

# Belonging by Design: BYU Students Share How to Build Connections

We asked first-year and senior BYU students, “What about your BYU experience has contributed to or detracted from your sense of belonging at BYU?” Nearly **2,700 students** shared their thoughts.

Here are the top four things your peers recommend doing to feel a greater sense of belonging at BYU.

## 1 Connect with professors.

Students identified professors as a key contributor to belonging. Professors value students and want to help them succeed and become their best selves. Professors were especially important for students who struggled to feel like they belonged at BYU. So, go talk to one of your professors about school, their research, your interests, anything!

*“Realizing that most faculty are there to help and have your best interests at heart, and learning to be comfortable interacting with them more [has contributed to my sense of belonging].”*

*“I feel seen when I talk with my professors.”*

## 2 Love everyone and find ways to serve.

Students said a loving, welcoming campus community is important for promoting covenant belonging. BYU is diverse, and everyone wants to be valued for their whole selves. Students suggested belonging increases when we serve each other by (a) respecting other’s unique gifts and experiences; (b) talking to everyone, especially those who differ from you; (c) serving someone in need, like helping with course work; and (d) inviting others to join activities with you.

*“When I have reached out to others in a caring way, I’ve felt very much a sense of belonging. I’ve been able to offer encouragement and accept encouragement.”*

## 3 Connect with peers.

Connecting with others plays a big part in covenant belonging at BYU, but this does not happen without effort. First-year students said how important wards, dorms, and campus activities are. Seniors said finding their major led to connecting with people with similar interests. Do the work to connect – try new clubs, go to events, and talk to people in your classes and ward.

*“Connections with other students helped me to feel like I belong at BYU. I’m glad I pushed myself out of my comfort zone to make these connections.”*

## 4 Embrace BYU’s spiritual foundation.

What sets BYU apart from all other universities is its foundation in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Students who lean into BYU’s unique mission feel a greater sense of belonging. Your peers recommended going to devotionals, intentionally connecting your academic and spiritual learning, and finding simple ways to share your beliefs with others.

*“I often think about how lucky I am to be able to attend a university where we are not only allowed but encouraged to speak openly about our religion and make connections to it with our more secular learning. It greatly enhances my classes and helps bring people together.”*