

Established originally by the Massachusetts legislature and soon thereafter named for John Harvard (its first benefactor), Harvard is the United States' oldest institution of higher learning, and the Harvard Corporation (formally, the President and Fellows of Harvard College) is its first chartered corporation. Although never formally affiliated with any denomination, the early College primarily trained Congregationalist and Unitarian clergy. Its curriculum and student body were gradually secularized during the 18th century, and by the 19th century Harvard had emerged as the central cultural establishment among Boston elites. Following the American Civil War, President Charles W. Eliot's long tenure (1869–1909) transformed the college and affiliated professional schools into a modern research university; Harvard was a founding member of the Association of American Universities in 1900. James Bryant Conant led the university through the Great Depression and World War II and began to reform the curriculum and liberalize admissions after the war. The undergraduate college became coeducational after its 1977 merger with Radcliffe College.

Harvard is a large, highly residential research university. The nominal cost of attendance is high, but the University's large endowment allows it to offer generous financial aid packages. It operates several arts, cultural, and scientific museums, alongside the Harvard Library, which is the world's largest academic and private library system, comprising 79 individual libraries with over 18 million volumes. Harvard's alumni include eight U.S. presidents, several foreign heads of state, 62 living billionaires, 335 Rhodes Scholars, and 242 Marshall Scholars. To date, some 150 Nobel laureates, 18 Fields Medalists and 13 Turing Award winners have been affiliated as students, faculty, or staff.

The University is organized into eleven separate academic units—ten faculties and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study—with campuses throughout the Boston metropolitan area: its 209-acre (85 ha) main campus is centered on Harvard Yard in Cambridge, approximately 3 miles (5 km) northwest of Boston; the business school and athletics facilities, including Harvard Stadium, are located across the Charles River in the Allston neighborhood of Boston and the medical, dental, and public health schools are in the Longwood Medical Area. Harvard's \$37.6 billion financial endowment is the largest of any academic institution.

Harvard was formed in 1636 by vote of the Great and General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. It was initially called "New College" or "the college at New Towne". In 1638, the college became home for North America's first known printing press, carried by the ship John of London. In 1639, the college was renamed Harvard College after deceased clergyman John Harvard, who was an alumnus of the University of Cambridge. He had left the school £779 and his library of some 400 books. The charter creating the Harvard Corporation was granted in 1650.

In the early years the College trained many Puritan ministers.[citation needed] (A 1643 publication said the school's purpose was "to advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity, dreading to leave an illiterate ministry to the churches when our present ministers shall lie in the dust".) It offered a classic curriculum on the English university model—■many leaders in the colony had attended the University of Cambridge—■but conformed Puritanism. It was never affiliated with any particular denomination, but many of its earliest graduates went on to become clergymen in Congregational and Unitarian churches.

Throughout the 18th century, Enlightenment ideas of the power of reason and free will became widespread among Congregationalist ministers, putting those ministers and their congregations in tension with more traditionalist, Calvinist parties.:1–4 When the Hollis Professor of Divinity David Tappan died in 1803 and the president of Harvard Joseph Willard died a year later, in 1804, a struggle broke out over their replacements. Henry Ware was elected to the chair in 1805, and the liberal Samuel Webber was appointed to the presidency of Harvard two years later, which signaled the changing of the tide from the dominance of traditional ideas at Harvard to the dominance of liberal, Arminian ideas (defined by traditionalists as Unitarian ideas).:4–5:24

In 1846, the natural history lectures of Louis Agassiz were acclaimed both in New York and on the campus at Harvard College. Agassiz's approach was distinctly idealist and posited Americans' "participation in the Divine Nature" and the possibility of understanding "intellectual existences". Agassiz's perspective on science combined observation with intuition and the assumption that a person can grasp the "divine plan" in all phenomena. When it came to explaining life-forms, Agassiz resorted to matters of shape based on a presumed archetype for his evidence. This dual view of knowledge was in concert with the teachings of Common Sense Realism derived from Scottish philosophers Thomas Reid and Dugald Stewart, whose works were part of the Harvard curriculum at the time. The popularity of Agassiz's efforts to "soar with Plato" probably also derived from other writings to which Harvard students were exposed, including Platonic treatises by Ralph Cudworth, John Norris and, in a Romantic vein, Samuel Coleridge. The library records at Harvard reveal that the writings of Plato and his early modern and Romantic followers were almost as regularly read during the 19th century as those of the "official philosophy" of the more empirical and more deistic Scottish school.

