

How many graduate students does Harvard have? The color was unofficially adopted (in preference to magenta) in 1875, a vote of the student body, although the association with some form of red can be traced back to 1780, when Charles William Eliot, a young graduate student who would later become Harvard's 21st and longest-serving president (1869–1909), brought red bandanas for the crew so they could more easily be distinguished by spectators at a regatta.