

**Academic Affairs Council Meeting
December 12, 2023
Summary and Action Items**

1. Faculty Startup Funding – Dr. Shreek Mandayam provided the Council with a reminder that the management of faculty startup funding now resides in the Division of Research but noted that nothing with the process has substantially changed. The process is managed by Dr. Mike Blanda and Nick Schellman.

2. Undergraduate Admissions Report – Mr. Gary Ray presented the undergraduate admissions report, including data from the [National Student Clearinghouse Research Center](#) that indicates college enrollment surged by 2.1% in fall 2023 compared to last year’s decrease of 0.9%. Freshmen enrollment for fall 2023 declined by 3.6% particularly among 18- to 20-year-olds at four-year institutions. Instead, community colleges led enrollment gains, particularly among freshmen over 21.

The ‘Fourth Wave’ of International Student Mobility

COVID-19 effects, shifts from China to India, protectionist policies, and growing attention to employability and retention are all factors that will likely impact international student recruitment over the next decade. For many international students, educational mobility is not merely about getting a degree but also the opportunity to migrate. Hence, higher education institutions that emphasize pathways to employability and foster connections with industry will likely become more attractive.

Freshman applications are at a record pace for fall 2024. TXST has received 31,000 (30,986) applications; this benchmark was not met until January 9 last year.

Spring Registration Count – 51 days until Spring Census Day

	Spring 2023	Spring 2024	Difference	Final Spring 2023
Undergraduate	28,901	29,517	616 or 2.1%	30,713
Graduate	3,605	3,544	(-61) or (-1.7%)	3,735
Total enrollment	32,506	33,070	564 or 1.7%	34,448
Total credit hours	384,974	406,062	21,088 or 5.5%	412,512

Spring Registration Count – After the same 38 days of registration

	Spring 2023	Spring 2024	Difference
Undergraduate	27,176	29,517	2,341 or 8.6%
Graduate	3,247	3,544	297 or 9.1%
Total enrollment	30,423	33,070	2,647 or 8.7%
Total credit hours	361,029	406,062	45,033 or 12.5%

Freshman class persistence tracking for Spring 2024 (as of 12/11/2023)

Cohort	Registered	Percentage	Not registered	Percentage	Canceled Reg
2023	7,164	92.5%	513	7%	70

Fall 2024 merit awards to date: students have until May 1, 2024 to accept the offer. Our first comparison chart for awarding in fall 2023 was developed on 1/2/2023.

FTIC	Fall 2023 (1/2/2023)	Fall 2024 (12/11/2023)	Difference
Awarded	5,452	7,151 of 16,567 admits	+1,699 or 31%
Accepted	1,030	1,387 of 7,151	+357 or 34%

TXST now has the second highest first-year applications (16,283) submitted to Apply Texas for fall 2024. TXST recently passed UT Rio Grande Valley (16,171), and only Texas A&M University (21,015) has received more applications than TXST. With the Common apps, TXST surpassed 30,000 first-year applications; we did not meet this benchmark until January last year.

Dr. Cynthia Hernandez announced that we are up in housing applications by 94, which is an 8% increase. TXST has approximately 1,300 housing applications.

Dr. Hernandez also announced that our FTIC persistence rate is 92.5%; this is higher than TXST has been in the past, which represents the retention of an additional 400 students over last year. She also discussed recent staff hires to bolster TXST’s academic recovery services.

3. Graduate Admissions Report – Dr. Andrea Golato provided the Council with a graduate admissions report. While the number of continuing graduate students is down for spring 2024, graduate SCH is up by 1.6%. For the fall 2024 semester, there are 224 more doctoral and master’s applications than last year. Dr. Golato also noted that ongoing meetings are occurring with the scholarship optimization consulting firm.

OFF AGENDA

Dr. Hernandez introduced Dr. Michael Preston as a new AVP for Student Success.

Dr. Hernandez announced that TXST welcomed the final fraternity organization of the National Pan-Hellenic Council and we are now the only non-HBCU in Texas to have all nine NPHC organizations (referred to as Divine Nine).

Dr. Mary Brennan provided a brief update from the planning committee for the Presidential Debate at TXST in September 2024, including ideas for generating enthusiasm and involvement across campus.