Charles W. Eliot, president 1869–1909, eliminated the favored position of Christianity from the curriculum while opening it to student self-direction. While Eliot was the most crucial figure in the secularization of American higher education, he was motivated not by a desire to secularize education, but by Transcendentalist Unitarian convictions. Derived from William Ellery Channing and Ralph Waldo Emerson, these convictions were focused on the dignity and worth of human nature, the right and ability of each person to perceive truth, and the indwelling God in each person.

James Bryant Conant (president, 1933–1953) reinvigorated creative scholarship to guarantee its preeminence among research institutions. He saw higher education as a vehicle of opportunity for the talented rather than an entitlement for the wealthy, so Conant devised programs to identify, recruit, and support talented youth. In 1943, he asked the faculty make a definitive statement about what general education ought to be, at the secondary as well as the college level. The resulting Report, published in 1945, was one of the most influential manifestos in the history of American education in the 20th century.

Women remained segregated at Radcliffe, though more and more took Harvard classes. Nonetheless, Harvard's undergraduate population remained predominantly male, with about four men attending Harvard College for every woman studying at Radcliffe. Following the merger of Harvard and Radcliffe admissions in 1977, the proportion of female undergraduates steadily increased, mirroring a trend throughout higher education in the United States. Harvard's graduate schools, which had accepted females and other groups in greater numbers even before the college, also became more diverse in the post-World War II period.

Harvard's 209-acre (85 ha) main campus is centered on Harvard Yard in Cambridge, about 3 miles (5 km) west-northwest of the State House in downtown Boston, and extends into the surrounding Harvard Square neighborhood. Harvard Yard itself contains the central administrative offices and main libraries of the university, academic buildings including Sever Hall and University Hall, Memorial Church, and the majority of the freshman dormitories. Sophomore, junior, and senior undergraduates live in twelve residential Houses, nine of which are south of Harvard Yard along or near the Charles River. The other three are located in a residential neighborhood half a mile northwest of the Yard at the Quadrangle (commonly referred to as the Quad), which formerly housed Radcliffe College students until Radcliffe merged its residential system with Harvard. Each residential house contains rooms for undergraduates, House masters, and resident tutors, as well as a dining hall and library. The facilities were made possible by a gift from Yale University alumnus Edward Harkness.

The Harvard Business School and many of the university's athletics facilities, including Harvard Stadium, are located on a 358-acre (145 ha) campus opposite the Cambridge campus in Allston. The John W. Weeks Bridge is a pedestrian bridge over the Charles River connecting both campuses. The Harvard Medical School, Harvard School of Dental Medicine, and the Harvard School of Public Health

are located on a 21-acre (8.5 ha) campus in the Longwood Medical and Academic Area approximately 3.3 miles (5.3 km) southwest of downtown Boston and 3.3 miles (5.3 km) south of the Cambridge campus.

Harvard has purchased tracts of land in Allston, a walk across the Charles River from Cambridge, with the intent of major expansion southward. The university now owns approximately fifty percent more land in Allston than in Cambridge. Proposals to connect the Cambridge campus with the new Allston campus include new and enlarged bridges, a shuttle service and/or a tram. Plans also call for sinking part of Storrow Drive (at Harvard's expense) for replacement with park land and pedestrian access to the Charles River, as well as the construction of bike paths, and buildings throughout the Allston campus. The institution asserts that such expansion will benefit not only the school, but surrounding community, pointing to such features as the enhanced transit infrastructure, possible shuttles open to the public, and park space which will also be publicly accessible.

Harvard's 2,400 professors, lecturers, and instructors instruct 7,200 undergraduates and 14,000 graduate students. The school color is crimson, which is also the name of the Harvard sports teams and the daily newspaper, *The Harvard Crimson*. The color was unofficially adopted (in preference to magenta) by an 1875 vote of the student body, although the association with some form of red can be traced back to 1858, when Charles William Eliot, a young graduate student who would later become Harvard's 21st and longest-serving president (1869–1909), bought red bandanas for his crew so they could more easily be distinguished by spectators at a regatta.

