

Academic Year 2021 – 2022.

Richard J. Light

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Richard Light is the Carl H. Pforzheimer Professor of Teaching and Learning. His Ph.D. is from Harvard in Statistics. Light has been asked by five Harvard presidents over the past twenty five years, Derek Bok, Neil Rudenstine, Larry Summers, Drew Faust, and now Larry Bacow, to explore ways to improve the undergraduate experience both at Harvard and also for a diverse group of other, quite different colleges. To accomplish this he created the Harvard Assessment Seminars, a consortium of leaders from 25 colleges and universities, with the common goal to carry out research on enhancing college effectiveness.

The Harvard Assessment Seminars has led Light to create and co-chair several additional projects. One is the “Forum for Excellence and Innovation in Higher Education.” This activity brings together sixteen excellent campuses and their leaders to try innovations and to rigorously assess their impact on students’ learning. Second, Light recently created and Chairs the Harvard Higher Education Leaders Forum, that brings together rising future campus leaders each year for discussion and debate about changing campus needs. Third, Light has organized Deans and campus leaders from Harvard, Brown, Duke and Georgetown for a long-term project. The group is working collaboratively to explore and enhance the experiences of First Generation College Students, especially at highly selective campuses. This effort has focused on enhancing First Generation student success both inside and outside of the classroom. It will continue through 2022.

Light currently has a new book completed with former HGSE graduate student advisee Allison Jegla, called “Becoming a Great University” to be published by Princeton University Press in 2022. Light is author of *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds*. This book won The Stone Award for best book of the year on education and society. It has become one of the three best selling books in the 100-year history of the Harvard University Press. He is coauthor of *Summing Up: The Science of Reviewing Research* with David Pillemer; and he is co-author of *By Design: Planning Research on Higher Education* (with Judith Singer and John Willett, both also published by Harvard Univ. Press). He served on the Harvard Business School External Visiting Committee. He has been Chairman of the Panel on Youth for the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C., has served as the first elected President of the American Evaluation Association, and as a member of the National Boards of the U. S. Government Accountability Office and the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education. Light is an Elected Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of The National Academy of Education. He has won the Paul Lazarsfeld Award for distinguished contributions to science, and was named by Vanderbilt University’s Chancellor’s Lecture Series as one of America’s great teachers.