

Reunion Merchandise and Favors Overview

Merchandise and Favors Overview

Some reunion committees might choose to offer a favor (a merchandise item) to classmates who attend the in-person campus programming. Please note this is completely optional. Committees also have the alternative or additional option of working with the HAA staff liaison and campus partners to offer online on-demand merchandise stores to classmates throughout the year. Management of merchandise and favors may only need to be managed by the Chairs and the Reunion Treasurer in partnership with the HAA staff liaison, but there might be the opportunity for other volunteers to play a role depending on interest from committee members. Having at least two volunteers involved in this process can help to move things forward as key deadlines approach.

Reunion Favors

Reunion favors are a great way to provide your class with a memento of the reunion year. For reunion committees that choose to offer a favor to their class, they have usually offered these to registrants of the in-person campus programming and offered these to the alumni only (not their guests). The cost for the items is built into the flat registration fee that all in-person registrants will pay, so the classmates are indirectly paying for the item when they register.

You can select an item as a reunion favor through either the Harvard COOP or Harvard Student Agencies (HSA). Your HAA staff liaison can connect you with contacts at both vendors so you can explore options with them and ultimately make a product selection from one vendor. Please be sure to copy your staff liaison on all communications with the vendors so they can be in the loop and assist as needed.

Recent classes have also foregone the favor in order to lower overall registration costs, or selected a COOP Gift Card which enables classmates to select their own class merchandise. We strongly advise against choosing size-based apparel (like a jacket, t-shirt, sweatshirt, or vest) as a reunion favor. One-size-fits-all items are best for favors (i.e., hats, mugs, glasses, water bottles, etc.). Your HAA staff liaison can help you determine what might work best given your interests.

You can customize your reunion favor with a class logo. See the Logo Approval section below for more information.

Merchandise Stores

To create a sense of engagement and excitement around your reunion year, consider offering an online store featuring class-branded merchandise through Harvard Student Agencies (HSA). Your HAA staff liaison can connect you to an HSA representative directly if you are thinking of pursuing this.

- They can share suggested items based on past stores. Plan for no more than 15 items in your store (stores with just a few items are also fine!).
- They can share what the pricing might be on possible items.
- Some items might require a minimum number of orders for the item to be produced, while some may be able to be produced individually on-demand. The vendors can share which items fall into each category. Aim to avoid items with high minimums.

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- Be sure to offer items in a range of price points.
- They can create a website where your classmates (and loved ones) can shop and pay for the items (with credit card payment) so you do not need to manage this aspect.
- They will also manage delivery of the items following the orders being placed. Items will be mailed directly to classmates at their home/preferred addresses.
- The process of selecting items, identifying pricing, making design mockups, getting Trademark approval, and launching the website store takes time, so please be in touch with your HAA staff liaison as soon as you are thinking about pursuing a merchandise store.

Note that when reunion classes have offered these stores in the past, it was up to the individual classmates placing orders to pay for their own items (i.e., they were not subsidized or paid for with class treasury funds). This is a recommended approach, but with this in mind, we ask you to be mindful of the pricing of your items vis-a-vis other expected expenses for your classmates in your reunion year, like the registration for your campus programming. It's also recommended to space out the launch of your merchandise store from the launch of your campus programming registration for this reason.

Some reunion committees will choose to use class treasury funds (with the approval of the Chairs and the Class/Reunion Treasurer) to order extra items to be used for raffles/giveaways at virtual and in-person events. Your HAA staff liaison can help you determine the best way to move forward with this if you decide you want to do this. One-size-fits-all items are best for giveaways (i.e., hats, mugs, glasses, water bottles, etc.).

You can customize your store products with a class logo. See the Logo Approval section below for more information.

Logo Approval

You can choose to customize your reunion favor and/or merchandise store products from the COOP and/or HSA with a custom class logo and text. Note that you should have just one logo for the favor and store products (these could be the same, or you could have one for the favor and something different for the store products; HSA is unable to accommodate multiple logos for store products).

If your logo will include one or more of the Harvard College, Radcliffe College, or class-specific shield logos, the shield(s) must also be accompanied by text that either says "Harvard College Class of XXXX," "Harvard-Radcliffe Class of XXXX," or "Harvard and Radcliffe Classes of XXXX" in order to pass review by the Harvard Trademark Office. You may choose to include additional text that states the reunion year (i.e., "50th Reunion").

The logo approval process by the Trademark office can take up to six weeks, accounting for any edits that might be needed, so it is best to start planning this early! Once you finalize your logo design, know what product you'll offer for a favor (and with which vendor), and know what items you'll offer in your merchandise store, your HAA staff liaison can then send all of that information to the Trademark office

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for review. Their review will be of the logo itself and of its application on your selected products from the COOP and/or HSA.

Timeline for Logos, Favors, and Stores

- By the end of November, your logo(s) should be submitted to your staff liaison to share with Trademark. Allowing for up to six weeks and the University's holiday break, this ensures that the logo is approved by the end of January.
- By the middle of December, your list of store items should be shared with HSA. This will then allow for a month of refining and confirming options. You should also select your reunion favor product on this same timeline.
- HSA will then build the stores in February, with the goal of launching them all on or around March 1.
- Your reunion favor order can be placed by your staff liaison in early February.

Gifts

While not required, some reunion committees or leaders may choose to use class treasury funds (with the approval of the Chairs and the Class/Reunion Treasurer) to offer gifts to key speakers (whether they be classmates or faculty) as a thank you. If you are thinking of doing this, your HAA staff liaison can help you determine what might work best and assist with the purchase, so no one needs to be reimbursed (unless volunteers are planning to do this with their own personal funds). Due to Harvard expense policies, gifts to individuals cannot be more than \$99. If you have a merchandise store and/or favors and have extra items, you may choose to use these as the gifts rather than buying additional items.

More information about this work can be found on the separate Budgeting Process and Best Practices document.