



## Design Summary for Tuition Assistance Benefit (TAB) Infographic

### Overview:

The infographic is an effort to implement more visual explanations to the Tuition Assistance Benefit (TAB) program that I manage for faculty/staff at the University of Colorado. With the introduction of the TAB Pilot Program in Fall 2017, which allowed eligible CU employee's dependents (children, spouses, etc.) to utilize the TAB on any CU campus, the benefit became complex for both employees, as well as the administration. Due to the TAB program's complexity, there are multiple steps and areas of information that an employee needs to inform themselves of on our website, which is primarily text. As I continue to spearhead improvements to the TAB program, a greater need for visual learning is occurring with our faculty/staff demographic.

### 1. Setting/Mise en Scène and Major Characters

#### Why I want to create this infographic:

- **Who is the infographic for?**

The infographic is for our faculty/staff who are using the TAB for the first time. Additionally, this infographic can be used to explain the TAB to increasing amounts of CU administration requesting explanations of our TAB processing with the TAB application, workflows and policy.

- **The infographic will cover the following content:**

- The general TAB process, including timing of our step-by-step deadlines for each CU campus of registration (Denver/Anschutz, Boulder and Colorado Springs) and TAB taxation.
  - Admittance to the campus
  - TAB application deadline
  - TAB registration
  - TAB tuition bill adjustment
  - Etc.
- The TAB for employees versus dependents.
- TAB application usage from Fall 2017-Spring 2019.



- **Where and when will the infographic be used?**

My goal is to create a high-quality TAB infographic that will be implemented on CU's TAB [website](#) in time for the Fall 2019 semester, roughly by July 2019.

## 2. Plot

- **Through your design, what will the infographic accomplish?**

My instructional goals are:

- I want faculty/staff to develop knowledge of the TAB step-by-step process for their campus of registration.
- I want to implement a different method of learning for our faculty/staff—visual learning instead of elongated text policy.
- I want the CU administration to understand the TAB process by utilizing this visual resource rather than working group discussions to understand the TAB policy.

- **What will learners be able to do as a result of viewing the infographic?**

My learning objectives are:

- Faculty/staff will be able to complete their campus of registration's TAB step-by-step deadlines each semester with the assistance of the infographic resource.
- Faculty/staff will understand the different amounts of the TAB benefit for employees versus dependents.
- Faculty/staff will understand the number of TAB applications for employees versus dependents, by CU campus and overall for our 3-year TAB Pilot Program (Fall 2017 to present).
- Faculty/staff will be able to access the TAB website for more information on the TAB process and deadlines.



### 3. Outcome [Design Solution (with referenced support), also describing how the solution addresses the project's assessment tool]

Please share the story about your design decisions:

- Instructional Strategies:
  - Faculty/staff will review the TAB step-by-step process and TAB application process on the infographic and understand the overall action items needed for themselves, as well as the campus steps process.
    - We do have step-by-step instructions for each TAB campus of registration on our website, but a better visual checklist or list layout is needed.
  - Faculty/staff will access the TAB amounts for employees and dependents (Option A-Home Campus versus Option B-Other Campus) in section one of my infographic and be able to determine the TAB amount specific to their situation.
  - Faculty/staff will review the TAB Pilot Program Application: Fall 2017 – Present bar graph to understand that an average of 1,537 faculty/staff colleagues utilize the TAB each semester. This will assist employees in being aware of the high number of applications and general TAB usage numbers.
  - Faculty/staff will be able to access the general TAB website to understand the general TAB website, as well as being able to access hyperlinks in the infographic connecting them to their campus of registration deadline page, eligibility information and more.
    - All TAB information is listed on our website. However, it is simply a matter of getting employees to access this information and read/understand it.

How infographic achieves specific project requirements:

- **For the Infographic project, describe how the project includes one of the four visual infographic elements.**
  - Out of the four visual infographic elements in our project requirements, I included a visual representation of an instructional sequence for both the employee's TAB step-by-step process, as well as for the TAB application campus step approvals. Additionally, I added the chronological representation of how many TAB applications have been used from Fall 2017 through Spring 2019 for each semester.



- **Describe how your design addresses each element of CARP: Contrast, Alignment, Repetition, Proximity:**

**Contrast:** I believe that my infographic shows contrast clearly in my black and white/gold theme between the black background and gold text and white background (for readability) with black font. It is easy to read with little eye strain and to physically read all data, text, etc.

