

MY SFSU

THE REDESIGN OF THE SFSU STUDENT PORTAL THROUGH THE ELEMENTS OF USER EXPERIENCE

PROBLEM

MySFSU is an online portal for San Francisco State University students. In this portal the students are able to check their class schedule, register for courses, view grades, check financial statements, and keep track of their progress in the University. Many students have expressed dislike for the current interface of the website portal because of its lack of description and organization. The website consists of titles of the subpages and buttons that lead to the subpages. Along side with this the portal is lacking visual appeal. The portal does not look professional coming from a University. For many incoming students, this is one of the first connections they have with the school and it may become confusing to search for the material that is needed. My mission is to redesign the user interface on the portal to create ease when navigating through the site. I will be using Jesse James Garrett's The Elements of User Experience as a guide for my redesign.

EXISTING MYSFSU

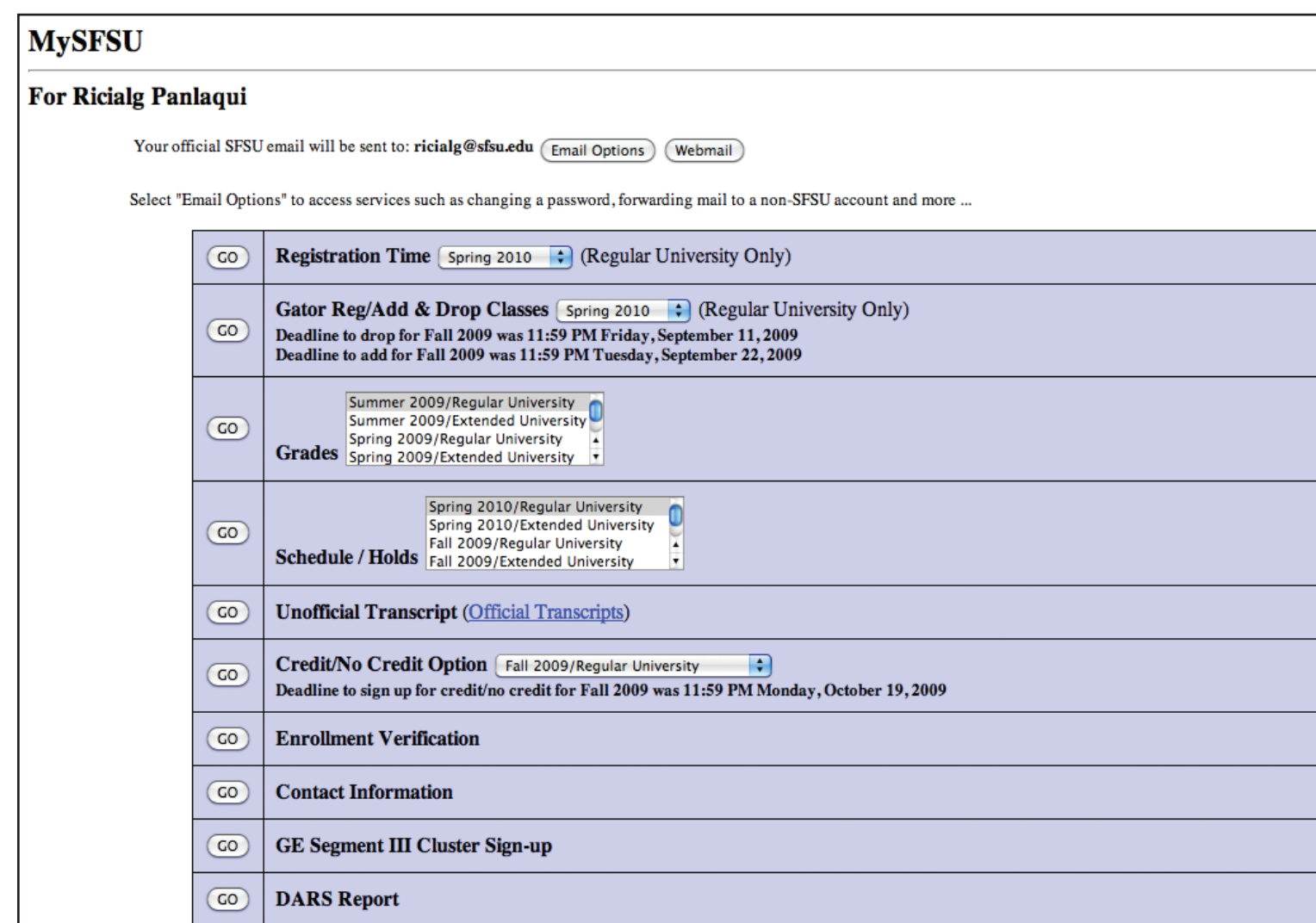


Figure 1: Current MySFSU. www.sfsu.edu

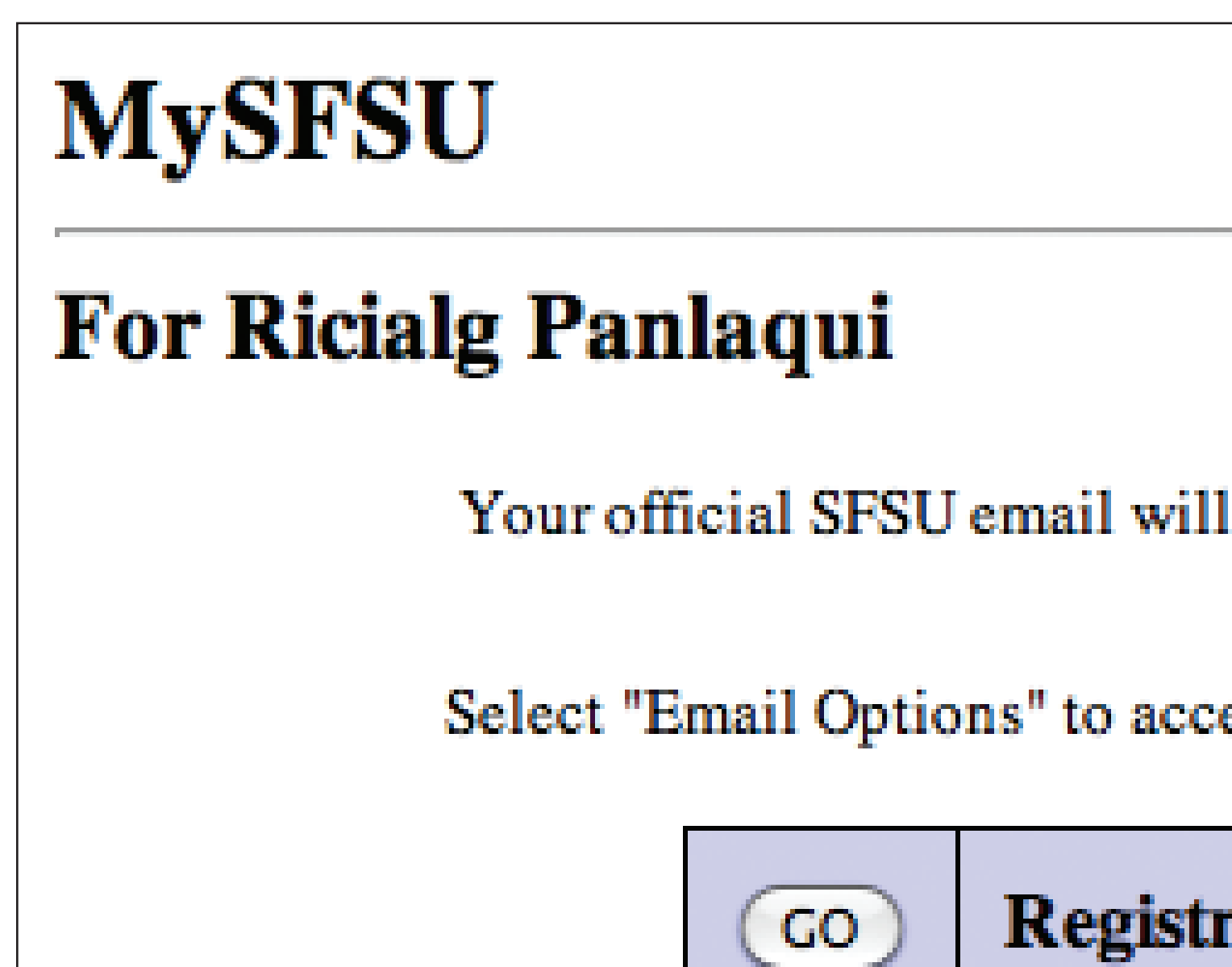


Figure 2: Current MySFSU headline. www.sfsu.edu

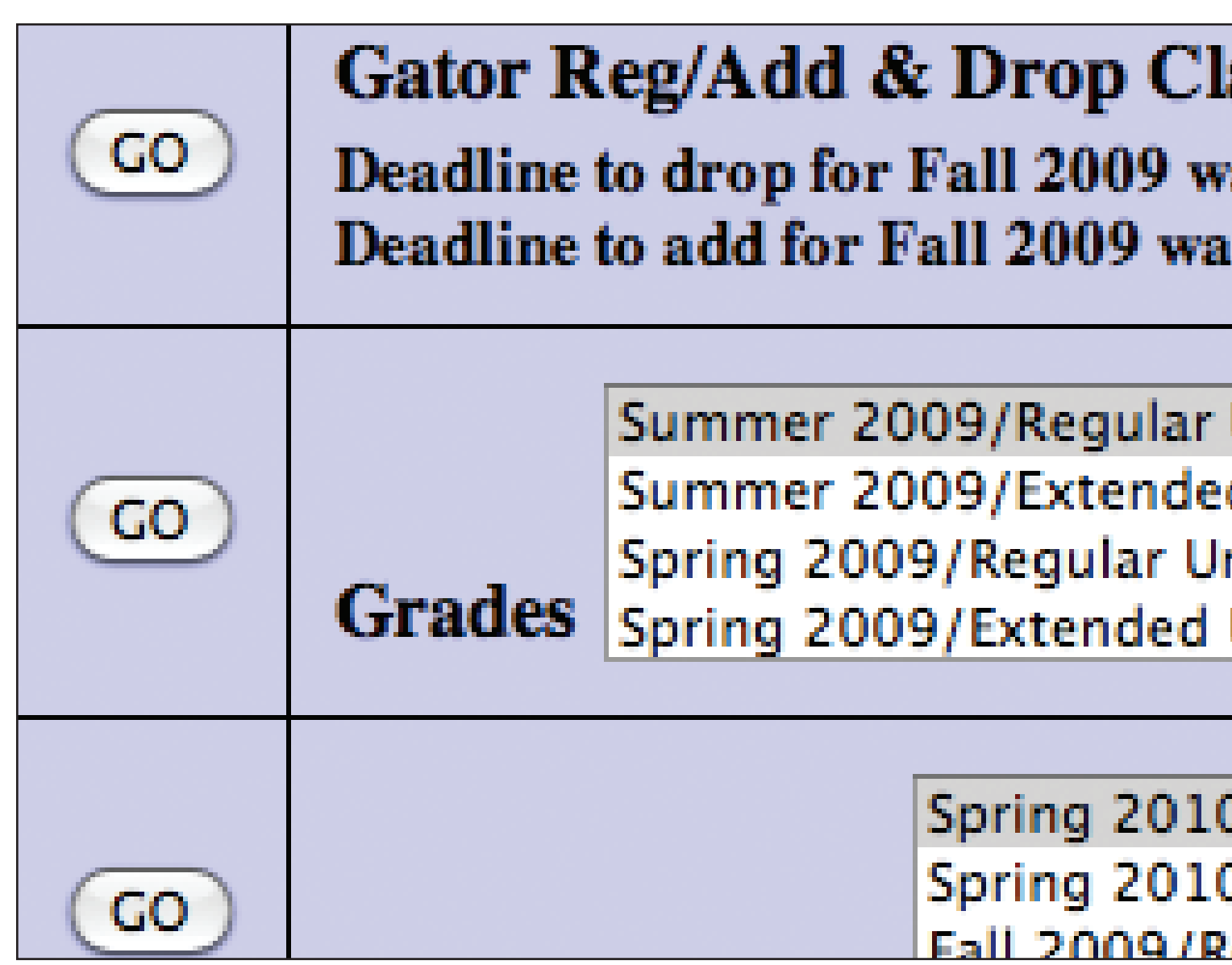
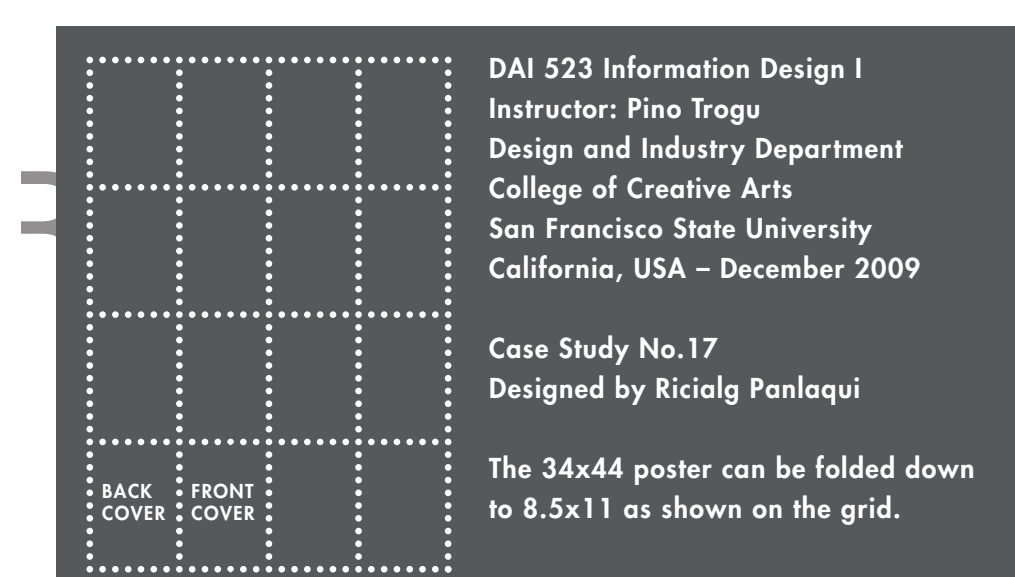


