TEXAS STUDENT MEDIA APPLICATION FORM
MANAGING EDITOR OF THE DAILY TEXAN
Term of Office: January 1, 2019 - May 31, 2019

This application and supporting materials must be submitted to the TSM Business Office
(HSM 3.200 / William Randolph Hearst Building, 2500 Whitis Avenue) by
**Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 12:00 p.m.**

This position is due to be appointed at the TSM Board meeting scheduled for
**Tuesday, December 11, 2018 at 1:00 p.m.**

Please plan to attend and discuss your application with the Operating Trustees.

**Applicant Information**

**Forrest Milburn**
Name

**fsm326**
UT EID

**fmilburn@utexas.edu**
Email Address

**Journalism**
Major

**Applicant Attestation / Authorization for Release of Information**

1. I am currently enrolled as a UT-Austin student.

2. By the start of my term of office, I will (if an undergraduate) have completed
   12 hours at UT-Austin with a GPA of at least 2.0 or (if a graduate student)
   have completed 9 hours at UT-Austin with a GPA of at least 3.0.

3. I agree to complete and pass a media law and libel test administered by the
   Editorial Adviser prior to taking position.

4. I have obtained and included signatures from at least five staff members of
   The Daily Texan supporting my application.

5. By the start of my term of office, I will have completed at least two semesters
   as a permanent-staff member of The Daily Texan in an area other than opinion.

6. By the start of my term of office, I will have served in a Daily Texan
   management position with supervisory and design responsibilities
   (as defined by the Daily Texan Handbook) for at least one semester.

*Note: If no qualified applicant has filed by the deadline, the Board shall make an appointment
using the Handbook qualifications, each of which shall be waivable by an affirmative vote
of two-thirds majority of the voting members present.*

I certify that to the best of my ability I have given true and accurate information concerning my
scholastic and experience qualifications, and hereby grant permission for the Office of the Director,
Texas Student Media, to verify said information. Further, I understand that this information will be
provided to the TSM Board of Operating Trustees and will become part of the public record of TSM.

**Signature of Applicant**

**Dec. 4, 2018**
Date
Supporting signatures from at least five staff members of The Daily Texan:

Marin Mendlin
(associate projects editor)

Catherine Mafi
Associate Managing Editor

Chase Karacostas - News Editor

Kirsten Handler - Copy Desk Chief

Ellie Breed (Managing Editor)

My experience at The Daily Texan consists of (list positions and dates):

fall 2015 - general reporter

Spring 2016 - senior reporter

fall 2016 - news editor

Spring 2017 - associate news editor

fall 2017 - enterprise reporter & associate social media editor

Spring 2018 - associate managing editor

fall 2018 - associate managing editor

It is recommended that you include supporting materials such as:

A résumé
A letter outlining your qualifications, goals, plans for the position
Letters of recommendation
Samples of published work (on 8 1/2" x 11" paper)
Forrest Scott Milburn
4406 Avenue A Austin, Texas 78705
(214) 715-5935 | @forrestmilburn | fmilburn@utexas.edu

Education
The University of Texas at Austin Bachelor of Journalism, Spring 2019

Experience
The Texas Observer Digital intern, Fall 2018
- Helped develop a digital plan for how best to push major stories from the Observer’s magazine on social media as its inaugural digital intern.
- Worked on Instagram stories, tweet storms and helped write the weekly newsletter. Kept track of week-by-week metrics for the magazine’s analytics report.
- Launched a limited-run weekly newsletter — Cruzings to November — focused on the U.S. Senate race between Ted Cruz and Beto O’Rourke, knowing there would be a large niche audience eager to sign up.

The Dallas Morning News Politics desk intern, Summer 2018
- Helped the politics team in Dallas, Austin and Washington, D.C., cover the competitive U.S. Senate race, as well as other statewide and local campaigns.
- Helped with spot coverage of the Texas Democratic Convention and took on several breaking news stories related to state and local politics.
- One of three interns to land in the top 10 stories on DallasNews.com by unique page views for the month of June.

Houston Chronicle Austin bureau intern, Spring 2018
- Focused on state issues and how policies enacted at the state level affect Houstonians.
- Covered a wide range of topics, but mainly LGBTQ rights, voting rights and maternal mortality.
- Made short social media videos alongside the bureau’s videographer.

San Antonio Express-News Metro intern, Summer 2017
- Covered how health policy affects San Antonio residents. Focused on Obamacare repeal, maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS research.

The Austin American-Statesman Legislative intern, Spring 2017
- Focused on bills affecting the LGBTQ community and local control during the 85th legislative session.
- Live tweeted and used Facebook Live at protests at the Capitol.

The Daily Texan Associate managing editor (digital), Fall 2018
- Since fall 2015, I’ve served on the news department team covering city and state politics; on the social media team managing the paper’s Twitter account and running analytics; and in management, where I’ve focused on digital strategy.

Additional information
Active memberships: Founder of UT’s NLGJA chapter, vice president of UT’s SPJ chapter
Skills: Facebook Live, live tweeting, live blogging, AP style, SEO, Excel and Google Sheets, analytics (Parse.ly, Google Analytics, Chartbeat), newsletter strategy, Instagram, Snapchat, engagement products and tools (Hearken), moderating Facebook groups
Experience with: Tableau, Adobe Photoshop, photography, Adobe InDesign, QGIS, video production
To the Texas Student Media Board of Operating Trustees,

My name is Forrest Milburn, and I would be honored to serve as The Daily Texan’s managing editor in spring 2019. I am a journalism senior, expected to graduate in May after completing my eighth semester as a member of the Texan.

Long before I had even stepped foot into the basement, I knew I'd fall in love with The Daily Texan and the people who tirelessly help put an issue to bed every night. As a senior in high school, I remember reading the paper anytime I visited campus before starting my first year at UT austin. Sure, getting accepted into the journalism school was great; but honestly, I was focused on starting a career — what can only be done in the basement of one of the greatest daily newspapers in the country. That's exactly what I found here in my time at the Texan.

Through my time in the news department, in which I was a general reporter, senior reporter, news editor, associate news editor and an enterprise reporter, I gained a ton of experience. That helped get me internships at some of the largest news outlets in Texas — the Austin American-Statesman, the San Antonio Express-News, the Houston Chronicle, the Texas Observer, the Dallas Morning News and the Texas Tribune — and even the Washington Post, where I will spend this upcoming summer as an intern on its audience engagement team. These internships allowed me to observe the ins and outs of what makes a professional news organization work, from the ground up. But above all else, The Daily Texan helped me find a large group of people I can call some of my closest friends.

After a semester as the Texan's associate social media editor last fall, I helped grow our Twitter presence, focusing on impressions and engagement through writing tweets with a more playful voice. Last semester, in my first as an associate managing editor, I monitored Google analytics and Chartbeat to ensure we're pushing stories on social media in the most efficient way, working with the social media team and other departments to think about new ways in which we can reach our audience and make them a part of the reporting process. I even helped create a web team of digital producers (like at the Express-News and Statesman) who write stories based solely off what our audience is talking about. In today's media climate, it's important to have your fingers on the pulse of your audience, and your content and strategy should reflect that.

This semester, in my second as an associate managing editor, I've taken the knowledge from working at the Dallas Morning News this past summer to help push the Texan further. I worked on a redesign and rebrand of our Daily Digest newsletter, forming a team of newsletter writers to streamline and curate our content in the best way for readers that mirrors the DMN's newsletter strategy. We also started two Facebook groups — Hooked: Your UT and Raising Voices — to facilitate moderated discussions about news related to the Forty Acres, not just from our website,
but from any source that could be beneficial to our readers. Groups are an amazing tool on Facebook that beats out its pages function, because it focuses on discussions and conversations rather than simply trying to boost page views. In the long run, these groups could help the Texan improve its relationship with our sources and readers. If we're not improving our relationship with our readers, making sure they're more informed than when they first clicked an article, then why are we here?

We also launched our first-ever engagement reporter — a first for any college newspaper in the country — whose beat is literally everything to do with the Forty Acres. She reports on submissions to our Curious Campus series, where we answer questions submitted by readers and nothing else.

As managing editor next semester, I plan to build on my improvements and the successes of those who’ve served before me with a few major focus areas.

**Audience and Community Engagement**

For the most part, professional news outlets have little clue what “engagement” — a common buzzword among media circles — means when they employ an engagement editor. Usually, a newspaper’s engagement editor is a fancy title for whomever is in charge of the organization’s flagship social media accounts, like Twitter and Facebook, and measuring the corresponding metrics through analytics applications. But while having someone to focus on those areas are important, they represent a fundamental, crucial misunderstanding.

