

CUNY Academic Commons - Feature #10229

Remove 1 item from main nav bar when we add courses

2018-08-27 09:07 AM - Matt Gold

Status:	Resolved	Start date:	2018-08-27
Priority name:	Normal	Due date:	
Assignee:	Chris Stein	% Done:	0%
Category name:	Information Architecture	Estimated time:	0.00 hour
Target version:	1.14		
Description			
During Friday's subcat meeting, Chris mentioned we should do this when we add Courses to it, so that it doesn't become too cluttered. I agree. My only question relates to what we should remove. Chris suggested About. I think we should also consider removing Papers.			
Related issues:			
Related to CUNY Academic Commons - Feature #9801: Add courses item to main Co...		Resolved	2018-05-18
Related to CUNY Academic Commons - Design/UX #10580: Primary nav item review		New	2018-10-24

History

#1 - 2018-08-29 05:16 PM - Boone Gorges

- Related to Feature #9801: Add courses item to main Commons nav added

#2 - 2018-08-29 05:16 PM - Boone Gorges

- Target version set to 1.14

#3 - 2018-09-27 05:26 PM - Boone Gorges

+1 on dropping Papers in favor of Courses, though then there's no way to get to the global Papers directory through the top-level nav. Perhaps we leave Papers in the toolbar dropdown?

Seems to me that removing About would remove a lot of valuable information for first-time visitors to the site.

I've added Sonja as a watcher.

#4 - 2018-09-27 08:56 PM - Matt Gold

Boone Gorges wrote:

+1 on dropping Papers in favor of Courses, though then there's no way to get to the global Papers directory through the top-level nav. Perhaps we leave Papers in the toolbar dropdown?

Seems to me that removing About would remove a lot of valuable information for first-time visitors to the site.

I've added Sonja as a watcher.

For now, I think we should replace Papers with Courses and leave About

#5 - 2018-10-03 05:39 PM - Sonja Leix

I wonder if we could remove the "Home" nav item. The logo is linked to the homepage, that is a common nav pattern people are used to. When someone is logged in to the Commons website, the top left dropdown item (text "CUNY Academic Commons" is also linked to the homepage.

Do we have any analytics on how many people use the "Papers" nav item? It will likely upset a lot of users if we simply remove that nav item and don't find a good way for them to get to papers.

Alternatively we could create a nav item that groups things like Groups, Sites, Papers in a sub nav and leave People and Courses as a main nav item?

Thoughts?

#6 - 2018-10-04 12:09 PM - Boone Gorges

Sonja, I dug into our analytics and it looks like we don't currently track navigation click events. We can tell when users went from the home page to the Groups directory (for example) but we don't know if that happened through the header nav, or the toolbar, or some other way. I've added GA

events for toolbar nav clicks and header nav clicks in <https://github.com/cuny-academic-commons/cac/commit/26dfa04963ae3d2d589bd401e5c6848bbfa7843e> and <https://github.com/cuny-academic-commons/cac/commit/5b60aedde758a6133d3b42dbf82d208f2732dc16>. I'll go ahead and backport these for the 1.13.11 release so that we can start collecting data.

The Papers directory does get some traffic, but it's about 20% of what the other top-level directory links get (Sites, Members, Groups). An option is to remove Papers from the header nav but to leave it in the toolbar dropdown at the upper left (though this breaks the parallel structure of these two navs).

Removing Home sounds promising to me, though Matt should sign off on that.

#7 - 2018-10-04 12:39 PM - Sonja Leix

Boone Gorges wrote:

The Papers directory does get some traffic, but it's about 20% of what the other top-level directory links get (Sites, Members, Groups). An option is to remove Papers from the header nav but to leave it in the toolbar dropdown at the upper left (though this breaks the parallel structure of these two navs).

Thanks for looking into the analytics and adding tracking event for the nav and header clicks! That will be very helpful in the future. To the 20%, really all depends on the total number, 20% sounds like a big number when it comes to interaction with a section of the site. I agree breaking the parallel structure of the two navs isn't a great idea since users will expect to find all nav links in both menus.

Looking forward to hearing what Matt thinks of removing the Home item, or alternatively my thoughts on grouping things like Sites, Groups, etc. in a dropdown.

#8 - 2018-10-04 01:11 PM - Chris Stein

- File *Footer-current.png* added

- File *Footer-withAbout.png* added

- File *Main-current.png* added

- File *No-About.png* added

- File *No-News.png* added

I would be very hesitant to group Groups and Sites. Based on the UX work in the past and anecdotal evidence, these are the two areas most used by members. This suggestion did remind me that we currently have no visual cues for the nav items that have additional drop-down items (News, About).