**Alignment:** Throughout my infographic, I have left alignment for ease of reading, again. This is repeated throughout my design for graph alignment, process alignment, as well as my titles/headers and all paragraph text. Left alignment continues throughout my design for the header and footer, additionally.

**Repetition:** Throughout my infographic design, I repeat the same gold colors on all graphs, headers and footers. I also, repeatedly use the same font (Buenard) and font sizes for titles-to-titles and paragraph text-to-paragraph text. I repeatedly use the same left alignment and terminology for “TAB” and “CU”. My visuals repeat for the black process arrows, as well as using appropriate visuals in my first infographic section showing the amount of TAB for employees versus dependents.

**Proximity:** Although there is a lot of information on this infographic, it is appropriate for the audience and simple to understand, in my opinion. There is enough negative space on the infographic that text/data is not overwhelming, and it gives the audience room to breathe. Additionally, the negative space and gold line dividers help the audience move their eyes in the appropriate direction from top to bottom in the infographic for each section.

- **Describe how your design addresses specific guidelines included in Our Infographic Design Guidelines document:**

- At first glance, people will understand what your infographic is about and what it’s trying to achieve—
  - Yes, although I include a lot of information on my infographic, it’s clear that it’s about the Tuition Assistance Benefit (TAB) right away from the title. At first glance, the audience can tell I’m talking about how many credits you can receive, TAB processes and some data pertaining to applications and who uses the TAB generally.
- There is an appropriate color theme—
  - Yes, I adhered to CU colors, while still allowing for contrast/readability. It looks professional and has a splash of color.
- Have typos, errors been eliminated and there is a consistent punctuation, capitalization and alignment throughout?



- Yes, I've double checked all spelling and grammar. Additionally, I am consistent on alignment, punctuation and capitalization.
- Selected fonts render clear letter spacing and are easy to read—
  - My font that I chose, Buenard, is simple, easy to read with appropriate spacing between letters and other words. Nothing is capitalized in my infographic for whole words and generally, there is appropriate negative space leftover by using this font.
- Have orphaned words been eliminated?
  - With the exception of a couple of process boxes where the word “application” is too long, my titles and paragraph texts do not have orphaned text.
- Eliminated centered text—
  - I had left-alignment throughout my infographic.
- Is the resulting infographic something that you're pleased with professionally and will use on your base camp site?
  - Yes, I have support from my manager to experiment with visual representations for the TAB program for the administration and our website. I will share this infographic with my manager and possibly the administration. I might adjust some of this data for our employee audience and/or create additional infographics to coincide with this information. We are already talking about infographic checklists for TAB appeals and the TAB process specific to each CU campus of registration. I will definitely add this infographic to my base camp portfolio website.
- **Share how our readings/viewings have influenced your design; include the citations:**
  - Robin Williams is a great resource with his book, [The Non-Designer's Guide Book](#) as it is very visual in its examples and helps me generate ideas for my design work. Specifically for the infographic project, I found it helpful reading through Chapter 10 comparing font types, their similarities and differences, and the six groups of font styles: Oldstyle, Modern, Slab serif, Sans serif, Script and Decorative (Williams 2008). I found myself being very conscious of the font type I was choosing for my infographic.
  - The five criteria for considering in making a great infographic helped me determine how infographics are viewed by their audience:
    - Immediacy (creating an urgency or need to read my infographic).
    - Malleability (my infographic audience has enough information that they can determine what TAB amounts and data pertain to them).



- Compellingness (I focused on my contrast and TAB information to make sure that my reader continued the infographic).
  - Resonance (my TAB infographic connected enough information to allow the reader to be inspired to use the TAB and connect how they can do that).
  - Coherence (by being knowledgeable on TAB and representing the TAB office, my information is credible and ready to use by our faculty/staff) (Dunlap & Lowenthal 2016).
- In The Superpowers of Visual Storytelling, Laura Stanton and David LaGessee gave visual examples of different infographic possibilities, such as charts, mapping events and locations and generally using visuals for storytelling (Stanton and LaGessee 2018). Although my TAB infographic data and visuals are probably drier than a lot of other topics, the possibilities of visuals that I could use from this reading will help me with infographics and other visual projects moving forward.
- Randy Krum helped me learn about the history of why the infographic has become so popular and important to communicating visual work to our current day audience. With the current person today being exposed to the equivalent of 174 newspapers-worth of information each day, it's necessary to fight for space for your specific information towards your audience. Visuals are the best way to combat short attention spans and too much information (Krum 2013). When working with CU faculty/staff on the TAB, although all of our information is online and on the TAB application, 80% of the time, employees aren't reading. I'm working on explaining information to our faculty/staff in different manners to combat the TAB program complexity with short attention spans.