Harvard has the largest university endowment in the world. As of September 2011[update], it had nearly regained the loss suffered during the 2008 recession. It was worth \$32 billion in 2011, up from \$28 billion in September 2010 and \$26 billion in 2009. It suffered about 30% loss in 2008-09. In December 2008, Harvard announced that its endowment had lost 22% (approximately \$8 billion) from July to October 2008, necessitating budget cuts. Later reports suggest the loss was actually more than double that figure, a reduction of nearly 50% of its endowment in the first four months alone. *Forbes* in March 2009 estimated the loss to be in the range of \$12 billion. One of the most visible results of Harvard's attempt to re-balance its budget was their halting of construction of the \$1.2 billion Allston Science Complex that had been scheduled to be completed by 2011, resulting in protests from local residents. As of 2012[update], Harvard University had a total financial aid reserve of \$159 million for students, and a Pell Grant reserve of \$4.093 million available for disbursement.

During the divestment from South Africa movement in the late 1980s, student activists erected a symbolic "shantytown" on Harvard Yard and blockaded a speech given by South African Vice Consul Duke Kent-Brown. The Harvard Management Company repeatedly refused to divest, stating that "operating expenses must not be subject to financially unrealistic strictures or carping by the unsophisticated or by special interest groups." However, the university did eventually reduce its South African holdings by \$230 million (out of \$400 million) in response to the pressure.

Undergraduate admission to Harvard is characterized by the Carnegie Foundation as "more selective, lower transfer-in". Harvard College accepted 5.3% of applicants for the class of 2019, a record low and the second lowest acceptance rate among all national universities. Harvard College ended its early admissions program in 2007 as the program was believed to disadvantage low-income and under-represented minority applicants applying to selective universities, yet for the class of 2016 an Early Action program was reintroduced.

The four-year, full-time undergraduate program comprises a minority of enrollments at the university and emphasizes instruction with an "arts and sciences focus". Between 1978 and 2008, entering students were required to complete a core curriculum of seven classes outside of their concentration. Since 2008, undergraduate students have been required to complete courses in eight General Education categories: Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding, Culture and Belief, Empirical and

Mathematical Reasoning, Ethical Reasoning, Science of Living Systems, Science of the Physical Universe, Societies of the World, and United States in the World. Harvard offers a comprehensive doctoral graduate program and there is a high level of coexistence between graduate and undergraduate degrees. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, The New York Times, and some students have criticized Harvard for its reliance on teaching fellows for some aspects of undergraduate education; they consider this to adversely affect the quality of education.

Harvard's academic programs operate on a semester calendar beginning in early September and ending in mid-May. Undergraduates typically take four half-courses per term and must maintain a four-course rate average to be considered full-time. In many concentrations, students can elect to pursue a basic program or an honors-eligible program requiring a senior thesis and/or advanced course work. Students graduating in the top 4–5% of the class are awarded degrees summa cum laude, students in the next 15% of the class are awarded magna cum laude, and the next 30% of the class are awarded cum laude. Harvard has chapters of academic honor societies such as Phi Beta Kappa and various committees and departments also award several hundred named prizes annually. Harvard, along with other universities, has been accused of grade inflation, although there is evidence that the quality of the student body and its motivation have also increased. Harvard College reduced the number of students who receive Latin honors from 90% in 2004 to 60% in 2005. Moreover, the honors of "John Harvard Scholar" and "Harvard College Scholar" will now be given only to the top 5 percent and the next 5 percent of each class.

For the 2012–13 school year annual tuition was \$38,000, with a total cost of attendance of \$57,000. Beginning 2007, families with incomes below \$60,000 pay nothing for their children to attend, including room and board. Families with incomes between \$60,000 to \$80,000 pay only a few thousand dollars per year, and families earning between \$120,000 and \$180,000 pay no more than 10% of their annual incomes. In 2009, Harvard offered grants totaling \$414 million across all eleven divisions;[further explanation needed] \$340 million came from institutional funds, \$35 million from federal support, and \$39 million from other outside support. Grants total 88% of Harvard's aid for undergraduate students, with aid also provided by loans (8%) and work-study (4%).

