

## **ApplyTexas Advisory Committee**

### **Board Report**

**Fall 2015**

#### Meetings

This report covers the period from September 2014 through August 2015. During this time period the ApplyTexas Advisory Committee (ATAC) met four times on the following dates for the following purposes:

- September 18, 2014  
The general purpose of this meeting was to reorganize the committee by electing chairs and selecting membership for the sub-committees.
- November 10, 2014  
During this meeting, the subcommittees met to begin discussing requests for improvement and concerns from the field related to the ApplyTexas application.
- January 26 – 27, 2015  
ATAC had a two-day meeting to allow committee members to have an opportunity to attend each of the subcommittees of which they were members and to begin making recommendations on proposed changes to the ApplyTexas application. Additionally, THECB staff made a presentation to the ATAC on Negotiated Rulemaking and how it impacted the committee.
- April 28, 2015  
During the final meeting of the year, the ApplyTexas Technical Team led a discussion on the progress of the changes requested to the application. Additionally, there was a discussion on the revised role of the ApplyTexas Advisory Committee.

The minutes are on file for each of these meetings and can be accessed for specific details of each meeting.

#### Membership and Oversight

Twelve new members were appointed to fill the vacancies of members whose term had expired. These new members were appointed for three-year terms in

accordance with new guidelines for membership. Prior to this year, members were appointed for two-year terms. Members represent two-year, four-year, and private institutions of higher education in Texas. Margaret Dechant, Texas A&M Corpus Christi and Elizabeth Garza, Alamo Colleges were elected by the membership during the September ATAC meeting to serve as co-chairs of the committee.

Until this year oversight for the ATAC had been assigned to the Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research Division of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). After the first meeting, oversight of the ATAC was transferred to the Division of College Readiness and Success.

#### Recommendations for Changes to the ApplyTexas Application

The purpose of the ATAC is to discuss and vote on changes that may be needed to the application for the upcoming academic year. Additionally, the committee also addresses additional initiatives to strengthen student participation and access into higher education. This year, the following recommendations were discussed, voted on, and submitted to the Technical Team for implementation.

**Table. Recommendations for ApplyTexas Application for 2016-2017 Cycle**

<b>Type of Change</b>	<b>Section/Page</b>	<b>Change</b>
Application	Profile	Field lengths for names expanded
	Institution/Application Type page	Dual Credit wording improved
	Semester Selection page	Optional deadlines added
	Educational Background	Country drop-down menu added
	Educational Information page	“Pharmacy” added to pre-professional question
	Employment and Honors page	“Organization” field added to reference section

Administrative	Executive Menu	Option for custom deadline names and dates
	EDI	EDI changes reference moved to separate document
	Site	Admissions Application Counts improved
Counselor Suite	Addition	Test version for public view added

### Other Initiatives

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. In the past, the workshop has been held over two days – one day for SPEEDE and one day for ApplyTexas. This year in an attempt to reduce travel costs and avoid duplication of information the workshop was condensed to one day.

The one-day SPEEDE/ApplyTexas workshop co-sponsored by TACRAO was held on June 12, 2015 at the University of Texas at Austin J. J. Pickle Research Campus. Approximately 175 participants attended the conference. During the wrap-up session, the attendees agreed to the one-day format for next year.

### Benefits of the Committee's Work

All of the above 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. The following three changes have the broadest impact and perhaps best reflect the importance of the committee's work:

- Improve the wording in the freshman application for identifying dual credit students (as opposed to entering freshmen). One million freshman applications were processed in FY2015.
- The addition of optional deadlines per term will enable students to more specifically indicate their date of entry each term, helping institutions anticipate enrollments for the various flex-entry dates.
- Almost 1,300 high school counselors used the Counselor Suite during FY2015 to assess their students' status. The creation of a test module will enable more counselors to learn to use the Suite to more efficiently target their efforts on student who need help the most.

### Estimated Costs

Committee costs for FY2015 were estimated at \$21,000 for the fiscal year. The estimate includes the following:

- Committee member travel costs for four meetings
- Various THECB staff time
- THECB broadcasting costs