There are two forms of engagement: quantitative — or what can be measured, like, how many referrals a tweet sent to the Texan’s website — and qualitative, for what cannot and should not be measured. This past year, the Texan has seen its quantitative engagement improve by leaps and bounds. We’ve seen our social media referrals jump through a coordinated, strategic effort from our digital team; tweeting/posting stories to social was made a crucial aspect of every staff member’s job description, improving each individual’s brand while adding to ours; and our website’s page views, bounce rates and other analytics metrics rival that of major news outlets like the Texas Observer.

But where the Texan needs more work, is with qualitative engagement, or building loyalty among audience/community members through creating genuine relationships using digital and in-person interactions and conversations. We’ve launched several different initiatives — the Hooked and Raising Voices Facebook groups, Curious Campus, an engagement reporter, an events planner — but we must keep pushing forward. I plan on creating the position of engagement editor, putting them in charge of monitoring and operating our current engagement
initiatives, while also expanding on new, innovative ideas for potential projects that put our readers at the forefront of our content.

- **Reader-generated content**
  Curious Campus, a series we launched at the beginning of the semester, was intended to put our readers at the forefront of our content by allowing them to ask and submit any question they have on everything related to life on the 40 Acres through submission forms embedded in each CC article, including its introductory post. Our engagement reporter’s sole purpose is to report only on these questions submitted by readers, while also using social media to crowdsourcing responses and new questions. We’ve seen a great amount of genuine engagement — 40 question submissions and more than 12 published answers, as of this writing. Next semester, I plan to have our engagement editor work on establishing another reader-generated content (RGC) project, possibly on questions related to the 86th Texas Legislature, to expand on our initiative.

- **Facebook groups**
  We launched two Facebook groups this semester, inspired by success stories from the Dallas Morning News and the Texas Tribune: Hooked and Raising Voices. In Hooked, readers are able to interact with each other and members of the Texan staff about the best content from the organization. No, that doesn’t always mean what was the dominant story in today’s paper; it means what stories will start conversations among Hooked members, which, sometimes, means content that wasn’t from our own staff. We started the group aiming for 1,000 members by the end of the semester (a lofty goal that is on par with professional news outlets) — we neared that within a month and sit at 912 as of this writing. In Raising Voices, group members are either a member of the Texan staff, a member of one of the minority journalism groups on campus, or both. Posts would help launch conversations surrounding race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and diversity, reflecting the collaborative project of the same name between the Texan and NABJ, NAHJ, AAJA and NLGJA. We had a goal of 200 members; we have half of that, but that’s good — we always wanted this group to be small to foster a safer environment for conversations on sensitive topics. Both of these groups help facilitate important conversations about policy — even if it’s at the campus level — while also improving transparency, removing the barriers between our audience and members of our newsroom. I expect the engagement editor to restructure our current Facebook groups and launch new ones, possibly surrounding the 86th Texas Legislature.

- **Events**
  This one is a little more self-explanatory. We launched an events planner to plan frequent events (like Coffee with the Texan, where our engagement reporter met with audience members to discuss various themed issues, such as the 2018 midterm elections) and larger events, like our Conversation on Diversity in Journalism with members of the UT Journalism School. I intend to expand the events planner position so she has her own
team, launching more events throughout the semester than in this semester that potentially partner with other organizations, like the Journalism School and the Knight Center. The engagement editor would work with that team and management to ensure we were creating more opportunities to foster in-person relationships with audience members.

**Staff and Source Diversity**

Every year, professional news outlets look to student newspapers for eager graduates searching for their first job out of college. In this way, student newspapers are a “funnel of talent” — those who excel here, move on and get the job. Right now, most major news outlets are facing a crisis related to the lack of people of color, women and queer people on their staffs. According to the American Society of News Editors, in 2018, all of the state’s major media outlets were nowhere near close to parity with their city’s census on race and gender, meaning the newsrooms’ staffs looked nothing like the audience they serve. How many stories slipped through the cracks, how many communities went unserved, due to the overwhelmingly white and male newsrooms across the country this year?

While professional news orgs struggle to address the systemic issue, student media outlets need to look at ourselves, as well. If we really are a “funnel of talent” to professional papers, and if we are also nowhere near close to parity to our universities, then aren’t we part of the industry’s problem? The Daily Texan has made some strides over the past two years — in large part due to Ellie’s leadership in recognizing the issue and addressing it through several initiatives, as well as from stars on staff like Maria Mendez. We launched collaborative partnerships with the UT chapters of NABJ, NAHJ, AAJA and NLGJA this semester and last, in the hopes that we can improve our coverage by including voices that often go unheard in our reporting, while also offering valuable clips to the portfolios of group members, many of which were freshmen and sophomores.

I plan on helping continue the collaborations next semester, while working with a newly launched, three-member Internal Diversity Board to give the Texan’s POC and queer staffers an elevated, louder voice at the organization. Members of the board, who are paid, would meet with management to offer advice and insight into improving how stories are reported, from news to features, as well as flag with current content, such as perspectives and angles that are consistently left out. The burden of improving the Texan’s culture and recruiting process would fall on management, rather than on the board, who serve in an advisory role. The board, made up ideally of those with editing experience, would oversee the collaborations alongside management. The problems the Texan faces with being an overwhelmingly white institution at the University won’t go away in a night or a semester, but baby steps will lead us closer to where we need to be.
**Digital Presence and Products**

Almost all of my ideas and initiatives as managing editor are continuations that build on what my predecessors had started. One of the best ideas Ellie and I had before joining management was finding someone to be our first art director, with enough design skills and an artist’s eye to oversee our graphics, front page designs for projects, and, well, our art. But one area that is still a weak spot in some sort of “digital director,” in the same vein as art director, who can oversee all of the organization’s digital products. While I’ve taken on the responsibilities of overseeing our analytics, social media presence, engagement initiatives, etc., most of that is on top of my duties as associate managing editor. As managing editor, I won’t have the time to focus on side projects.

That’s why I want to expand management by creating a Director of Digital Strategy, who does much of what I currently do while also thinking of ways to keep the Texan at the forefront of innovative digital strategy and audience engagement for college newspapers. They would oversee the editors for social media, newsletters, engagement (and events), audio and video, while keeping track of better ways to tell stories on our website. This would mean a restructuring of management on down through other relevant departments in the newsroom and their digital products.

- **Web content**
  Where other outlets have failed to give their audience web content that is interesting, the Texan needs to take the best parts of aggregation and make it work for us, improving on our page views by sharing stories that may not be entirely relevant to our audience, but definitely interesting. This could be a story on a viral video about Congressman Beto O’Rourke riding on a skateboard through a Whataburger parking lot, or a story about news from Texas A&M. I would restructure our web department to include web producers, much like the web producers at the Express-News and the Statesman, and the director of digital strategy would work with the social media editor to edit and oversee their content.

- **Print —> online articles**
  Whenever the editors at budget on a given day decide to put three photos on the front page for a given story in the print product, there is not one to oversee whether those same photos are embedded into the story on our website. If there’s a video? Audio? Tweets? A lot of the time that goes into the complicated process of messing with embedding digital products into an online story is spent only if someone in management has enough to spare at night — this is rarely the case. The Director of Digital Strategy would keep a running weekly and daily document that details what digital products are meant to accompany stories on the website, working with the relevant departments to ensure our content lives up to its potential online.

- **Newsletters and social media**
The Daily Digest redesign was something in the works for a while, but after launching the revamp this semester, we saw our engagement and click rate jump. The only problem is as we turned our automatic afternoon newsletter into a curated morning newsletter, we also increased the workload on the digital team without giving them the proper additional manpower to account for designing and scheduling each newsletter at night. I plan to hire a newsletters editor to run a team of maybe four writers, slotted to work on the Daily Digest on one scheduled night. The editor would also be expected to work on designing and launching other newsletters throughout the semester, while staying up to date on the latest in newsletter strategy for media outlets. As some aspects of the digital editor position is elevated and combined with some of my initiatives as associate managing editor, the director of digital strategy position means digital editor would revert back to social media editor. The social media editor would be far narrower in scope, monitoring and overseeing the Texan’s flagship social media accounts, like Twitter, Facebook and Reddit.

I’ve had so many great experiences working at newspapers during my internships. But to serve as The Daily Texan’s managing editor would be by far my biggest accomplishment, and I would cherish the opportunity for as long as possible. Thank you for letting me map out my vision for the Texan and for considering my application. My contact information is below if you have any questions; but be warned — I can chat anyone’s ear off talking about my favorite college newspaper.

