

Rashid
S. Alvi

COURTESY OF RASHID S. ALVI

roadmap makes the scope of her ambitions clear. Documents can be sorted by type—whether a primary source like a legal treatise or fatwa (an advisory opinion), or a secondary source like a book review. Other menus array their contents by the typical topics taught in law schools (criminal law, property law, and so on), or by themes such as environmental law, apostasy and blasphemy, and legal pluralism. Users will also be able to search through the site's expansive map of space and time, accessing material by contemporary regions and countries as well as by historical empires and eras, reaching back to the founding of Islam. So far, the beta site has collected sources in and translations from English, Arabic, Persian, and Bahasa Indonesia, with plans to expand to Turkish next.

"There was never going to be a way to cover all of that by having two people—or even 10 people—sitting at Harvard," says Alvi. "We realized early on that this was going to be a worldwide collaborative project." It will be crucial, he notes, to recruit contributors who align with the site's academic, apolitical mission. Already, professors from Australian Catholic University have agreed to take charge of developing content on Islamic law in Southeast Asia, including major Muslim countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei.

What scholars could get in return for collaborating on SHARIASource highlights how new ways of cataloging knowledge in the digital age will also create knowledge. The site is intended as a plat-

form for researchers to engage with their peers. Contributors will also be responsible for thoughtfully adding tags on subjects and themes to the database's ever-growing network of sources from around the world in order to help fellow researchers make connections among different eras, regions, and areas of expertise. A tenth-century manuscript, presented as an original scan on one side of the screen and an English translation on the other, will live comfortably alongside the latest decisions on blasphemy laws in Pakistan. For the first time, scholars will be able to make connections between sources of different types, eras, and geographies easily, says ILSP visiting fellow Meagan Froemming, who holds a master's from Harvard's Center for Middle Eastern Studies along with a law degree from New York University. As Alvi puts it, the first reactions of most professors who hear about the project has been: "Why wasn't this around when I was writing my latest book?"

IN ANOTHER STEP to populate the site, Rabb is running the Digital Islamic Law Lab this spring, a class of 12 students who will each research four articles for SHARIASource. The students' experiences speak to the potential value of the online resource. Though

few began the course as experts in Islamic law, they've made connections between the theoretical areas that interest them and the case studies they've found. One student, Rabb says, applied her background in contemporary U.S. intellectual-property law to what she found in the nineteenth-century Ottoman law code. Bringing examples of Islamic law into larger debates in the legal academy is part of the site's explicit goal, Rabb says. (Froemming, for example, sees the site's potential to connect her work on Afghani finance law to that of other researchers who are interested in the theories of law and development.) The platform aims to make Islamic law more accessible and, in turn, Rabb says, help promote "the study of Islamic law *as law*, rather than purely as religion."

Above all, SHARIASource—like its model, SCOTUSblog—is explicitly designed as a user-friendly place for policymakers, the journalists who cover them, and ordinary readers trying to make sense of what they find in the news each day. Right now, Rabb says, journalists may "do a Google search and find thousands of hits on any given topic of Islamic law, but have no idea what's credible, what's not." Rabb hopes that SHARIASource—vested with the authority of a university, and with entries from legal scholars explaining what's happening "in plain English"—will become a real, reliable search engine for such questions.

—STEPHANIE GARLOCK

University News Briefs

Climate-change Currents

THE Climate Change Solutions Fund—announced in April 2014 by President Drew Faust, and intended to channel \$20 million into innovative research (see harvardmag.com/climate-15)—has made its first seven grants, totaling \$800,000, for projects ranging from work on food waste (at the Law School) and coping with extreme heat events (Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health) to work on energy and climate policy in China and India.

In mid March, Faust focused on climate issues during a capital-campaign "Your Harvard" event in Beijing; among the faculty members who appeared was professor of architectural technology Ali Malkawi, director of the Center for Green Buildings and Cities (described more fully at

harvardmag.com/cities-15). Faust also spoke at Tsinghua University, where she highlighted academic partnerships, research, and training, drawing on examples from Harvard-Tsinghua collaborations on air pollution, the atmosphere, and global warming (see harvardmag.com/climates-15).

