

The Section Experience

“The tight friendships and relationships that develop from the section structure are what meant the most to me. I am amazed at how much of what I learned through the section experience applies to what I am doing...(it has) opened my mind to the real challenges facing business.” Mike Thomas, MBA ‘97

When students enter Harvard Business School they are assigned to a “section” – a group of approximately 80 students with whom they will complete the first year curriculum. By taking classes together, working on projects as a team and socializing with classmates, the section serves as the center of intellectual and social life, and is one of the most formative and defining experiences at HBS.

Ask most HBS alums and they’ll tell you that it was here that they made life-long friends and built a network of business contacts...developed leadership skills by representing their section in the Student Association...discovered new ways of looking at the world.

You’ll also hear most alums say that the time spent in their section was a transformational experience that helped them become the people that they are today.

Every student gets something unique and profoundly positive out of the section experience: for some, it is an opportunity to meet and work with people from every corner of the globe; for others, a chance to test new ideas, pursue a dream, or reevaluate career goals and personal values.

In fact, the late night study sessions, the time spent just getting to know one another over a cup of coffee at the Student Center, and the group meetings to decipher a case before class are such meaningful experiences that the section parties at HBS reunions are some of the most popular events – a testament to the strength and permanence of the bonds that are formed over the course of the year.