

TEXAS  EXES<sup>®</sup>

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# 2024 Student Send-Off Guide





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### Note from the Texas Exes Chapters & Networks 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!

Chapters and Networks Department Staff

1(800) 594-3937





## 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 at least 2 guests. 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 in May/June.
- Chapter emails to all alumni (and current students based on chapter's decision).

For help promoting your Chapter's Send Off please contact the Texas Exes Chapters and Networks department.

### Marketing Event to Students and Alumni

- Chapters **must** submit event information at least **6 weeks** before the event for Texas Exes and UT Office of Admissions to send out email invitations and mailed invitations in a timely manner and ensure the event is marketed well.
  - The chapter must use your Texas Exes paid Premium [Eventbrite account](#) to receive RSVPs. **This is new for the 2024 year.** The username is your [chaptername@texasexes.org](mailto:chaptername@texasexes.org) email address; contact us for the password.
  - For email invitations to alumni, incoming students, and current students, fill out the Student Send-Off Email Marketing Request Form: [SSO Email Request Form](#).
  - To request a postcard mailer to **alumni and students**, submit your information through this form: [SSO Mailer Request](#)





- *Want to keep in touch with students from your Chapter area after the Send Off?* When you promote your event on Eventbrite, your emailing list grows with each registrant! Utilize this technology to promote future events to parents and families.

## 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.





## 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/family can get there after work, but not too late. 6 - 6:30 pm is a good start time and weeknights work best for families from feedback on past Send-Offs.

### Introductions

- **Chapter leader- 2-3 minutes**
  - Introduce themselves 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
  - <https://www.texasexes.org/membership/join/student-membership>
- Encourage students to attend Orange and White Welcome as well as Camp Texas
  - <https://www.texasexes.org/get-involved/camp-texas>
- **Sing School Songs** – with words on display or in handouts. *Parents and students may not have it memorized yet.* Or play an audio-recording 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](https://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 and encourage people to follow your social media accounts.
- 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 school spirit songs 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.





## Student Send-Off Ideas and Examples

We are thrilled to hear your chapter is participating in Student Send-Off this year. If you are unsure where to start or what to do, refer to the following for ideas. You are not limited to what is included here from previous Student Send Offs. However, be sure to remember we want this event to be focused on the seniors we are sending off and should be inviting them and their guests.

- Family Friendly
  - Picnic at the Park/Chapter Member's home
    - This can include outdoor games, activities, photo booth
    - Finger foods (ie. Sandwich, chips and dip, cookies)
- Dine In for Dinner
  - Meet for Mexican Food (appetizers included meals and drinks available for purchase)
  - Pizza Palooza (pizza and soda included for incoming students and 2 guests)
- A Piece of Texas
  - Meet for Barbeque (meal and drink included for senior and 2 guests, alumni and students have a flat rate for their meal)
  - Bring Barbeque to you (have Barbeque catered at your event to give your seniors a Texas welcome with some good Texas barbeque.)
- Sit and Stay Awhile
  - Have a meal catered at a location that is welcoming to incoming students. (ie. convention center space)
  - Include formal program with special guest speakers.

Don't forget to encourage your guest to wear gameday attire.





## Sample Student Send-Off Event Planning Checklist

### 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

### 6 Weeks in Advance | Date \_\_\_\_\_

- Submit Email and Mailing marketing Request Form (to request student and alumni 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)
  
- View your attendee list in your chapter's Eventbrite account

### 2 weeks in advance | Date \_\_\_\_\_

- Send "know before you go" event details to attendees





Week of Event | Date \_\_\_\_\_

Final headcount to caterer

Prepare nametags for attendees

Put together any materials or decorations needed at event





## Sample Event and Venue Logistics 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 (use Eventbrite check-in option)
- 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





## Sample 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 120,000 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 570,000 alumni across the globe to the Forty Acres. We have, on average, 120 active geographic-based domestic chapters, international chapters, and Affinity Alumni Networks. Longhorns are everywhere! Texas Exes are here in your chapter X, San Francisco, New York, London, and all the way to Australia!

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 come back to \_\_\_\_\_ 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 great social and networking 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 the Texas Exes Association 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 prouder of our hometown Longhorns!





## 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 casual 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 at keeping 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](#).