#### 4. Preview [Formative Feedback]

##### Peer Review Questions:

##### **1) How does my infographic fit CARP guidelines well and how can I improve on this?**

I asked this question because I feel that CARP guidelines are the most encompassing tool to attaining a great visual/layout. I wanted to make sure that my peer reviewers were reviewing my infographic's contrast, alignment, repetition and proximity. Additionally, CARP guidelines are on our grade rubric for this project.

##### **2) How can I improve my infographic's color, text, statistics, layout, etc. so that it flows better, is easy to understand and/or is easy to read? What type of different charts for my data would you recommend?**



***-I struggled with the colors because I could do black and gold, which are CU colors, but the TAB program itself doesn't have branded/associated colors.***

I asked this question to get some ideas from my peers about what better color themes would be better in my infographic, which I knew were off. Additionally, the TAB program is very complex, including data included with it. Therefore, I wanted to confirm that an audience who doesn't know about TAB could decipher what my graphs/data were referring to. I was hoping for suggestions about different types of charts to use and a better color theme to use.

**3) For someone that doesn't know anything about the TAB program, what gaps in information on my infographic can I fill in? How do you feel about the general TAB website for a call-to-action? How can I expand on this?**

I wanted to ask this question so that I could decide if I needed to tweak my data information that I provided for TAB on my infographic. Because the TAB program has multiple TAB contacts based on different CU campuses of registration, I only put the general TAB email on the infographic. However, I wondered if I needed more information for my call-to-action.

### **Three Peer Review Feedback:**

Then share the specifics of all peer reviews and explain what you did, or did not do, based on your feedback.

#### **Peer Feedback #1:** (my comments in purple)

Ok, let's start with something good (because that is easy on yours.) The full page is clean and inviting. It is neat, and crisp. This is good because it is about money and it looking organized and neat makes me feel that it is reliable. I think there are just a couple of little things to think about. I will add those below your questions.

**1) How does my infographic fit CARP guidelines well and how can I improve on this?**

This does meet CARP guidelines. The contrast between the white background is about much contrast as you could get. I think it makes the page too bright and feels sterile. I have read that white letters on a black background are easier on a readers' eyes, so perhaps reversing those colors for much of the infographic would make it less bright and harsh. A black background would also make the yellow graphics "pop" a little more. On the vertical bar graph, it is very difficult to see the yellow bar above "Spring 2019" If you reversed the back and white, white text would be easy to read and that light yellow would be very visible.

I didn't like the look of an all-black background with my text when I flipped it; it was simply hard to read. However, replacing the yellows with gold and contrasting the header and footer in black with gold/white text makes the contrast easier to read and the general infographic looks better with this. I originally had trouble making charts/graphs in Canva directly and had copy and pasted graphs from Microsoft Word. I agree that the font was too small on the infographic and hard to read, so I recreated all charts directly in Canva after playing around some more and the final outcome is easier-to-read/larger font and matching gold colors.

**2) How can I improve my infographic's color, text, statistics, layout, etc. so that it flows better, is easy to understand and/or is easy to read? What type of different charts for my data would**



### you recommend?

The two flow charts – “The employee’s TAB process” and “The TAB application process” - are a little confusing to me. Is the first how employees use it and the second for dependents? Is it just two ways of doing the same thing for both groups? I do not understand if it is exclusively for employees, or if it applies to dependents. I was also wondering if the second flowchart, having only 4 boxes in it, was intentionally left shorter across the page or if it just worked out like that. The text in those boxes is pretty dense (a problem I have with my infographic, too) and it is pretty tough to read. I was wondering if you used a slightly larger font for both flowcharts and made the bottom boxes just a little bigger if it might be easier to read. If you left the bottom row shorter on purpose, to demonstrate it is a shorter, easier process, then You might adjust it to still be a little shorter than the first chart. But if it is not that big a difference, or is purely coincidence, I think it might balance that line a little better and make it easier to read if it was a little bigger font and bigger boxes.