In looking at this again I wonder if it's time to remove News. There are two issues with it from a UX perspective. One is that it's not really news, it's an activity feed that is auto-generated. I haven't done any testing but I wonder if an academic audience thinks of a curated news feed with that title. The second is that the sub-nav for Twitter, that page is broken. If we get it working it might function better linked from somewhere on the home page.

I do still see about as an option and as a point of clarification, I'm not suggesting we totally remove it but instead put it in the footer.

I agree with Boone and Sonja that getting stats on clicks is a good idea.

I also agree that the main nav and the top-bar nav should be consistent.

Perhaps now that we are tracking clicks better, we can just add in Courses, watch the stats and then make a decision later about whether we want to move or change anything?

Making changes to the nav may also be a time to look at the nav on smaller screens.

I'm attaching some screenshots with different nav configurations.

#9 - 2018-10-04 01:17 PM - Chris Stein

- File *No-Papers.png* added

Forgot to add the no Papers screenshot. I also didn't mention that the problem with removing Papers is where to put it.

It may be possible to group Courses and Papers in a nav item. Both of these are more explicitly academic work than the other items. I'm just drawing a blank on a good name for it.

Another possible grouping is Events and News, or at least putting News under Events.

#10 - 2018-10-04 01:40 PM - Matt Gold

Hi All --

I find Sonja's argument about removing "Home" convincing, so I am in favor of that.

I am also inclined to remove Papers from the main nav, though I would love to see some data on analytics for that and I take Chris's point that we'd have to find a place to put it. Making it a sub-nav item of Courses seems promising to me. Let's wait, say, 7-10 days and see what the numbers look like.

As for the rest of the proposals:

- Perhaps we should retitle "News" "Activity"?
- At least at the moment, i'm reluctant to merge or de-emphasize groups and sites, as they are a key part of how the CAC works
- I like keeping About in a prominent place, as I think we are foregrounding in that section the community-oriented nature of the project -- it's not just a piece of software developed outside of our community but is developed by our own internal team, and the statements we make about the commons there are important to its identity

But we should continue to review this all and think about options. Sonja, we have long had a review/refresh of our information architecture on our list of tasks for the redesign project, so I would love to hear continued thoughts from you, Chris, and Boone about this all.

#11 - 2018-10-04 02:43 PM - Boone Gorges

- File Screenshot_2018-10-04_18-25-32.png added
- File Screenshot_2018-10-04_18-25-55.png added
- File Screenshot_2018-10-04_18-26-31.png added
- File Screenshot_2018-10-04_18-26-15.png added

For the time being, here's the plan:

- Remove 'Home'
- Add 'Courses' after 'Sites'

I've attached screenshots of loggedin/loggedout state, desktop and mobile, so you can see the effects.

In mid-October, I'll check analytics for the new nav click events.

#12 - 2018-10-08 05:29 PM - Sonja Leix

Sorry for my late response, seems the response I've tried to post on Friday didn't post :/

Chris Stein wrote:

In looking at this again I wonder if it's time to remove News. There are two issues with it from a UX perspective. One is that it's not really news, it's an activity feed that is auto-generated. I haven't done any testing but I wonder if an academic audience thinks of a curated news feed with that title. The second is that the sub-nav for Twitter, that page is broken. If we get it working it might function better linked from somewhere on the home page.

I think that's a good question – "what does our academic audience expect when they see News?" – but it sounds like a bigger project for another release. I would encourage you to open a new ticket for this and do some research around this.

I do still see **about** as an option and as a point of clarification, I'm not suggesting we totally remove it but instead put it in the footer.

Though About could naturally be something users expect in the footer, if they can't find it in the main navigation, I see one major issue with this move. About in the main navigation has sub nav items. The way the footer navigation is currently setup, doesn't accommodate for sub navigation or additional links. Where would those links go?

Matt Gold wrote:

But we should continue to review this all and think about options. Sonja, we have long had a review/refresh of our information architecture on our list of tasks for the redesign project, so I would love to hear continued thoughts from you, Chris, and Boone about this all.

Do we have a separate issue for IA already? If not I'm happy to set one up and start working on it once the 1.14 release is launched. I think in that case we shouldn't just yet remove Papers and revisit during the reevaluation / redesign of the nav.

Boone Gorges wrote:

I've attached screenshots of loggedin/loggedout state, desktop and mobile, so you can see the effects.

These are looking good!

In mid-October, I'll check analytics for the new nav click events.

See reply to Matt's comment about Papers above.