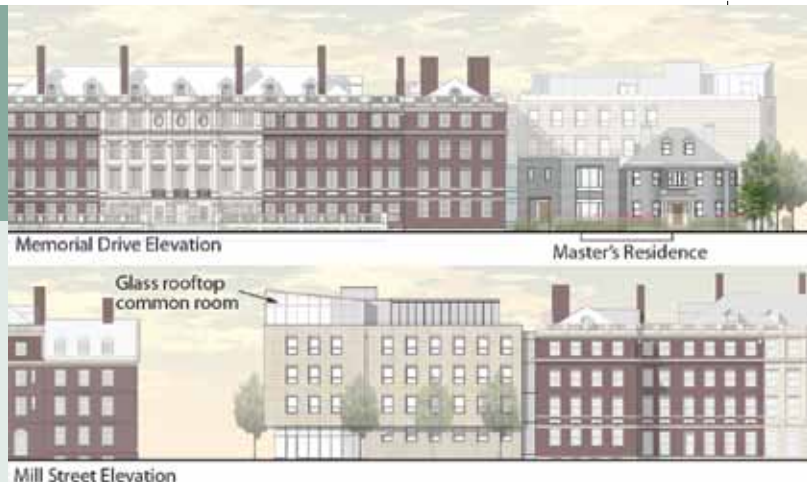
On campus, Harvard's environment center has organized a series of climate-change events for the week of April 6-10, and the University convened an expert panel discussion on April 13 (see harvardmag.com/divest-15); both were scheduled to occur after this issue went to press. Separately, students campaigning for divestment of Harvard's investment in fossil fuels staged a sit-in at Massachusetts Hall in mid February, and alumni supporters promised a more comprehensive action there for "Harvard Heat Week," scheduled for April 12-17. Among the support-

Putting the “New” in House Renewal

When students vacate Winthrop House after Commencement 2016, they will make way for something new in the program of undergraduate residences: not just stem-to-stern renovation, but significant fresh construction, in the form of a five-story addition to Gore Hall that will accommodate more than 50 students now living in overflow apartments on DeWolfe Street; a separate master’s residence; and enlarged dining facilities.

The plans, unveiled in February, suggest the work to be undertaken at the second House to be wholly redone. (Construction is now under way at Dunster House, which is expected to receive its returning residents for this coming fall term.) “Winthrop East,” the addition to Gore Hall, will replace surface garages at the corner of Plympton and Mill streets. In addition to student living quarters, it will provide classroom and socializing spaces, for which designs are incomplete. (Such features appear in the prior

Winthrop House renovation plans include a five-story addition to Gore Hall at Plympton and Mill streets (below). A house on Memorial Drive (above right) becomes the master’s residence.



renovations, including the overhaul of Quincy House’s Stone Hall and the current work at Dunster.) The plan also includes a glass-enclosed rooftop common room and open-air terrace with views of Cambridge, the Boston skyline, and the Charles River.

The design adapts a modern architectural idiom, rather than attempting to blend in with the existing façade. As Elizabeth Leber, a partner with project architects Beyer, Blinder, Belle, told the *Harvard Gazette*, “We felt that it was appropriate that a building should be of its time, rather than trying to be what it’s not. Winthrop House has a number of wonderful entablatures that announce entries and provide a good deal of character and stature to the building. What we’re proposing is a contemporary way of using similar traditional materials.”

The master’s residence will be created by reconstructing a wood-frame building at the corner of Plympton Street and Memorial Drive and linking it to Gore Hall. The expansion and improvement of the existing dining hall, to accommodate the enlarged number of House residents, encompasses lowering the adjacent outdoor terrace to make it accessible from the dining area. This will also admit more natural light into the two-story hall, where the lower story is below grade.

During the 2016-2017 academic year, Winthrop House residents will relocate to the former Inn at Harvard and other nearby swing spaces; their House is to reopen in the fall of 2017.

See harvardmag.com/winthrop-15 for additional details and images.



ers is Archbishop Desmond Tutu, LL.D. ’79, a Nobel laureate and former member of Harvard’s Board of Overseers, whose campaigning against apartheid in South Africa famously led to his support for University divestment of investments in companies that operated there—a step then-president Derek Bok declined to take. The alumni advocates of divestment also announced a Fossil Free Alumni Fund, for donations to an investment vehicle designed by the Natural Resources Defense Council. The University would receive

the proceeds “when the Harvard Corporation publicly commits to divesting from fossil fuels.” If Harvard has not committed to divestment by the end of 2025, the funds would be directed to tax-exempt climate-change organizations. A lawsuit challenging Harvard’s investment in fossil-fuel companies, brought by student divestment advocates last fall, was dismissed in mid March for lack of standing.

On Your Honor

HAVING ADOPTED an honor code for under-

graduates in May 2014, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences discussed its implementation (beginning this fall) at its meeting on March 3, and expressed hope of enacting the language and procedures for use during a meeting later this spring. Incoming undergraduates would be educated about the code, and would write a personal response to it upon matriculation, and students would affirm their *awareness* of the code at registration (without having to actually pledge their *acceptance* of it). For students’ signed affirmations for final exams, theses, and all

other final papers and projects, the draft language suggests that faculty members “may wish to use” this text: “I attest to the honesty of my academic work and affirm that it conforms to the standards of the Harvard College Honor Code.” For details, see harvardmag.com/hchonor-15.

