

APPLY TEXAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT

COMMITTEE ABOLISHMENT DATE: 10/31/2025

Committee Purpose:

The purpose of the Apply Texas Advisory Committee (ATAC) is to discuss and vote on changes that may be needed to the applications for the upcoming application cycle. The committee also addresses additional initiatives to strengthen student participation and access into higher education.

The ATAC may tasks include:

- (1) technical and functional revisions to the common admission applications and the Apply Texas System;
- (2) development of training materials for the users of the various components of the Apply Texas System;
- (3) recommendations on admission policy; and
- (4) other activities necessary for the maintenance of the Apply Texas System.

Report Period:

September 2020 – August 2021

University Co-Chair:

Jamie Hansard, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Texas Tech University

Community, State, and Technical College Co-Chair:

Mordecai Brownlee, Vice President for Student Success, St. Phillip's College (term ended May 2021)

Committee Members:

List of 2020-2021 academic year Committee Members is attached.

Committee Meeting Dates:

October 19, 2020

February 10, 2021

May 12, 2021

Annual Costs Expended:

Committee costs for FY2021 were *estimated* at \$5,100 for the fiscal year. The estimate includes the following:

Travel and lodging: \$0

Staff time (3): \$5,100

Time Commitments:

Committee members spent approximately 5-7 days on committee work for the three meetings; staff members averaged approximately 10-12 days to prepare, attend, and develop minutes for each of the meetings.

Current Recommendations to the Board:

There are no recommendations at this time.

Summary of Tasks Completed:

Membership and Oversight

Jamie Hansard, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Texas Tech University was elected by the membership during the October 19, 2020, ATAC meeting, to serve as 4-year institution co-chair of the committee. Her term will end May 2022.

Training

The ATAC annually sponsors an ApplyTexas workshop in conjunction with the TACRAO SPEEDE Committee. The purpose of the workshop is to share information on upcoming changes to the application, legislative updates, and user training for the ApplyTexas Application. Admissions and technical staff from colleges and universities across the state attend the workshop. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this training was cancelled.

ApplyTX Application Preview

On July 1, 2021, the ApplyTX Application expected to launch on a brand-new platform, Amazon Web Services (AWS). On June 9, 2021, the ATAC and ApplyTX team hosted a virtual preview of the new ApplyTX application platform, 2021. The preview provided an overview and progress of the ApplyTexas Advisory Committee's strategic planning

and introduced the improvements and changes made to the application, Administrative Suite, and Counselor Suite. The event was recorded and shared with over 1,000 registrants for later viewing.

Updates

The following changes to the application and work of the ATAC Planning and Assessment Subcommittee have the broadest impact and perhaps best reflect the importance of the committee's work:

General Changes to the ApplyTexas application

- Databases moved to AWS cloud
- New application site
- Mobile-friendly site

Approved change requests

The ATAC reviewed change requests from participating institutions. The ATAC discussed recommendations, voted on, and submitted priorities to the Technical Team for implementation.

All the changes were made to improve the accuracy and flow of data from applicants to their desired institutions. These changes helped students avoid errors that may delay their admission.

- 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 was added (request by THECB).
- Expanded 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

ApplyTexas Strategic Planning and Assessment Subcommittee

In partnership with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the ATAC set a goal to strengthen and enhance the ApplyTexas application. The ApplyTexas Strategic Planning and Assessment Subcommittee devised a survey to gather feedback from various user groups to inform technological, structural, and operational modifications to the ApplyTexas application to assist this effort. A random sample of recent applicants and their parents/guardians, along with Texas high school counselors and college and university representatives, were invited to offer feedback about the application and comparative systems, such as the Coalition and Common Applications. In March 2021, the Planning and Assessment Committee established a report of the findings.

