



2021 Student Send-Off Guide



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Note from the Texas Exes Chapters Team

A big Texas-sized thank you to you and your chapter for hosting a Student Send-Off! These events are a great opportunity for incoming Longhorns and their families to see that there is a local, Longhorn alumni group supporting them. Texas Exes and UT's Office of Admissions truly appreciates your continued effort to engage alumni and students!

Hook 'Em!

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Purpose

- Give local alumni a chance to introduce incoming students to the UT family
- Help send a message that “while UT is large, we care about your sons and daughters and we want parents to feel comfortable sending them to Austin”
- Show support from the local community for all students who have been admitted to UT
- Provide a space for students to meet other students from their hometown who will also be on campus
- Encourage student development to create lifelong giving Longhorns

Each participant should be able to describe the event, after it is over, as warm, friendly, fun, relevant, and informative without being overwhelming.

***Please note:** Since 2018, Texas Exes Chapters Team is working with UT’s Office of Admissions to market your chapter’s event to students. Admissions requires that these events be free to students and their guest(s). Please remember to factor this in when planning your chapter’s event. Thank you!*



Promotion

Get the Word Out

- Make it a group effort to ensure that your Send Off is a success.
 - Give several volunteers the responsibility of calling up a few admitted students from your area to personally invite them and their parents. A call from a chapter representative may be the needed push to inspire a student and his/her family to attend, and to feel warmly welcomed to the Longhorn family.
- Put a press release in the local media, get on community calendars (print and online)
- Ask schools to publicize the date before classes end
- Chapter emails to all alumni (and current students based on chapter's decision).

For help promoting your Chapter's Send Off please contact Chapters and Networks Coordinator Catherine Flores at catherine.flores@texasexes.org

Marketing Event to Students and Alumni

- Chapters **must** submit event information at least **4 weeks** before the event for Texas Exes to send out emails in a timely manner and ensure the event is marketed well. The chapter may choose to include a chapter email (CHAPTERNAME@texasexes.org) or utilize your premium [Eventbrite account](#) (username is chaptername@texasexes.org – contact us for the PW) to receive RSVPs.
 - Fill out the Student Send-Off Email Marketing Request Form: [SSO Email Request Form](#)
 - *Want to keep in touch with students from your Chapter area after the Send Off?* Include a sign-in sheet at the event for parents and students to get information about future Chapter events.
- The Chapters Department will create a Chapter e-mail to be sent out to students and alumni in advance after you make your request through the above form. The Chapters Department will send an email to all alumni, members, and friends of The University who receive the chapter's regular weekly emails.
 - Please contact **Catherine Flores** at Catherine.flores@texasexes.org with any questions.



COVID-19 Safety and Precautions

Texas Exes Chapters and Networks will continue to follow the guidance of CDC safety recommendations and UT's plans for COVID-19 safety when planning in-person events. [UT plans for a near normal start](#) in Fall with planning updates expected. We expect more changes from UT in the coming weeks. Students have been asked to have a 2-week quarantine before coming to the Forty Acres, so please be mindful of the first class date (August 25) and when your chapter is hosting an in-person event. Lastly, we encourage all to get vaccinated—[doing so](#) doesn't only protect you from COVID-19, it is an act that protects others.

Program

Keep the program brief- give the students plenty of time to get to know each other and the alumni there, as well as to ask any questions they might have. We recommend choosing a Chapter leader most comfortable with public speaking.

Suggested Speakers:

- Chapter Leaders
- University Representatives
- Texas Exes staff
- Current Student (past scholarship recipients)
- Current Parent
- Student Leaders
- Local Elected Officials



Sample Event Timeline

Start late enough that parents can get there after work, but not too late. 6-6:30 pm is good start time and weeknights work best from feedback on past Send-Offs.

Introductions

- **Chapter leader- 2-3 minutes**
 - Introduces him/herself and welcomes everyone- *See Sample Chapter Leader Script on p. 11*
 - Opportunity for freshmen and parents to ask questions
 - Opportunity for local Texas Exes to wish these students well as they get ready to head to Austin and to remind them that the Texas Exes chapter is also a resource at home
 - Points out key local chapter leaders; recognizes their efforts in making the event possible
 - Recognizes special guests, including local educators or elected officials and scholarship recipients
 - Introduces first speaker
- **Guest speaker- 5-10 minutes**
 - Depending on their role, they should welcome the students and their families, and encourage the students to make the most of their time on campus.
- **Current Student- 5 minutes**
 - Speak about experiences on campus
 - Reinforce recommendation for students to get involved
 - Tell of Camp Texas or Student Member experience, or scholarship recipient experience, if applicable
 - Give brief advice for success in class work while at UT (What did they learn as a freshman that has continued to help them succeed as a student)
 - Invites student guests to talk further with any current students present
- **Chapter Leader- 3 minutes**
 - Thanks student speaker
 - Gives best wishes to students, tell them Texas Exes will be ready to welcome them as life members when they graduate
 - Invite students to attend chapter events when they are home for breaks
 - Encourage parents to join Texas Exes to stay informed about what is going on locally and on campus; Encourage students to join as a Student Member
 - Encourage students to attend Orange and White Welcome as well as Camp Texas (<https://www.texasexes.org/get-involved/camp-texas>)



