Finter: A Social Network for International Students

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Introduction
Coming to the US as an international student can be an exciting and thrilling adventure. However, studying in a foreign country does introduce some challenges such as feelings of loneliness, difficulty with adjusting to new culture, lack of financial aid resources, job hunting etc. From my experience, connecting and discussing with other F1 students about my struggles has really helped me through some of the issues I have faced. This experience is not unique to me as studies have shown that this is true for many international students. They feel other international students understand the specific challenges they face, and it helps them understand they are not facing those challenges alone.

Objective
The purpose of this project is to create a platform that provides a space for international students to develop a network among other international students. Students will be able to share information on their experience, discover/connect with other international students, and view helpful news and resources.

Significance
There are over 1 million international students in the US, and there are very limited platforms on which international students can interact on.

Database Model

Application Prototype

Architecture/ Technology

User Interface:
The User Interface (UI) is what a user interacts with when using an application. In the project, I used Reactjs, a frontend framework technology, to create the UI.

API Services:
The API services exist in the back end of the application, the side the user neither sees nor interacts with. This is where the app logic lives. I implemented the API using Python, a programming language.

Database:
The Database is where data is stored and retrieved from. I used MongoDB as my database.

Future Work
Deploy the application on Google Cloud Platform, or any other cloud services
Add more features that tailor to the needs of international students. Some of the features will include:
- Job Platform where students will be able to view and apply for jobs that would sponsor work visas or accept OPT.
- Scholarship display
- Housing search platform.

Reference
Klings M., (2016) “Study shows social media can help adjust to college life”. https://news.ku.edu/2016/02/05/study-shows-social-media-can-help-international-students-adjust-college-life-not-support