



<http://ntrp16.org/>

North Texas Regional P-16 Council
Meeting Minutes
April 25, 2023
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Meeting via Zoom

A. Welcome and Introductions (9:00– 9:05)

Jean Keller

B. Approval of February 14, 2023, Council Meeting Minutes (9:05-9:10)

The February 14, 2023, minutes were reviewed. Bobby Morris made a motion to approve, and Rosalyn Walker seconded the motion. The February 14, 2023, minutes will be posted to the NTRP-16 Council website.

C. Transition to Higher Education and Success (9:15-10:00)

As Texas' definitive resource for college and career planning, Texas OnCourse connects high school and college level advisors and educators with free tools and resources to ensure their students succeed.

Javier Garza,
Tiffany Gilmore,
and Tiffany Kirksey

Panelists:

- Farcett Patrick, Manager of My Texas Future, Texas OnCourse, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Andrea Panter, Senior Network Coordinator, Texas OnCourse, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Lauren Discher, Professional Learning Coordinator, Texas OnCourse, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Texas OnCourse is part of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The users of Texas OnCourse's tools range from middle and high school counselors, teachers, administrators, and community-based organizations that focus on post-secondary success. OnCourse also provides resources to students and their families.

Academy Overview

What We Do: Texas OnCourse simplifies the college and career planning process with:

- Free digital tools
- Easy-to-digest information
- Educator training (in-person and virtual professional development); and
- Access to extensive resources

Mission: With Texas OnCourse, all Texas students, no matter where they come from or where they're headed, have a plan for success after high school.

Texas OnCourse Academy is one of the main resources for educators. Using this resource, you can really become the go-to source for college and career planning at your school district. It is a one-stop shop providing the most relevant and up to date information. The Academy is created by educators for educators and is a great online tool for any educator who supports students in their plans after high school. It has over 25 learning modules that can be completed in one's own time. These cover career pathways, postsecondary pathways, financial aid, and transition planning. Each module can take between 45 and 60 minutes to complete. You are able to earn CPE credits from TEA for earning badges.

Academy Pathways –

1. Career Pathways
 - a. Career exploration
 - b. Academic Planning
 - c. Career Planning
 - d. Career Learning Experience
2. Admission and Application Process
 - a. Postsecondary Pathways
 - b. Entrance and Placement Exams
 - c. Postsecondary Research
3. Financial Aid
 - a. Scholarship Application Process
 - b. College Cost
 - c. Financial Aid
4. Success in Higher Education
 - a. College Finances and Beyond
 - b. Holistic College Ready Advising
5. Transition Advising
 - a. Advising Highly Mobile Populations
 - b. Middle School College and Career

Each unit within the Academy contains supplemental resources such as handouts, posters, power points, and videos that can be used as resources for staff, students, and parents. These are being continuously updated.

Another resource that is available is the Academy Calendars. Because there is so much information on the website, this is a great resource to help navigate through the academy and determine with modules are most relevant throughout the school year.

Digital Learning *Works*: For counselors, completing all Texas OnCourse modules is associated with the same growth in knowledge as 11-30 years of experience. When educators use Texas OnCourse, they report that their confidence in their knowledge doubles.

How can we use the Academy? Below are some ideas for implementation:

- Use the calendar to determine Academy learning
- Encourage teachers to complete modules
- Provide resources to staff, post in halls/offices
- Send short, regular e-mails to staff with updated information
- Have handouts at student/parent events

Data Drive

- Data Drive is a list of educational statistics including information on STARR/TSI and scores
- With Texas OnCourse's Data Drive, you can compare academic statistics and plan for areas of key growth
- View Texas education data allows you to communicate more clearly to colleagues, students, and your community

Meet ADVi – Texas' Virtual Advisor

What is ADVi?

- ADVi is an AI-powered chatbox developed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in partnership with Mainstay, to reach Texas students with critical college access information via text message
- ADVi pairs artificial intelligence with human support. A team of virtual advisors at the Coordinating Board support the chatbox and provide extra support for students who need it.

ADVi is not a replacement for in-person advising. Virtual advising is a triage tool and an opportunity to catch students at key milestones and connect them with resources and the next level of support.

Benefits of chatbots:

- Meets students where they are
- Works with hard-to-reach populations
- Frees up advisors and counselors by answering common questions
- Provides regular support and bite-sized action steps
- Informs and makes us better advocates.

Three Key Components:

- Weekly proactive campaigns for key reminders and just-in-time information
- A robust AI-fueled knowledge base that can answer common questions 24/7
- A team of trained advisors for personalized support

Monthly Themes for 2022-2023

- Sep: Intro to ADVi
- Oct: Understanding how to submit the FASFA/TASFA and college applications
- Nov: Compiling application materials (e.g., letters of recommendation, resumes, transcripts)
- Dec: Submitting applications
- Jan: Submitting FAFSA or TASFA (emphasizing priority deadlines)
- Feb: Understanding your priorities; How to pick a college
- Mar: Applying for scholarships
- Apr: Making decisions (e.g., understanding aid notification and decision letters)
- May: Enrollment tasks (e.g., Decision Day, orientation, financial aid next steps, housing)
- Jun/Jul/Aug: Final tasks and transition steps (e.g., vaccinations, packing lists, campus services)

Other types of messages:

- Tips and tricks for navigating critical challenges (e.g., FAFSA verification)
- “Ask an advisor” campaigns and pulse surveys

Help from AI and Advisors:

- Students can text ADVi anytime to answers to common advising questions
- A robust knowledge base and advanced algorithm helps ensure students get the right information
- Students can easily connect with an advisor when extra support is needed:
 - Tough advising scenarios
 - Institution-specific responses
 - Clarification and additional resources

ADVi by the Numbers (High school seniors reached from October 2021 to August 2022)

- 237,000+ high school students served
- 27+ million total outgoing messages from the bot
- 728,000+ total incoming messages from students
- 64% active engagement
- 23,000+ escalated to THECB virtual advisors

Counselor Toolkit – Ready to share ADVi with your students? This tool kit will give you what you need to get started. www.askADVi.org/counselors

My TX Future – mytexasfuture.org

All the information provided is from the Tri-Agency Partners, so there is information from the TEA, there is K-12 data, along with information from the Texas Workforce Commission. It is an institutional advising network. It is in the works of creating full training offerings to educators and advisors.

Current Timeline:

- Spring 2023: Propel working-age Texans to connect directly with institutions and (re)enroll
- Summer 2023: Streamline the planning and application process for secondary students
- Fall 2023: Promote efficient planning and credit application for transfer students

In Person or Online Training

- Get Your Students OnCourse to a Brighter Future: An Overview of Texas OnCourse
- Improve College and Career Knowledge Using the Texas OnCourse Academy
- Build a Culture of College and Career Readiness
- Make an Impact Using the Apply Texas Counselor Suite
- Meet ADVi: Texas' Virtual Advisor
- Financial Aid: Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) Updates

D. Questions, Reflections, and Actions (10:00-10:15)

Christine Hubbard

Christine Hubbard: I know this doesn't roll out until fall, but can you give us a bit of information on what the Map My Path feature will look like in the fall?

Farcett Patrick: What we're hoping for with this upcoming feature is the opportunity for students to map their path. We are working with institutions that have already partnered with us to get their RCS data on all of their course selections. We are wanting students with some or no college credit to be able to use this feature to map their path to degree attainment or credential attainment in any public state institution.

Ray de los Santos: If we have a scholarship program that students can apply for, who would we send info on that to possibly get that opportunity made available to any prospective students?

Farcett Patrick: It will be the point of contact at that institution for My Texas Future. When we do the Map my Path and the Applied Texas Work that's coming up in the fall, we will have a list of institutions that we've already partnered with and have a point of contact. We wouldn't handle it on our end as far as scholarship opportunities. We do have a tool to refer to on the My Texas Future website that talks about paying for school, so we will give generalized information, but if it is institution specific, we would like the student to reach out to the point of contact at the specific institution.

Javier Garza: I know a lot of this is just being rolled out and is under development, but do you see these as being ready to serve as resources for the delayed rollout of the simplified FAFSA?

Farcett Patrick: Yes.

Bobby Morris: It looks like the data on the Data Dive site is pretty old. College Readiness is 18-19. How often will that data be updated?

Lauren Discher: I'm not quite sure; we will have to follow up with that.

Jean Keller: I had a question about the data and dashboard. Can you tell us how institutions, especially partnering institutions might be able to use that data?

Farcett Patrick: We are imagining that the dashboard will look different for each of the targeted audiences of My Texas Future. Right now, it is live for our adult learners, for our military and veteran students and families, but when we bring in our K-12, when we bring in our transfer students, their plan for postsecondary success may look different. We are looking at how we want to build that out. Will there be a question to identify where they are in their post-secondary planning or career journey so that way they can get a very personalized dashboard.

E. Break (10:15-10:25)

F. Committee Work and Reporting to Council (10:25-11:15)

1. Communications, Networking & Social Media – Rosalyn Walker & Renee Parker

LinkedIn Link for NTRP-16 Council Page: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9310324/>

Please join to build our numbers and increased our communication. Rosalyn Walker will post the Texas OnCourse presentation to the appropriate social media sites.

2. Leadership & Sustainability – Ray de los Santos & Jorge Figueroa

This committee met and discussed the sustainability aspect of their charge along with a bit of the leadership aspect. It was discussed that there is form different leadership structure that may need to be implemented moving into the future. It was discussed how other institutions have the elected offices of a president-elect, a president who was the prior year's president-elect, and then the previous year's president. This would put three people in the position of leadership for the organization to ensure the sustainability of the group. If we ever decided to have an actual 510c3 structure, elected officers would be a requirement.

To celebrate the roughly 25 years that the council has been around, it was suggested to host a workshop in person that can generate resources and sponsorship.

3. Professional Development – Lisa Harrison & Christine Hubbard

It was suggested that the Council host a mixer as a networking opportunity to have among members, set up like speed dating.

The committee was also interested in creating a survey that gets a sense of the Council's needs and what they would like to focus on for future endeavors.

4. Research, Assessment & Accountability – Bobby Morris & Melissa DeSimone

The committee talked about knowing which students are "home grown" Texas student and which ones have moved in? It was suggested that as a council, we need to define with "home grown" means. Does that mean K-12 in Texas schools or just 9-12? Wanting to piggyback off the survey proposed by Dr. Hubbard with the Professional Development committee, it was suggested that there are some data questions added to see what kind of information people from the council wanted to hear from the committee. It was requested that the meeting dates for next year be established before members' calendars fill.

G. Updates and Information Sharing (11:15-11:30)

All Council Members

Dr. Abigail Hobart: For K-12, in Region 10, there are over 20 LEAs that are transferring to the four day week.

H. Adjourn

Dr. Keller adjourned the meeting at 11:33 and thanked the Counsel for its hard work.

