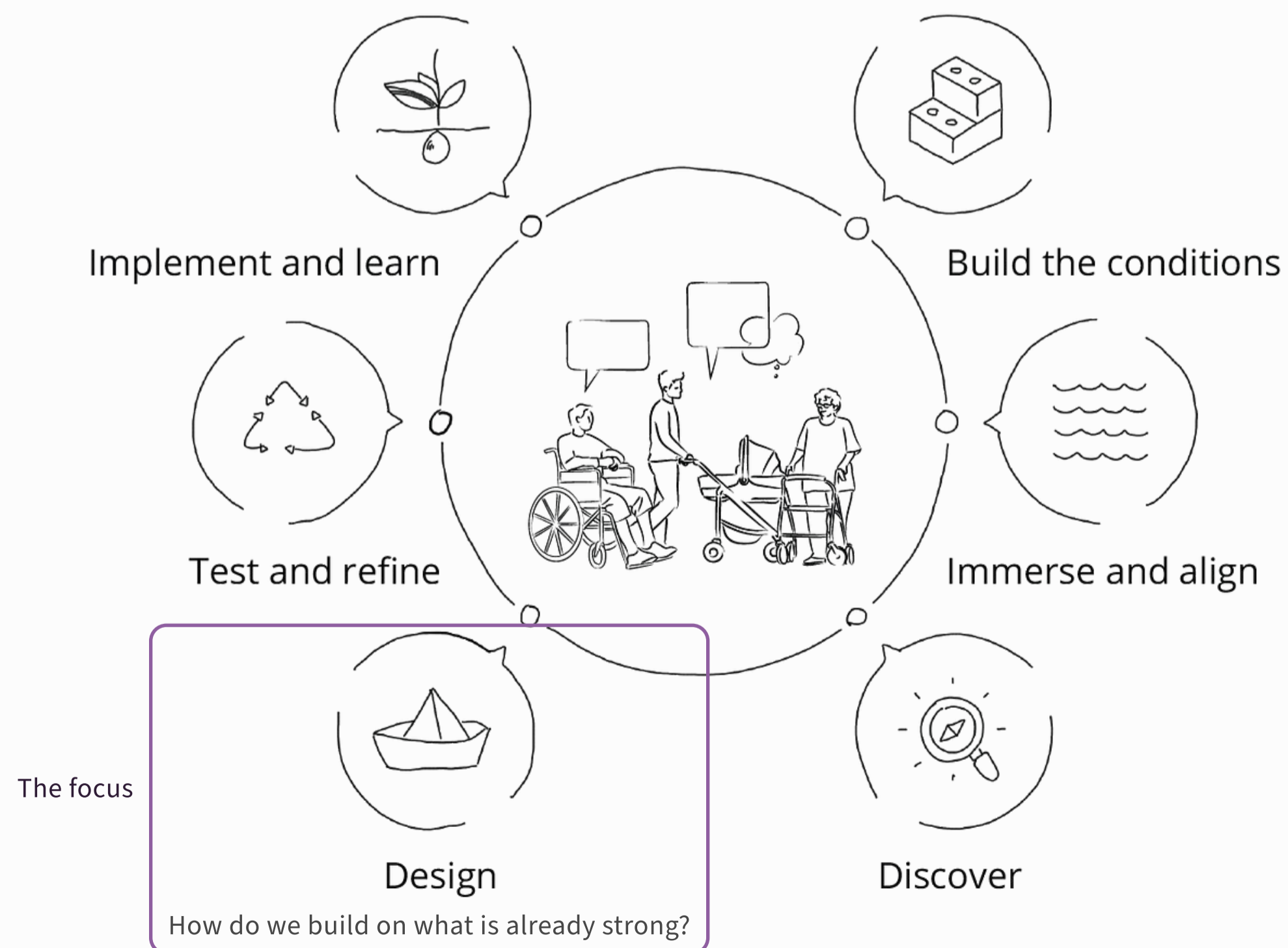


Objectives

The research aimed to explore the impact of laws on students with disabilities at CODE University. Key findings include:

- Federal (BTHG, GG, HRG) and state laws (e.g., BerlHG) support inclusive education but are open to interpretation.
- The research also seeks to validate assumptions and increase awareness and empathy for CODE's community.

