

Claudine Gay became the 30th president of Harvard University on July 1, 2023.

Prior to becoming president, she spent five years leading Harvard's Faculty of Arts and Sciences as the Edgerley Family Dean, having served previously as dean of social science from 2015 to 2018. Gay was recruited to Harvard in 2006 as a professor of government. She was also appointed as a professor of African and African American Studies in 2007. She was named the Wilbur A. Cowett Professor of Government in 2015.

As FAS dean, Gay guided efforts to expand student access and opportunity, spur excellence and innovation in teaching and research, enhance aspects of the FAS's academic culture, and bring new emphasis and energy to areas such as quantum science and engineering; climate change; ethnicity, indigeneity, and migration; and the humanities. She successfully led the FAS through the COVID pandemic, consistently and effectively prioritizing the dual goals of safeguarding community health and sustaining academic continuity and progress. She also launched and led an ambitious, inclusive, and faculty-driven strategic planning process, intended to take a fresh look at fundamental aspects of the FAS's academic structures, resources, and operations and to advance academic excellence.

Gay is a leading scholar of political behavior, considering issues of race and politics in America. She has explored such topics as how the election of minority officeholders affects citizens' perceptions of their government and their interest in politics and public affairs; how neighborhood environments shape racial and political attitudes among Black Americans; the roots of competition and cooperation between minority groups, with a particular focus on relations between Black Americans and Latinos; and the consequences of housing mobility programs for political participation among poor people. Gay is a dedicated educator and mentor whose courses have focused on such topics as racial and ethnic politics in the U.S., Black politics in the post-Civil Rights era, American political behavior, and democratic citizenship. She is founding chair of the Inequality in America Initiative, a multidisciplinary effort launched in 2017.

Prior to joining the Harvard faculty, Gay was an assistant professor of political science at Stanford University from 2000 to 2005, and an associate professor (tenured) from 2005 to 2006. She earned a B.A. in economics from Stanford University, where she received the Anna Laura Myers Prize for best senior thesis in the department. She earned her Ph.D. at Harvard in 1998, receiving the Toppan Prize for best dissertation in political science.

A member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Gay has pursued her scholarship as a fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California, the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard. She currently serves on the boards of the Pew Research Center, Phillips Exeter Academy, and the American Academy of Political and Social Science. She also served as a member of the American Association of Universities advisory board on racial equity in higher education.