College House Application Information
2016-2017

The purpose of this document is to provide information that may be helpful to you in the application process.

Important Dates

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Questions from the Application

Below is a preview of the College House application essay questions as well as the information we request from recommenders.

Applicant Essay Questions

- What are you hoping to get out of living in a College House? How will you positively contribute to the College House System?
- One benefit to living in a College House is the ability to design and execute a diverse range of programs including, but not limited to, social, academic, intellectual, and community events. Please provide 2-3 specific examples of how you want to use this opportunity to organize programs for the Bowdoin community. One of these examples must include how you would bring faculty and staff into the Houses.
- A dynamic and successful House is comprised of individuals whose involvement at and beyond Bowdoin spans a vast range. Consider your academic pursuits, social activities, and personal background: how would your unique perspective, passions, and interests influence and contribute to the College House System?
- Based on your experience with the College Houses, what about the Houses would you want to replicate? What would you do differently?
- The Residential Life Office is committed to building College House communities that respect, are eager to learn about, and have a willingness to accept many ways of viewing the world. Please give an example of how you would work to promote diversity of experiences within your House.

Recommendation Information

* We prefer your references complete our online recommendation form due to ease of collection and comparison. However, if they would rather submit your recommendation as a letter or email, that is also acceptable.

About the position: House residents have numerous roles and responsibilities outside of the classroom. They represent the College in the broader Brunswick community and host events on campus for students, faculty and staff, and other community members. Successful selection is based on creative programming ideas and willingness to contribute to an energetic, cooperative team. All House members gain leadership skills that often propel them to other highly visible leadership roles at the College. Please refer below to Program Expectations to learn more about the role.
A strong College House applicant will be:

- Willing to fully participate in all aspects of living in a College House including planning and executing programs and events
- Excited to engage and be part of a diverse, welcoming, and inclusive community
- Motivated to be part of creating and shaping Bowdoin's student culture

College House members will:

- Play an integral role in the creation, development, and coordination of a variety of programs and events
- Promote an inclusive environment in their house and the greater Bowdoin community
- Participate in a unique opportunity to shape the social and academic culture for the Bowdoin community

Deadline: To help ensure a smooth selection process, we would greatly appreciate receiving all recommendations by March 9th, 2016. Please contact the Office of Residential Life to make alternate arrangements if you cannot meet the deadline.

Questions for the Recommenders:

- How well and in what capacity do you know this applicant?
- Life in a College House depends on effective communication, teamwork, and protecting an environment of mutual respect. How would you describe this person’s approach when working within a group? Please be specific.
- Have you seen the applicant demonstrate qualities of leadership? Please be specific.
- Do you have any additional thoughts or concerns about this student joining a College House?
College House Application FAQ

1. Why live in a House? What does a House have to offer?

Living in a College House offers a great opportunity to shape and create the Bowdoin community while living and working with awesome people. House members develop leadership skills and connect to a vast array of resources on and beyond campus. Skills gained while living in a House help residents to launch into other leadership roles at Bowdoin and beyond.

2. What is expected of House members?

Living in a house is an extra-curricular activity. House members are expected to be engaged in programming and building community on campus. This can be many things: hosting campus-wides, affiliate events, talks, guest speakers, film screenings, etc. House members are required to attend Spring Open House, weekly House meetings, attend Summer House Orientation, and assist with First-Year Orientation.

3. Application questions:

   a. What are the sections of the application?

   Application questions include information about you and your block, House preferences, and free-response questions. We also ask for a recommendation letter from a faculty/staff or peer leader who knows you well. After you submit your app you'll be asked to sign up for an interview with your block.

   b. What is a block?

   A block is comprised of you + the person (or people) with whom you are applying. Blocks are capped at 4 people. You may also block as an individual. Your block doesn’t have to consist of people with the same House affiliation as you, but you can only apply to Houses that at least 1 person in the block is affiliated with. You can also opt to be considered individually in the case that your block is not selected.

   c. What’s expected at the block interview?

   A faculty/staff member and student will interview you and your block together for 20 minutes. During your interview you will present a program idea that you would want to carry out while living in a College House. There will also be time for questions.

   d. What does it mean that applications are binding?

   If your block is selected to any House that you apply to as a binding option, you are all required to live there next year. If you indicate that you are willing to apply to ANY HOUSE that decision is also binding.

   e. Can I only apply to houses that people in my block are affiliated with?

   Yes, you can only apply to the houses you or someone in your block is affiliated with (The exception to this rule is if you are applying to Howell House, you may choose to apply there regardless of affiliation). However, the application will give you the option to apply (as a block) to the remaining unaffiliated houses (besides Howell House) in the event that your block’s application is not accepted into an affiliate house. This option would is also binding.

4. Who shouldn’t apply to live in a House?

Living in a House is a ton of fun and can be incredibly rewarding, but it is also a lot of work and responsibility. If you’re not excited about working with a team to plan and execute thoughtful programming for campus, then living in a House isn’t for you.
5. **What happens if I don’t get into a College House?**

We recommend you make simultaneous arrangements for the housing lottery in the event that you do not get accepted into a College House. Decisions are mailed out in early April and the general housing lottery is in Mid-April.

6. **What happens if I am selected for Res Life staff?**

If you accept a position on ResLife, your application will be withdrawn and your block-mates’ applications will be considered without you.

7. **What happens if I am selected for Peer Health?**

You may hold membership on both Peer Health and a College House at the same time.

8. **Are my block mates the same as my roommates?**

No. Once the Houses have been selected, all individual members will receive a lottery number to choose a bedroom. You may choose to room with any of the people accepted into the House.

**Common College House Vocab**

- **College House**: There are 8 College Houses which house anywhere from 22-34 students. We refer to these as College Houses and not “social houses” because as a House you will be required to do much more than host social events. You’ll also be expected to host intellectually engaging programs, community building events, and more.

- **Block**: Group of people you apply with. You may block with up to 3 other people.

- **Block Interview**: The last step of the app process which requires your entire block to attend and present an idea for a program for your future House. The remaining time will be spent asking questions about your interest in the College House System.

- **Binding**: If you are accepted into a House, you must accept the offer and withdraw your name from the general housing lottery in April. This includes if you choose to apply to ANY HOUSE.

- **Programming**: Each House has the resources to plan and throw a variety of intellectual and social events for affiliates and the entire campus. As a House member you will play an active role in planning and executing programs.

- **House Meeting**: Required weekly meeting at the House where you plan events and reflect on the week. These meetings are led by the House officers.

- **House Officer**: Individuals elected to leadership positions in the House (President, Vice President, Programming Director, Communications Director, and Treasurer). All House members are expected to be involved leaders in the House.