



Student Send Off Guide



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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
- Send Off is an opportunity 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.



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
- Ask schools to publicize the date before classes end

For help promoting your Chapter's Send Off please contact Chapter Events Coordinator **Jane Marie Agnew** at JaneMarie.Agnew@texasexes.org.

Submit a Chapter Student Send Off Contact Request Form

- To request a contact list of admitted students to attend a Send Off, please submit a [Chapter Student Send Off Contact Request Form through this link](#).
- Please include your name on the form, as well as Chapter, your email address, and date of the event.
- For source of contact, please choose how you plan for students to be contacted. The Chapters Department can create a mailer and/or a Chapter e-mail to be sent out to students and alumni in advance. Please contact Jane Marie Agnew (JaneMarie.Agnew@texasexes.org) to request a mailer and Megan.Yeager@texasexes.org to request a Chapter e-mail.
- IMPORTANT: This list of student information can ONLY be used for a student Send Off event. 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.



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.

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 (Contact Texas Exes for spots available.)

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.



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.
- Create buzz with a 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 from the podium 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

6 Months in Advance | Date _____

- ___ Potential date for sendoff identified and confirmed with board
- ___ Assign chapter member or board member as sendoff chair/liaison

4 Months in Advance | Date _____

- ___ Reserve venue for event
- ___ Set the budget
- ___ Begin looking for potential sponsors
- ___ Contact speakers for the program

3 Months in Advance | Date _____

- ___ Send logistical information to the Texas Exes for the invitation (email or print)
- ___ Submit Admit List Request Form to request student attendee information
- ___ Assign specific jobs to committee members/board
- ___ Decide on caterer and menu for the event
- ___ Rent any equipment needed

5 Weeks in Advance | Date _____

- ___ Confirm with any sponsors
- ___ Send sponsor logo(s) 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 -- keep track of RSVPs
- ___ Invite any special guests (examples: local media, local elected officials, high school college counselors)

2 weeks in advance | Date _____

- ___ Send reminders to incoming freshmen in the area to invite them to the event (email or call them)

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 their parents to ask questions of all of us who have done this before.

The Texas Exes and its more than 106,000 members 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.

Volunteer-run Chapters like this one help the Texas Exes reach alumni and friends outside Austin by connecting more than 480,000 alumni across the globe to the Forty Acres. We have 25 active international chapters, on every continent except Antarctica. We're still working on that one!

We host game-watching parties, speaking engagements, networking events, scholarship fundraisers, and community volunteer events.

That's a huge footprint the Texas Exes is making. We're bringing alumni together in fun and engaging ways all year long. But here's the most important part: Our Chapters and Networks awarded over \$461,000 in scholarships last year. We're making a positive impact and paying it forward and you should all feel very proud.

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 and there, we hope you'll join us at Chapter events and 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 to make you 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 "Longhorns 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 [Admit List Request Form](#). Make sure if your Chapter is sending email invitations to students, to request for only email addresses. If the Chapter is coordinating a mailer to go out to students, request for only addresses. 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. Including at an alumni's home or backyard, 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 alumni's 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.