Sincerely,

Forrest Milburn
Associate Managing Editor, The Daily Texan
(214) 715-5935
To the members of the Texas Student Media Board of Operating Trustees:

It is my pleasure to strongly support and recommend Forrest Milburn as the next managing editor of The Daily Texan. I’ve worked closely with Forrest since we joined the news staff together in the fall of 2015, and I know him to be a strong leader and dedicated to the Texan beyond measure. I have no doubt he would take the Texan to new heights, and you should feel comfortable with his qualifications and character.

I’ve had the privilege of serving as the Texan’s managing editor for the last two semesters, and Forrest has worked as my associate managing editor for both of them. Throughout this year the Texan made great strides with a restructure of the news department, partnership projects and increased audience engagement efforts. All of these initiatives allowed us to broaden our reporting scope and connect with students in a way the Texan hasn’t done in a long time. None of this would have been possible without Forrest.

I’ve worked with Forrest in multiple capacities in our three years at the Texan. I was his editor while he reported on city, state and national politics and I also led the news department with him for two semesters as editors. In both roles, Forrest showed a level of dedication to the job that, to me, remains completely unparalleled by anyone on staff. Forrest has a true passion for journalism and helping in whatever way he can to make the Texan the best college newspaper in the country. He brings this drive to whatever role he occupies.

The quality I admire most in Forrest is his ingenuity. It seems like every day that he walks into the management office with a pitch for a new project or an idea to improve our content. He has his finger on the pulse of both student and professional journalism circles and a knack for taking this inspiration and making it into an opportunity for us to grow as an organization. I have never known Forrest to be satisfied with the status quo. You can be assured that as managing editor Forrest would be in constant pursuit of ways to improve this paper. That coupled with his intimate knowledge of our staff and what roles they will succeed in, will make him able to accomplish a lot in a semester.

What really separates Forrest from the crowd, however, is his personality and character. The staff laughs, collaborates and seems infinitely happier when Forrest is in the office and our content is better for it. During his time in management he has learned when to be a friend, but also when to lay down the law. One of the most challenging and underrated aspects of being the managing editor is bringing people together. A good managing editor unites a group of over 300 students, from all backgrounds and identities, and makes them understand they are a part of something bigger. Forrest understands this. Throughout the last three years, Forrest has helped me develop as a writer, editor and manager. Most importantly, however, Forrest has never failed to make me feel valued. I feel confident he would do so for each staffer at the Texan.

The Daily Texan has given me countless opportunities to grow as an individual during my time in college. I believe, at its root, that is the main function of this paper. The Texan gives young
writers, editors photographers the opportunity to take a chance, grow and develop relationships that will last far beyond this University. I am so lucky to have had Forrest by my side for the last year, and I would trust no one more to take the reigns and continue this mission. The Daily Texan, its staff and our audience would benefit immeasurably from his leadership.

If you have any questions about Forrest or his qualifications, please don't hesitate to contact me. It would be my pleasure to speak further on his behalf.

Sincerely,

Ellie Breed
Managing editor - Spring 2018 and Fall 2018
News editor - Fall 2017 and Spring 2017
C: (512) 750-8147
To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing this letter to strongly support and recommend Forrest Milburn for the position of managing editor for the spring of 2019. Besides his countless contributions to the paper, I wholeheartedly believe that Forrest embodies the values we strive to uphold here at The Daily Texan and is more than capable of effectively leading our publication.

I had the pleasure of meeting Forrest in the fall of 2015, when we both began working at the Texan as general reporters together. In the semesters since, he has been consistently promoted, holding the positions of news editor, news desk editor, enterprise reporter and most recently, associate managing editor. He is incredibly dedicated to this publication, remaining on staff for seven semesters.

What all of us love about The Daily Texan is the great friendships and memories that we make here. Forrest has played an integral role in fostering a culture of family, both within news and among departments, as well as a dedication to the publication across multiple semesters, something that was not common in the semesters leading up to our freshman year.

Besides this, Forrest has taken impressive amounts of initiative in all of his leadership roles at the Texan. After serving on the social media team last fall, Forrest took it upon himself to spearhead online engagement during the spring. Most notably, Forrest helped form a web-based content department, which produces online stories aimed at increasing online readership. The department has been immensely successful at incorporating lighthearted, listicle type content into our traditional coverage, drawing more students and readers to our website.

As associate managing editor, Forrest also paid close attention to the Texan’s outreach and online analytics, sending out regular critiques to our staff that contained detailed information regarding our top stories and numbers online. Forrest also communicated heavily with individual departments, eloquently teaching staff members how to craft headlines and social media posts to ensure our online content was visible, accessible and interesting to readers. This semester, he helped in spearheading several initiatives, including the Curious Campus series, and has been an integral part of overseeing partnerships and projects that highlight unique voices across campus. Although not in his job description, Forrest took it upon himself in the last year to make engagement a top priority for the Texan, which has improved content, readership and overall communication with the student body.

Additionally, Forrest was an essential part of initiating two partnerships which the Texan began this year, one with the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and another with the National Association of Black Journalists. These projects helped fuel ideas for other ventures, including the Raising Voices and First Generation series which the Texan has been publishing this semester. All of these partnerships have produced many feature-length stories that have given minority and underrepresented groups on campus a platform to share their experiences.
Throughout the process, Forrest played an important part in teaching our staff to think critically about our reporting and the importance of these stories.

Outside of the basement, Forrest has experience interning at multiple professional news publications, including the Austin American-Statesman, the San Antonio Express-News, the Houston Chronicle, the Dallas Morning News and the Texas Observer. Forrest has brought this knowledge to the Texan, implementing changes that allow us to operate at the level of a professional publication in many ways. From restructuring individual departments, improving overall content and online engagement, Forrest has thought beyond the immediate impacts of his internships, bringing his professional experience to the basement to ensure we continue to do better each semester.

Forrest’s commitment to the Texan is clear to everyone on staff. Even on his days off, Forrest stops by the office to give reporting advice to our writers, oversee production and ensure the Texan is producing quality content. He is often the first one in the basement and the last one to leave, and he is consistently and adamantly seeking out and brainstorming ways that the Texan can improve.

Above all else, Forrest inspires those around him to do better. He is visibly respected and admired by those on staff, both for his knowledge and passion for journalism and his dedication to the Texan. The Texan has made great strides this semester and in the last year in content and internal operations, and I truly believe that this would not have been possible had Forrest not joined our staff three years ago. I have been honored to work at this publication with him for the past three years, and I am delighted to speak on his behalf.

Sincerely,

Catherine Marfin
Associate Managing Editor, The Daily Texan, Fall 2018
Managing Editor, The Daily Texan, Summer 2018
210-667-0935
Forrest Scott Milburn
4406 Avenue A Austin, Texas 78705
(214) 715-5935 | @forrestmilburn | fmilburn@utexas.edu

Here are five clips for audience engagement/social media work, at the Texas Observer and at The Daily Texan:

- The Daily Texan’s evening newsletter, the Daily Digest, was a very simple, automated wrap-up of top headlines from stories published in the morning, for years. For the past two semesters, I decided to work on a redesign, schedule it in the morning (9:45, when most students are getting to their first classes), and curate our headlines in a conversational way to readers. Here is one morning Daily Digest.

- This year, The Daily Texan launched two Facebook groups — moderated by me and a few others on our engagement team — to better connect with our core readers on that social media platform. Here is what our group Hooked, where readers can discuss “anything UT,” looks like. At the launch, we set a goal of 1,000 members by the end of the semester. We have hit 840 within one single month. We also have a group called Raising Voices, where readers can discuss our project by the same name, which are collaborations with our paper and NAHJ, NABJ, AAJA and NLGJA.

- Here’s a link to a tweetstorm I wrote for the Texas Observer, on the anniversary of former Gov. Ann Richards’ death.

- I send out a Digital Critique to the entire staff of The Daily Texan every Wednesday night to share analytics information and to discuss how we’re using social media, as well as a critique on headlines. Here is the first one I sent out this semester.

- While at the Texas Observer this fall, a major part of my digital internship is writing three Instagram stories a week alongside individual posts. Here is one Insta story I did for a column from Andrea Grimes on Brett Kavanaugh’s sexual assault allegations.
Good morning, Longhorns! 😃

I may not know much about sports, but I hear we won a reaally big game on Saturday — is that true? This morning, you'll find a story on how the Longhorns scored their biggest win in the Herman era this weekend, beating the Trojans, 37 to 14. Oh, and say hello to Jenny's, ladies! No longer just a Wendy's, the fast food joint inside Jester where everyone gets their 4 for $4's has rebranded.

