Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
ApplyTexas Advisory Committee
February 2, 2022

Meeting Notes

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board ApplyTexas Advisory Committee (ATAC) convened at 9:09 a.m. on February 2, 2022, with the following committee members present: Andrés Arredondo, Shontell Blake, Michael Sanders, and Amy Williams.

Participating via Telephone: David Barron, Jennifer Beal, Scott Bennett, Andy Benoit, Cintia Cortez, Hanna Deland, Luis Franco, Jamie Hansard, Laura Isdell, Veronica Lopez, Rebecca Lothringer, Mardell Maxwell, Tristan Pepper *(Student Representative),* Stefanie Salazar, Michael Talamantes, Julia Vickery, Miguel Wasielewski, and Lu Waterhouse

Unable to Attend: Michelle Walker

ApplyTexas Technical Team Members: Graham Chapman and David Muck

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

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION
1. Welcome and Introductions	Jamie Hansard called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.
2. Approval of Minutes from the May 12, 2021 Meeting	On motion by Luis Franco, seconded by David Barron, the Committee approved this item.
3. Update from Strategic Planning Subcommittee	Miguel Wasielewski provided update to committee. Discussion to consider how institutions receive academic credentials though options like TReX and self-reported academic record. Committee agreed with recommendation for subcommittee to focus on a new topic for the next year, to explore alternative options to make transmission of transcripts more efficient and reduce costs.
4. Update from Communications Subcommittee	Andy Benoit provided an update. Continuing to seek volunteers. Communications would like to continue work that was done last year: 1) Determine constituent groups, both higher education and K-12 for both technical and functional 2) Providing general updates, to higher education partners, counselors, and users.

	3) Determine what we communicate, when, and how we communicate. 4) Discuss different communication channels, collaborate with IHE and K-12 partners Meetings to begin mid to late February.
5. Presentation on the ApplyTexas Counselor Suite	David Muck presented an overview of the ApplyTexas Counselor Suite.
6. Update for K-12 Collaboration Subcommittee	Jennifer Beal provided an update. Still looking for members for subcommittee, looking for rural and large ISDs to bring in that representation, community partner. The subcommittee will: 1) Work with stakeholders to improve the ApplyTexas Counselor Suite 2) Work with the Communication subcommittee to improve communications to K-12 stakeholders Claudette Jenks shared the FAFSA filing status in the Counselor Suite is one method of proof for school districts to track students completing the FAFSA and the Coordinating Board is working on integrating online TASFA data into the Counselor Suite. This integration is expected to be launched by October 2022. This subcommittee is expected to meet up to three times.
7. Update from Residency Logic Subcommittee	Amy Williams provided an update. Seeking two more community college representation. Amy will send out a survey. Coordinated with David Muck, ApplyTexas team who will share the current residency logic. This subcommittee is expected to meet three times via Zoom.
8. Update from ApplyTexas Technical Team	David Muck provided an update from the ApplyTexas Technical Team. *See attached list under Tech Team Update.* Committee discussed other items. David Muck shared additional information: • There will be an automatic reroute to go back to the main landing Applytx.org. • Percentage comparison to prior year will be added. • Both the administrative suite and application site will redirect to new website. No hard date set at this time, the ApplyTX team will need to ensure all spring applications have been sent first.

		- Issues with Administrative and Counselor Suite authorization renewals. Will discuss this issue more offline. - Archived data will be moved to AWS. Team is discussing retention schedule and will determine how far back data will be provided. Graham Chapman provided an update on year-to-year comparisons. Applications hit almost same numbers from two years ago. The ApplyTexas Roadmap was presented to the committee. ***See comparison data and roadmap attached.***
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- ***Proposed Changes to ApplyTexas Applications or Procedures.***
10.	Discussion on Potential Agenda Items and Next Meeting Date	Potential Agenda Items: Standing items: - Subcommittee updates - ApplyTexas Technical Team update Discussion for 2-year colleges to use the International and Transient applications ApplyTexas Summer Meeting: - There is still a continued relationship with TACRAO. - Decision to move from TACRAO was based on timing of the summer meeting. - Need to clarify roles and responsibilities and human capacity for THECB staff and ATAC to host meeting. - Jamie Hansard will go back to TACRAO executive committee to discuss further. - Discuss in-person or webinar with pre-recordings. - Claudette Jenks will schedule meeting with Luis Franco, Jamie Hansard, Rebecca Lothringer, and Laura Isdell and discuss next steps for ApplyTexas Summer Meeting. Next meeting scheduled for May 11, 2022.
11.	Adjournment	On motion by Andy Benoit, seconded by David Barron, the meeting adjourned at 12:44 p.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.