Co-Design Sessions

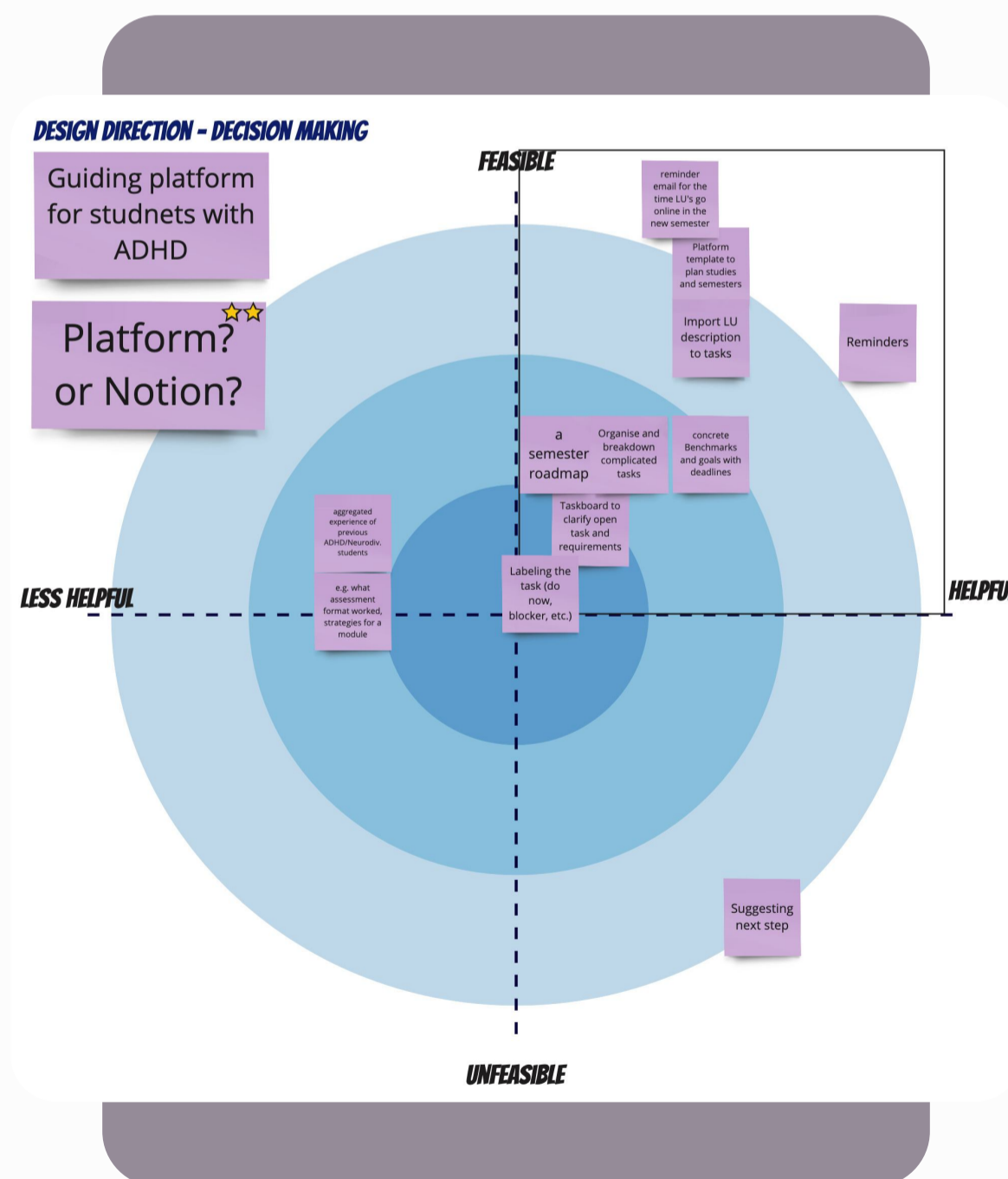


Co-Design

Ideation - what design direction

During the ideation phase, specific project objectives were identified. Key points include:

- Enhancing student ease and optimizing performance.
- Pooling ideas and strategically positioning them based on feasibility and helpfulness.
- Students chose to focus on the 'Before LUs' aspect, recognizing its personal benefit.
- This decision set the design direction for the 'Semester Roadmap' project.