☁️ | Today's weather: Say goodbye to the drizzle — for now. Today's going to be partly cloudy, with a high of 92 degrees.

Here are your top headlines this morning. 😊
Football

**Longhorns dominate in first signature win of the Herman era**

The majority of the school-record 103,507 fans at Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium could feel it. Texas was moments away from its first signature win of the Tom Herman era.

As the clock hit triple zeros Saturday night, cementing Texas’ 37-14 win over the Trojans, the Longhorns finally celebrated on the national stage.

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**Cruz-O’Rourke:** Democrat Beto O’Rourke probably has young voters on his side. But if history’s any guide, that doesn’t mean they’ll help him win.

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Jester Wendy's adopts long-held nickname, 'Jeny's'

It's not just a nickname anymore. The Wendy's inside of Jester Center was officially renamed to "Jeny's" over the weekend.

The marketing agency that runs advertising for Wendy's said they noticed the recent closure of the Wendy's in the Texas Union Building bothered a lot of UT students. The name change aimed to show students that they're listening.

Photo of the day
Around the site

- **On-campus racism**: 'Nothing is being done about it': Lawrence Ross exposes widespread issue of on-campus racism in a speech to the Panhellenic Council.
- **Dirty Sixth — err — Pecan Street**: The Pecan Street Festival gives Austinites a different historical view of Sixth Street.
- **Aftermath of USC**: Forty-one pounds of waste were picked up around West Campus by a dozen volunteers following the Texas football victory over USC.

Take a listen

What we're reading

- **It's on**: Ted Cruz and Beto O'Rourke have agreed to three debates, with the first set for Dallas this Friday. *(Dallas Morning News)*
- "Dehumanizing, degrading, toxic, and vile": Screenshots link University of Southern California graduate student's email to user in white nationalist chatroom. (The Daily Trojan)
- Texas State University: Student Government president announces resignation amid allegations of election code violations. (The University Star)

Curious Campus
You have questions about UT-Austin and the 40 Acres?
We have answers.

What question about UT have you always wanted answered? What story have you wished the Daily Texan would write about? The Texan's first engagement reporter Megan Menchaca wants to hear from you. Submit questions through our form, here.

| That's it for this morning! Head over to thedailytexan.com for more news and columns. |
Connect with us! Join our first-ever Facebook group, Hooked: Your UT, an online community where readers and Daily Texan staffers discuss everything on and off the 40 Acres.

Have any feedback? Send your thoughts, questions, praise and corrections to our engagement team, at fmilburn@utexas.edu.

Our work is made possible by support from our advertising partners and donors. To provide individual support, please visit The Daily Texan page at supportstudentvoices.org. To highlight your business, please email advertise@texasstudentmedia.com.

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Announcements

The Daily Texan
0 Admin - Published by Forrest Milburn 11: August 29 at 2:36 PM
Add topics

Hey, members! Welcome to The Daily Texan's first Facebook group, Hooked: Your UT. This is a private group for readers to connect with one another and Daily Texan staffers over news of the day related to the 40 Acres.

This is an open forum, moderated by digital editor Alex Dominguez, engagement reporter Megan Manchaca, and Forrest Milburn, an associate managing editor. Check out our about section for more info!

Q: What should I post in this page?
A: We'll have a general topic to focus on every month, with most posts on this page touching on that focus. We invite you to let us know in the comments what topics or threads you'd like to see covered once we get the ball rolling for our first month. We also encourage members of this page to share content relevant to the topics we're covering — and it doesn't have to be from our site!

Q: I have a mixer for my student org this week. Can I share it on the page?
A: We want this page to be a space for conversations about news related to UT Austin, so we invite sharing relevant events that the wider student body should be aware of. But please don't flood the page with self-promotion or marketing/ads for your organization if not relevant.

Q: Someone has used offensive language toward me in the group. What do I do?
A: If someone uses abusive/offensive language toward you, please contact one of the admins on Facebook, or email managingeditor@dailytexanonline.com

Q: I don't think a post is relevant to this group. I've reported it, now what?
A: When a post is reported or when you tag one of the admins in a comment, we will review the post. Page administrators and moderators reserve the right to remove any content and any user account for any reason at any time. Please refrain from reporting a post if it does not break our rules.
Hooked: Your UT

A PLACE TO DISCUSS
Student Governance

The Daily Texan

Carlos Garcia is with Katie Bauer and 2 others.
6 hrs  Texas Athletics, 2 others

Hello!
My name is Carlos Garcia and I’m the photo editor at the Daily Texan. Yesterday, we took pictures at UT’s biggest game, literally. Last night’s game broke the record for most fans at DKR. The game was intense and the atmosphere was breathtaking.

Our photographers are here to capture the moment and bring the moment to you whether it be through print or online.
http://dailytexanonline.com/.../longhorns-dominate-in-first-s...

Im interested in your reaction to the game? What was the biggest moment for you? How can we, as photographers, better represent our community and the moments you want to see? What type of coverage would you like to see from us?
You, Catherine Martin, Malo Gonzalez Aranda and 23 others

Like Comment

Ross Burkhart
September 15 at 11:18 PM · Texas Athletics, Texas football
Last year, Texas QB Sam Ehlinger left the USC game after a heartbreaking defeat.
364 days later, he walks off a winner.

Colton Becker Damn right he did 😂
Like · Reply · 1d

Forrest Milburn shared a link.
Admin · September 14 at 1:49 PM · Texas Athletics, 2 others
One of our readers asked Curious Campus, “How does Texas Athletics raise so much money for locker room upgrades, but the University can’t raise enough money for improvements to campus security?”
Megan, our engagement reporter, looked into it. Here’s her second story for Curious Campus, our new series where we’ll be answering reader-submitted questions every week.
We know that this is a question lots of y’all have probably asked yourselves before, too, so check it out. 😁
money for athletics but not academics? - The Daily Texan

Terry Melbourne, Megan Menchaca and 9 others

Like
Comment

Morgan O’Hanlon shared a link.

September 13 at 2:41 PM
Add Topics

Hi, members! My name is Morgan, and I’m a reporter for The Daily Texan’s special projects department. I wrote a story published in today’s paper about students who choose to carry on campus. I wanted to learn more about who these students are and gain an understanding of campus carry’s effects on UT students two years after its implementation in Texas.

For one student, Sam Kellogg, campus carry represents the opportunity to prevent tragedies such as the stabbing that happened in front of Gregory Gym in May 2017.

“I think ultimately (campus) is a safer place,” Kellogg said.

Do you agree with Kellogg? Do you think UT is safer now that students can carry their guns into campus buildings? What do you think the future holds for campus carry?

Give it a read, and let me know your thoughts!

The Daily Texan

‘Get Your Gun’
The Daily Texan When he saw the bloody knife, Sam Kellogg thought it w...

You, Lisa Creider, Tony Melbourne and 35 others

Like
Comment

Sara Schleede shared a link.

September 12 at 3:01 PM
Students, 2 others

Hey everyone! I’m Sara Schleede, and I am a news reporter for The Daily Texan. I just covered the Texas Interfraternity Council’s proposed ban on hard liquor at all UT fraternity social events. The aim of the new policy is to prevent hazing incidents involving alcohol and promote a more healthy social environment. You can read the story below!

What do you all think? Is a blanket ban an effective way to achieve those goals, or is there another way to mitigate hazing and binge drinking?
Texas Interfraternity Council proposes ban of liquor at all UT-Austin fraternity events - The Daily Texan

Forrest Milburn: I saw this story this morning, and liked this quote from IFC president Peter Driscoll:

"As a whole, the Greek community around the country has been evolving in response to cultural changes," he said. "I think our organizations are becoming more accountable and promoting better standards as all organizations do, which is good."

Peter Driscoll: Thank you, Forrest! I am proud of the changes we are striving for.

Benjamin Solder: I'm not sure there is any evidence to say convincingly whether or not it will work. Why make predictions? Are there cons to running this "experiment?" Go, Peter, go!

Peter Driscoll: I wouldn't call this an experiment, I would call it an initiative! One that I am proud to spearhead in order to provide a safer, healthier Greek experience at UT. As to whether or not this will "work" I can confidently say that although change takes time, and mutual cooperation, that doesn't mean we shouldn't try! In regards to the accusations of an alcohol "prohibition" nothing prevents individuals from legally purchasing and consuming liquor on their own time and property. However, fraternities need not condone this consumption.