Absolutely the TAB process section is confusing....as is the TAB program. I took this feedback to heart as it was in two of my three peer feedbacks, and I reduced the amount of text on the process areas and added an arrow to show that the bottom process was just for the TAB application. I also added verbiage to both process titles for clarity. I feel that this all was helpful, and I hope my audience agrees.

### -I struggled with the colors because I could do black and gold, which are CU colors, but the TAB program itself doesn’t have branded/associated colors.

I think I addressed this in my answer to #1. I really like the gold and black, and think that by embracing that, and reversing your black on white to white letters on black it would work great. At the top and the bottom where you already have gold backgrounds with black letters, I would leave those alone, those work great. [Adjusted in number one by changing my infographic’s colors/contrast.](#)

### 3) For someone that doesn’t know anything about the TAB program, what gaps in information on my infographic can I fill in? How do you feel about the general TAB website for a call-to-action? How can I expand on this?

I think the call-to-action taking the reader to the TAB website is OK. The page seems to link to all the right, pertinent information, as least as far as I can tell. Since your target audience is employees (maybe potential employees) it seems sensible to link to that institution generated page. If this were to be a poster, hanging on a wall, I might include the phone number and email address (maybe a QR CODE with the website embedded in it) but for an online resource I think this is going to do the job.

I originally added only the general TAB website because we have six TAB specific contacts at Employee Services and at each of the CU campuses, plus general contacts like campus Admissions, Registrar’s, and Bursar’s. I thought more contact info might help though, so I listed the TAB email and phone number at Employee Services for general questions. I end up redirecting employees all the time from these contacts....when they don’t read the website.

### Peer Feedback #2:

This looks great! Here is my feedback. (For the sections, I didn't count the header.)

#### 1) How does my infographic fit CARP guidelines well and how can I improve on this?





I think you hit contrast using yellow, white and black. You do need to watch some of the yellow, though, as it can look faded or too bright which strains the eyes. You might consider using grey for the bar graphs so you can still get color variation, but it will cut down on some the

eye strain with the yellow. This would still fit with the CU colors you are trying to use. I also had a quick question, for the TAB usage by campus, is this between the campuses or is it employees on the campus? So is Boulder 58% of all CU employees or are 58% of Boulder employees using TAB? You may want to add a clarification statement there. I think the alignment makes sense and it is presented in a good flow.

I already adjusted my yellow colors to gold/black/white from my first peer feedback/general group peer feedback. I did change the title for the pie chart showing that the TAB percentages were for all employees/dependents for the TAB program by campus. Otherwise, I think this chart is self-explanatory.

**2) How can I improve my infographic's color, text, statistics, layout, etc. so that it flows better, is easy to understand and/or is easy to read? What type of different charts for my data would you recommend? -I struggled with the colors because I could do black and gold, which are CU colors, but the TAB program itself doesn't have branded/associated colors.**

I think you should break up the yellow with some grey in there. If you decide to stick with the yellow, I would go a deeper color so it is not so bright. In the first portion where you talk about how much you can save, the 9 credits is a little off for the justification on the dependent side. Your font size seems to be consistent and I like where you bolded your text to call attention to the important words and phrases. For the step process in the 2nd section, I would consider left justifying these and using a slightly larger font or changing the font. Some of the letters are a little blurry. That happened to me too when I downloaded it to a pdf. If you make the logo at the bottom a little smaller, you could make the boxes here a little bigger to accommodate a different font. I really liked your visuals; especially in the first section. I think the data you included is great.

Again, I've fixed the yellow to dark gold/black/white contrast. I adjusted the "9 credits" alignment in the first section and focused on left alignment in the second section. I also increased the font size when I removed some text from the process charts previously.

**3) For someone that doesn't know anything about the TAB program, what gaps in information on my infographic can I fill in? How do you feel about the general TAB website for a call-to-action? How can I expand on this?**

For the 2nd section (The employee's TAB process vs The TAB application process) I felt this was a little confusing. I had to read it a couple times to understand what you were talking about. To me, the first line is the application process (what I do to apply and use it) where the second line is what happens to my application. I am not sure what you were comparing. It seems more like the steps the application goes through. You may want to consider doing this as a steps process where yellow is the employee and you choose a different yellow or grey for the behind the scenes steps.

Again, I fixed the titles on the processes, font sizes, shortened verbiage and added an arrow to help the audience understand the flow.



