



# PART 1: ADVISING AND MENTORING

# Next Gen

# STUDENTS AT HARVARD

"Administrators and faculty members desperately need a new language to characterize minority, low-income and first-generation students -- one that frees us from dependence on labels such as "disadvantaged"...Adopting an asset-oriented view of all students, including the big three, can be accomplished by overtly acknowledging and articulating the assets that these students possess. This does not require wishful thinking or mind tricks. It is increasingly evident that minority, low-income and first-generation students possess experiences and characteristics that make them prime candidates for what a 21st-century college student needs to be."

-Byron P. White, Ed.D.  
Associate Provost of Urban Research and University Engagement, UNC Charlotte

## INVESTING IN "FIRSTS" = SUPPORTING THE "NEXT"

### THE MINDSET



~15%  
of Harvard undergraduates  
are NextGen students

Who are Next Gen Students?

Next Gen are Harvard undergraduate and graduate students who are the first in their families to pursue a degree in the U.S., and/ or are from historically underserved, underrepresented, and under-resourced backgrounds.

The "Next Gen" term can be most closely associated with the demographic delineation "First-Generation and/or Low-Income (FGLI)"; however, given that the FGLI student population is on the rise (making up about 20% of the current college-going population), "Next Gen" signals that these students are the next generation of leaders who will impact our future society.

### IMPROVED TEACHING, MENTORSHIP & ADVISING PRACTICES

#### START WITH THESE 3 STEPS:

#### 1 ASK OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

Next Gen backgrounds can be complex. Ask open-ended questions instead of making assumptions to gain greater insight into students' experience. Doing so will help you guide students toward relevant resources & supports that match their needs.



Before jumping into academic topics, my professor always asked questions about my background and things I cared about. This made it clear that I had a person at Harvard that genuinely cared about my success beyond academics and made me feel like I was not alone on campus.

- Haeyun Lee, Senior Undergraduate in Neuroscience.

#### 2 SHARE YOUR STORY

Share your story and passion for your work to open untapped opportunities for authentic connection and engagement.



"When my professor shared what brought her into education and created a brave space for us to share our own stories it was very impactful. In a class of 45+ people she made it a point for all of us to be seen.

-Eliza Catalino, Masters of Education in School Leadership Program.

#### 3 FIGHT INVISIBILITY

Scan your syllabus for opportunities to include material and readings that represent diverse backgrounds, including those of Next Gen students, communities, and experiences.



"Seeing an important part of my identity reflected in my professor's reading assignments motivated me to excel academically in her class. It was a clear message that I mattered "

-Danny Rojas, Doctoral Candidate in Education Leadership

## MENTORING THE NEXT GEN COMMUNITY

Leverage these tips to enhance your mentoring relationship with Next Gen Students

BE A GOOD LISTENER



- Be curious and ask questions.
- Be aware of your body language and its impact
- Repeat-back what you hear

- In closing conversations remind students how they are contributing to the Harvard Community by identifying one attribute of resilience (e.g. self-awareness, empathy, persistence, etc.)
- It's okay to say "I don't know" and model how to find answers. This reminds students that faculty are also learners and highlights that learning (and expertise) is never static--it's an ongoing process.

REINFORCE BELONGING



MAKE A CONNECTION



- Introduce students to others who can support their journey and provide additional perspectives and opportunities.
- Discuss why expanding student networks can be a powerful tool for life-long success.

### RESOURCES

Check out rest of the Next Gen Digital Toolkit series:

- Teaching for Next Gen Student Success
- 3 Things You Can Do Now To Support Next Gen Students

Harvard Teaching & Advising Tools:

- HGSE Instructional Moves
- Bok Center for Teaching & Learning: Inclusive Teaching
- First-Generation Harvard Alumni SIG: Best Practices for Mentoring



SCAN ME