Samantha Reichestein: I think fraternities can easily get third-party vendors to supply alcohol to them, based on giving out free merchandise/free marketing at their parties or events. I'm unsure the connection, but Round Up 2018 felt sponsored by Bumble based on their name on the bands, free bandanas, sunglasses, etc. at most (if not all) IFC fraternities. I know Bumble isn't an alcohol brand, but using that example what is to stop Tito's from wanting in on that kind of free marketing? Or a local Austin, up and coming hard liquor brand? If anything, I personally feel this takes the "blame" off fraternities Incase of an accident/issue, but that accident/issue is still going to happen. I don't really understand how this would change the problem of alcohol and its current reputation with greek life.
Samantha Reichstein: Sara Schleede said the IFC executive board began discussing a change in policy in the spring. In addition, the North-American Interfraternity Conference, which oversees 6,100 chapters across the country, voted last week to ban hard alcohol at fraternity events, unless it is provided by a third-party vendor. Does that mean UT IFC is following a different rule?

Sara Schleede: Samantha Reichstein yelled IFC chose to go a step further than NIC.

James Boswell: Thanks for that clarifying point. I saw that as well but didn’t take the time to ask.

Ellie Breed shared a link.

Hi everyone! My name is Ellie Breed, and I’m the managing editor at The Daily Texan.

By now, most of you have probably heard of the stabbing that happened near Duren Residence Hall late last night.

Our crime reporters Megan Menchaca and Meghan Nguyen contacted UTPD chief David Carter this morning to ask why a text alert wasn’t sent out to students. Here’s what he had to say:

We want to hear your thoughts. Do you think this situation warranted a text alert? Do you think UTPD has improved their communication with students in recent semesters?

UT Police clarifies why alert text wasn't sent following stabbing near campus Monday - The Daily Texan

UT Police responds to stabbing near Duren Dormitory - The Daily Texan
As The Daily Texan's new diversity coordinator and associate projects editor, I am helping make sure The Texan better represents the UT community. To do this, I am leading a new collaborative effort to promote diverse perspectives and writers at The Daily Texan.

In collaboration with UT's chapters of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, Asian American Journalists Association, National Association of Black Journalists and the National Lesbian Gay Journalists Association, we will be producing stories on topics like students of color in academia, the elections, religion and the LGBTQ experience every month.

We are inviting students from all backgrounds and majors to help us report and provide diverse perspectives on these topics. If you're interested in writing or producing video, audio or photos or helping out for these collaborations, please attend our workshop tomorrow (Thursday) at 7 pm in The Daily Texan basement!

If you can't make it but are interested DM or email me at mariamendez@utexas.edu. Please help me make sure every student's voice is heard!
RAISING VOICES
The Daily Texan +
NAHJ, NABJ, AAJA & NLGJA
Collaborating to promote diverse voices and writers one story at a time.

THU, SEP 13
Raising Voices workshop
2500 Whitts Ave, Austin, TX 78705, United States
Ellie, Malu and 28 friends
You, Paul Cohler, Angela Wang and 11 others

Alex Dominguez shared a link.
Moderator • September 7 at 12:23 PM • UT administration. Campus news
You’ve probably seen Gun Free UT signs on office windows around campus.
Today, all faculty must have these and other outward facing signs taken
down, per University policy.
“Consistent with U.S. Supreme Court rulings, the University has policies
that use a content-neutral approach based on “time, place and manner” to
regulate speech on campus, including the placement of signs,” UT
spokesman J.B. Bird said.
Should faculty be allowed to keep these signs up? Comment your thoughts
below.

DAILYTEXANONLINE.COM
Gun free UT signs face removal after University enforces
signage policy - The Daily Texan
You, Angela Wang, Morgan O’Hanlon and 2 others

Morgan O’Hanlon For reference, here’s a link to the university’s
Hooked: Your UT

About
Discussion
Units
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Moderator Group

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Shortcuts
- Raising Voices
- Hooked: Your UT
- The Daily Texan
- Britni Latosavich
- A Conversation with Mit...
- See more

Forrest Milburn

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Forrest Milburn

I know that there were some readers on Twitter commenting on how there's a discrepancy between University policy here, when it comes to what applies to students and what applies to faculty/staff. Thoughts, Morgan?

Like · Reply · 1w

Morgan O’Hanlon

The policy has designated several specific areas as acceptable places for signs to be posted, including bulletin board, kiosks, other designated spaces, and the windows and doors of dorm rooms. It seems that prohibited areas for signage are outlined in... See More

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Morgan O’Hanlon

This tweet gets to the heart of the issue: https://twitter.com/___Sharp___/status/1038901481811749761

Susan Sharp on Twitter

Like · Reply · Remove Preview · 1w

Morgan O’Hanlon

The discrepancy is outlined here: https://twitter.com/artifishy/status/103700222072377020...

lumpia space princess

Like · Reply · Remove Preview · 1w

Ana López

fervently has been trying to do this for years. He threatened faculty constantly, using department chairs as middlemen, because he’s afraid of how the legislature will retaliate. He cited section many times as a reason why he mandated the removal of the signs. In my opinion, it’s cowardly. He has argued that the signs may confuse onlookers, making it look like this is an official university opinion, because it is an outward facing sign, we all know how opposed fave was to campus carry once it was signed. But he wants to cover his ass. This is a strict violation of faculty’s right to express their own views on the matter. There is a reason why some faculty offices are gun free zones.

Like · Reply · 1w · Edited

Samantha Fuchs

Faculty should have the right to their impermanent signs.

Like · Reply · 1w

George Schorn

I’m disturbed by both the chilling effect on speech and campus debate this new stance will have, and the disturbing, dogged refusal of the administration to put any details about the decision-making process into writing. UT’s mission rests on the open debate of ideas in the pursuit of knowledge. Suddenly banning expressive ideas, and then refusing to discuss the reasoning behind that change, or to disclose who will make the
Sandra LeGrand Pauolley: Do you feel the same way about Alex Jones being banned from Twitter?
Like · Reply · 1w

George Schorn: No.
Like · Reply · 1w

Ana López: Twitter's not a state-funded platform, you dolt. They can ban whoever they want, technically. Alex Jones can rot in the Chilli Parlor, for all I care.
Like · Reply · 1w

George Schorn: Nor is Twitter Alex Jones' personal office space.
Like · Reply · 1w

Sandra LeGrand Pauolley: Public or not, you claimed to support the "open debate of ideas in the pursuit of knowledge". That includes Alex Jones and others with whom you disagree. And Ana, calling someone a "dolt" is hardly in the spirit of open debate.
Like · Reply · 1w - Edited

George Schorn: No, that doesn't include Alex Jones. If you can't distinguish what he does from the way knowledge is pursued at Research University, you may need to retake RHE 306.
Like · Reply · 1w

George Schorn: (And for what it's worth, I don't think you can tone-shame Ana for using the word "dolt" while holding Alex Jones up as a voice we must all politely listen to.)
Like · Reply · 1w

Linda Briscoe Myers: Spreading misinformation is not free speech. It's inclement. Jones's actions forced one of the Sandy Hook families to go live in hiding. He's a criminal.
Like · Reply · 1w

Sandra LeGrand Pauolley: I share your disdain for Alex Jones. Just curious to see where the above stated commitment to "open sharing of ideas" begins and ends.
Like · Reply · 1w

Linda Briscoe Myers: Sandra LeGrand Pauolley with truth and not made up misinformation, propaganda, and lies.
Like · Reply · 1w

Sandra LeGrand Pauolley: Linda Briscoe Myers Who gets to decide?
Like · Reply · 1w

George Schorn: Sandra I think you are confusing, or deliberately conflating, "censorship" with the academic practice of sharing data, evaluating sources critically with an eye toward their contribution to longstanding inquiry, and privileging voices that have proven valuable in those pursuits while sidelining voices that do not advance, or actively interfere with, that work. Community knowledge-building does mean some voices will not be given much airtime. It's true. That's the system we've hammered out over centuries which has allowed us to advance human knowledge and make new discoveries. Believing in "free speech" doesn't mean you can never put any limits on any voice in any community.
Like · Reply · 1w
The University of Texas at Austin Police Department (UTPD)
September 8 at 8:41 PM

MISSING PERSON ALERT! Longhorns at the game. Please help us find Clarissa. She is 20 years of age. She is 5 feet tall. If you see her immediately call 9-1-1. It’s possible she may be outside the stadium.

Catherine Martin, Chad Lyle and 1 other

Forrest Millburn Thanks for posting, Grace. We’ll update if we see or hear anything.
Forrest Milburn
Here's KXAN's story:
https://www.kxan.com/.../ut-police-looking-for/.../1426261634

Karen Menchaca
UTPD and Chief Carter just posted an update on Twitter that she has been found.
Like - Reply - Remove Preview - 1w

Forrest Milburn
For reference:
https://twitter.com/utpdchi/status/1038651719542762...