Figure 3: Current MySFSU menu. www.sfsu.edu



< BACK



THE ELEMENTS OF USER EXPERIENCE

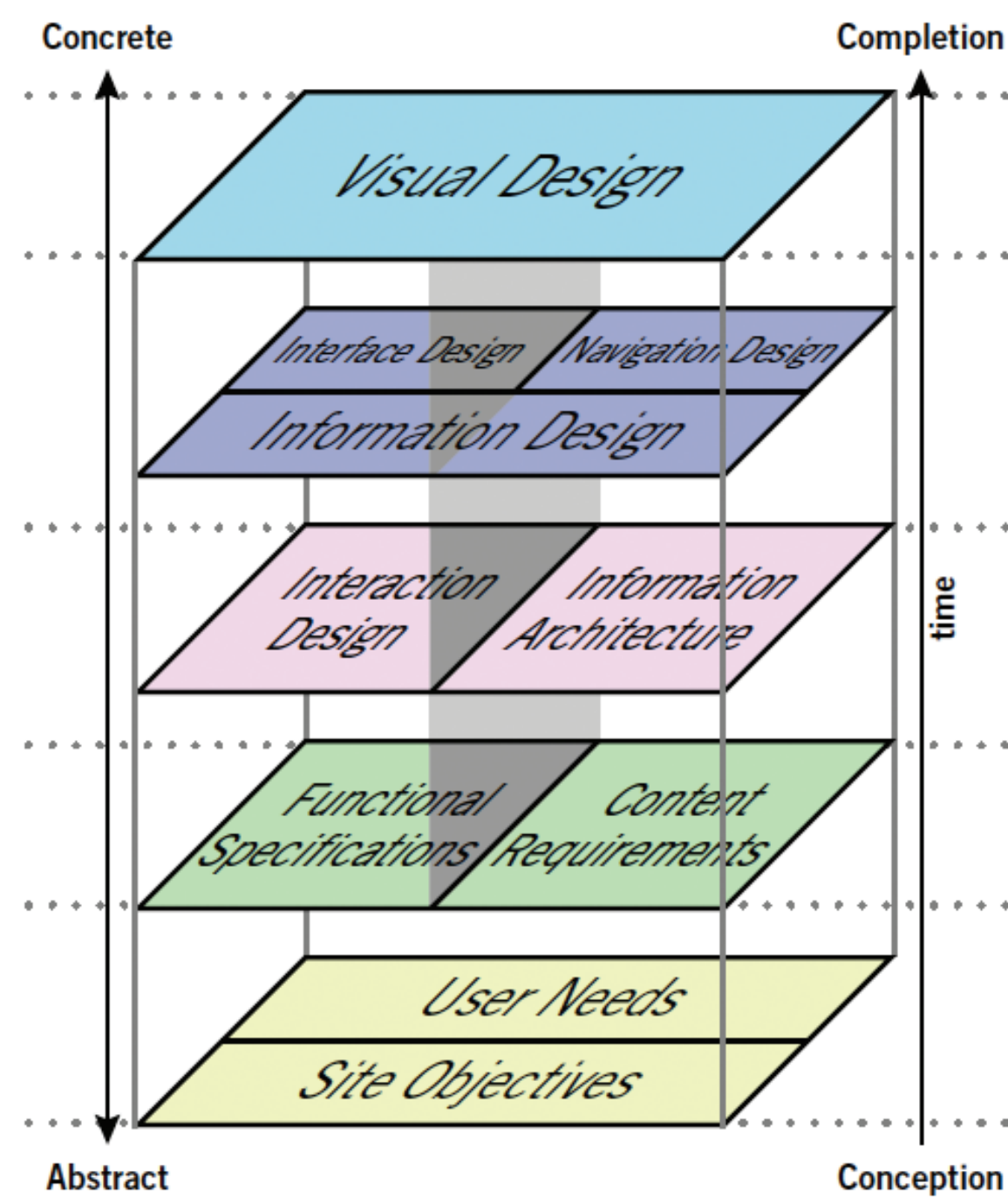


Figure 4: Jesse James Garrett's The Elements of User Experience. www.jjg.net

5 VISUAL DESIGN

Graphic treatment of interface elements
With my concept, I tried to keep the design simple. Going through all the information that is laid out in MySFSU, the last thing that students want to do is learn how to use a website because it is too confusing. My goal is to keep everything efficient for college students so that they can find the information they need in a timely manner. Throughout these steps of the "Elements of the User Experience", I have stated the problems that the current MySFSU portal has. I have explained the solutions through my concept of the portal. In the end, the MySFSU portal needs updating with its visual appeal and organization of its content.

4 INFORMATION DESIGN

Designing the presentation of information to facilitate understanding
The current MySFSU is very straightforward. This does not have to be a bad thing but with the current portal, the information is not organized which makes it a bad situation. I wanted to keep the website straightforward but still wanted the students to be able to find what they needed efficiently. In the functional specification portion, I mentioned that an image map will be created to be featured on each website. This way, students are able to access the different portions of the websites without having to track back to the very first menu page. In Figure 5, I have shown the data in an easier type face to read. For documents such as the DARS report, a type face such as Helvetica may be easier on the eye to read.

3 INTERACTION DESIGN

Development of application flows to facilitate user tasks, defining how the user interacts with site functionality
The MySFSU portal currently has a rough flow to its design. There is no room for customization because it is straight forward. The site consists of titles and a "GO" button that leads to the subpage. It is not really necessary to have the "GO" button when the actual title can be the link to the subpage. In Figure 3, the current "GO" button is featured. A solution that I created for that interaction is in Figure 5. I created an image map menu, so that the student can see what is included in those subpages and find what they are looking for specifically. This will create a flow within the menu and easy accessibility to information that is needed.

