

New Student Orientation welcomes the Class of 2026 with cherished traditions and new innovations

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The Class of 2026 will be welcomed during a week of New Student Orientation activities running from Monday, Aug. 15, through Sunday, Aug. 21. (Photo provided by the Office of First-Year Experience)

This year's New Student Orientation, hosted by the [Office of First-Year Experience](#), has been designed to create a cohesive and improved experience for new students and their families as they navigate the Tulane campus for the first time. Though there will be an emphasis on resources and information sharing, a lesson learned from prior years is the value of meaningful connections. Much attention will be given to establishing these connections during orientation.

This year, orientation groups will be smaller, consisting of 15 students, which will allow students to build stronger relationships with members of their residence hall.

Students will also spend a day in rotation with their First-Year Seminar class, providing them the opportunity to meet their seminar faculty during orientation.

“Both of these groupings intentionally introduce students to cohorts of their classmates that they will interact with throughout the entire fall semester in an attempt to foster substantive relationships early on in a student’s experience,” said Cristina Lawson, director of First-Year Experience.

Highlights of this year’s New Student Orientation include New Student Skits, which occur on the students’ first nights on campus, Monday, Aug. 15, through Wednesday, Aug. 17, from 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. at McAlister Auditorium. These skits will set the foundation for the orientation by familiarizing students with the multitude of campus resources that are available to them.

Another new component of orientation is the Friends of the First-Year Fest, a resource fair and social event where students will be introduced to staff from Newcomb-Tulane College and Student Affairs. This celebratory event will feature tastings of signature New Orleans dishes such as muffulettas, pralines and Zapp’s potato chips. A [resource booklet](#) will also be distributed to students. The fest will take place on Thursday, Aug. 18, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Academic Quad.

Returning this year is the pre-pandemic tradition of Rites of Passage, which follows the conclusion of the President’s Convocation on Thursday, Aug. 18, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Avron B. Fogelman Arena in the Devlin Fieldhouse. Faculty and staff are encouraged to wear their Tulane green and join First-Year Experience staff outside of Devlin Fieldhouse in forming two lines through which the students will exit to symbolize their “rite of passage.”

Welcome to the Wave is also back as an all-class event on Thursday, Aug. 18, from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the Avron B. Fogelman Arena in the Devlin Fieldhouse. The event will include a [video](#) featuring graduates from the Class of 2022 providing their advice to the first-year students. The event will also provide the opportunity for students to learn about Tulane’s Core Values.

“We want our newest students to walk away from orientation with the knowledge that they are well supported, and that Tulane offers the resources for them to find success on campus, whatever their definition of success,” said Lawson.

To view the entire New Student Orientation schedule, [click here](#).