Discussion and Possible Action to Adopt New Proposed Changes to ApplyTexas Forms or Procedures

Proposed Changes to ApplyTexas Applications or Procedures

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:
   This is an extra-large project. Would require additional requirements gathering. Currently on the US Freshman application there is a section for Senior course information only. Proposal would be to add a grade received field to that Senior course, would Junior, Sophomore, Freshman need to be added. Suggest adding only Junior level course work. Consider if this will be mandatory, considering those who use third party self- academic record. How many schools would use that do not have another method will use this option. Committee found this will be useful, but not top priority.

   Action:
   Item tabled until next year, Strategic Planning Committee will explore this further.

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 is a medium project. Would require EDI and QnE changes. Concern about changes in texting and possible implications. This is institution specific. Can UT ApplyTexas team have this as a custom question? By adding this, all institutions are all required to collect the information. Can we revise the existing certification? Is there a definition for authorized user? Institutional connections (other campus groups may begin reaching out). Since there is variation across institutions, suggest institutions use custom questions.

   Action:
   Move to not add this statement to the application. Motion by David Barron, seconded by Andy Benoit. Motion passes.

3. A proposal to add free form fields to the test pages (proposal by Pearson) [carried forward from last year].

   Discussion:
   This is a small project.

   Action:
   Move to not add this field. Motion by Rebecca Lothringer, Laura Isdell second. Motion passes.

   Original request was to add Pearson Test of English scores.

   Discussion:
   Source of the request was from a vendor.
   Action:
   Move to not add Pearson Test. Motion by Andy Benoit, Jennifer Beal second. Motion passes

4. 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:
   A small project. Would require change to database and applicant site in collecting the information and change import of EDI to accept longer field (40 characters).

   Action:
   Move to extend the length of the fields. Motion by Miguel Wasielewski, seconded by Luis Franco. Motion passes.

5. 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:
There were some liability concerns and discussion. Considered a medium project depending on discussion. Difficult to estimate time for project. Miguel Wasielewski officially withdrew this request.

Action:
Withdrawn from consideration.

6. 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:
This is a medium project. ApplyTX team requested additional info from UTPB, waiting on response. Suggested talking with all users to determine institution terms. This request is specific to graduate majors, at application type level, current functionality to input standard deadline and can add three optional deadlines. Some use for early access, early decision. When grad major is selected, if multiple options are present, the application would self-select deadline.

Action:
Item tabled until additional information is provided from UTPB.

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

Discussion:

This is small project. Maximum length was not addressed in the proposal. Suggest extending to 80-100. Implications would be increasing the import for the new character length.

Action:

Move to extend the maximum length of major titles. Motion by Scott Bennett, seconded by Luis Franco. Motion passes.

8. 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:

   This is an extra-large project. Andres Arredondo recommended additional research be conducted to look at all terms for different campuses and review any implications. Adding additional terms will impact difference areas of the application. Administrative site would add configure work and migration. Need to understand purpose.

   Action:

   Item tabled, need more information. Andres Arredondo will communicate with Trinity Valley Community College to discuss this further.

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

   Discussion:

   This is extra small project. The current choices are male and female. Discussed making consistent for what is required for state and federal reporting. Committee discussed inclusive options. Recommend not requiring this until additional inclusive options can be added. Further conversation is needed.

   Action:

   Move to reject the request to require gender on the profile. Motion by David Barron; seconded Rebecca Lothringer. Motion passes.

10. 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:
    This is small project.

    Action:
    Move to approve change. Motion by Laura Isdell, seconded. Andy Benoit seconded. Motion passes.

11. Consideration for expanding address verification to additional address fields. Currently only permanent and physical addresses are passed through verification. (submitted by Texas A&M University and suggestion from the ApplyTexas technical team).

    Discussion:
    This is a large project. Would not have to roll this out on July 1, could do this in progression. Would need to hook into other software with other fields. Requires a lot of testing. Would include a marker that the address is not what they entered. Committee would prefer addresses to be valid, but tech team should prioritize with other workload. Should be considered maintenance.

    Action:
    Move to approve this change. Motion by Miguel Wasielewski., Luis Franco seconded. Motion passes.

12. 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:
    This may be a large project. The Residency Subcommittee has been established and will be able to determine effort for project once recommendations provided.

    Action:
    Residency Logic subcommittee established. This subcommittee will bring recommendations to committee for consideration.

13. Consideration for the discussion regarding continuing education and workforce development students
    "I would like to speak to someone about the ability to include continuing education and workforce development students in the Apply Texas application process. I feel if we did this, it would align and promote those not looking for a degree to continue their educational journey. Additionally, with upskilling, reskilling, and good jobs challenge, and pathways, FAFSA/TAFSA is often require for our students and would allow these students to be registered as ACC students. The onboarding and perceptions of the students is critical to the pathways mentoring and coaching. Again, I just have several questions that I am unable to get answers, so it is best to go to the source. Thank you."

    Discussion:
    This request needs additional information and would require a lot of research. Might be a good topic for ApplyTexas Summer meeting. Suggest tasking to the Strategic Planning Committee to review and research for long term planning. Some institutions are looking at developing this on their own.