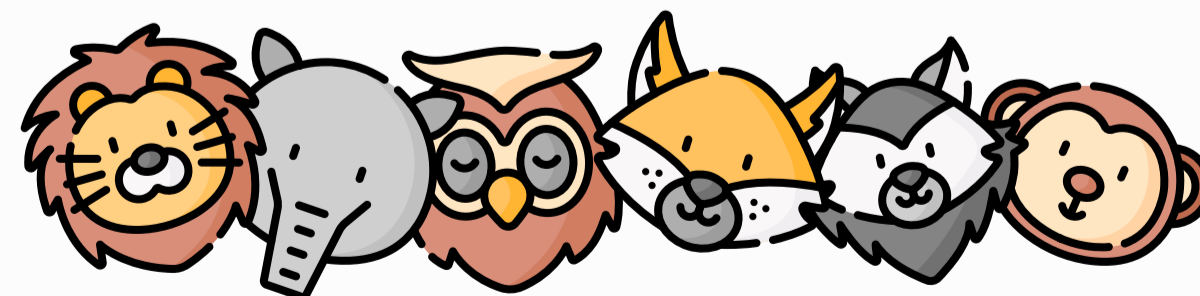


Co-design and Planning

The co-design process at CODE involved diverse participants and collaborative efforts.

Key aspects of the process include:

- Participants: SE, PM, and ID students, along with faculty.
- Communication occurred through an **anonymous Slack workspace using animal personas**.
- **Remote Miro sessions** were used to facilitate the design process.
- **The outcome was a clear design direction and a low-fidelity prototype.**



