

# [***Claudine Gay Named Harvard s First Black President Here s What To Know About Her***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:673K-CB41-DXVP-52TC-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 486 words

**Byline:** Ty Roush, Forbes Staff

**Highlight:** Gay will also become the second woman in the role.

**Body**

**Topline**

Harvard University named Claudine Gay as its 30th president in anannouncementThursday, following Lawrence Bacow s earlierdecisionto step down from the position, making her the school s first Black president in its nearly 400-year history.

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Claudine Gay was named Harvard's first Black president Thursday.

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**Key Facts**

Gay, who has served as dean of Harvard s Faculty of Arts and Sciences since 2018, will assume the role on July 1, 2023.

Gay is also the second woman to hold the position after Drew Faust, a former historian, stepped down in 2018 after an 11-year tenure.

Penny Pritzker, a fellow at the university and lead for its presidential search committee, said Gay will be an inspiring president for all of Harvard after she previously taught courses focusing on racial and ethnic ***politics*** in the U.S., democratic citizenship and Black ***politics*** in the post-Civil Rights era.

Gay is a leading scholar of political behavior, specifically her research into how the election of minority officeholders affects public perception of government and how housing mobility programs affect political participation for the poor,accordingto the university.

Controversy arose after Gay placed professor John Comaroff on academic leave as he faced sexual harassment allegations, which weredisputedby some faculty members in a letter to Gay in February, though some retracted their support of Comaroff after three women filedlawsuitsagainst him, according to the**Harvard Crimson**(Comaroff has since publicly denied the allegations).

Gay s appointment comes amid an ongoing Supreme Courtreviewof the university s consideration of race in its admissions process, which could rule jeopardize affirmative action at the school, among others,according to the**New York Times**.

**Surprising Fact**

Five of the eight Ivy League schools will now be led by women, asDartmouthand the University ofPennsylvaniaappointed women in July, while Brown and Cornell are led by Christina Paxson and Martha Pollack, respectively.

**Key Background**

Gay received her bachelor s degree from Stanford University in 1992 before receiving a Ph.D. in government from Harvard in 1998. She then became a tenured associate professor at Stanford before returning to Harvard as a professor of government in 2006. She also serves as vice president of the Midwest Political Science Association, anorganizationfounded to improve studies surrounding political science and its teaching, and as thefounderof the Inequality In America Initiative. Harvard noted Gay s research accomplishments addressing American political behavior, including voter turnout and the ***politics*** of race and identity, in its announcement.

**Further Reading**

As Supreme Court Considers Affirmative Action s Future, Legacy Admissions Also Need To End (**Forbes**)

Claudine Gay To Be Harvard s 1st Black President, Second Woman(**AP**)

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