

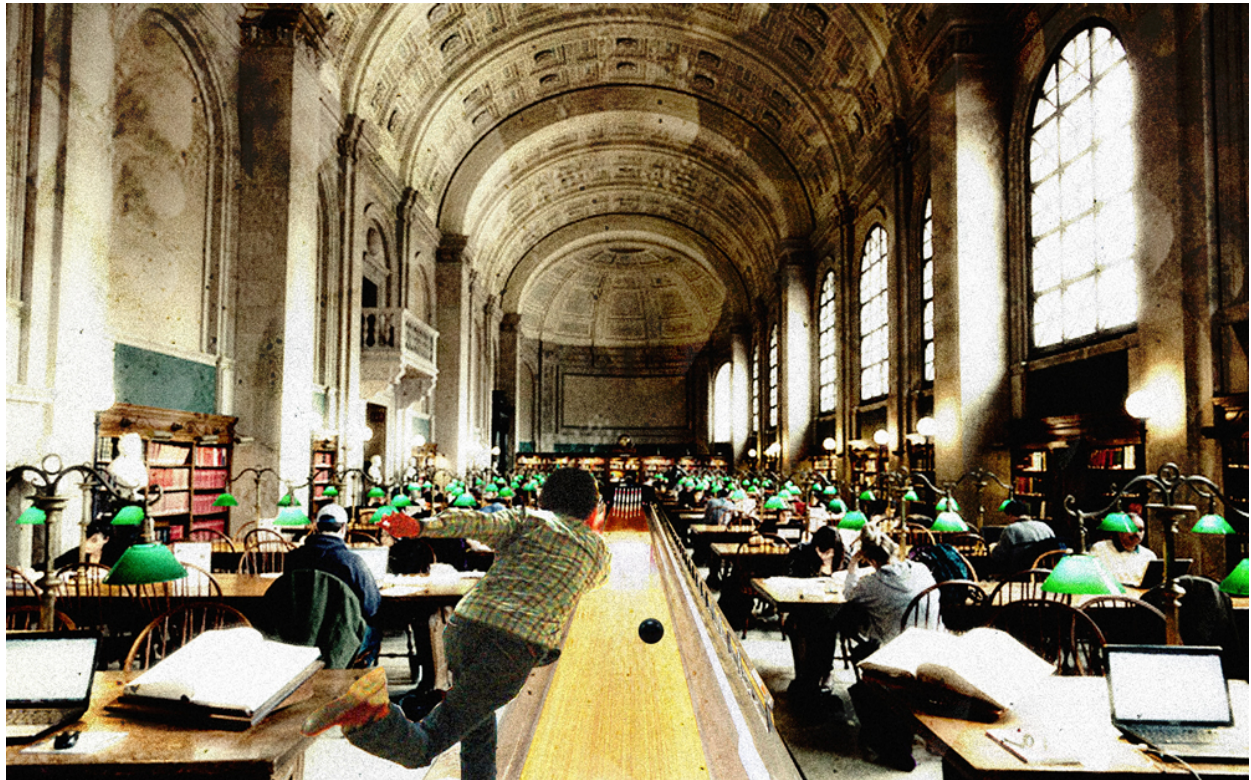
# Library Test Kitchen

Tuesdays, 10 - 1

L12 Loeb Library Visual & Material Collections Room

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## *Provisional Syllabus*



### **Introduction**

Bridging the analog and the digital worlds, the offline and the online, libraries and learning spaces represent one of the most exciting opportunities for design and redesign on the contemporary scene. Library Test Kitchen is a fast prototyping lab for the modeling smart spaces: spaces of learning, thinking, serious play, contemplation of and interaction with knowledge. It provides students the unique opportunity to develop and fully realize their design ideas on a 1:1 scale within the setting of one of the world's greatest research library systems -- the Harvard Libraries-- and Harvard University as a whole.

The Harvard Library system is in the midst of unprecedented transformation. As part of the process, the system's own Innovation Lab has financed the Library Test Kitchen for a second year. Not just as an engine of local change, but also as a driver of innovation on a national and international stage. The course assumes the form of a studio devoted to critical and speculative thinking, hands-on problem solving, fabrication and making. In addition to the Harvard libraries, the course's network of clients and collaborators includes major public library

systems nationwide.

### **Topics Covered**

libraries, learning spaces, smart spaces, innovative approaches to the development and communication of design thinking, creative technology practices, multimedia modes of argument and presentation, design and institutional ethnographies

***We will learn (by doing) how to make things happen.***

### **Skills Acquired**

idea packaging, web-based communication tactics, multimedia representation, collaboration with professional library staff, pitching, project budgeting, roadmapping, agile development, experience moving from conceptual ideation to concrete fabrication

### **Objectives**

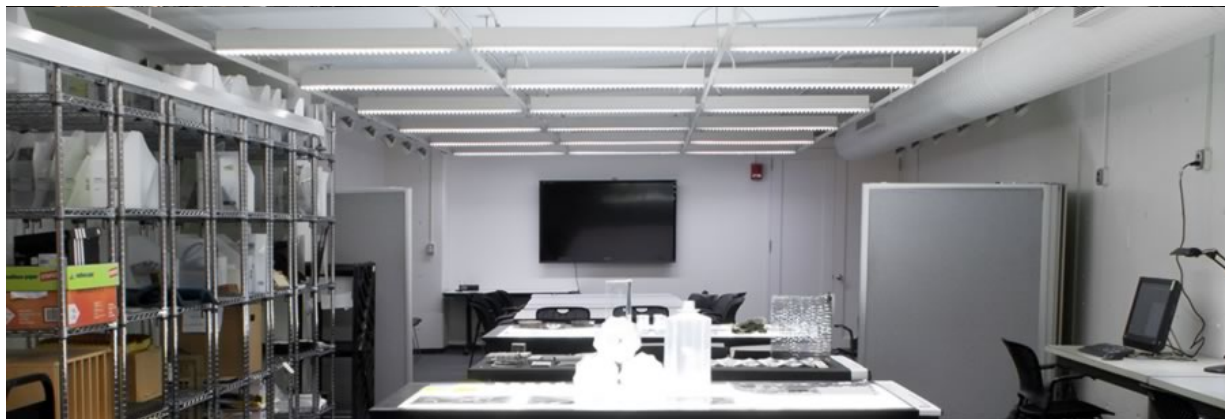
To leverage the course budget and the library community's support and expertise in order to design, build, test and deploy designs, devices, services and experiences that will shape the future of the Harvard Libraries and libraries and learning spaces worldwide.