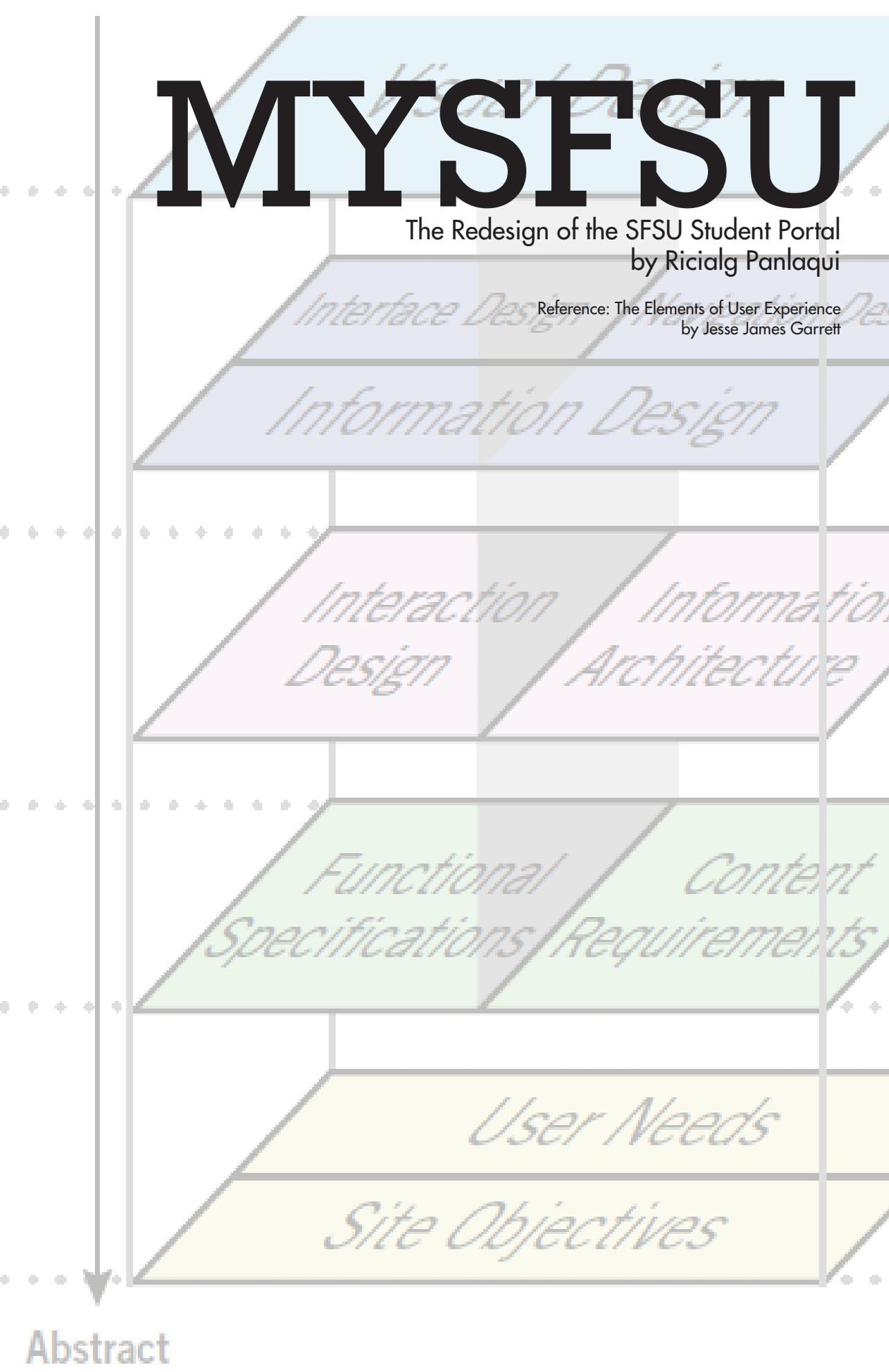
2 FUNCTIONAL SPECIFICATION

Detailed descriptions of functionality the site must include in order to meet user needs
Students have complained that it is almost impossible to go to the main page without having to log off. This also affects the efficiency of the portal because the student has to log off and log back in to get onto the portal. This will be solved by creating an image map for each webpage where the menu can be accessed. Also, each page will have links at the top of the page with the trail of progression through the website. This way students can find out how they got to the webpage.

1 USER NEEDS

Externally derived goals for the site
Since a college student's life is already hectic, he/she needs information fast. The two main things that a student needs is information and efficiency. If a student looks at the current MySFSU portal, it is definitely lacking information about the subpages that are listed. There are titles for the subpages but no descriptions on what the subpages include. This causes the student to click around trying to figure out if they are at the right place. SFSU students need something where they can know where to find their information without having to search for it.

Diagram Reference www.jjg.net



CONCEPT

KEY FEATURES NEEDED BY STUDENTS

- INFORMATION
- EFFICIENCY
- CONSISTENCY

- + Oral Communication (CCC/CSU GE AREA A1)
07SP SPCH 150 3.0 A FUND ORAL COMMUNICATION
Processed As: COMM 150
- + Written Communication (CCC/CSU GE AREA A2)
08SP ENG 214 3.0 A 2ND YR WRITTEN COMP-ENG
- + Critical Thinking (CCC/CSU GE AREA A3)
06FA PHIL 110 3.0 A CRITICAL THINKING I