For the call to action, you could include a link to the TAB application or also an email address with a contact us call to action. I did add a hyperlink to the employee portal for how to reach the TAB application on that step in the process on the infographic. Otherwise, the employee should really be reading our website steps.

Overall, I really like your infographic. It is clean, organized and it's easy to find information.

### Peer Feedback #3:

This infographic is really nice! I especially like the graphics you selected because they fit the topics well and are not overwhelming.

#### **1) How does my infographic fit CARP guidelines well and how can I improve on this?**

Your use of black and white adds a nice element of contrast. In each of the different sections, you utilize the alignment, repetition and proximity guidelines well because the layout is very pleasing to the eye and easy to follow. One suggestion I have to better improve the elements of CARP in your infographic (and this is very minor because I think you did a great job already!) is to change the color of the arrows on the process portion of your document to add more contrast and repetition. That section of the infographic has a lot for the reader to absorb and the darker arrows may help the flow from step to step.

I did end up changing my process arrows to black instead of yellow/gold...this helps with readability, in my opinion.

#### **2) How can I improve my infographic's color, text, statistics, layout, etc. so that it flows better, is easy to understand and/or is easy to read? What type of different charts for my data would you recommend?**

I really like your use of charts and graphs, and they are easy to follow. However, the color scheme is a little overwhelming with so many different yellows. I can tell you used a color scheme that could pair well with the university logo, but I personally feel it is too much. One suggestion I have to fix this is to choose a different shade that is more pleasing to the eye (maybe blues, greens, some grey?) or utilize a background color and make your data and text black and grey.

Another suggestion I have is to try to reduce (if possible) the amount of text in the process section. The text is a little small and hard to read, so a reduction in the amount of text may help this if you can summarize at all.

I didn't want to steer too far away from university colors, but again, I changed the yellow to gold/black/white. I also previously reduced the process text and thereby, increased font size in the process section.

#### **3) For someone that doesn't know anything about the TAB program, what gaps in information on my infographic can I fill in? How do you feel about the general TAB website for a call-to-action? How can I expand on this?**

I think the statistics and information you provide in the first section are very interesting and provide good insights into the program. However, I do not think that the question in the section heading completely applies to the information provided. As someone who knew nothing about TAB when first reading the infographic, I expected to see some money figures about how much



employees save with the program. Maybe a comparison chart with typical tuition costs for employees and dependents and then the cost of tuition with TAB?

This section was difficult for me, also. We have never put a monetary value on the TAB since it varies greatly from employee to employee and could create a legal liability for the university. Although, I wish I had this data! I adjusted the title question from “how much can you save?” to “how many credits can you receive?”.

## 5. Epilogue [Design Lessons Learned]

From this infographic project, I learned the importance of brainstorming and peer feedback. I feel that at this point in the course, I am very comfortable in aligning my design projects with CARP guidelines and presenting uniquely creative work specific to my professional role or personal interests. However, I did struggle to get the TAB information off the ground for this infographic, so I decided to have an idea brainstorming session with myself. This helped create a project checklist of possible TAB data to include on the infographic. I also struggled with contrast for this project since the TAB program doesn’t have a color theme and the CU System office color theme is vague in my mind. In reviewing other CU employee’s infographics in this course, as well as getting feedback from peers, I was able to catch details that I missed. I believe that feedback is most important as sometimes you’re so involved in a project that you may miss needed additions or miniscule errors that you can overlook on your own. Peer feedback also enlists some great project ideas, also, which always make my design work better than it would have been. I will continue to seek improvements to my design work and constructive feedback from my peers.

## 6. Bibliography

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## 7. Project Checklist

### Checklist for Infographic Project

Completed?	Project Element
X	Rich with instructional value and designed to help learners achieve learning objectives
X	Adheres to <i>Our Infographic Design Guidelines</i>
X	Follows the CARP design recommendations
X	Contains a substantial amount of interesting, emotional, and humanistic statistics (provides data which can best be understood visually and which might otherwise be challenging to grasp without seeing your infographic)
X	Contains one of the following <b>four visual infographic elements</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● mapped/annotated picture or diagram</li> <li>● compare-and-contrast representation</li> <li>● <b>visual representation of an instructional sequence</b></li> <li>● <b>chronological</b>, genealogical, or hierarchical representation</li> </ul>
X	Reflects revisions based on peer reviews and instructor feedback