

East Texas Baptist University

Spirit Program

Policies & Procedures

2012-2013

Mission

The mission for the East Texas Baptist University Spirit program is to promote school spirit and athletic traditions, motivate and lead the crowd and serve as ambassadors for the university while fostering Christian commitment and care.

Section I Cheerleaders, Dancers, and Mascots

A. Duties and Behaviors

1. The cheerleaders, dancers and mascots will promote spirit and represent the students, alumni, faculty, administration and friends of ETBU while they support the endeavors of athletes who represent the University.
2. The cheerleaders, dancers and mascots will work with other organized spirit groups to promote school spirit and traditions at athletic events and at other University activities. The cheerleaders, dancers and mascots will be called on at various times throughout the year to promote spirit and represent the University at community or public relations appearances as directed by the Spirit Program Director.
3. The cheerleaders, dancers and mascots will properly represent the University at all home games and at designated away games. Anyone smoking, drinking, or behaving improperly while representing the University or while on a University sponsored trip will be subject to immediate disciplinary action from the Office of the Student Affairs and may be further disciplined by the Spirit Program Director (possible sanctions to include immediate removal from the program). Any student who is not in good standing with Student Affairs will be immediately dismissed from the team and will not be allowed to tryout in the future.
4. **Chain of command** - If an issue arises, the team member should first discuss it with their captain. If the matter is unresolved then the Spirit Program Director will work with the member to come to a resolution. If still unresolved then members may have an official appeals process through the Student Affairs department. If a member does not follow this process then they will be removed from the team (Parents are not a part of this process)

B. Responsibilities

1. Cheerleaders, dancers and mascots are responsible for home football games, designated home volleyball games and designated away football game(s) and men and women's home basketball games and tournaments as directed by the Spirit Program Director. The squad will also perform at all pep rallies and spirit events as well as represent the University at various civic and community functions.

C. Qualifications for Spirit Squad Members

1. **Full-Time Student**- All candidates for each squad must be full-time ETBU students at the time of their candidacy. Transfer students must be admitted to ETBU for the fall of 2012. Incoming students must also be admitted to the university prior to the selection process.
2. **GPA Requirement**—Students must have and maintain a current and cumulative minimum grade point average of 1.65 for 1-35 hours and 2.0 for 36+ hours in order to participate in the selection process and to maintain membership in the program.
3. **Transfer Students**- In order to serve as a member of the spirit squads a student who is selected must be fully admitted to ETBU with a current and cumulative grade point average of 2.0 for 36+ hours of credit.
4. **Former Squad Members**- A candidate who has formerly been selected as a member of the ETBU Spirit Program must have satisfactorily fulfilled all obligations to their squad, this includes completion of the term to which they were selected along with fulfillment of specific duties. Any member who does not fulfill these responsibilities (i.e., resigns or is terminated) must have returned all clothing, shoes, and other items given to him/her and will have to petition to the Spirit Program Director to be reinstated for try-outs. The Spirit Program Director reserves the right to deny any member from participating in tryouts based on their past performance and attitude.
5. **Term Commitment**-Candidates must commit to one semester. The term will begin at the time of the Selection Process and will continue until the last day of that semester. Candidates may extend their commitment to include the entire school year.
6. **Eligibility**-Each candidate will have 8 semesters of eligibility and will have to petition the Spirit Program Director for an extension.

D. Meetings, Practices, Performances and Study Hall

1. The cheerleaders, dancers and mascots will meet and/or practice and workout two to three times each week in addition to scheduled performances. Mandatory weekly study hall will be required for each team member. **Meetings, practices, performances, and study halls must take precedence over all other activities.** The only excused absences will be for academic related activities, death in the family, illness, or injury (must have a doctor's note if you are missing more than one event). In regard to illness, all members are expected to be all practices unless they are contagious. Unexcused absences from a practice, game or event may result in being benched from an event as determined by the director/coach. The Spirit Program director will have the final say in individual situations.
2. In the event that a member must be late to, or miss, an official spirit program event due to academic reasons the member must notify the captains and the coach at least one practice in advance. If notified the day of the absence/tardiness then the absence will be unexcused.
3. Every effort is made when scheduling meetings, practices and performances well in advance so members can make appropriate arrangements. However, circumstances often dictate changes in the schedule of events. Members are expected to remain flexible in their planning to accommodate changes such as those caused by the weather, game

schedules, pre- or post-season tournaments, scheduling conflicts or others. As in all cases, the interests of the squad must supersede the interests of individual members.