Chief David Carter on Twitter

Forrest Milburn
Hey, Hooked members!

Thanks for joining The Daily Texan's first Facebook group! We're still getting things into full swing, so we'll have a few topics for you to choose from soon for our focus on the month of September.
But until then, let's all get to know each other a little more. Comment on this thread:

1) name, 2) UT affiliation (current sophomore, alum, etc), 3) major, 4) where you're from and 5) which UT-related topics you're most interested in.

Nicholas, Persac, Spencer, Buckner and 42 others

Selina Esraghli
1) Selina Esraghli
2) Current sophomore
3) Chemical Engineering and Radio-Television-Film double major
4) Born in Boston, but spent my whole life in Austin
5) I'm super interested in exploring UT's relationship with the city of Austin

Forrest Milburn
My name is Forrest (like the movie). I'm a senior journalism major from Dallas, and I'm most interested in the upcoming November elections — the U.S. Senate race, congressional campaigns, and the election for district 9 on the City Council.

Colten Becker
1) Colton Becker
2) super-senior
3) nutrition
4) Arvada, TX
5) anything student advocacy-related, particularly within the health & wellness realm. Great op-ed on Adderall abuse in today's paper

Chase Keracostas
My name is Chase, I'm a junior journalism and political communication major from Dallas. I'm most interested in the new UT chancellor as well as the upcoming November elections.

Anthony Goryczka
1. Call me what u want
2. Been here for too long, I'm still here
3. Linguistics
Digital Critique + social media guidelines
1 message

Forrest S Milburn <fmilburn@utexas.edu>

To: Peter Chen <peterschen@utexas.edu>, "Johnson, Gerald A" <gerald.johnson@ austin.utexas.edu>, Ellie Breed <ellie.breed66@gmail.com>, Catherine Marfin <catherine.marfin@ utexas.edu>, Alexandria Dominguez <adominguez37@gmail.com>, editor@dailytexanonline.com, Forrest S Milburn <fmilburn@utexas.edu>
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Hey y'all,

If you're getting this email, that means you're now a staff member at The Daily Texan. Congrats! My name's Forrest, and I'm one of the associate managing editors (the bald gay one). I heavily focus on our digital strategy, metrics and audience engagement.

Every Wednesday, I'll send out a Digital Critique for how well our week (every past Monday through Sunday) has been for website traffic, headlines, top stories and social reach. Read and digest all the information presented here, because it's very useful for ensuring more eyes are on your stories.

***First, a quick rundown on our social media policy:

- **Mandatory regular tweeting.** This means at least one tweet a day from your own account — as in, a RT of the Texan's Twitter doesn't count. Do this tool! But also tweet from your own account so we can reach a far wider audience.

- **Follow the Texan on all social media accounts,** and encourage your friends and family to as well. Be proud to work here! This also means putting your job title in your Twitter bio and on your Facebook.

- I'll frequently post in the general slack channel about stories that are doing well on social media, or on stories that are big projects that may need a big social boost. I will post a link to the story, the author's Twitter handle, the Texan's Twitter handle, and possibly a photo/general description. If I do this, I am not asking for you to tweet it and post it on your personal accounts; I am telling you to. Please ensure you are pushing out these stories when told to, and this goes for all staff members.

- There's an election in over a month! If you're in a content-producing department, refrain from sharing your personal political opinions.

- **Every staffer at the Texan** should be a member of our Facebook group, Hooked, where we invite readers to discuss news related to the 40 Acres. This is a place where you can post your stories if you think they're conversation starters. Join here, and invite your friends/family to join.

These social media guidelines go for every single staffer, permanent or issue, who works at the Texan. I will be checking to see if all areas of the newsroom are meeting these guidelines; if they're not, I will alert the appropriate department head to let them know you are not meeting your job requirements.

Got any questions about how to tweet better or how to improve your posts to the Facebook groups? Send me a Slack message!

**Website traffic**

This week (Sept. 10-16), total number of users: **35K**, up **20.3 percent compared to last week**

Total number of page visits (or sessions): **58K**, up **29.4 percent compared to last week**

Bounce rate: **64.05 percent**, down **1.4 percent compared to last week**

Session duration: **22 seconds**, down **4.5 percent compared to last week**

Total number of pageviews for the week: **69,432**

Our lowest total number of users was on Sunday (Sept. 16) at **3.8K**. Our highest was on Friday at **7.5K**, compared to last week, when our lowest was **3.2K** on Sunday, Sept. 9, and our highest was **5.9K** on Friday Sept. 7.

**Top stories**

Here are our top 10 stories based on total views for this past week, with total number of page visits per story.

1. Texas Interfraternity Council proposes ban of liquor at all UT-Austin fraternity events: 3,203
2. Jester Wendy's adopts long-held nickname: 2,741
3. Welcome to Jendy's: 1,562
4. UT Police responds to stabbing near Duren Dormitory: 1,307
5. UTPD responds to stabbing near Duren Dormitory: 1,259
6. Rising student rapper Ariea Bastami pushes hip hop boundaries and inspires others: 784
7. Students face overcrowding on buses following CapMetro remap: 752
8. College sugar babies have a place in feminism: 643
9. Professor's advice for making it in college: common sense: 613
10. Hey, Curious Campus: Why does UT-Austin have all this money for athletics but not academics?: 577

Just a FYI: At the Dallas Morning News, a story did "well" if it had 3,000 page views. For us, that number, in my opinion is 500 page views, though it's awesome seeing some of our content rival a major publication's in reach.

Headlines

— A few top headlines

- Hey, Curious Campus: Why does UT-Austin have all this money for athletics but not academics?
- 'We're kind of proving that we're back': Texas shines on national stage
- Texas Interfraternity Council proposes ban of liquor at all UT-Austin fraternity events

I liked these headlines, because a few were playful, conversational in tone, had a smart use of quotes and/or had buzzwords that people will search for on Google.

— A few that need some work

- SG explains plans despite little legislation
- Netflix's latest rom-com is not much of a winner
- Buying back into DBU's resurgence

A lot of these just needed to take up more space to add some much-needed context, giving the reader a reason to click (you can always take up 100 characters or less, for social media optimization). Often, when our headlines miss the mark, it's because the reader doesn't understand what the story is about. Don't write a headline that could be copy and pasted onto another story. Also, if you're writing a review, the name of the movie/album/etc should be in the headline. If you're writing something that another news organization also covered, look at their headline and think about why they phrased it the way they did.

Twitter
August tweet impressions: 677.81K
August engagement rate: 2.4 percent
September tweet impressions: 861.2K (so far)
September engagement rate: 2.7 percent

Facebook (only showing the changes from Sept. 11 - 17)
Page views: 518, up 42 percent compared to last week
Reach: 20,226, up 106 percent compared to last week
Post engagement: 9,345, up 94 percent compared to last week

Facebook groups

— Hooked: Your UT (Sept. 10-16)

- Out of our 785 members, 568 are considered active. Meaning they've viewed, posted, commented or reacted to content.
- There was a 30 percent growth in members this week.
- Lots of great conversations so far, but we need to keep pushing, posting at least once every day (not always a link from OUR website).
- We've had several editors at other publications (Daily Californian, Indiana Daily Student, Daily Trojan) request to join the group, interested in how we operate a small-scale online "community" with our audience. Making waves, people!

— Raising Voices (for our collabs with NABJ, NAHJ, AAJA, NLGJA)

- 82 members so far. Not much else to report, since the group launched earlier this week.

Daily Digest
Our average open rate is **20.1 percent.**
Our average click rate is **4.9 percent.**
The bar graphs for growth are not that telling, but it lists a 152 audience increase from Sept. 17 to Sept. 18.

**Instagram (Sept 12-18)**
Profile visits: 501, up 229 from last week (Sept. 5-11)
Reach: 8,966, up 6,986 from last week
Impressions: 14,323, up 8,745 from last week
*Yodeling kid photo drove these increases*

**Curious Campus**
We have 17 questions so far from readers, and Megan has published two answers so far. Both stories have made it to the top 10 list for page views over the past few weeks. We’ll start focusing on themes in October (the midterm elections), while also chipping away at our backlog.

That’s all for this week! Questions, comments, concerns? Shoot me a message on Slack.

Thanks,

Forrest

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Updated, 2:56 p.m. Aug. 6: Revised to include comment from Frisco ISD and other local school districts.