Overall, student and parent/guardian responses closely aligned with one another across the board. Key takeaways show:

- The vast majority (75% or more) were neutral about the application's overall difficulty or believed the application was easy to complete.
- Roughly 3/4 rated the time it takes to complete the application as "just right".
- Students and parents/guardians (along with high school counselors) more frequently reported 1-3 hours as the completion time for the average student.
- The top three most challenging sections to complete were (in order) the long essay, resume activities, and institution-specific questions.

Of highest importance, recommendations for enhanced ApplyTexas features included:

1. Auto-save feature
2. Easier to understand
3. More web accessible for students with disabilities

Those with the highest "not at all important" rating include: (*denotes top three for students, parents/guardians, and college/university representatives only.)

1. Available in multiple languages
2. Accessible via a smartphone app*
3. Mobile-friendly for smartphone browsers*

The move to the new platform is expected to address these and other recommendations provided from other external analysis. The ATAC will continue to review and prioritize recommendations for implementation for future application cycles. The final ApplyTexas Strategic Planning and Assessment Survey report is attached.

Meeting notes for the 2020-2021 academic year are attached.

Attachments:

- Attachment A: 2020-2021 ATAC Member List
- Attachment B: October 19, 2020 Meeting Notes
- Attachment C: February 10, 2021 Meeting Notes
- Attachment D: May 12, 2021 Meeting Notes
- Attachment E: ApplyTexas Strategic Planning and Assessment Survey Report

Apply Texas Advisory Committee (ATAC) September 2020-May 2021

ATAC Members	
Mordecai Brownlee, Co-Chair Vice President for Student Success St. Philip's College mbrownlee3@alamo.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2021	Jamie Hansard, Co-Chair Vice President for Enrollment Management Texas Tech University jamie.hansard@ttu.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022
Paula Arredondo Executive Registrar Texas State Technical College mparredondo@tstc.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2021	Scott Bennett Executive Director of Enrollment Services/Registrar Lee College sbennett@lee.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022
Shontell Blake Associate Dean, Enrollment Services/Registrar Dallas College – Cedar Valley sblake@dcccd.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022	Kevin Davis Associate Director of Admissions Stephen F. Austin State University daviskl2@sfasu.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2021
Hanna Deland Associate Director of Admissions Operations Lamar University heland@lamar.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022	Todd Fields Dean of Admissions/District Registrar Collin College tfields@collin.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022
Luis Franco Director, Undergraduate Admissions & Recruitment University of North Texas at Dallas Luis.Franco@untDallas.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022	Leah Hickman Associate Director of Admissions Midwestern State University leah.hickman@msutexas.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2021
Laura Isdell Executive Director, Admissions & Prospective Students Lone Star College laura.isdell@lonestar.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022	Billy Lagal Director of Admissions and Recruitment University of Houston – Victoria lagalb@uhv.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022
Rebecca Lothringer Associate Vice President for Enrollment The University of Texas at Arlington rebecca.lothringer@uta.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022	Dara Newton Associate Vice President for Strategic Enrollment The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley dara.newton@utrgv.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2021

Indra Pelaez Associate Vice Chancellor, Enrollment Management Houston Community College indra.pelaez@hccs.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2021	Angie Taylor Director of Admissions Sam Houston State University ataylor@shsu.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2021
Julia Vickery Vice President of Student Services Midland College jvickery@midland.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022	Michelle Walker Director of Admissions Operations Texas A&M University mbwalker@tamu.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022
Miguel Wasielewski Executive Director of Admissions The University of Texas at Austin miguelw@austin.utexas.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2021	Tristan Pepper (<i>Student Representative</i>) The University of Texas at San Antonio tristan.pepper@utsa.edu Term Ends: May 31, 2022
<i>ApplyTexas Technical Team – The University of Texas at Austin</i>	
Graham Chapman Executive Director, Academic Information Systems gchapman@austin.utexas.edu	Rebecca Kindschi Senior Software Developer/Analyst rkindsch@austin.utexas.edu
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<i>THECB Staff – Division for College Readiness and Success (CRS)</i>	
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