4. If a cheerleader, dancer or mascot is suspended for a game, they must attend that game and report to the coach, and/or captains who may ask for their assistance.
5. Cell phone use is not allowed during any official program activity, except in the case of an emergency. This includes practices, games, workouts and appearances.
6. Spirit Squad members must demonstrate skills needed to participate in each performance/game as determined by the coach.

E. Tardy/Absence Policy

1. A member will be considered tardy if they show up less than 15 minutes late to an official program activity. This includes practices, games, workouts, appearances and study hall..
2. If a member is more than 15 minutes late to an official program activity they will be considered absent.
3. Consequences for tardiness
 - a) 1st Tardy – Warning
 - b) 2nd Tardy - Conditioning after practice
 - c) 3rd Tardy – Suspended from a game/performance
 - d) 4th Tardy – Indefinite Suspension
4. Consequences for absenteeism
 - a) 1st absence – Miss the next football and/or basketball game
 - b) 2nd absence – Indefinite Suspension

NOTE: If a squad member needs to miss a game, practice, or scheduled event, due to academic obligations, a death in the family, illness, injury, other emergency, or for any other reason that member must notify the coach and captains prior to the event by email and phone.

F. Summer Time Commitment

All Spirit Program members will be required to attend summer camp and participate in work week prior the first week of school.

Summer 2012 mandatory dates for all Spirit Program members will be one week before the official start of school. We will have a private on campus camp for dancers and cheerleaders and mascots.

G. Uniforms and Equipment

1. All uniforms, megaphones, poms, etc. purchased by the University under the Spirit Program budget are the property of the University and must be returned upon completion of the member's term. Members that leave the squad before they have completed their term commitment will have 48 hours to return all university issued items clean and in good repair. It will be the responsibility of the member to pay full price for any lost, damaged, dirty or misplaced items at the time they are due. Failure to do so within the 48 hours will result in an athletic and financial hold being placed on your account. A late fee of 25 dollars per week will be assessed to all members failing to meet the deadlines stated above.

H. Travel

1. **Traveling is a privilege.**
2. Cheerleaders, dancers and mascots may travel to out-of-town football game(s) as determined by the coach with consideration to the budget and opposing team restrictions.

I. Selection Process

In addition to specific selection process procedures for each new potential member the following sections of the ETBU Spirit Program Policies & Procedures, each person desiring to become a member of the ETBU Spirit Program will fulfill the following responsibilities in order to become an eligible candidate.

1. **Tryout Fee and Application-** A non-refundable \$15.00 fee to cover tryout expenses will be required of all potential and returning members before the tryout process begins. Please make checks payable to East Texas Baptist University
2. **Skills Evaluation-** Skills will be evaluated for each candidate.
3. **Squad Selection-**The selection process will conclude after the skills evaluation. A point system will not be used during the process. Therefore, there will be **no scores available to view after the process has concluded**. The overall attitude and ability to work with others as demonstrated through this process, along with the potential to be an outstanding ambassador for ETBU, will also be contributing factors in the final decision. **All decisions are final.** The entire selection process is closed to the public and may not be recorded in any way. No contact should be made with director/coach or any representative of ETBU for one week immediately following the Selection Process. **All decisions are final.** Conflicts with the tryout date will be dealt with on an individual basis. There is no set or magical number of members that will be selected. The director will have the final decision as to the number of members to select for the program. Your performance, attitude, and contribution to the program during the previous season will be taken into consideration during the tryouts process.

J. Fitness and Appearance

1. The ETBU Spirit Program is committed to promoting and fostering healthy lifestyles and eating habits for squad members. Conduct which opposes this philosophy may result in appropriate counseling and/or disciplinary action.
2. Squad members should have sufficient strength and athleticism to perform skills.
3. All Spirit Program members are expected to maintain significant exercise regimens outside of practice during off season.
4. Members are expected to pass fitness assessments and to maintain their physical fitness at all times. Members may be given additional requirements if their personal fitness falls below the acceptable level as determined by coach.
5. The use of any illegal drugs is contrary to the healthy lifestyles supported by the program. Participants in the ETBU Spirit Program are subject to random drug testing.
6. There are no height or weight requirements to be in the Spirit Program but all members are expected to be physically fit, toned, and appropriately proportioned for height and weight. Spirit Program members may not have tattoos exposed during any games, events, practices and or performances. Cheerleaders and dancers may not acquire additional tattoos after they are selected.