Sing Eyes of Texas – with words on display or in handouts. (Parents and students may not have it memorized yet.) Or play a recording of the Eyes of Texas to sing along to.

Prior to your event, we encourage leaders to read, watch, and listen to learn more about the history of The Eyes of Texas at eyesoftexas.utexas.edu (full report - <https://eyesoftexas.utexas.edu/full-report/>)

Best Practices

- Ask current students to attend, so that they can share experiences with the entering freshmen.
- Door prizes always go over well. You can give away things like a pre-paid Student Membership and/or Parent Membership to the Texas Exes, Longhorn gear donated by local retailers, or things they'll need in college, like food gift cards.
- Generate buzz by creating Facebook group or event and encourage people to join it when communicating with them
- Give students something to leave with- include information on Texas Exes and any other information you can gather for them about UT- Camp Texas, housing, student discounts in the city, calendar of events, what to pack for the dorms, etc.
- Use a venue that will be warm and inviting for all guests, not intimidating
- Create a comfortable environment by encouraging everyone to wear game day attire
- Include a sign-in sheet for students and parents so you can invite them to future Chapter events
- Keep the program brief
- Choose a Chapter leader or volunteer that is comfortable with public speaking to give the remarks about the Chapter and Texas Exes (*see Sample Script on p.11*)
- End with the "Eyes of Texas" and have the words either on a handout or on the screen. Remember, parents and students may not have it memorized yet.
- Remember that this event is for **all students**, so don't put too much focus on the scholarship recipients- there are other opportunities for that.
- Be cautious if offering alcohol for purchase- while it may be appropriate for adults, make sure that it's not a focal point of the evening



Templates

Student Send-Off Event Planning Timeline

3 Months in Advance | Date _____

- Potential date for sendoff identified and confirmed with board
- Assign chapter member or board member as sendoff chair/liaison
- Reserve venue for event (consider a contingency venue)
- Set the budget
- Begin looking for potential sponsors
- Contact speakers for the program
- Send logistical information to the Texas Exes for the invitation
- Assign specific jobs to committee members/board
- Decide on caterer and menu for the event
- Rent any equipment needed

7 Weeks in Advance | Date _____

- Submit Admit List Request Form (to request student attendee invitations)

5 Weeks in Advance | Date _____

- Confirm with any sponsors
- Send sponsor names to Texas Exes to include on email promotions

1 Month in Advance | Date _____

- Confirm order and set up time with caterer
- Confirm set up needs with venue
- Invitations sent out
- Invite any special guests (examples: local media, local elected officials, high school college counselors)
- Arrange with Chapters Team how frequently registration is pulled

2 weeks in advance | Date _____

- Call reminders to incoming freshmen in the area to invite them to the event

Week of Event | Date _____

- Final headcount to caterer
- Prepare nametags for attendees
- Put together any materials or decorations needed at event



Send Off Event Planning Checklist

Venue

- Parking is available and convenient
- Location is central
- Venue is suitable for event

Facilities

- Name and contact information of representative responsible for your event
- Know location of lighting, heating/air conditioning, music controls
- Size of room is adequate
- Registration/Welcome tables
- Room setup time—how early will you have access to the room vs anticipated set up time
- A/V equipment, if needed, is available

Materials

- Sign in sheet
- Nametags and pens
- Any chapter handouts

Food and Drink Arrangements

- Determine menu and food set up
- Confirm deadline for submitting guarantee
- Confirm billing arrangements
- Plan for gratuities
- Location in room of food and drinks

Program

- Speakers/special guests confirmed week of
- Parking arranged for special guests
- Extra copies of program/script for speakers

Hospitality

- Assign someone to work the nametag table as a greeter
- Have committee members work the room as greeters



Budget

Total Budget:

Expected Attendance:

Projected Expenses:

Facilities/Room rental charges \$_____

Set up charges/fees \$_____

Rental equipment (a/v, tents, tables, etc.) \$_____

Food \$_____

Beverages \$_____

Bartender and serve fees/guarantees \$_____

Decorations \$_____

Entertainment \$_____

Miscellaneous (photos, supplies, prizes) \$_____



Sample Chapter Leader Script

Welcome everyone, I'm X. Thank you for joining us for this exciting celebration! As alumni of the University of Texas at Austin, we love sending the next generation of Longhorns off to the Forty Acres. It's a chance for us to wish you well and an opportunity for freshmen and their parents to ask questions of all of us who have done this before.