Separately, on March 24, Stanford provost John Etchemendy wrote to faculty members and teaching staff there about “an unusually high number of troubling allegations of academic dishonesty” reported during the winter quarter—one involving “as many as 20 percent of the students in one large introductory course.” He noted, “At the beginning of our students’ Stanford careers, they are introduced to the Honor Code and agree to abide by it.”

Olympics Ambitions?

As 100 inches of snow buried Boston and Cambridge from late January to early March, stranded commuters were not much focused on the 2024 summer Olympics. But the organizing committee promoting the city’s bid to host the games suggested several Harvard venues for competitions: field hockey in the Stadium (indicated as seating 30,000, although renovation plans call for that to be reduced significantly), fencing in the Gordon Track, and aquatics, water polo, and tennis in temporary facilities at “Beacon Yards”—an area the University hopes it may, by then, develop as a commercial “enterprise research campus” (see “A New Era in Allston,” March–April, page 18). Similar plans are sketched for Paralympic venues, including football, swimming, fencing, and tennis. In remarks to faculty members on March 3, President Drew Faust said that University interactions with local Olympics sponsors had been general and non-committal, and that Harvard would maintain its academic, financial, and fundraising interests—and be mindful of impacts on its campus neighbors—in any future discussions, plans, or detailed submissions for a Boston-based event. Sports fans, stay tuned.

Fundraising Facts, Near and Far

THE UNIVERSITY announced that The Harvard Campaign had tallied \$5 billion in gifts and pledges (toward the \$6.5-billion goal) as of December 31, up from \$4.3 billion as of June 30, 2014.

Not that other institutions are standing still: elsewhere on the fundraising circuit, Cornell alumnus Charles F. Feeney, who

has given his alma mater hundreds of millions of dollars (including the lead gift for its New York City technology campus), gave the University of California, San Francisco, \$100 million for its hospitals and research on neuroscience and aging, bringing his support for UCSF to \$394 million. Roberta Buffett Elliott (sister of Warren Buffett) gave her alma mater, Northwestern, more than \$100 million for global studies. A few weeks later, Northwestern alumnus and trustee Louis A. Simpson and his wife, Kimberly K. Querrey, gave \$92 million, the naming gift for a new biomedical research center there; they earlier gave \$25 million for medical research.

As an indication of the pace of contemporary fundraising, less than four years after concluding its \$3.88-billion Yale Tomorrow campaign, that institution announced a snap \$200-million Access Yale drive for financial aid, in part to support more undergraduates, who will be accommodated in two new residential colleges under construction.

And Princeton announced a *nonmonetary* gift: the bequest of rare books and manuscripts, including a Gutenberg Bible, a first printing of the Declaration of Independence, a run of Shakespeare folios, and important musical manuscripts. The donation, valued at \$300 million, is the largest gift in the school’s history.

More on MOOCs

A TWO-YEAR REVIEW of enrollments in 68 HarvardX and MITx MOOCs (massive open online courses) offered through their joint edX venture refined earlier findings. It confirmed that about half the people who register for a course subsequently do not engage with it at all. Focusing on those who *do* participate (about 1 million people, who became involved with 1.7 million course units through September 2014), researchers found a highly educated cohort (in every course, a majority of participants had at least a bachelor’s degree)—among them a large number of teachers and instructors who may be incorporating the online materials in their own classes, magnifying the reach of the MOOC contents and techniques. Computer-science classes continue to be the most attractive subject area, garnering far larger enrollments than those in other fields. The report also suggests a transition from descriptive to experimental research that might begin to demonstrate



how online students learn most effectively; it hints as well about the use of the online materials and techniques in campus-based classes—one of the initial aims of the edX enterprise. For a detailed report and discussion, see harvardmag.com/mooc-15.

Online Accessibility

THE National Association of the Deaf and four deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals have filed suit against Harvard and MIT, alleging that their online content, including courses distributed through edX and recordings of speeches and presentations on campus, are not captioned, or are insufficiently accommodating, and thus are discriminatory, in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act and other laws. The University, while declining to address the litigation *per se*, responded, “Expanding access to knowledge and making online learning content accessible is of vital importance to Harvard...We expect that the U.S. Department of Justice may issue proposed rules in June 2015 to provide much-needed guidance in this area. We look forward to the establishment of those new standards and will, of course, fully comply once they are finalized.” Separately, under a settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice, edX agreed to make its course offerings fully accessible to users with disabilities during the next 18 months.

Stockholder Sentiments

THE Corporation Committee on Shareholder Responsibility’s annual report (<http://media.www.harvard.edu/content/CCSR-Annual-Report-2014.pdf>) details its decisions on 56 issues presented during the spring 2014 proxy season. In 51 cases, the committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility, a 12-member student, faculty, and alumni body. In general, the Corporation committee favored shareholder proposals for corporate actions to reduce greenhouse-emissions; strengthen environmental planning, monitoring, and reporting; and disclose political contributions and lobbying.