The Harvard University Library System is centered in Widener Library in Harvard Yard and comprises nearly 80 individual libraries holding over 18 million volumes. According to the American Library Association, this makes it the largest academic library in the United States, and one of the largest in the world. Cabot Science Library, Lamont Library, and Widener Library are three of the most popular libraries for undergraduates to use, with easy access and central locations. There are rare books, manuscripts and other special collections throughout Harvard's libraries; Houghton Library, the Arthur and Elizabeth Schlesinger Library on the History of Women in America, and the Harvard University Archives consist principally of rare and unique materials. America's oldest collection of maps, gazetteers, and atlases both old and new is stored in Pusey Library and open to the public. The largest collection of East-Asian language material outside of East Asia is held in the Harvard-Yenching Library.

Harvard operates several arts, cultural, and scientific museums. The Harvard Art Museums comprises three museums. The Arthur M. Sackler Museum includes collections of ancient, Asian, Islamic and later Indian art, the Busch-Reisinger Museum, formerly the Germanic Museum, covers central and northern European art, and the Fogg Museum of Art, covers Western art from the Middle Ages to the present emphasizing Italian early Renaissance, British pre-Raphaelite, and 19th-century French art. The Harvard Museum of Natural History includes the Harvard Mineralogical Museum, Harvard University Herbaria featuring the Blaschka Glass Flowers exhibit, and the Museum of Comparative Zoology. Other museums include the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, designed by Le Corbusier, housing the film archive, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, specializing in the cultural history and civilizations of the Western Hemisphere, and the Semitic Museum featuring artifacts from excavations in the Middle East.

Harvard has been highly ranked by many university rankings. In particular, it has consistently topped the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) since 2003, and the THE World Reputation Rankings since 2011, when the first time such league tables were published. When the QS and Times were published in partnership as the THE-QS World University Rankings during 2004-2009, Harvard had also been regarded the first in every year. The University's undergraduate program has been continuously among the top two in the U.S. News & World Report. In 2014, Harvard topped the University Ranking by Academic Performance (URAP). It was ranked 8th on the 2013-2014 PayScale College Salary Report and 14th on the 2013 PayScale College Education Value Rankings. From a poll done by The Princeton Review, Harvard is the second most commonly named "dream college", both for students and parents in 2013, and was the first nominated by parents in 2009. In 2011, the Mines ParisTech : Professional Ranking World Universities ranked Harvard 1st university in the world in terms of number of alumni holding CEO position in Fortune Global 500 companies.

The Harvard Crimson competes in 42 intercollegiate sports in the NCAA Division I Ivy League. Harvard has an intense athletic rivalry with Yale University culminating in The Game, although the Harvard–Yale Regatta predates the football game. This rivalry, though, is put aside every two years when the Harvard and Yale Track and Field teams come together to compete against a combined Oxford University and Cambridge University team, a competition that is the oldest continuous international amateur competition in the world.

Harvard's athletic rivalry with Yale is intense in every sport in which they meet, coming to a climax each fall in the annual football meeting, which dates back to 1875 and is usually called simply "The Game". While Harvard's football team is no longer one of the country's best as it often was a century ago during football's early days (it won the Rose Bowl in 1920), both it and Yale have influenced the way the game is played. In 1903, Harvard Stadium introduced a new era into football with the first-ever permanent reinforced concrete stadium of its kind in the country. The stadium's structure actually played a role in the evolution of the college game. Seeking to reduce the alarming number of deaths and serious injuries in the sport, Walter Camp (former captain of the Yale football team), suggested widening the field to open up the game. But the stadium was too narrow to accommodate a wider playing surface. So, other steps had to be taken. Camp would instead support revolutionary new rules for the 1906 season. These included legalizing the forward pass, perhaps the most significant rule change in the sport's history.

