The University of Pennsylvania, commonly known as Penn, has a long and storied history that dates back to the 18th century. The university was founded by Benjamin Franklin in 1740, with the goal of providing education to young men who were not able to afford it. The original name of the university was the Academy of Philadelphia.

In 1751, the Academy of Philadelphia was renamed the College of Philadelphia, and it became the first institution of higher learning in the United States to offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees. In 1779, the college was renamed the University of the State of Pennsylvania, and it became the first university in the United States.

Throughout its early history, Penn was a pioneer in many areas of higher education. It was one of the first universities in the United States to offer courses in modern languages, natural sciences, and political economy. It was also the first university to establish a medical school, which opened in 1765.

In the 19th century, Penn continued to grow and expand. It established several new schools, including the School of Engineering and Applied Science, the Wharton School of Business, and the School of Veterinary Medicine. The university also played a major role in the development of American education policy, and it was a leader in the movement to establish a system of public education in the United States.

During the 20th century, Penn continued to build on its reputation as a world-class institution of higher learning. It established several new research centers and institutes, including the Penn Institute for Biomedical Informatics and the Penn Center for Neurodegenerative Disease Research. It also became a leader in the field of computer science, and it played a major role in the development of the Internet. [ENIAC](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ENIAC), the first general-purpose electronic computer, was born at Penn in 1946.

Today, Penn is one of the most respected and prestigious universities in the world. It is a member of the Ivy League, a group of eight elite universities in the United States, and it is consistently ranked as one of the top universities in the world. The university is home to over 25,000 students and employs over 4,000 faculty members. Its alumni include a number of notable figures, including eight signers of the United States Declaration of Independence, 12 Nobel laureates, and numerous heads of state, CEOs, and other leaders in various fields.

[Francis Hopkinson](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Hopkinson), signed the [Declaration of Independence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Declaration_of_Independence" \o "United States Declaration of Independence) and designed the first official [American flag](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_flag" \o "American flag).

[George Clymer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Clymer), [Founding Father](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Founding_Fathers_of_the_United_States" \o "Founding Fathers of the United States); early advocate for complete independence from [Britain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Great_Britain" \o "Kingdom of Great Britain).

[Donald Trump](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Donald_Trump), [45th](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidency_of_Donald_Trump) president of the United States.

[Elon Musk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elon_Musk), a founder, CEO or both of all of: [PayPal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PayPal" \o "PayPal),[[460]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Pennsylvania#cite_note-He_Won't_Back_Down:_Elon_Musk-473) [Tesla](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tesla,_Inc." \o "Tesla, Inc.),[[461]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Pennsylvania#cite_note-knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu-474) [SpaceX](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SpaceX" \o "SpaceX),[[462]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Pennsylvania#cite_note-SpaceX_Leadership:_Elon_Musk-475) [OpenAI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/OpenAI" \o "OpenAI), [The Boring Company](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Boring_Company" \o "The Boring Company), [Neuralink](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neuralink" \o "Neuralink) and [Twitter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter" \o "Twitter).

[Warren Buffett](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_Buffett), chairman and CEO of [Berkshire Hathaway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berkshire_Hathaway" \o "Berkshire Hathaway).

[Drew Gilpin Faust](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drew_Gilpin_Faust), 28th president of [Harvard University](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harvard_University" \o "Harvard University).

Penn is well-known for its research programs in a wide range of fields, including medicine, business, engineering, social sciences, and humanities. It is home to numerous research centers and institutes, such as the Penn Institute for Biomedical Informatics, the Wharton Risk Management and Decision Processes Center, and the Penn Center for Neurodegenerative Disease Research.

Claudia Cohen Hall, formerly Logan Hall, home of the College of Arts and Sciences and former home of the Wharton School and originally, the medical school.

In addition to its academic programs, Penn also has a strong tradition of community engagement and service. The university is committed to providing opportunities for students to engage in service and volunteer work both on and off campus. It has partnerships with a variety of community organizations and offers a range of community service programs, including the Penn Volunteers in Public Service program and the Penn Center for Community Health Workers.

Finally, Penn's campus is a beautiful and historic place to study. It features a mix of traditional and modern architecture, with buildings ranging from the historic College Hall, which was built in 1872, to the modern Annenberg Public Policy Center, which was completed in 2009. The campus also includes several parks and open spaces, as well as numerous dining and shopping options.