



# CONVERSATION PARTNER PROGRAM FALL 2023 HANDBOOK



AFFILIATED WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO



UNIVERSITY OF  
WATERLOO

# WELCOME!

We welcome you to the Fall 2023 Conversation Partner Program. This handbook provides useful information such as possible conversation topics, ideas for in-person activities on campus and around Waterloo, and a reminder of the CPP expectations.

Please read this carefully. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Renison Student Experience and Housing team by email at [ren-cpp@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:ren-cpp@uwaterloo.ca).

## PURPOSE OF THE CONVERSATION PARTNER PROGRAM

The program is designed to provide you and your partner with an intercultural experience while making a new friend. This one-on-one program will allow you to learn about one another's culture. International students will be able to practice their English!

## EXPECTATIONS

- Meet weekly and complete 20 hours by the end of the term.  
**Note:** Students studying in the APPLS or SWK courses may have a 12-hour time commitment. Please speak with your partner to learn what the requirements are for each of you.
- Meet in person whenever possible, except when illness or other extenuating circumstances require you to meet online via Zoom, Whatsapp, or other online platforms. As long as more than 60% of your meetings are in person, some may be online.
- You and your conversation partner are responsible for staying connected with each other and arranging meeting times. Please respond to your partner's messages or emails within 24 hours if possible. You may want to speak with each other about a preferred method of communication. For example, perhaps you both would prefer to use Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, WeChat, etc.
- Please be considerate of each other. If, at any time, you are unable to meet with your partner please let them know in advance.
- You and your partner are responsible for submitting weekly hour submissions through the log hours button on the CPP website.



- You will receive an email from the Conversation Partners Program within the first couple of weeks of the program as a progress check-in.
- If, for any reason, you are unable to continue with this program or have any concerns about your pairing, please do not hesitate to contact [ren-cpp@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:ren-cpp@uwaterloo.ca)

## CONVERSATION PARTNER PROGRAM CODE OF CONDUCT

I agree to commit to the following:

- To meet with my partner for 1-2 hours per week and maintain contact with my partner regularly throughout the term
- To respond to my partner (whether or not I can attend a meeting) and reschedule a new meeting with my partner if I cannot attend
- To create a safe and accountable environment where the personal boundaries and privacy of my partner is respected
- To complete the online mid-term check-in and end-of-term surveys promptly once invited to by the Renison Student Experience and Housing team
- To notify the Renison Student Experience and Housing team immediately if there are any concerns

## CONVERSATION IDEAS

**Food** – Discuss different food or show some pictures of dishes you’ve had during the week. Show each other what a typical day is like. Teach your partners how to order at a restaurant.

**Coins** –Show each other your own currencies and explain what each coin is called.

**Videos/pictures of some of your favourite places in the city** – Share some photos or give a “tour” around your city/neighbourhood.

**Folklore** –Share some famous or well-known mythology stories or cultural superstitions.



Games – Play games online or show each other how to play any typical card games, etc., that you would play with your family and friends growing up.

Family – Discuss the typical family size in your culture. How many siblings (brothers and sisters) do each of you have? How do you address family members?

Transportation – Share the different modes of transportation. How do you use it? What kinds of different transportation are there?



Careers in each of your countries – Talk about the most common careers in your countries. Which career path would you like to take?

Education systems – Identify any differences in education systems you and your partner have experienced. What age do you begin and finish school?

Holidays – Share the big holidays in your country. How much time do you have off for those holidays? How do you celebrate those holidays?

Hometowns – Have a conversation about the most famous thing in your hometown. Where should you visit in Kitchener Waterloo, or in your hometown?

Typical activities that you would do in each season – Highlight the typical winter activities, fall activities, summer activities in your country. What activities do you enjoy doing in the different seasons?

Sports – Introduce your partner to your favourite sport. What sports do you have in common?

Hobbies – Introduce your partner to activities that students normally like to do in their free time. What hobbies do you enjoy?

Music – Show new music to your partner and share your favourite artists with each other. What groups or singers are popular in your country?

Travel and vacation – Share your favourite vacation spots. What is your traveling style?

How houses/buildings look like in your city – Discuss what a typical house looks like. Architecture? How many floors does a typical house have?

## CONVERSATION ACTIVITIES

Click on the hyperlinks below for more info about these activities.

- [Table Talk](#) – Table Talk is a game of conversations.
- [Twenty Questions](#) – The objective of the game is to guess the person, place or thing in 20 questions or less.
- [Just a Minute](#) – Speak on any given subject for a minute.
- [Presentation](#) – Create a fun presentation about your life story or other interesting topics and share it with your partner.
- [Playlist](#) – Create a Spotify playlist with your partner and include your favourite music.
- [Renison Events](#) – The Renison Student Experience and Housing team offer events that are open to you and your partner.
- Board Games – The Renison Ministry Centre (Room 1108) lends out free board games that you can help yourself to at any time to play. You may also borrow board games from the Renison Lusi Wong Library with a WatCard.



## POSSIBLE IN-PERSON ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Meet for coffee/tea at a local café
- Take a walk on campus or at a nearby park
- Meet at a cinema to watch an English-language movie (Tuesdays are cheap ticket days at Cineplex!)
- Visit the St Jacobs Farmer's Market
- Walk around campus and introduce each other to your favourite study spots or most interesting campus buildings

- Visit a mall and discuss shopping in different countries
- Explore Uptown Waterloo
- Attend a student event at Renison or any part of the University of Waterloo

...and many more!

If you find other activities that you particularly enjoy, feel free to let us know at [ren-cpp@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:ren-cpp@uwaterloo.ca), so we can add them to this list for future participants!