PART 1: ADVISING AND MENTORING
Next Gen STUDENTS AT HARVARD

INVESTING IN “FIRSTS” = SUPPORTING THE “NEXT”

The Mindset

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.

Investing in “Firsts” = Supporting the “Next”

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

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of Harvard undergraduates

are NextGen students

~15%

Mentoring the next gen community

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

Be a good listener

- In closing conversations remind students how they are contributing to the Harvard Community
- Be curious and ask questions.
- Be aware of your body language and its impact
- Repeat-back what you hear
- Be respectful back when you hear

Be a good observer

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

Be a good connector

- Identify one attribute of resilience (e.g. self-awareness, empathy, persistence, adaptability, etc.)
- Ask open ended questions
- Share your story and passion for your work to open untapped opportunities for authentic connection and engagement.
- In order to be seen and heard they need to build meaningful relationships, but when they feel invisible it’s hard to engage. They need to feel respected.
- Fight invisibility

- 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, Master’s of Education in School Leadership Program.
- “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.

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

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IMPROVED TEACHING, MENTORSHIP & ADVISING PRACTICES

1. ASK OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS

2. SHARE YOUR STORY

3. FIGHT INVISIBILITY

RESOURCES

HGSE Instructional Moves

Teaching for Next Gen Student Success

3 Things You Can Do Now To Support Next Gen Students

Inclusive Teaching

Best Practices for Mentoring

Created by Danny Rojas, Shandra Jones & Becca Bassett | Next Gen Initiative | nextgeninitiative_cs@harvard.edu | https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/nextgen

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