

**Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
ApplyTexas Advisory Committee
February 10, 2021**

Meeting Notes

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board ApplyTexas Advisory Committee (ATAC) convened at 10:08 a.m. on February 10, 2021, with the following committee members present: Paula Arredondo, Scott Bennett, Shontell Blake, Mordecai Brownlee, Kevin Davis, Hanna Deland, Luis Franco, Jamie Hansard, Leah Hickman, Laura Isdell, Billy Lagal, Rebecca Lothringer, Dara Newton, Becky Sergeant, Angie Taylor, Julia Vickery, Miguel Wasielewski, and Michelle Walker.

Unable to Attend: Todd Fields and Indra Peláez

Student Representative: Tristan Pepper

ApplyTexas Technical Team Members: Graham Chapman, Rebecca Kindschi, Barry McClendon, Lorraine Muniz, and David Muck

THECB Staff: Jerel Booker, Diana Foose, Claudette Jenks, and Lisa Paiz

AGENDA ITEM	NOTES/ACTION
1. Welcome and Introductions	Mordecai Brownlee called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.
2. Review and Adoption of Minutes for the October 19, 2020 Meeting	On a motion by Angie Taylor, seconded by Julie Vickery, the Committee approved this item.
3. Update from Strategic Planning Committee	<p>Miguel Wasielewski provided an update from the Strategic Planning Committee. The survey of students, parents, high school counselors and higher education representatives was executed, and final results were received at the end of January 2021. There was a strong response rate and good representation with a lot of qualitative information. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled with the Strategic Planning subcommittee review results and recommendations will be determined from that feedback. Preliminary results from the survey showed applicants would like an autosave feature, web accessibility, and better understand the application. The report will provide additional information and the final report will be available in the next few weeks.</p> <p>Dr. Zach Taylor, Trellis Company, presented a second edition of an exploratory report with a comparative analysis of ApplyTX and other application systems- Common, Coalition, and Universal College Application from 2018 through 2021 and recommendations for improvement.</p>

	An additional cross-analysis of 15 major college application systems will also be included in the report.
4. Update from Communications Committee	Mordecai Brownlee provided an update from the Communications subcommittee. The subcommittee assisted in setting up the distribution of survey through the TACRAO listserv.
5. Update from ApplyTexas Technical Team	David Muck provided the ApplyTexas Tech Team update. Committee reviewed items from last year for consideration. See attached Current Cycle Updates and Proposals.
6. Discussion and Consideration of Proposed Changes to ApplyTexas Forms or Procedures	<p>David Muck provided an overview of the Future cycle proposed changes and updates. See attached Future cycle proposals.</p> <p>Erin Willig, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, provided an overview of the ADVi chatbot. Last fall a consent was added to ApplyTX to opt in to receive text messages. There are 150,000 opted in to date and a 44% engagement rate with ADVi. A team of 5 virtual advisers support the chatbot through one on one engagement and answer questions the chatbot may not be able to answer. There is a regular campaign calendar for general messaging about financial aid, admission applications, and other information. Messaging is timely and general enough to supplement any institution’s messaging. Additional outcomes will be presented at the next ATAC meeting.</p> <p>David Muck provided an update on the AWS transition and an overview of the revisions to the ApplyTX System. The timeline is March 29 alpha testing/early preview access by invitation and April 19 beta testing/full preview institutions to opt in. Regarding transmission, there will be no changes to the EDI. ApplyTX will expand the format offerings in future phases.</p> <p>Committee discussed communication about the new changes to ApplyTX. ApplyTX staff will provide messaging about the new application on the ApplyTX webpage and Administrative Suite. The Communications Subcommittee and Coordinating Board staff will discuss a communication plan. The Coordinating Board staff will use current listservs of counselor and administrators to inform groups of the changes.</p>
7. Discussion of Potential Agenda Items and Next Meeting Date	Committee asked for updates from subcommittees and ApplyTX Tech Team, discuss what reporting institutions would like, outcomes of ADVi, Dr. Zach Taylor final report on ApplyTX.

8. Adjournment	On motion by Kevin Davis, seconded by Michelle Walker, the meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.
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Tech Team Update 2/10/21

Graham Chapman – Executive Director, Academic Information Systems, University of Texas at Austin

David Muck – Principal Software Developer/Analyst, AIS, University of Texas at Austin

Current cycle updates and proposals (David Muck):

- Additional daily application deliveries – We have a number of institutions participating in additional deliveries times of 7 am and 12 pm (in addition to the normal 6 pm application delivery). Please reach out to us if you are interested in either of these additional delivery times.
- We would like to encourage more high schools to participate in the transcript request service that we continue to maintain in collaboration with the Texas Education Agency.
- The completed Fall 2020 semester was down 4% in submitted applications from the prior year. Two-year submissions were down 11% while four-year submissions were approximately the same. Two-year applications left in saved (not submitted) status were up 14% from the prior fall semester.
- For the incomplete Fall 2021 semester, we are down 12% on submitted applications compared to the same time last year. Four-year application submissions are down 7% while two-year application submissions are down 30%. There has been steady improvement in these numbers as statewide application submissions were down 35% in early November.
- A question was added to two year and US Freshman applications asking for the applicant’s consent to receive text-messaging from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and AdmitHub. This will facilitate some of the advising and outreach campaigns the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is involved in. We have heard some positive feedback regarding the ADVi chatbot both on twitter and in our post-submission survey.
- Fraudulent applications continue to be a problem for some of our institutions. We continue to work to reduce this issue.

Future cycle proposals and updates (David Muck):

- A proposal to add a “grade received” field to the Educational Information section to facilitate self-reporting of grades (request by University of Houston from last cycle)
Action: On a motion by Rebecca Lothringer, seconded by Dara Newton, the Committee did not approve the addition of this question to the application for this cycle. Vote: 16 in favor, 1 against.
- A proposal to add a question if the applicant enters a cell phone number: “[Institution name] uses text messaging to communicate important admissions information to prospective students. Your information is not shared with third parties and you may opt out at any time. Standard messaging rates may apply.
- Allow (default) - Do not Allow” (proposal by University of The Incarnate Word)
Action: Table for next meeting. Institutions have a custom question, can eliminate if universal available. Cannot make this option institution specific. David will draft language based on

information from other institutions questions. Scott Bennett, Mordecai Brownlee, Dara Newton, and Rebecca Lothringer will review.

- A proposal to add fields to collect Pearson Test of English scores to the test pages (proposal by Pearson)

Action: Table to next meeting.

- Provide a question that will allow students applying to public, two-year colleges to self-identify in one of the Perkins V special populations categories* and request available local services (request by THECB)

Action: On a motion by Mordecai Brownlee, seconded by Julia Vickery, the Committee approved this question be added to this application cycle. Vote: 17 in favor, 0 against.

- A proposal to expand the option of the parent information questions to all application types, but to not require that information on application types other than the US Freshman. Request text below (request from Tarleton State University):

- "I noticed the Parent information can be "turned on or off" but if it is "on", it is required. Can this also be an option for transfers and readmits to be "turned on" but not required since transfer students can be a wide range of ages. Our administration wants to communication with parents more so I wondered if this was an option. Thank you."

Action: Table to next meeting.

- Development continues on moving the Counselor Reporting Suite to AWS
- Development continues on moving the Administrative site to AWS
- Development continues on moving the Applicant site to AWS