**Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**
**ApplyTexas Advisory Committee**
**October 26, 2021**

**Meeting Notes**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board ApplyTexas Advisory Committee (ATAC) convened at 9:15 a.m. on October 26, 2021, with the following committee members present: Andrés Arredondo, Jennifer Beal, Shontell Blake, Cintia Cortez, Hanna Deland, Jamie Hansard, Michael Sanders, Michael Talamantes, and Amy Williams

Participating via Telephone:  David Barron, Andy Benoit, Luis Franco, Laura Isdell, Mardell Maxwell, Stefanie Salazar, Julia Vickery, Michelle Walker, and Miguel Wasielewski

Unable to Attend:  Scott Bennett, Rebecca Lothringer, and Tristan Pepper *(Student Representative)*

ApplyTexas Technical Team Members:  Graham Chapman, David Muck

Other Attendees:  Veronica Lopez, University of Houston-Victoria, and Jennifer Waits, Collin College

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

| AGENDA ITEM | ACTION |
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| 1.  Welcome and Introductions | Jamie Hansard called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m. |
| 2.  Overview of ApplyTX Committee Tasks | Claudette Jenks provided an overview of the ApplyTexas Committee member roles and responsibilities, tasks, calendar for the year, and governing rules. |
| 3.  Approval of Minutes from the May 12, 2021 Meeting | On motion by Julia Vickery, seconded by Luis Franco, the Committee approved this item, with noted corrections to the spelling of Jamie Hansard's name and David Muck's title. |
| 4.  Update on Annual Report to the Board | Jamie Hansard provided an update on the Annual Report to the Board. The Committee Co-Chairs provide an annual report to the Coordinating Board's Committee on Academic and Workforce Success.  We provided a summary of the work of the committee including the approval of the two items for the last application cycle, the coordination of the ApplyTX Preview, a high level overview of AWS Transition, and the outcomes of the usability study conducted by the ApplyTX Committee's Strategic Planning Subcommittee. There were no questions from the Board Committee members. |

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| 5. Discussion on Communications Subcommittee | Jamie Hansard discussed the benefit to continue the Communication Subcommittee. Claudette Jenks provided an overview of the tasks for the lead and the subcommittee. Further action tabled until discussion of agenda item 7. |
| 6. Discussion on Progress of Transition to the New ApplyTexas Application System | Graham Chapman provided an overview and update on the progress of the transition of the ApplyTexas System.<br><br>ApplyTexas updated based on usability reports. User interface to be updated and accessible to applicants, mobile friendly and to reduce operating cost of the infrastructure.<br><br>New applicant site rolled out on July 1. Experienced challenges through the transition. Communicated updates and created weekly stand up meetings with institutions to understand issues. |
| 7. Discussion and Possible Action to Establish Additional Subcommittees | Shontell Blake discussed the need to establish additional subcommittees. The ATAC currently has established two subcommittees, Communication Subcommittee, and a Strategic Planning Subcommittee.<br><br>Claudette Jenks gave an overview of the interest in establishing two new subcommittees:<br>A subcommittee to address the skip logic for Residency and A subcommittee of high school representatives to advise on the ApplyTX application and Counselor Suite.<br><br>The ATAC agreed to establish the following subcommittees and lead contacts:<br>**Communication**<br>Lead: Andy Benoit<br>**Strategic Planning**<br>Lead: Miguel Wasielewski<br>**Residency Logic**<br>Lead: Amy Williams<br>**K-12 Collaboration**<br>Lead: Jennifer Beal |
| 8. Review and Possible Action to Approve Proposed Changes to ApplyTexas Applications or Procedures Carried Forward from 2021-2022 | David Muck reviewed current cycle updates and items carried over from prior application cycle for consideration. See attached list and discussion. |
| 9. Discussion and Possible Action to Adopt New Proposed Changes to ApplyTexas Forms or Procedures | David Muck provided an overview of the Future cycle proposed changes and updates. See attached list and discussion under- Future cycle proposals.<br><br>Committee discussed comparison from Fall 2020 numbers. Why are numbers down? Seeing trend where applicants |

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|  | started applications and waited to submit, may be carry over, or delay in transmission of data to institutions.<br><br>Legacy application will be available until everything is moved over to new application. Expect a lot of communication about this update. |
| 10. Discussion on Potential Agenda Items and Next Meeting Date | Committee request for ApplyTX Roadmap.<br>No new agenda items discussed.<br><br>Next meeting scheduled for February 2, 2022. |
| 11. Adjournment | On motion by Andrés Arredondo, seconded by Amy Williams, the meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m. |

## *Tech Team Update 10/26/21*

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):*

- For the incomplete Fall 2021 semester, we are down 5% in submitted applications compared to the same time last year. Four year application submissions are down 7% while two year application submissions are down 3%. There has been steady improvement in these numbers as statewide application submissions were down 35% in early November of last year.
- For the Fall 2022 semester, we have seen an increase of 45% in total applications and an increase of 30% in submitted applications compared to the same time last year. Comparing the same time period to the Fall 2020 semester we are up 1% in total applications and we are down 17% in submitted applications.
- Fraudulent applications continue to be a problem for some of our institutions. We continue to work to reduce this issue.
- 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.
- All three of our main portals (applicant, administrator, and counselor) are now hosted on Amazon Web Services. We will gradually retire the legacy system hosted on campus at the University of Texas at Austin over the course of Spring 2022 as that ApplyTexas application semester winds down.