As a junior, Kundai Nyamandi and her classmates often packed the Frisco Heritage High School auditorium for presentations from school officials, preparing them for their senior year before heading off to college.

Yearbook plans. Senior pictures. Which classes to take.
But she said information on how to register to vote, which state law requires high schools to explain to eligible seniors, never once came up.

"At my school, I know that the AP Government teacher does a great job at informing students," Nyamandi, 17, said. "But a lot of students who aren't taking the course don't get that opportunity."

She's not alone. About 180,000 Texas students were potentially affected over the past two years by their high schools' failure to encourage the next generation of voters to register, according to a new report from the Texas Civil Rights Project, a community attorney group that focuses on voting rights and other social justice issues.

Since 1985, the Texas Election Code has required every high school in the state — public and private — to distribute voter registration applications to eligible students at least twice each school year.

Only 34 percent of high schools requested voter registration forms from the Texas Secretary of State's office, the first step in complying with state law, since October 2016. Some of those high schools got the forms only because their school district did it for them, as is the case in Lewisville and Garland ISDs, according to the report.
"We really think that schools would more than happily do this if the process was made clearer and easier for them," said James Slattery, a senior staff attorney for the Texas Civil Rights Project. "When you think about it, they're spending more than eight hours a day managing a school, managing employees. That's a lot."

Meghan Cone, assistant director for communications for Frisco ISD, said in an email that the district's schools offer voter registration cards to students during government and economics classes. Schools also host registration drives — usually during lunch or student advisory periods — at least twice per year in compliance with state law.
"Frisco ISD takes its responsibility seriously to educate students about the right to vote and help them register," she said. "While students may not be aware of all the things Frisco ISD schools are doing to help register students, voter registration has been an ongoing effort in FISD and will continue to be an area of focus headed into the November midterms."

Several Frisco schools get forms directly from Collin or Denton County or local post offices, Cone said, and others have students fill out the form online to then return printed applications to the counties for processing. Schools also utilize volunteer deputy registrars from groups like the American Legion and League of Women Voters, who bring their own registration forms, she said.

"I would anticipate several other school districts utilize similar strategies and resources beyond the Secretary of State's office, which may also help explain the results of the study," Cone said.

Mida Milligan, executive director for communications for Garland ISD, said in an email that the district has worked with local groups, including Dallas County Elections Department, to comply with state law, "providing them with the forms they need to complete in order to actively participate in one of the fundamental features of living in a democracy."

Amanda Brim, chief communications officer for Lewisville ISD, said in an email that the district was one of the few to provide voter registration applications to its students because it's the law.

"But more importantly, we believe the future of our state and country depends on voters being engaged and informed," she said. "That starts early with teaching students who are still in school the importance for voting, and ensuring they are registered to vote."

**Students take charge**

Though it was released Tuesday, none of the report’s findings were news to Hillary Shah, a recent graduate of Lone Star High School in Frisco. She, Nyamandi and a few other peers last semester co-founded the Frisco Student Activist Union, a group trying to increase civic participation among students following the deadly shooting in Parkland, Fla.
The Frisco Student Activist Union's first move was to plan a walkout where they could register voters at each of the district's nine high schools in response to the shooting. Shah said 2,500 across the district showed up, and 15 eligible seniors registered from Lone Star High School alone, though she did not have a total number for how many were registered across the district.

"We're trying to hold the district accountable, and we're urging them to hold mandatory events during school hours for high school seniors to register themselves," Shah said. "We're trying to make it an active thing, rather than just a table at lunch, because it's never been uniform."

March For Our Lives also formed immediately following the Parkland, Fla. shooting. Members launched a nationwide bus tour that's traveled to 75 cities in more than 20 states throughout the summer, registering high school students ahead of the November midterm elections. They stopped in Dallas last month.
Where does the burden lie?

Slattery said the students at Frisco ISD and others across Texas shouldn't have to register their own peers to vote. That burden should fall on the state and high school administrators.

"The secretary of state is the chief elections official," he said. "That's why it's so incumbent on him to be affirmative and proactive in taking whatever steps are necessary to get this information in front of schools."

The state recognizes there's a problem, and it's made a few efforts to address the issue since advocates started sounding alarms more than five years ago.

Last year, the secretary of state asked school superintendents to sign a pledge, promising "100 percent commitment" from their district's principals to improve compliance, and 432 have signed on to date. Sam Taylor, a spokesman for the secretary of state's office, said the new system to track the efforts has been effective, and the numbers are through the roof.
“We have taken a number of steps to remove barriers for principals, encourage community involvement and implement accountability measures to the maximum extent allowed under the current law,” Taylor said in an email statement. “We look forward to seeing even greater participation among Texas high school principals as they work to ensure all of their eligible students have the opportunity to register to vote as the new school year begins.”

Parkland school shooting survivors bring gun-control message to Dallas

The report shows one assistant principal emailed the secretary of state's office because he could not find the form to request applications, and he was one of several school officials who found themselves in similar situations.

The state could help by developing better methods to comprehensively and effectively educate school officials about the requirements of the law, the Texas Civil Rights Project said in the report.

Students at the Frisco Student Activist Union said the state could also offer more aid to high schools by bringing in trained voter registrars, who can not only give students the necessary forms but also tell them exactly what to fill out and where to send them.

Until then, the Frisco Student Activist Union plans to fill in all the holes it can by registering voters across the district and reaching out to those in power to change district policy. Next week, they're meeting with a director at Frisco ISD, and they'll be at the board’s next meeting on Aug. 13, Shah said.

“This is a statewide pandemic, it’s not a just a Frisco problem,” she said. “I think every Texas public high school needs to play an active part in this, because that’s the law, that’s their responsibility.”

“Students are at the forefront of this,” Shah added, “because someone has to be."
New cases of HIV in Bexar County keep climbing

By Forrest Milburn, Staff Writer


Joel attends services at San Fernando Cathedral, Sunday, August 20, 2017. He was diagnosed with AIDS in the 1990's and is now HIV positive. Joel asked his last name not be used.

Photo: JERRY LARA /San Antonio Express-News

Brian Hernandez and his friend each had their blood drawn for an HIV test in June 2014, and about a week later, his friend learned the result: He was negative.

When Hernandez didn't get a call, he immediately sensed a foreboding voice creep into his mind. Days passed before a caseworker reached him, saying she wanted to meet with him in person: He was HIV positive. He was just 19 years old.
The thing that’s never supposed to happen to you just happened, Hernandez, now 22, recalled thinking. “So what do I do now?”

Hernandez transformed his initial shock and disbelief into a mission. He’s sharing his experience publicly, educating people about self-protection and testing and spreading the word about PrEP, a medication for people without the virus that lowers the chances of ever getting it by more than 90 percent.

In 2014, he was one of 329 people newly diagnosed with HIV in Bexar County. The number has increased steadily over the last decade by more than 50 percent — from 234 in 2006 to 360 last year. The rate of infection has declined nationally and in Texas, but not in Bexar County, which at 19.1 cases per 100,000 people is well above the U.S. average of 12.3 cases.

Related: Metro Health to hold HIV summit

Health officials want to reverse that and are ramping up prevention, testing and education efforts. On Wednesday, a daylong summit with panels and speakers, including Mayor Ron Nirenberg and County Judge Nelson Wolff, will focus just on HIV/AIDS.

“Do I think we have a huge and under-recognized problem with HIV in our community? Yes,” said Dr. Barbara Taylor, infectious disease specialist at UT Health San Antonio. “This is a fatal if not treated and incurable illness that carries a lot of stigma and is expanding in our community. And we have the tools to stop the epidemic.”
What is Cluster 51?

Part of what set off the recent alarm about HIV in Bexar County is not just the disturbing yearly increase in people getting infected, but the discovery of what is called “Cluster 51.”

In 2015, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, working in conjunction with the Texas Department of State Health Services and the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, used genotypes to trace similar HIV strains. They identified 16 clusters — or connected groups of people with HIV — throughout Texas. Six were in Bexar County, including the largest in the state, Cluster 51.

Of the 34 people in the group, all were men, 87 percent were Hispanic and 89 percent indicated they had sex with other men, which is the most common method of spreading the virus. The median age was 29. They reported behavior putting them at high risk of contracting HIV: 72 percent had sex with anonymous people and with many of them, 45 on average.

Most also used one or more drugs, primarily alcohol, marijuana, cocaine and methamphetamine.

In response to the Cluster 51 analysis, Metro Health Director Colleen Bridger sent out a “dear
colleague letter to local primary-care providers and others in the health field, urging them to take action, foremost, more testing. Some of her points:

At the least, routinely do a one-time HIV test on everyone from age 13 through 64, even people brought into emergency rooms. (Nationally, one in seven people with HIV are unaware of it.)

