

## ***Tech Team Update 2/2/22***

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### ***Current cycle updates and proposals (David Muck):***

- For the completed 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 25% in total applications and an increase of 18% in submitted applications compared to the same time last year. Comparing the same time period to the Fall 2020 semester we are up 3% in total applications and we are down 3% 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.
- We estimate there will be a significant reduction in infrastructure costs with the move to AWS based on what we are seeing so far. The team continues to make efforts to further reduce costs moving forward. Once we have a full application cycle completed, we should be able to take several measures to reduce cost based on the current requirements of the system.

## *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:**

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

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:** None

**Action:**

yes for consideration

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:**

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

**Action:**

yes for consideration, additional information needed

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:**

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.

7. 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

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:**

None

**Action:**

yes for consideration. Combine with request from UT Permian Basin.

9. 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.

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:** None

**Action:**

yes for consideration

11. 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.

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:**

None

**Action:**

yes for consideration, will be reviewed by Residency Logic subcommittee

***Future cycle proposals and updates received since October 26 meeting(David Muck):***

1. Consideration for the discussion regarding continuing education and workforce development students (proposal by Christopher Roche from Alvin Community College).

From the request:

"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."

2. Consideration for an additional Continuing Education application type (proposal by Christopher Roche from Alvin Community College).

From the request:

“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.”

3. Request to add a question regarding the Texas school district the applicant lives in, if applicable (proposal by Laura Isdell at Lone Star College).

From the request:

“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.”