Figure 5: MySFSU concept

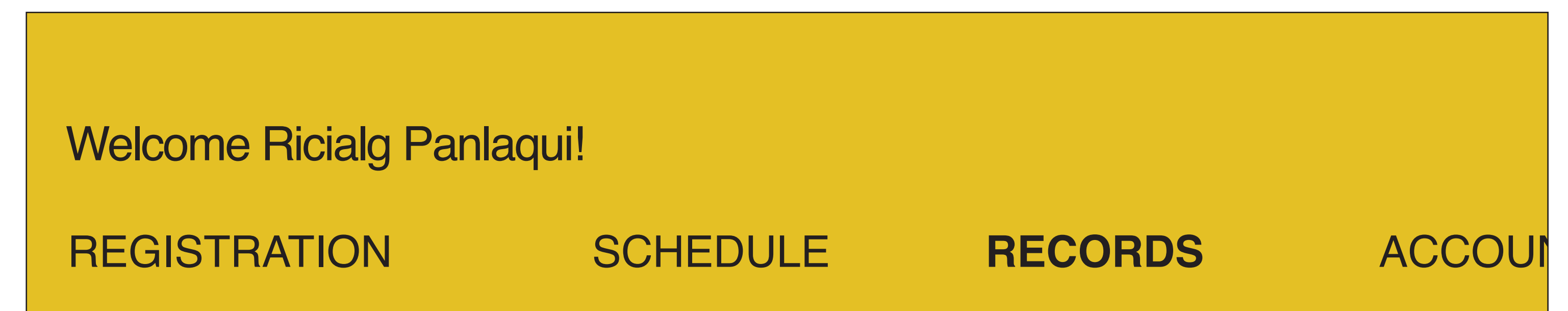


Figure 6: MySFSU concept menu