    Action:
    The Strategic Planning Committee will explore this request.

14. Consideration for an additional Continuing Education application type
    "Has the Board discussed an implementation of a CE Apply Texas application that is shorter version than the existing one? Our CEWD division at ACC has requested to be able to use

the existing Apply Texas application for their students, but it's really not conducive for their needs."

Discussion:
This is an extra-large project. Same request as item 13.

Action:
The Strategic Planning Committee will explore this request.

15. Add a question regarding the Texas school district the applicant lives in, if applicable
While the Texas residency questions help determine In and Out of State residency for institutions, community colleges must also determine In and Out of District residency. Currently the only way to do this through the 2-year application is by adding a custom question. I'd like to request ApplyTexas include a question such as "Select the Texas Independent School District (ISD) you reside in" with the option to then select any ISD in the state through a searchable list or map selection option to help the end user easily find their ISD.

Discussion:
This is small project. Laura Isdell submitted request, will withdraw, and refer question for consideration for the Residency Logic Subcommittee. Suggest holding this request until after Residency Logic comes back with recommendations.

Action:
Item tabled. Will go to Residency Logic Subcommittee for discussion and re-review request.

ApplyTexas Roadmap

AWS Feature Parity

Applicant Suite
- Add institutional detail page – 3/1/2022

Administrative Suite
- Documentation – 2/1/2022
  - Functional changes for a given cycle, essay prompts, user guides, EDI and flat file specs
- Directly send a support request – 3/15/2022
- Managing institution-specific application settings – **2023-24 cycle**, 5/1/2022
  - Will include new self-management capabilities for migrating application settings and modifying transmission times
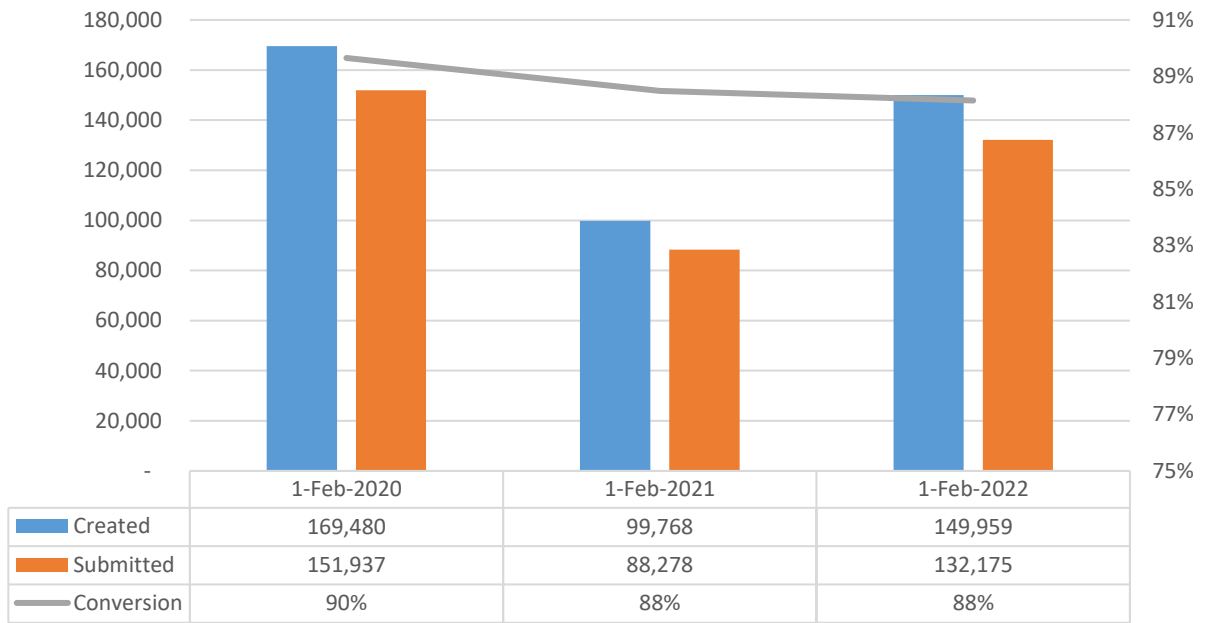
Transmission and QnE
- Improve manual transmission of applications – 3/1/2022

Counselor Suite
- Specific reports – 3/1/2022
  - High school counts, break down by classification, Counselor activity, etc.
- Documentation – 3/1/2022
  - Improve training instructions
- Add institutional detail page – 5/1/2022

Two-Year Institution Fall YoY Counts

	1-Feb-2020	1-Feb-2021	1-Feb-2022
Created	169,480	99,768	149,959
Submitted	151,937	88,278	132,175
Conversion	90%	88%	88%

Four-Year Institution Fall YoY Counts

	1-Feb-2020	1-Feb-2021	1-Feb-2022
Created	756,751	662,890	802,336
Submitted	525,931	469,158	524,102
Conversion	69%	71%	65%