

Interpartisan Friendships in College...



... Begin with friendly first encounters

Before college: “Most of my fondest childhood memories involve her and also the other way around.” – Moses

Off-campus: “[I] found a community at a local game store” – Grace

In class: “We got deeper in conversation than most people do the first time meeting.” – Jessica

In residence life: “[We] met the first night, because one thing about [my university] is they really emphasize house community” – Mary

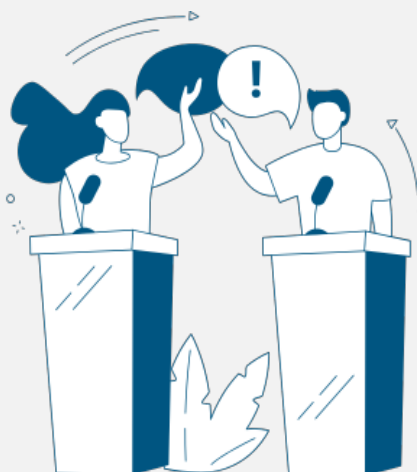
... Take shape in charged political environments with minimal support

“We have different people on different sides who are very vocal, and it does kind of scare me a little bit.” – Katherine

“It did feel very cold around campus [post-election]; it was very, a heavy feeling.” – Margo

“Yeah, I don’t think they care about that [interpartisan friendships].” – Max

“I think indirectly supporting mental health has really helped friendships around campus.” – Chase



... Are bolstered by informal spaces

“It’s nice to be able to...you know, spontaneously see each other, maybe at the library or different buildings.” – Jessica



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... Are challenged by power dynamics and painful tensions

"I have always been the less powerful and not out of the fault of any other. It is just the way I operate because I try so much to hide myself." – Grace

"It just helps sometimes to know that I have friends that are in that same boat with me. And now...I guess it just doesn't feel like he's in that boat anymore." – John

"I can't fully share in that part of my life [faith] with her. You know, she's not gonna understand." – Georgianna

... Entail navigating deep divides using multifaceted boundary-crossing strategies

Letting differences be: "Sometimes we tend to disagree, and we just let it go." – Jack

Relational softening: "I kind of approached that more with curiosity." – Ajay

Civil discourse: "Oh, I see what you're saying, but this is my view on it." – Ellery

Valuing difference: "I think it's very valuable to have someone that can challenge your views...and even sometimes change how you feel about them." – Jessica

Humanizing one another: "[Her] political views do not define her as a human being." – Moses

... Are sustained by shared interests, peer networks, and positive relational qualities

"I really liked her. I liked her vibe, or fun look on life and everything, and we shared the same favorite animal." – Vanessa

"We have a close friendship, like I was saying with the intramural soccer, that's built on something else [other than politics]." – John

"We were all in the same dorm...We were in the Honors Village too, so I think we all were similar-minded in that we were passionate about our studies." – Chase



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“She will fight for what's right, which I admire about her so much.” – Katherine

“I had to speak up for him.” – Max

“She showed me love and that made me love her back.” – Georgianna

... Foster openness, new ways of thinking, and personal and relational strengths

“[I] came out of my shell more.”
– Vanessa

“She helped me with my relationship problems. And how to be more open, and how to be more patient, how to give grace.” – Selena

“It changed my sense of humor.”
– Mary

