

Revitalizing Andover Hall

If a place could be said to contain the soul of Harvard Divinity School, it would be Andover Hall. Literally and symbolically, Andover Hall is the School's center, a multiuse building located in the middle of the HDS campus whose classrooms, meeting rooms, worship spaces, and resources both house and enrich the School's vibrant intellectual and spiritual life. It is also one of Harvard's most architecturally distinctive buildings—the only structure at the University built in a Collegiate Gothic style.

More than a building or a set of buildings, a school is people. But the physical place where those people study and interact with one another, and the resources they have at their disposal, have a profound influence on what they do. Andover Hall has just celebrated its 100th birthday. During those hundred years HDS has evolved in important ways, becoming more diverse and more global in both reach and influence. As the School has changed however, the building has not kept pace, and today Andover Hall struggles to keep up with the demands we place on it. To the extent that a school's facilities influence a student's decision to go there, this hurts us competitively as well.

HDS has launched a \$50 million fundraising effort to support a comprehensive revitalization of Andover Hall. This project will improve the building, but more importantly it will improve the quality of the experience of those who rely on it. Its revitalization will enrich the process of learning, broaden the range of resources that support it, and transform the ways the people of Harvard Divinity School engage the world and each other.

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Harvard Divinity School is a global leader in advancing understanding of world religion, integrating rigorous scholarship, critical thinking, and compassionate practice within a multi-religious context to prepare ethical leaders to work for a better world. Learning bridges religious and cultural divides. Conversations happen here that wouldn't happen anywhere else.

One of HDS' strengths has been its capacity to evolve. Over time our mission has broadened, and today the School prepares graduates to become ministers, scholars, educators, public officials, advocates for social justice, and leaders in many other fields. The HDS of 2013 is a global school, with students from six continents and more than 30 religious traditions, and with nearly half of its courses having some international focus, the highest proportion of any school at Harvard.

In 1911, when construction was completed on Andover Hall—a few years post-airplane, eight decades pre-Internet—worldviews were narrower and people and cultures were less connected than they are today. True to its founding mission, HDS was a multifaith divinity school, and for much of the 20th century those faiths were all Christian faiths, in contrast to the rich tapestry of world religions studied and practiced here today. The nature of learning has changed and the range of resources that can be put to its service has exploded exponentially.

Harvard Divinity School is a great experiment—one that stays bold and relevant through a process of continuous renewal. Revitalizing our campus to meet evolving demands is an ongoing need, and funding that revitalization is an ongoing challenge. The School practices good stewardship, and thanks to the generous support of alumni and friends, over the past 15 years we have undertaken major renovations in Divinity Hall, Rockefeller Hall, and the Center for the Study of World Religions. Now it is Andover Hall's turn.

The comprehensive reimagining of Andover Hall will bring this iconic building into the 21st century, dramatically improving its ability to advance an HDS education. Among the project's highlights:

- **Create a true campus center** – A fragmented campus will gain renewed unity and vitality through the creation of a true campus center in Andover Hall. The project will bring together admissions, financial aid, and other student services under one roof. The student café, currently in Rockefeller Hall, will relocate here as well. A redesigned entryway will open into the new space, which promises to become a dynamic campus crossroads, giving students convenient access to a range of services, fostering the kind of informal interaction that tightens the community fabric, and making Andover Hall the academic, spiritual, and social heart of the campus.
- **Make Andover Chapel a multifaith chapel** – Reflecting the HDS of the early 1900s, Andover Chapel was designed as a Christian chapel. Today's HDS, however, is far more broadly multi-religious, a place where Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, and members of other faiths—more than 30 in all—worship side by side. Noon Service, for example, brings the entire campus to the Chapel each week to celebrate a different religious tradition. Our goal is to design a worship space that reflects the multiple faiths that are here.
- **Create a center for conferences and other major gatherings** – As HDS grows in global significance, we play an increasing role convening conversations about religion and theology, and involve leaders from around the world in those conversations. The Dalai Lama spoke here about compassion and inter-religious understanding. Author Toni Morrison talked about goodness, altruism, and the literary imagination. Neither of those talks, however, took place on the HDS campus because we had no suitable gathering space to accommodate them. A new multiuse auditorium in Andover Hall will give us an ideal venue for major events, heightening awareness of the School, increasing worldwide visibility, and improving our stature as a global leader advancing knowledge about religion.

- **Modernize the Andover-Harvard Theological Library** – Serving both HDS and Andover Theological Seminary, the Library is a unique and invaluable resource, with half a million volumes and other materials and with special strengths in such areas as Christian ethics, religious freedom, women in religion, and religion and politics. Among its treasures is a 30,000-volume collection of rare books, some of which date back to the 15th and 16th centuries, including original writings by Martin Luther and the world’s first multilanguage Bible. Improved climate control will ensure that these historic materials receive the kind of protection they require. New below-grade storage—along with ongoing digitization of many resources—will make it easier to access materials while allowing us to reduce the Library’s physical size, freeing space to create the new campus center (described above).
- **Modernize classrooms** – Today’s HDS faculty bring a variety of teaching styles to the classroom. Where once a professor lecturing may have been the norm, today’s teachers engage students—and call on students to engage each other—in discussion-based learning, in projects, in small groups, and in other ways. “Flipped” classrooms are a growing trend, as students watch recorded lectures on their own time and use class time for interactive work that explores topics more deeply. Renovations will create classrooms that are ideally suited to new ways of teaching and learning, with flexible spaces that can be reconfigured for different needs, enhanced acoustics, and a new multimedia infrastructure, enabling an increasingly global school to both bring the world in and broadcast what happens here out.
- **Improve accessibility** – Part of being a diverse and welcoming campus means being fully accessible to people with disabilities, and right now Andover Hall is not accessible enough. The western, courtyard side of the building can be especially imposing, as an earth berm and stone stairways limit wheelchair access. Renovations will create an inviting ground-level entry on that side, while addressing other issues to make the building fully accessible by those with disabilities.

- **Accelerate HDS' environmental leadership** – Underscoring Harvard's commitment to environmental sustainability, several years ago President Faust announced a goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent by 2016. The university has taken significant steps toward that goal, and HDS has been at the forefront of these efforts. HDS recycles or composts a university-leading 70 percent of its refuse. Rockefeller Hall, a LEED Gold facility, is one of the Harvard's most energy efficient buildings. And with over two years to go before 2016, HDS has already reduced emissions by 36 percent. The School's remarkable green momentum will extend to Andover Hall with the addition of ultra-energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, improved air quality, use of sustainable materials, and other improvements. Andover Hall will earn at least a LEED Gold certification, and is aiming for LEED Platinum.

Advancing a Legacy

For over a hundred years Andover Hall has played a pivotal role in learning and life at Harvard Divinity School. When students pass through its doors they do so aware of whose footsteps they are following and aware of the extraordinary intellectual and spiritual explorations that have taken place here. Yet as HDS has evolved in profound ways over time, our signature building has not kept pace.

The time has come for Andover Hall to evolve. Our students deserve this, and future students will expect this. In 2016 HDS will celebrate its bicentennial. As we prepare to begin our third century, we aim to ensure that this vital and distinctive building lives up to its potential as both the literal and symbolic center of HDS, a place where classrooms, worship spaces, gathering spaces, and other resources come together, advancing the School's important work preparing leaders for a religiously complex world.