#13 - 2018-10-24 12:29 PM - Boone Gorges

- Related to Design/UX #10580: Primary nav item review added

#14 - 2018-10-24 12:29 PM - Boone Gorges

- Status changed from Assigned to Resolved

Circling back with some info that we've gathered from our new custom Analytics events. I wish we'd done this a while ago - it's pretty interesting.

Number of total events registered between when the feature was implemented (Oct 9) and today:

toolbarNav: 19,783

mainSitePrimaryNav: 2,954

So the toolbar nav (ie the admin bar) is much, much more widely used than the main site nav. Maybe this isn't surprising, since the toolbar (a) is visible everywhere (not just on the main site) and (b) contains much more navigation than the main site nav (such as the "my" items), but I was somewhat surprised by the disparity in the numbers. I can break this down further at some point, especially after we've collected more data - logged-in vs logged-out, filtering out toolbarNav clicks to reflect only those that are also visible in mainSitePrimaryNav (in other words, the main Commons nav), etc.

In any case, for the purposes of this ticket, we registered the following clicks in the past couple weeks:

- 176 clicks on the Papers top-level nav item on the main site nav bar
- 35 clicks on the "My Papers" item in the logged-in user toolbar nav item
- 33 clicks on the "Papers" directory item in the toolbar nav

By contrast, the Sites and Groups main-nav items were clicked 4-5x more frequently, and the Members tab at least 2x more frequently.

I think this argues that we should simply add the Courses item to the nav for 1.14, and remove Home. We can continue to gather data and readdress for our next release: [#10580](#).

#15 - 2018-10-24 06:10 PM - Matt Gold

very interesting. thank you, Boone.

#16 - 2018-10-25 01:35 PM - Sonja Leix

Thanks Boone for these insights! Very interesting indeed!

For a future nav design considerations it would be interesting to look at the numbers of all individual nav items on the main nav and the admin nav. You mentioned the admin nav is accessible across all sites – can you specify the "all" in this context? And if it makes sense, is there a way to track which sites it's used on the most.

#17 - 2018-10-25 01:38 PM - Boone Gorges

- File Screenshot_2018-10-25_12-37-07.png added

By "all sites" I mean that the toolbar is visible across all subsites in the network. So, for example, at <https://gcenglish.commons.gc.cuny.edu> you can see the menu at the upper-right - see screenshot.

Yes, it'd probably be possible to track patterns in how it's used, but we'd need to ask specific questions - is it used most frequently from specific subdomains, from the Dashboard vs the front end, by certain kinds of users, etc. Feel free to start collecting thoughts like this in [#10580](#).

#18 - 2018-10-25 01:44 PM - Matt Gold

the admin bar also has two parts -- the part aligned to the left, which replicates the main site nav bar, and the part on the right near the avatar, which has the "My Sites" etc. I'm assuming we can differentiate between those, too?

#19 - 2018-10-25 01:46 PM - Boone Gorges

Click events anywhere on the toolbar are registered as the same sorts of events in GA, but we know which specific item is clicked (eg Groups vs My Groups) so it would be possible to filter them out. It's for this reason too why it's not quite apples-to-apples - the toolbar offers much more functionality than the main site nav. I have not filtered the data to try for a more direct comparison.

#20 - 2018-10-25 02:59 PM - Sonja Leix

Boone Gorges wrote:

By "all sites" I mean that the toolbar is visible across all subsites in the network. So, for example, at <https://gcenglish.commons.gc.cuny.edu> you can see the menu at the upper-right - see screenshot.

Yes, it'd probably be possible to track patterns in how it's used, but we'd need to ask specific questions - is it used most frequently from specific subdomains, from the Dashboard vs the front end, by certain kinds of users, etc. Feel free to start collecting thoughts like this in [#10580](#).

Thanks for the clarification and for creating a new ticket!

Files

Footer-current.png	39.5 KB	2018-10-04	Chris Stein
Main-current.png	21.7 KB	2018-10-04	Chris Stein
No-About.png	20.5 KB	2018-10-04	Chris Stein
No-News.png	21.1 KB	2018-10-04	Chris Stein
Footer-withAbout.png	38.9 KB	2018-10-04	Chris Stein
No-Papers.png	28.3 KB	2018-10-04	Chris Stein
Screenshot_2018-10-04_18-25-32.png	52.5 KB	2018-10-04	Boone Gorges
Screenshot_2018-10-04_18-25-55.png	34.8 KB	2018-10-04	Boone Gorges
Screenshot_2018-10-04_18-26-31.png	20.8 KB	2018-10-04	Boone Gorges
Screenshot_2018-10-04_18-26-15.png	25.9 KB	2018-10-04	Boone Gorges
Screenshot_2018-10-25_12-37-07.png	50.8 KB	2018-10-25	Boone Gorges