There are more than 106,000 Texas Exes members who work to keep alumni connected to the place that changed their lives forever. We work to promote and protect the university by communicating its value, enhancing the student experience, and advocating on its behalf.

Chapters play a vital role at the Texas Exes—we are the Longhorn connection at the local level. We host game-watching parties, speaking engagements, networking events, scholarship fundraisers, and community service volunteer events.

Volunteer-run Chapters like this one help the Texas Exes reach alumni and friends outside Austin by connecting more than 500,000 alumni across the globe to the Forty Acres. We have 115 active geographically based domestic chapters and 20 international chapters as well as 15 Affinity Networks. Longhorns are everywhere! Texas Exes are here in your chapter X, San Francisco, New York, London, and all the way to New Zealand!

To our soon-to-be freshmen, we can't wait for you all to experience UT-Austin for yourselves. As you get ready to head to Austin, know that this chapter will always be a resource and support system for you at home. When you do come back here during your school breaks or upon graduation, we hope you'll join us at Chapter events. Make sure to keep up with what's happening on campus! While you're there, you can get a jumpstart at the Alumni Center and join the Texas Exes as a Student Member. They have a great events and programming events as well as unique and spirited student member only merchandise that will make you to feel at home.

And after graduation, we hope you'll help us promote and protect your alma mater by joining as a Life Member.

Parents, we encourage you to join as well and get involved as much as you can. Even if you didn't graduate from UT, you sure are a Longhorn now.

Best wishes to you all—we couldn't be more proud of our hometown Longhorns!

Hook 'em!



Eyes of Texas

It is traditional to end all "Longhorn family" gatherings by "raising your horns" and singing this song.

The Eyes of Texas are upon you,

All the live long day

The Eyes of Texas are upon you,

You cannot get away

Do not think you can escape them,

At night or early in the morn

The Eyes of Texas are upon you,

Until Gabriel blows his horn!

Texas Fight

It is traditional to sing this song to urge on Longhorns athletic teams.

Singing: Texas fight, Texas fight and it's goodbye to A&M

Texas fight, Texas and we'll put over one more win

Texas fight, Texas fight for it's Texas we love the best

Hail! Hail! The gang's all here

And it's goodbye to all the rest.

Spoken: Yeah orange, yeah white, yeah Longhorns—Fight! Fight! Fight!

Texas fight, Texas fight, yeah Texas fight!

Texas fight, Texas fight, yeah Texas fight!

Repeat first refrain, singing



Student Send-Off FAQs

- **How do I invite students attending UT in the Fall from our Chapter area?**
To invite students, fill out the Student Marketing Request form ([SSO Email Request Form](#)) You can also connect with nearby high schools to send flyers or information to college counselors to invite students and their families to attend.
- **What types of locations work well for Student Send-Offs?**
Chapters host Student Send-Offs in a variety of locations such as: an alumnus' home or backyard, public park, country club, community spaces, conference room at a hotel, restaurant, etc. Think about an inviting place that will have enough space for your expected number of attendees.
- **What kinds of activities should take place at the event?**
Think about your venue to determine what kinds of activities will flow best in the space. If at an alumnus' home or backyard, yard games could make for a fun and family friendly activity. Some chapters have a more formal Send-Off and have a guest speaker speak to their time at UT. Other ideas include: Texas Trivia, door prizes or raffle, photo booth, time for students to mingle with one another, etc.
- **Should we serve food at our Send Off?**
The venue and environment of the Send Off will help determine if offering food is appropriate. For a more formal program, some options include a buffet meal or sit down meal. Most Send Offs go the buffet route with either Mexican food or BBQ served to highlight Texas! For a more causal Send Off either light appetizers or heavy hors d'oeuvres can be served. For a sweet and simple option: serving cake or cookies with light refreshments works well. We find that most Send Offs that have simple appetizers or light refreshments are most successful to keep the focus on the students and Texas Exes.
- **How do we get Chapter members to volunteer?**
The Chapters Department can assist in coordinating a Chapter weekly email to make a call for volunteers to assist in either the planning or day of assistance at the event. Volunteer roles that may be needed include: marketing, set up and decorations, registration table, clean up, etc.
- **How does our Chapter keep in touch with students after the Send Off?**
Have a Sign-In sheet available for students and parents, as they enter the Send Off, so you can personally invite them to your events throughout the year. Encourage them to follow the Chapter on Facebook/social media and to join [UT HookedIn](#).