### **Questions**

What form should a library assume in the 21st century? What about classrooms and media spaces? Should they simply vanish into virtual desktops and merge into a timeless and placeless universal database? Should they alter their identity and become workshops, laboratories, innovation incubators where emerging and future forms interact and dialogue with the relics of the past? Or should they simply merge with the university itself as a place of knowledge production and reproduction?

### **Candidate Projects**

Final projects may assume a range of forms. They may be built, grown, coded or performed. They may involve redesigning existing library websites, spaces or services. They may be pieces of furniture or new-fangled library experiences, policies or interventions. Projects may address existing problems or serve as speculative probes or provocations. All that is required is that they be realized so that they exist for people to interact with.



### **Format**

Seminar/Workshop feel with frequent guests from the library and design communities.

## Evaluation

Participation (blog posts, class discussion) - 25%

Exercises (assignments) - 25%

Final Projects - 50%

## Resources

The Library Test Kitchen is funded research, generously supported by the [Harvard Library Lab](#). Beyond financial support, our collaboration with the Harvard Library opens up a landscape of opportunities. The staff, the space, the data -- these and other resources make a unique palette of project "materials".

*The Harvard Library is our canvas.*

## Publishing

We will be publishing our coursework to the course website: [www.librarytestkitchen.org](http://www.librarytestkitchen.org). Our website is the central repository for LTK work -- work done inside and outside the class. We will also publish our work as a newspaper to share with the larger design and library communities outside of Harvard.

## Learning More

Visit our site: [www.librarytestkitchen.org](http://www.librarytestkitchen.org)

Read the Harvard Magazine coverage: <http://harvardmagazine.com/2012/07/library-test-kitchen>

## Expectations

**Weekly blog entries** – your blog will be the primary channel of communication with the rest of the class. All exercises will be submitted as blog posts. All reflections on readings will be submitted as blog posts. Completed exercises must be photographed or otherwise documented in blog posts to facilitate web exposure.

**Exercises** – Representation and communication are crucial elements of this course. If you cannot effectively share your work, it will not be realized. We expect high production value work that is print-ready. In this day and age, to convince anyone of anything, production value is necessary.

**Final Project**- The goal of the Library Test Kitchen is to make things others can experience. That means over the course of the semester rapidly driving projects clear through ideation to prototyping. We want our work in the library where fellow students can act as the jury. You may work as an individual, or as part of a team.

## Projects and Grading

Participation: 20%

Exercises: 30%

Project & Project Documentation: 50%

# Course Schedule

## Week 1: September 4th

### Library Test Kitchen: Culture, Expectations, Opportunity

*We will discuss course culture, expectations and deliverables. We will learn about participants in the class. We will define the scope and opportunity of libraries as a design challenge.*

#### Assignment:

1. Set up personal blogs
2. Join group dropbox folder (turn off public notification)
3. Scan description of Harvard Depository: <http://hul.harvard.edu/hd/pages/facility.html>
4. Exercise I: 20/20

## Week 2: September 11th\*

### The Harvard Depository

*Tour of the Harvard Depository, preceded by on-site presentations and discussions of Exercise I: 20/20*

*\*This is a Field Trip. Meet for bus at entrance to Gund, 9:45 sharp. Bring cameras and warm layers. Hats and jackets are a good idea. The main space is kept at ~55 Degrees.*

#### Assignment:

1. Exercise II: Field Ethnography
2. Readings to come

## Week 3: September 18th

### Classifying Information: a visit from David Weinberger

*David Weinberger, Author of Everything is Miscellaneous and Co-Director of the Harvard Library Innovation Lab, will survey the landscape of classification schemes inside libraries and out.*

#### Assignment:

1. Exercise III: Content Delivery

## Week 4: September 25th

### Library 101

*The library is a complex system made up of many many pieces working in concert. We will have visitors from across the Harvard Library to describe their responsibilities and expertise.*

#### Assignment:

1. Project Assignment I: The Pitch
2. Readings to come

## Week 5: October 2nd

### Past Projects and Concepts

*Past projects will be presented for class discussion. We will also flesh out several driving concepts from the Spring 2012 semester.*

**Assignment:**

1. Project Assignment II: Project Plan

**Week 6: October 9th**

**Design and Communication: a visit from Project Projects**

**Assignment:**

1. Project Status Report

**Week 7: October 16th**

**Looking at Loeb: a visit from Stephen Cassell, Architecture Research Office**

**Assignment:**

1. Analysis of Kickstarter
2. Selected readings

**Week 8: October 23rd**

**Pitch Literacy: a visit from Stephanie Pereira, Kickstarter**

**Week 9: October 30th**

**Project Mid-Reviews**

**Week 10: November 6th**

**Designing for Community: a visit from Dan D'Oca, Interboro Partners**

**Week 11: November 13th**

**Workshopping Projects**

**Week 12: November 20th**

**Workshopping Projects**

**Week 13: November 27th**

**Final Review**

**Week 14: December 4th**

**Preparation for Publication**