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A Glimpse of the HGSE Community
Dear Prospective Applicant:

At the Harvard Graduate School of Education, we strive to be a place that supports and benefits from the perspectives of each member of our community. We aspire to create an intellectually vibrant learning environment in which all people — regardless of race, ethnicity, immigration status, gender identity, sexuality, ability, age, socioeconomic background, political views, religious beliefs, or any other element of who they are — are heard and valued. As our authentic selves, we aspire to be a place where we question conventional wisdom and assumptions; engage in robust debate in the quest to advance our knowledge and understanding; and work to remain united, despite our different approaches and philosophies, in our shared respect for each other and in our faith in the power of education to change the world.

For our shared success, it is critical that you feel like you fully belong and can equitably access the extraordinary opportunities at HGSE. Through our vast array of student organizations and programs, we know you will find the resources and supports you need to thrive. Through our outstanding faculty, staff, and student body, we know you will meet trusted mentors and colleagues who will help to sustain your success and expand your vision for the future. At the same time, we also invite and encourage you to share your own gifts and talents to help make HGSE, and the Harvard University community more generally, a better place for all people.

Having a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community is central to our collective efforts to imagine, create, and support greater educational opportunities around the world. I hope you will join us in this work.

BRIDGET TERRY LONG
Dean
Saris Professor of Education and Economics
Harvard Graduate School of Education
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HGSE students come from small towns and big cities, from across the street and across the globe. They possess a wide range of educational and professional experiences, and represent a seemingly endless variety of personal, socioeconomic, racial, religious, and political backgrounds.

At HGSE, they come together to form a community that not only learns from one another, but lifts each other up; supports, sustains, and energizes each other; and is committed to making sure that every member of our community can thrive.
HGSE enables people to find and build community, which was very important for me as a student of color. I needed people who looked and talked like me, who were from similar backgrounds, in order to be successful and thrive. HGSE provided the support and encouragement for me to build that community. As a result, I could really be myself here.

HGSE offers an abundance of opportunities for students to connect with people of similar backgrounds and experiences, including student organizations, cultural events, and other social and academic activities.
HGSE increases your ability to connect with people across the school, not just the people you’d normally interact with. In my time on campus, I was part of the student council, HIVE (Harvard GSE Innovation & Ventures in Education), and QueerEd, and found support and the free exchange of ideas in everything I’ve been involved in.

"Whether you’re an activist or an entrepreneur, an educator or researcher, you will find the resources to propel your career forward and a community of supportive friends and colleagues that will sustain you through your academic experience and beyond."
I was concerned that HGSE would be a cutthroat environment where I might not be able to keep up with the rigorous academics. But all of my fears diminished within my first two weeks on campus. The professors are very invested in making sure you get the best education HGSE can give, and my fellow colleagues have greatly contributed to my academic, professional, and personal growth."

With the education and support our students receive, they inevitably grow — both personally and professionally — and develop the confidence to follow their passions and turn their visions into reality.
Because I am 20 years older than most of my colleagues at HGSE, I feared I would not fit in with my classmates because of the age difference. Happily, I was wrong about that. The Higher Education Program cohort has been wonderful, and I have relationships with some of my classmates that will last the rest of my life.

BRIAN MITCHELL | Ed.M.
Three words that describe me: Dad, Lifelong-Learner, Doer

HGSE students come from a wide range of academic, professional, and personal backgrounds, which helps to create a dynamic learning environment and a supportive community.
I was one of the only students from a low socioeconomic background at my undergraduate college, and was afraid this would also be the case at HGSE. While students from poor backgrounds tend to be a small group in elite spaces, I found that people at HGSE were eager to support me and help me identify and develop the things I felt were missing from my experience.

Our students come from a wide range of backgrounds and represent a great variety of perspectives and interests. Wherever you come from — and wherever you want your life and career to go — you’ll find an inclusive and encouraging environment at HGSE and all the resources you need to achieve success.
The HGSE community is very diverse and values so many different things. I discovered I can bring my whole self to this environment. I am black and gay, and every part of who I am is honored; my voice is heard and valued. And there have been so many opportunities for me to connect with people who have similar opinions and beliefs.

CORNELIUS LEE  |  Ed.M.
Three words that describe me: Educator, Leader, Empathizer

HGSE values every student voice. Classrooms and other safe spaces provide an open and accepting environment for students to speak their minds and engage in a free exchange of different ideas.
CREATE CONNECTIONS, PURSUE PASSIONS, LIVE DREAMS

The breadth and depth of student organizations and events at HGSE is testament to our commitment to ensuring that every aspect of your HGSE experience is fulfilling. If our existing initiatives do not meet your wants and needs, we encourage you to create your own.