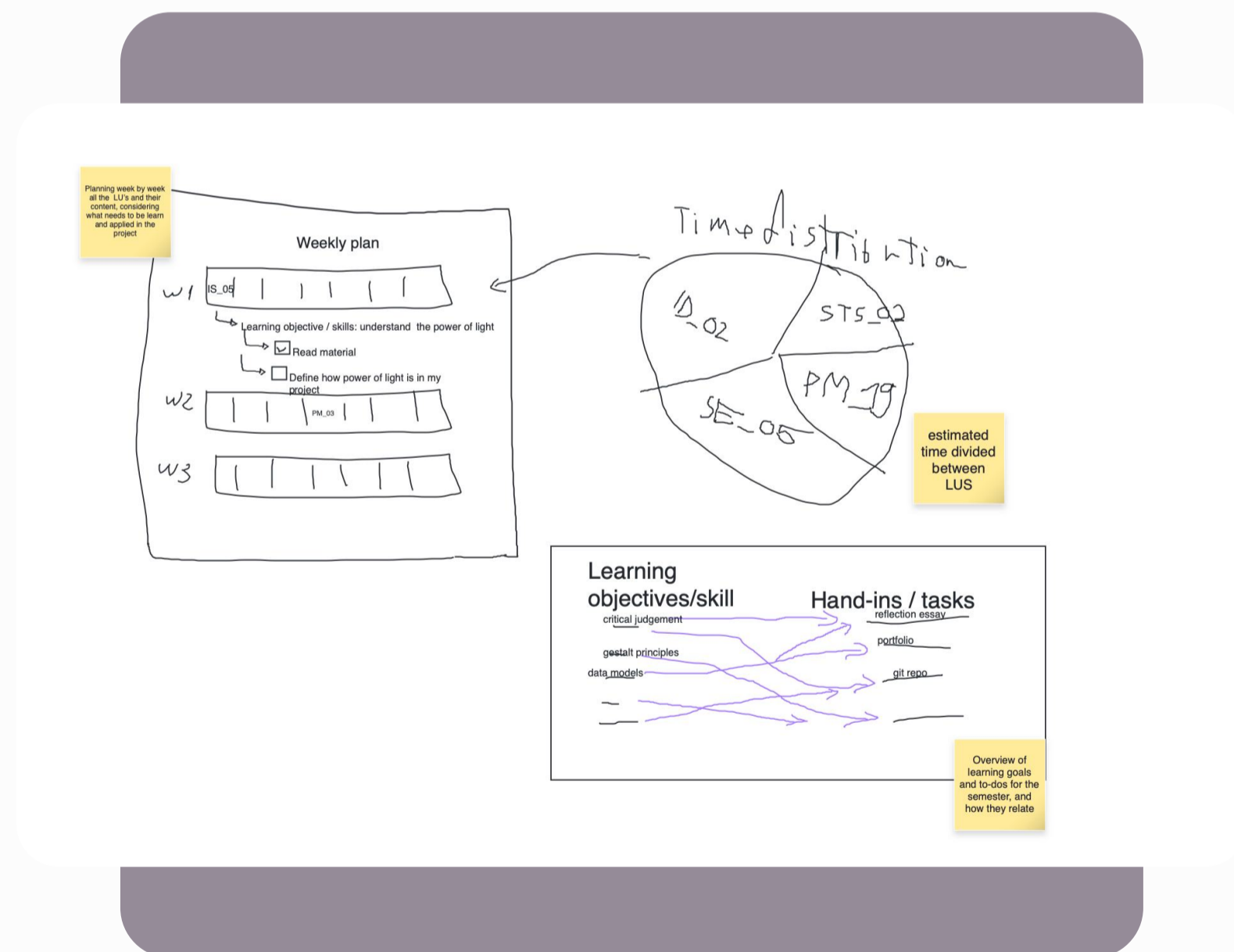
Co-Design

Sketching and testing

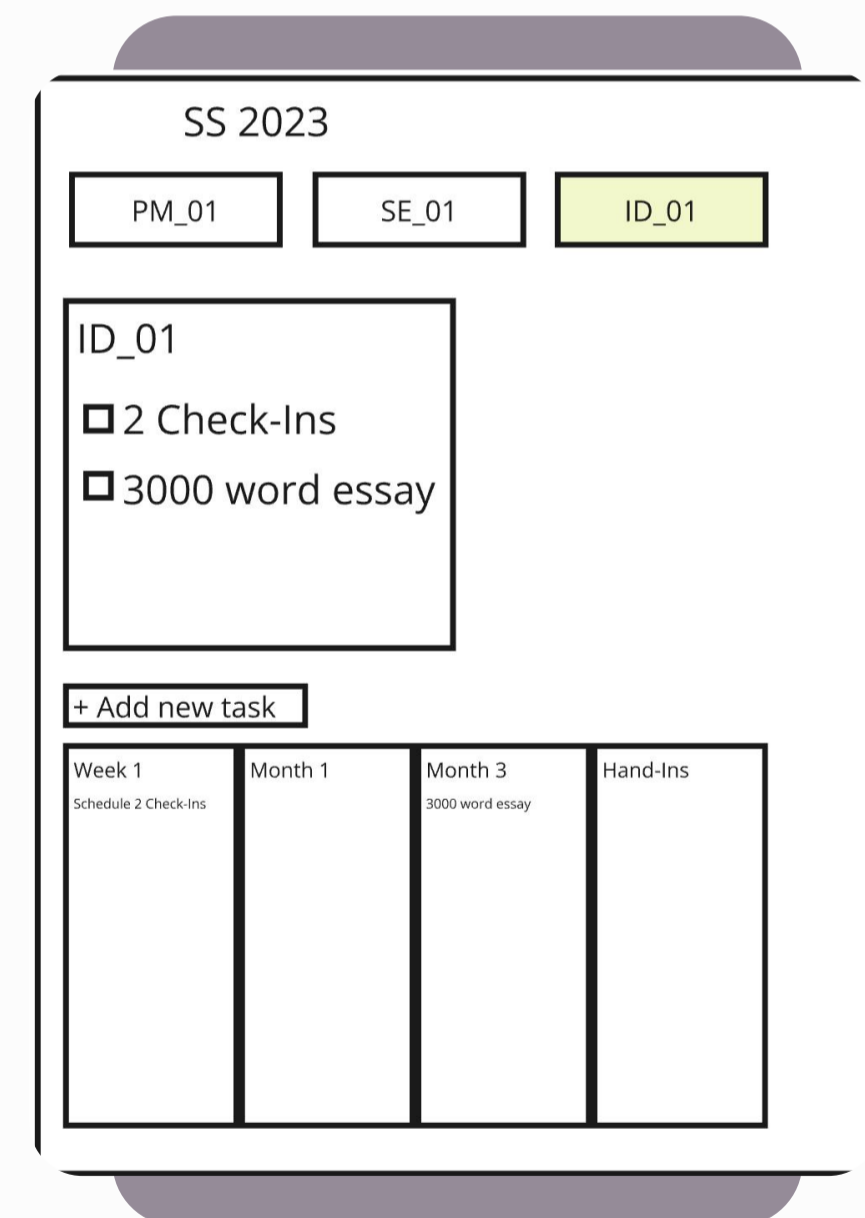
The idea development process involved faculty and students working together. Key steps included:

- Creating sketches by two groups.
- Presenting the sketches to **gather feedback**.
- **Merging the sketches** into a cohesive concept for testing.

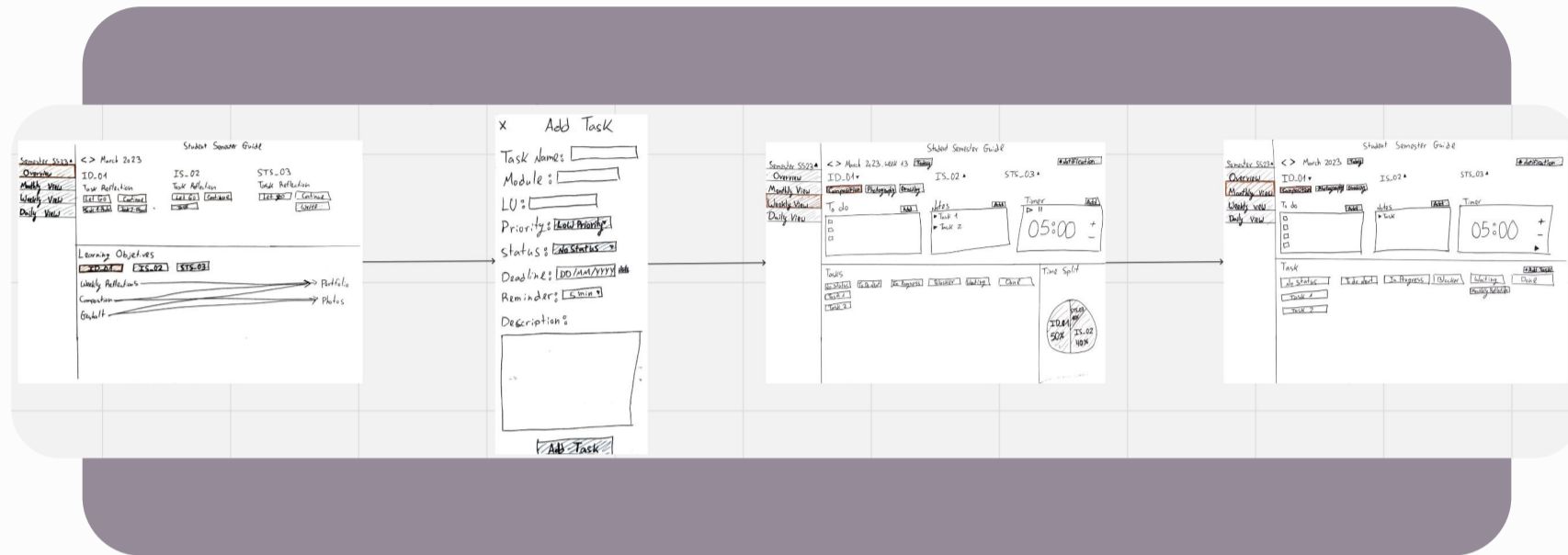
Group A idea



Group B idea



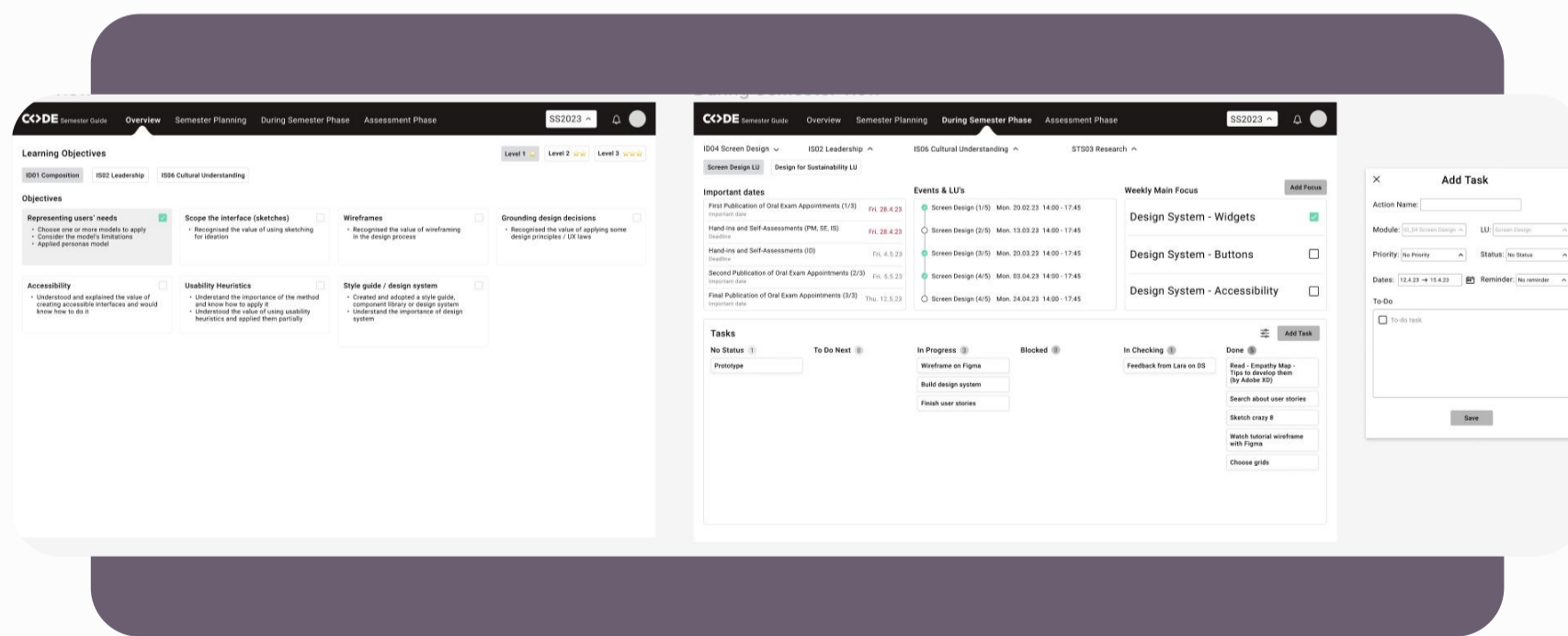
Testings



First draft of testing that combined the two ideas.

How does it make you feel? while working with it?	More organize	Cool/Nice	Uncomfortable (with current design)	A bit on top of things	Safe	Accountable
What will be more challenging for you to use in the system?	Timer	Adding tasks manually (It's a task on it's own)	How it works at the beginning	How it works at the beginning	On which screen I am	
if we do this does it helps?	Definitely	Absolutly	I think so	If need to do manually no. If it's automatic yes		

Insight from first testing.