### *Proposed Changes to ApplyTexas Applications or Procedures Carried Forward from 2021-2022*

1. 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) [carried forward from last year]

   **Discussion:**
   There are other application platforms, Common App and possibly Coalition app do this. Third party vendors can do this and it may not be as easy for ApplyTexas. If most of the institutions want this, would there be an opportunity to have this option? Maybe ApplyTexas can work with a third party for this function. Would this require a policy change?

   **Action:**
   Additional research needed.

2. 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) [carried forward from last year]

   **Discussion:**
   This has been discussed previously and different departments have different ways of handling text messaging.  There would be some complications. Members in favor of this

recommendation. It would be easier to have an opt in or opt out. Committee can work on the language. This may be a custom question for some institutions already. UT will need to research to determine the implication for institutions and determine project size. Complexities among opt outs for whole institution or institution specific programs. Understanding that it would be admission specific. Need further review of the technical side. Have Communications subcommittee review FCC requirements and table and come back with this information.

**Action:**
yes for consideration, need more information

3. A proposal to add fields to collect Pearson Test of English scores to the test pages (proposal by Pearson) [carried forward from last year]

   **Discussion:**
   Recommend adding another and not listing and provide test date.  That would cover all other tests. Prevents having to list all test.  Add other category and add date taken and date sent. Determine which application types will this question be added? Will it be a required question?

   **Action:**
   yes for consideration

### *Future cycle proposals and updates (David Muck):*
1. A proposal to extend the length of the field that collects the name of high school senior courses (suggestion from the ApplyTexas technical team and requested by many applicants)

   **Discussion:** None

   **Action:**
   yes for consideration

2. A proposal to include relevant questions about Selective Service registration (proposal by the University of Texas at Austin):

   "Federal regulations have been changed to no longer require institutions to verify that male recipients of federal aid be registered with Selective Service.  The FAFSA document will no longer include questions related to Selective Service registration and the response will not be matched against the Selective Service database.  This means that the results of the database match will not be data that is provided to institutions.

   The issue at hand is that State of Texas regulations (SEC. 51.9095) require males who receive state funded aid, which includes state grants, work-study and exemptions/waivers, to file a statement attesting that they are registered or exempted.  The student's response on the FAFSA will no longer satisfy Texas regulations as providing a "statement".

   If the ApplyTX application included relevant questions about Selective Service registration, this could serve as the "statement".  The responses could be imported into an institutions enterprise system allowing for automate processes to deal with the exceptions rather than collecting a new document from each recipient.

**Discussion:**
Concerns for being held liable if that question is not answered correctly.

**Action:**
yes for consideration, additional information needed

3. A proposal to add a second optional deadline for graduate majors (proposal by UT Permian Basin):

   Currently the major-specific deadline for graduate programs only gives the option for one deadline. Can we add another deadline (similar to the optional deadlines provided in the regular semester-specific setting)? Example scenario: UTPB's online graduate programs have a Fall A (August 9) and Fall B (October 14) deadline. The deadline for all on-campus graduate programs is August 16 only.

   **Discussion:**
   Suggest combining with request from Trinity Valley.  Need more clarification on specifics on the graduate component and any affect on the undergraduate application and if there will there be any hard deadlines if a Fall II is established and it doesn't coincide with another institutions term (i.e. community college's flex term, etc.).

   **Action:**
   yes for consideration, need additional information. Will follow-up with requestor.

4. A proposal to extend the maximum length of major titles. Currently set at 60 characters. (proposal by Dallas Baptist University)

   **Discussion:**
   None

   **Action:**
   yes for consideration

5. A proposal to add additional terms to the ApplyTexas application. We currently offer Spring, Summer I, Summer, Summer II, and Fall. The specific request was for a Fall II term. (proposal by Trinity Valley Community College).

   **Discussion:**
   None

   **Action:**
   yes for consideration. Combine with request from UT Permian Basin.

6. Consideration for making the gender question on the profile required (requested by numerous schools over the course of this cycle)

   **Discussion:** None

**Action:**
yes for consideration. Michael Talamantes will submit an official request.

7. Consideration for making the international Application Representative address collection fields consistent with the rest of the address fields on the application. Currently they are just two free-form text inputs to collect address, city, country, zip. (suggestion from the ApplyTexas technical team)

    **Discussion:** None

    **Action:**
    yes for consideration

8. Consideration for expanding address verification to additional address fields. Currently only permanent and physical addresses are passed through verification. (suggestion from the ApplyTexas technical team).

    **Discussion:**
    Is there a reason all addresses can't be verified? Consider for all addresses.

    **Action:**
    yes for consideration. Michelle Walker will submit an official request.

9. Consideration for the formation of a sub-committee to review the current rules, flow, and information collected for determining Texas residency. (suggestion from the ApplyTexas technical team)

    **Discussion:**
    None

    **Action:**
    yes for consideration, will be reviewed by Residency Logic subcommittee