7. Males must keep their hair cut short and it may not be styled or colored in a way that is distracting from the overall look of team.
8. Females must keep their hair an acceptable length and it may not be styled or colored in a way that is distracting from the overall look of team.
9. Males must also keep their face neatly shaven at all games, events, practices and/or performances.
10. Females must also keep their personal appearances in a professional manner for all games, events, practices and/or performances.
11. In the event that a squad member changes sizes, it will be his or her responsibility to have his or her uniform altered and paid for or seek another uniform from the coach.

K. Vacancy

1. A replacement to fill a vacancy will be appointed by the director.
2. A member's inability to participate for medical purposes will be determined by documentation from a medical doctor and/or under the advisement from the Athletic Trainer in consultation with the director. If a member is unable to perform the usual tasks of their squad, they may be replaced.
3. Any injuries or accidents acquired during practices or performances must be reported to the director.
4. Injured members must present a valid release from their doctor or trainer before returning to scheduled practices or performances.
5. All members **MUST** carry health insurance or purchase health insurance from the university. A copy will be kept on file with the coach in addition to squad members keeping a copy with them at all times.

L. Safety

The increased popularity and athleticism of collegiate cheerleading has led to more complicated and riskier elements, which has also increased concern and awareness for safety of the participants. East Texas Baptist University employs coaches that are safety certified by the AACCA (American Association of Cheerleader Coaches and Administrators), the governing body for this sport. Safety is an important aspect in the administration of the activities of the Spirit Program. Membership in the East Texas Baptist University Spirit Program involves a variety of gymnastics, motions, partner stunts, rotations, pyramids, dance moves and heights. Thus, participation requires specific set of skills and a high level of fitness. It also involves an amount of danger of personal injury and possibly including death.

M. Insurance and Liability

Being a participant of the Spirit Program has significant risks for injury, some of which are very severe or catastrophic in their nature. ETBU does not maintain comprehensive or group health insurance on Spirit Program members. Spirit Program members are required to maintain comprehensive or group health insurance in order to participate as a member of the squad or related activities such as try-outs, etc. with the express purpose of providing first-dollar or primary medical coverage in the event of injury.

N. Fundraising

Each member of the program will be required to participate in fundraising for the Spirit Program. Individual and group goals will be set and become the responsibility of the member to meet those goals. Fundraising will be kept to a reasonable amount and failure to complete fundraising efforts can lead to the dismissal of the member.

Section II Captain and Co-Captain

1. A captain and co-captain will be selected from each squad to serve in a leadership capacity in cooperation with the director/coach.
2. To apply for positions of captain and co-captain, candidates must meet the following requirements:
 - A. Have one year experience on the squad
 - B. Apply for Leadership
 - C. Interview with Spirit Program Director
 - D. Demonstrate Leadership and Organizational Skills
 - E. Receive a favorable ranking from current and incoming squad members
 - F. Available to meet or email with director during summer months
 - G. Turn in one letter of recommendation from an ETBU staff member
3. The captain and co-captain will meet after Selection Process and throughout the summer to help plan for upcoming activities/events and meet weekly throughout the season with the director/coach.
4. The captain and co captain are expected to be at all scheduled events/games 15 minutes before the team to prepare.
5. The captain will serve as the leader during all athletic events on the field or floor and should be respected as the authority in those situations. The co-captain will assist the captain and will be ready to lead in the absences of the captain.
6. The captain and co-captains behavior inside and outside of “team time” should be exemplary and represent the same values that they would expect from their team. They should conduct themselves at the highest standard while representing university.
7. The captain may have the opportunity to serve as the student assistant to the director/coach if she/he meets the university’s guidelines. If the captain is not eligible to serve as the student assistant then the co-captain may be considered for the position.

Section III Athletic Department Policies

1. Buckley Amendment agreement must be signed by all Spirit Program members.
2. Assumption of Risk Statement and Release Claim agreement must be signed by all Spirit Program members.
3. A yearly general physical examination and ETBU Athletic Packet must be completed and turned in one the assigned date for all Spirit Program members.
4. Sign the East Texas Baptist University Spirit Program Agreement Rights and Privileges policy.

The ETBU Spirit Program Director reserves the right to add/delete or amend the above policies at any time.

***January 30, 2012**