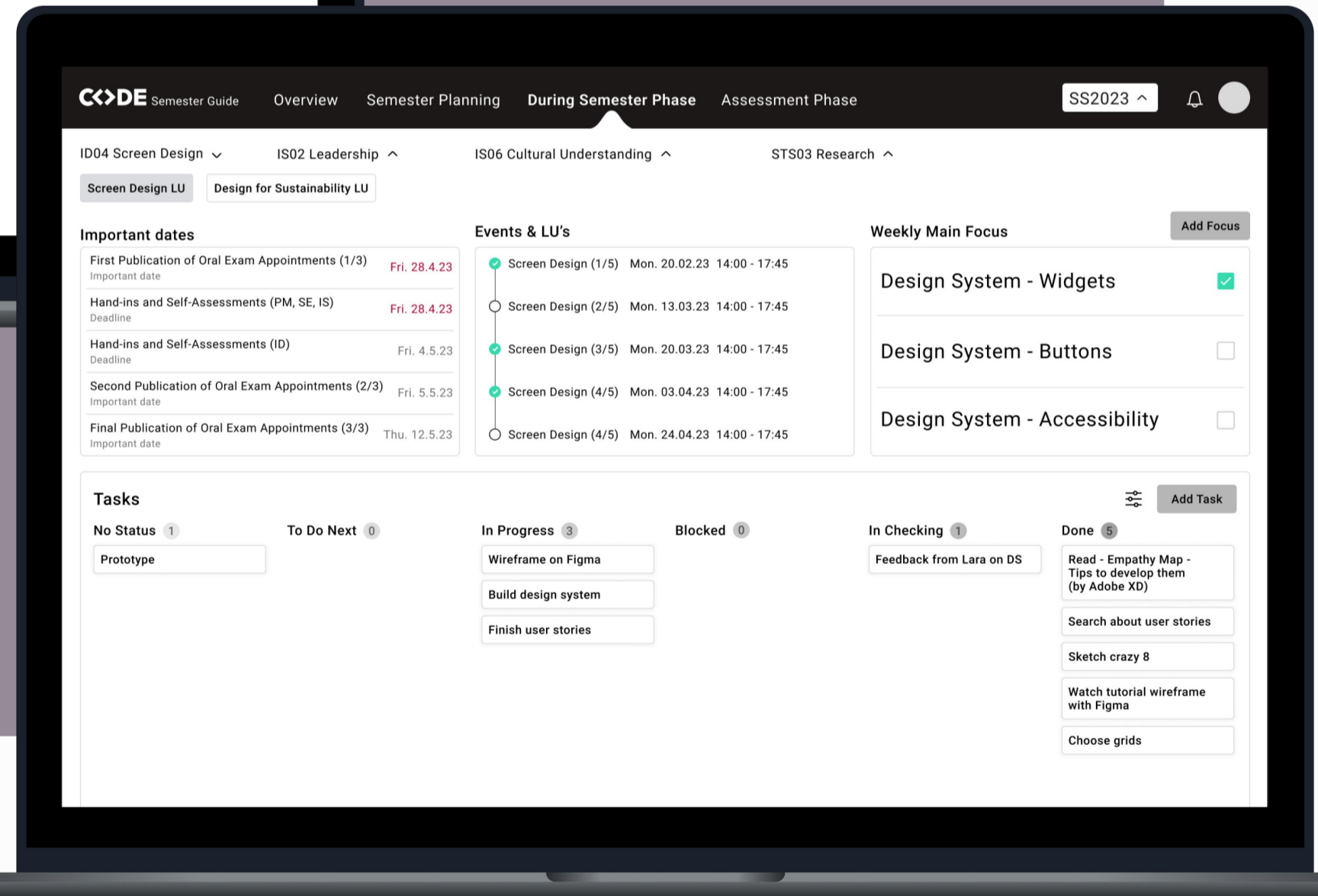
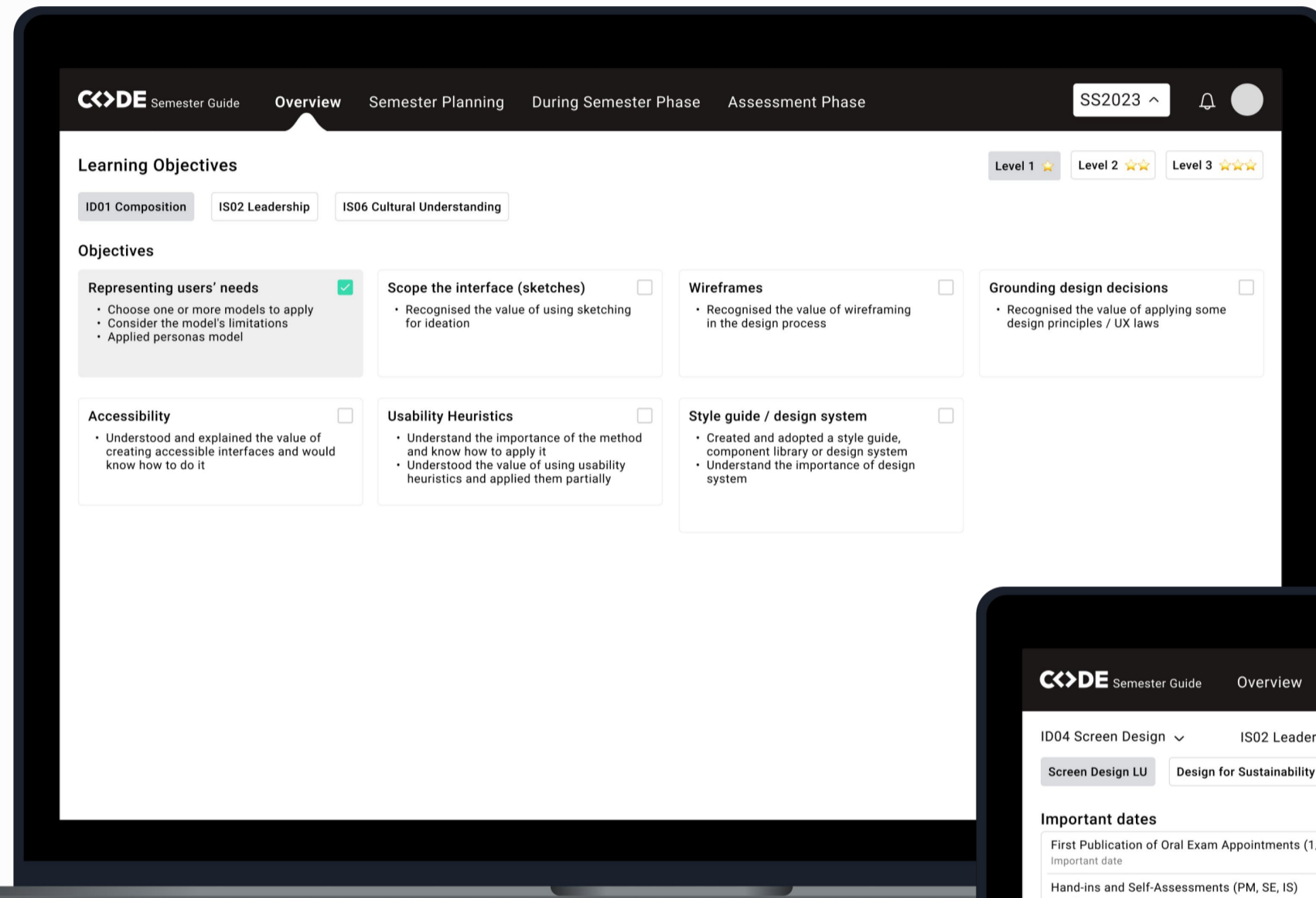


Second draft of testing transferred to wireframe.

How does it make you feel? while working with it?	"I need to do more from my side" - Until the platform will come created a feeling that they can try more strategies	"This will be very helpful or have a lot of potential to be helpful"	Stressed	Too much-going on	Overview upper part confusing	Happy for less time to waste on preparing for semester
What will be more challenging for you to use in the system?	Filling all the forms for 'add task'	Using the platform at night if there is no 'dark mode'.	Navigating between views	What is due tasks / no due tasks	Need to see objectives next to task (too much navigating between the pages)	A lot going on - how all is connected and used
if we do this does it helps?	Definitely	Will be great rather writing on paper all the time (all in one place)	For one individual no. (they have their own system). But maybe will use if get an introduction first.	If need to do manually no. If it's automatic yes	Absolutly	

Insight from second testing.

End Result



See prototype

Reflecting on Co-Design Facilitation and its Outcomes

Need to be developed



Managing personal time effectively during the project.



Navigating the constraints of a 10-week semester, which impacted the research process.

Gained



Valuable insights from the co-design session:

- highlighting the importance of clear communication.
- effective time management.



Enhanced facilitation skills, particularly in question phrasing and timing.