People at high risk of contracting HIV need to be tested at least once a year.

When examining a patient with symptoms such as fever and infected lymph glands, don't overlook the possibility of HIV.

Offer PrEP to people who don't have HIV but are at high risk.

At its clinic on East Highland Boulevard, Metro Health started offering PrEP and charges for it according to a person's income. It is advertising the medication on popular hookup apps for gay and bisexual men, like Grindr.

Getting PrEP

Robert Salcido Jr. recently started using PrEP, or “pre-exposure prophylaxis” to protect himself. He wrestled for years with whether to take the daily medication called Truvada, which provides another safeguard against infection when using condoms or other kinds of protection during sex.

Salcido, like his dad, identifies as queer. His dad died of complications related to AIDS in 1996 when Robert was 15. Afterward, he thought the epidemic was something everyone in the LGBTQ community had to endure.

“After educating myself and growing up, I now know that's definitely not the case. But it's still one of those fear factors in the back of your head,” said Salcido, 36, a San Antonio resident.

“While we'd all like to say that we're safe 100 percent of the time, the reality is that's not always the case,” he said about deciding to take PrEP. “Having that extra layer of comfort, knowing that if I engage in anything that isn't considered safe, it adds multiple layers of safety for my own well-being.”

Jerry Permenter, director of development for the Alamo Area Resource Center, which provides social and health services related to HIV/AIDS and other illnesses, said those who are at the highest risk of contracting HIV — LGBTQ men of color — often have the least access to resources for prevention and care.
In Bexar County, the rate of new HIV diagnoses for Hispanics was 21.4 per 100,000 people in 2015, compared to 9.8 cases for Anglos. The rate for blacks was significantly higher, 38.4 new diagnoses per 100,000, according to data from the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District.

The racial and ethnic disparities hold true nationwide. Earlier this year, the CDC estimated that black men who have sex with men have a 50 percent chance of contracting HIV in their lifetimes, if current rates continue. For similar Latino men the chance is 25 percent, and for Anglos, 9 percent.

As a young, gay Latino, Hernandez shares some of the characteristics of the men who would later be identified as part of Cluster 51.

Hernandez isn’t sure exactly when he contracted the virus. It had to have been in March or April 2014, when he was seeing an older man, whose status wasn’t clear before the two had unprotected sex.

But Hernandez trusted him.

“He seemed like just a really genuine guy,” he said, before pausing. “Ignorance, I guess.”

Hernandez fell ill less than a month later with the usual symptoms of acute HIV infection, which are similar to those of the flu: fever, abdominal pain, painful coughing. When the test confirmed it, Hernandez zoned out, paralyzed by shock and how he had “failed.”

Like others his age, he had had the same warnings instilled in him, coming from family, teachers.
health care providers and an LGBTQ community that was still shell-shocked over the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s: “Use protection.” “Know their status.” “Pray you don’t ever get HIV.”

“There was an area of loneliness and not relating to anybody,” he said about the diagnosis. “Now you’re gay with HIV, and nobody is going to want to date you, nobody is going to have any interest in you at all because you have that — they’re going to be scared of you.”

This fear — the idea that someone’s life is over once they contract the virus — can result in the opposite of its intent. Instead of ensuring more young gay and bisexual men use protection, it can create a stigma surrounding those who are HIV positive, stifling healthy conversations about how to effectively protect young people from the virus.

“It’s something that stays with you daily, that you’re reminded of as a gay man,” Hernandez said. “Those emotions and those feelings build up almost, and it becomes a paranoia where you don’t want to go get tested to find out — you just don’t want to deal with the shock.”

Curbing the stigma

A major step in curbing the stigma, Permenter said, is better educating people at high risk about protection, demystifying the virus and showing that it is preventable and treatable with the right tools.

Primary-care providers need to be better educated, too, because some have their own prejudices about HIV, possibly driven by false information, homophobia or discomfort with talking about diseases related to intimacy.

Some providers have the misconception that prescribing PrEP would lead to more “promiscuity,” that if people free of the virus are on the medication, then they don’t have to wear condoms during sex, leading to a rise in contraction rates for other sexually transmitted diseases, Permenter said.

“It kind of goes back to the days of the birth control pill,” he added. “There was a time when physicians were saying it would give women license to have more sex. We’re hearing that with PrEP, and it’s absolutely ridiculous.”

That notion just leaves people, whether they have the virus or not, feeling burned and stigmatized.

“Which totally makes sense,” Taylor said. “If you think you’re going to go someplace and you think they will look down on you for having HIV, why would you go?”
Taylor said some of her HIV patients have partners who don’t have the virus and come to her with questions about PrEP and their health risks because they’re too afraid of talking with their own primary-care providers.

“I can build someone up in clinic, but we send them into a world where their family members are going to give them separate plates to eat with,” she added. “We have to work on all fronts.”

In all, 86,669 Texans are living with HIV, and more than half are over the age of 45.

In Bexar County, 5,763 people were HIV positive in 2015 and 138 people had AIDS, according to Metro Health data.

In 2014, 1,490 people with HIV/AIDS in Texas died; of those with a known cause of death, more than 60 percent died of complications related to HIV or AIDS, the state reported. Less than 10 percent were people under the age of 34.

With advances in antiretroviral drugs that have fewer side effects, young people newly diagnosed with HIV can live a long, healthy life if they take their daily dose of medication and continue seeing their primary-care providers, Taylor said.

“Young men should not be dying in San Antonio of AIDS, that is a tragedy every time it happens,” she said. “It is a tragedy for the person, for their families. As a provider, it’s horrible to watch because it is avoidable.”

But many of the most high-risk people — young, gay and bisexual men of color — are often “the hardest to reach,” and don’t have as much access to treatment as their counterparts, Taylor said.

“We have had effective HIV treatment for 20 years, people living with HIV should live a normal lifespan,” she added, “and yet we have people dying of AIDS, particularly in the Southern U.S. and right here in San Antonio. And we have to do something about it. It’s just not OK.”

Joel, who didn’t want his full name used because of the stigma, have lived with the virus for half his life. He first learned he had contracted it in 1991, a time when there were some advances in research about the illness and medications to control it. Still, the death toll was high.

Like Hernandez, Joel contracted the virus when he was in his early 20s. In the years that followed, he bounced around, from San Antonio to San Francisco, New York City, Minneapolis and back to San Antonio. He watched friends along the way die from the virus.

“You feel worthless, like you are nobody anymore — that’s what the disease does to you, it strips you of everything” he said. “For years my job was to stay alive. And once I accomplished that
my job was to get back on to the confidence I used to have.

Placed on the four walls of Joel's living room are seven mirrors, ranging from tall and narrow to chunky and square. At the top of each are messages written in large, bold letters, easy to see every morning.

“You matter.” “You care about you.” “Think love, you are worth it.”

For Joel, 50, these are daily reminders to see the beauty in himself that makes life worth the years of pain.

Joel remembers when HIV researchers developed some of the earliest antiretroviral medications, like zidovudine, or AZT, to treat the virus.

Decades later, they have come a long way in developing antiretroviral therapy, or ART, with less severe side effects. Joel, who said he had “been on his deathbed” at times, takes medication daily.

Health-care providers and HIV researchers says it is essential that people with HIV stay on the medication, which lowers their viral load and the chance of spreading the virus. They can become what is called “undetectable.”

This “treatment as prevention” method has proved to be nearly as effective as PrEP in reducing the spread of the virus, Taylor said.

According to a study of 358 gay men in mixed-status relationships released last month from the Kirby Institute in Sydney, Australia, zero HIV negative men contracted the virus from their positive partners, who were kept on routine medication to suppress their viral loads. The study saw no HIV transmission despite 74 percent of the couples having condomless sex throughout the study’s duration.

“If we could get everybody on HIV treatment and undetectable in the U.S., we would not have an HIV epidemic,” Taylor said. “We have the tools to stop HIV, and communities that have focused on getting people tested, engaged in care, treated and undetectable, are communities that have seen huge drops in their HIV epidemics.”

On St. Mary's Street, the stretch known as The Strip, Hernandez is doing his part.

He regularly performs at one of the clubs there as his drag queen persona “Miss Taint.” He begins many of his shows by telling the audience about wearing protection, where to get tested and places to get PrEP.
“You’re not immune to it, and it’s going to happen if you’re not wearing condoms,” Hernandez said. “It could be that one time or it could be that 105th time.”

“You need to be prepared for the worst because life can hit you at any moment.”

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