Harvard has several athletic facilities, such as the Lavietes Pavilion, a multi-purpose arena and home to the Harvard basketball teams. The Malkin Athletic Center, known as the "MAC", serves both as the university's primary recreation facility and as a satellite location for several varsity sports. The five-story building includes two cardio rooms, an Olympic-size swimming pool, a smaller pool for aquaerobics and other activities, a mezzanine, where all types of classes are held, an indoor cycling studio, three weight rooms, and a three-court gym floor to play basketball. The MAC offers personal trainers and specialty classes. It is home to Harvard volleyball, fencing and wrestling. The offices of several of the school's varsity coaches are also in the MAC.

Older than The Game by 23 years, the Harvard-Yale Regatta was the original source of the athletic rivalry between the two schools. It is held annually in June on the Thames River in eastern Connecticut. The Harvard crew is typically considered to be one of the top teams in the country in rowing. Today, Harvard fields top teams in several other sports, such as the Harvard Crimson men's ice hockey team (with a strong rivalry against Cornell), squash, and even recently won NCAA titles in Men's and Women's Fencing. Harvard also won the Intercollegiate Sailing Association National Championships in 2003.

Politics: U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon; American political leaders John Hancock, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Rutherford B. Hayes, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Al Gore, George W. Bush and Barack Obama; Chilean President Sebastián Piñera;

Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos; Costa Rican President José María Figueres; Mexican Presidents Felipe Calderón, Carlos Salinas de Gortari and Miguel de la Madrid; Mongolian President Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj; Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo; Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou; Canadian Governor General David Lloyd Johnston; Indian Member of Parliament Jayant Sinha; Albanian Prime Minister Fan S. Noli; Canadian Prime Ministers Mackenzie King and Pierre Trudeau; Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras; Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu; former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto; U. S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Shaun Donovan; Canadian political leader Michael Ignatieff; Pakistani Members of Provincial Assembly Murtaza Bhutto and Sanam Bhutto; Bangladesh Minister of Finance Abul Maal Abdul Muhith; President of Puntland Abdiweli Mohamed Ali; U.S. Ambassador to the European Union Anthony Luzzatto Gardner.

Other: Civil rights leader W. E. B. Du Bois; philosopher Henry David Thoreau; authors Ralph Waldo Emerson and William S. Burroughs; educators Werner Baer, Harlan Hanson; poets Wallace Stevens, T. S. Eliot and E. E. Cummings; conductor Leonard Bernstein; cellist Yo Yo Ma; pianist and composer Charlie Albright; composer John Alden Carpenter; comedian, television show host and writer Conan O'Brien; actors Tatyana Ali, Nestor Carbonell, Matt Damon, Fred Gwynne, Hill Harper, Rashida Jones, Tommy Lee Jones, Ashley Judd, Jack Lemmon, Natalie Portman, Mira Sorvino, Elisabeth Shue, and Scottie Thompson; film directors Darren Aronofsky, Terrence Malick, Mira Nair, and Whit Stillman; architect Philip Johnson; musicians Rivers Cuomo, Tom Morello, and Gram Parsons; musician, producer and composer Ryan Leslie; serial killer Ted Kaczynski; programmer and activist Richard Stallman; NFL quarterback Ryan Fitzpatrick; NFL center Matt Birk; NBA player Jeremy Lin; US Ski Team skier Ryan Max Riley; physician Sachin H. Jain; physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer; computer pioneer and inventor An Wang; Tibetologist George de Roerich; and Marshall Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto.

Harvard's faculty includes scholars such as biologist E. O. Wilson, cognitive scientist Steven Pinker, physicists Lisa Randall and Roy Glauber, chemists Elias Corey, Dudley R. Herschbach and George M. Whitesides, computer scientists Michael O. Rabin and Leslie Valiant, Shakespeare scholar Stephen Greenblatt, writer Louis Menand, critic Helen Vendler, historians Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Niall Ferguson, economists Amartya Sen, N. Gregory Mankiw, Robert Barro, Stephen A. Marglin, Don M. Wilson III and Martin Feldstein, political philosophers Harvey Mansfield, Baroness Shirley Williams and Michael Sandel, Fields Medalist mathematician Shing-Tung Yau, political scientists Robert Putnam, Joseph Nye, and Stanley Hoffmann, scholar/composers Robert Levin and Bernard Rands, astrophysicist Alyssa A. Goodman, and legal scholars Alan Dershowitz and Lawrence Lessig.