

WHAT MATTERS COMMUNITY CROSSOVER

Are you worried about the growing divides over politics, religion, race, gender, and more? Do you want the tools and opportunity to better understand others and communicate across our differences?

The What Matters Community Crossover is a McKeen Center program, in partnership with [Make Shift Coffee House](#), designed for Bowdoin students to learn the [key skills of civic discourse](#) and practice these skills through facilitated conversations on campus and in Richmond, Maine.

Why is this program relevant to me?

Conversations across political ideology, race, gender, religion, and class have become more fraught due to many factors, including polarized social media and a toxic political environment. However, learning and practicing the skills of civic discourse can allow us to listen to others across the divide, communicate our beliefs, and build a foundation for better understanding and, potentially, collaboration. The Community Crossover helps you build these skills to use in personal interactions, in student groups, and in public life.

What is the program commitment?

The program will take place over four sessions in Fall 2021:

- Saturday, 10/30 11a-2p: Student retreat with programming on the Importance and Skills of Civic Discourse, Identity and Civic Discourse, and the History of Richmond, Maine.
- Thursday, 11/4, 7:30-9p: Travel to Richmond, ME for a What Matters & Make Shift Coffee House conversation on 'What should be the role of government in America?'
- Thursday, 11/11, 7:30-9:30p: A What Matters & Make Shift Coffee House conversation held at Bowdoin's campus on 'How should our high schools serve our society?'
- Thursday, 11/18, 7:30-8:30p: Program Reflection

Who will participate at Bowdoin?

Our goal is to have 10 to 20 students from across campus join our cohort. This program is open to every class year. We want diverse students who are engaged in all parts of campus life culturally, politically, and socially. Our main qualification is that you come into this open to listening, sharing, and learning!

Why Richmond, Maine?

Richmond is only a 25-minute drive from Bowdoin, but the demographics of the town differ greatly from Bowdoin's, and even Brunswick's. Our hosts for the Richmond conversation, Enterprise Grange #48, offer a view into an older and more rural American town. Richmond community members are eager to learn what matters to Bowdoin students and hear their experiences as well. Community members will attend both the conversation in their hometown and travel to Bowdoin for the conversation on campus.

How do I apply?

Please access the [What Matters Community Crossover Application here](#). The application is due by Tuesday, October 19 at 11:59p EST. All we want in your application is to briefly learn about you, what you are passionate about (here at Bowdoin or in the greater community), and why you want to participate in this program.

Who can I ask for more information?

Please reach out to Tom Ancona (tancona@bowdoin.edu), Associate Director in the McKeen Center for more information, or to set up a time to talk!

