

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

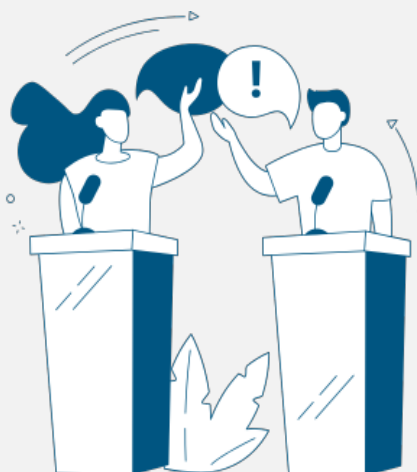
... Take shape in charged political environments with minimal support

“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



... 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





“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