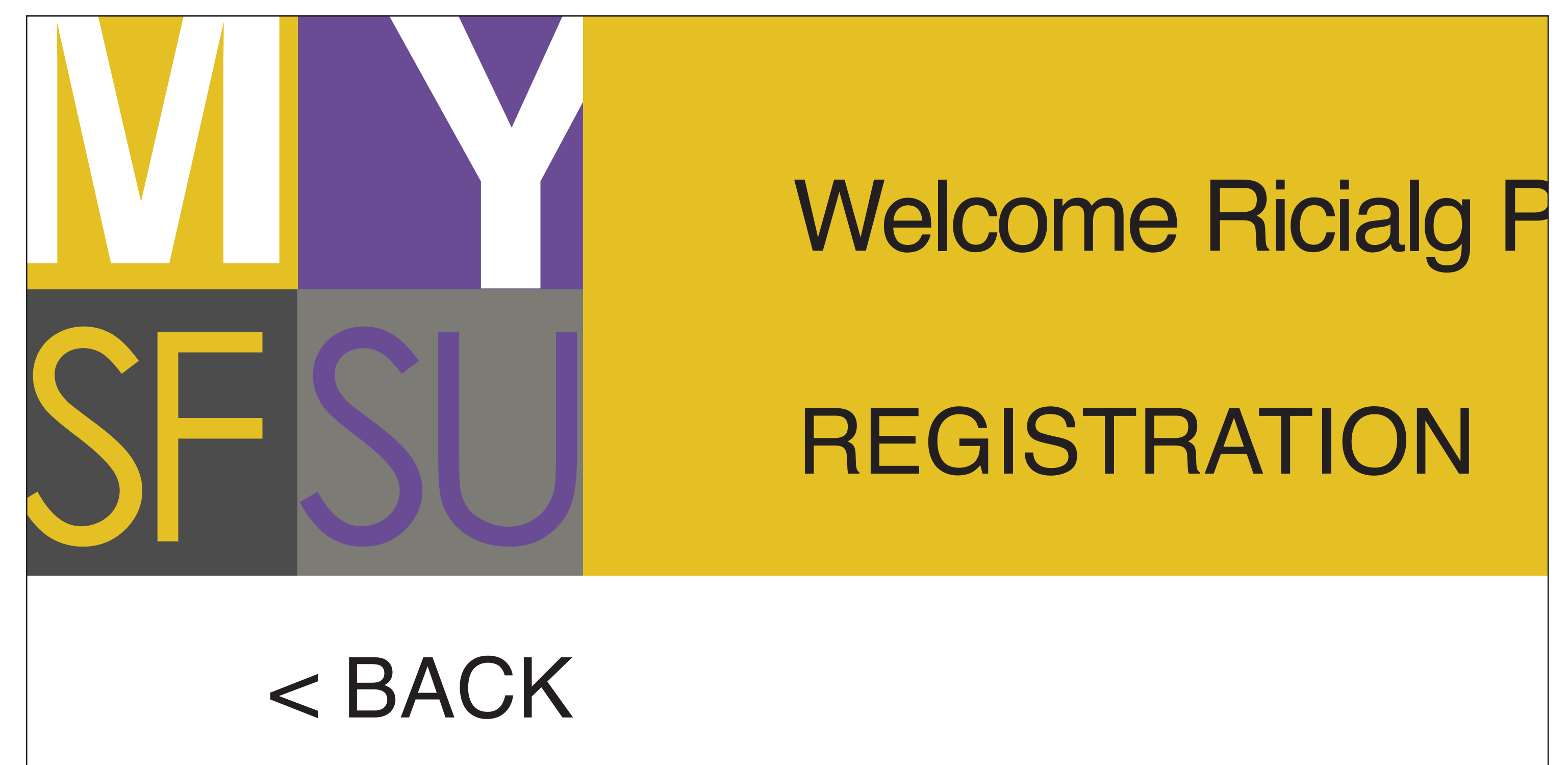


Figure 7: MySFSU concept logo

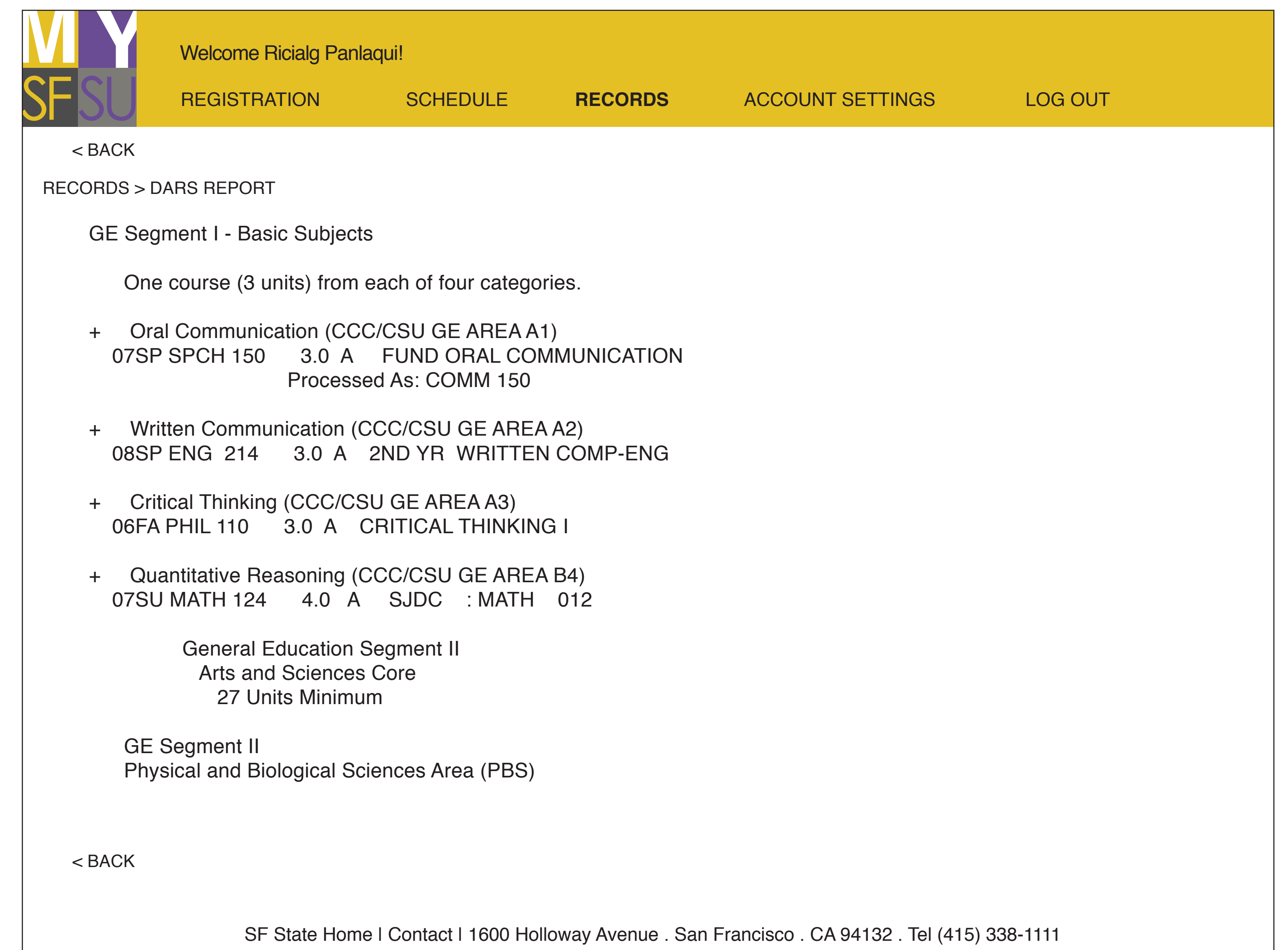


Figure 8: MySFSU concept