

# the d.school

## THE HASSO PLATTNER INSTITUTE OF DESIGN AT STANFORD

The scale and complexity of the challenges facing the world today are unprecedented. Solutions won't come from any single field, but from collaboration between innovators who can see beyond the way the world is to the way it could be. At the same time, students seek a new kind of education that fosters creative confidence and pushes them beyond the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines.

The Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford was founded in the School of Engineering in 2005 to prepare a generation of innovators to tackle these complex challenges. Known on campus as the d.school, the institute brings students and faculty from radically different backgrounds together to develop innovative, human-centered solutions to real-world challenges. The transformative experiences of students and faculty have fueled the d.school's explosive growth.

### Design Thinking

d.school courses and curriculum are based on the *DESIGN THINKING* process. It draws on methods from engineering and design, and combines them with ideas from the arts, tools from the social sciences, and insights from the business world. The process provides a glue that brings teammates together around a common goal: make the lives of the people they're designing for better.

Design thinking is best learned by doing, and our classes immerse students in an experiential learning environment. Students cycle rapidly through a series of steps: observe, brainstorm, synthesize, prototype, and implement; repeating as necessary. We focus on the design process because we seek to equip our students with a methodology for producing reliably innovative results in any field. Our focus is on creating innovaTORS rather than any particular innovaTION.

### T-Shaped Students

At the d.school, we help to create "T-shaped" students. They bring a deep set of skills, knowledge and approach to problem solving from their own field; we help them develop the breadth and creative confidence to collaborate with people from vastly different disciplines. This equips students to tackle the big, ambiguous challenges they'll encounter out in the world that can't be solved with a single approach.

The d.school does not grant degrees; instead it serves as a university-wide hub for innovation where students from engineering, the arts, medicine, education, law and the social sciences come to take classes together and work on projects. We currently serve over 650 students per year, and demand for our classes continues to outweigh availability.



“When I get depressed or worried about something, I often wander over to the d.school...and just hang around for an hour or two. I come away feeling good about life and about the things that Stanford students can create and invent.”

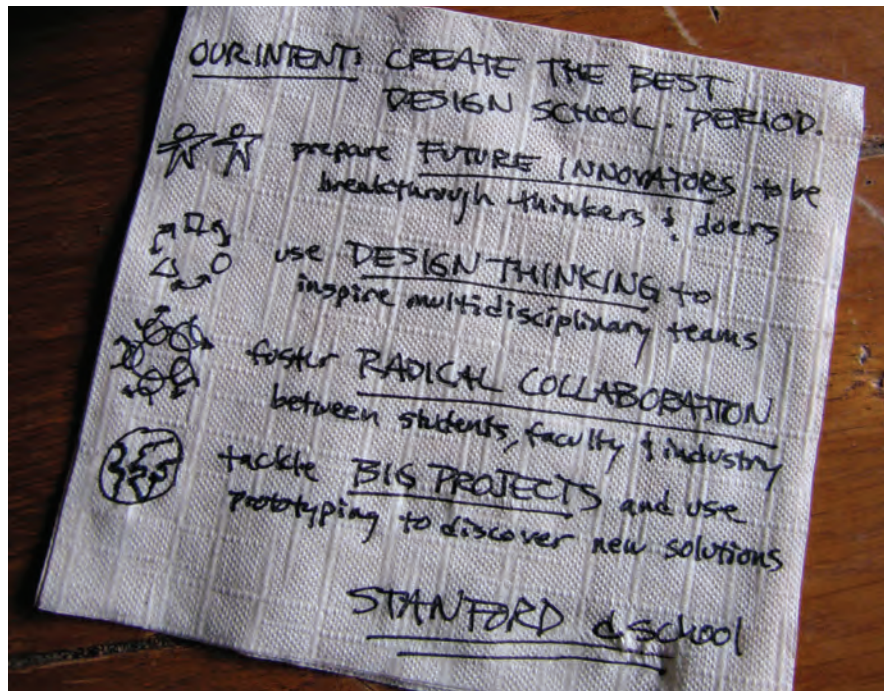
— **JIM PLUMMER, DEAN OF THE STANFORD SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING**

## Faculty

We have more than 70 members of our teaching teams drawn from across campus and industry. Every class at the d.school is taught by a team. Some are pioneering research faculty, some are influential practitioners in the field, all are bringing the full benefit of their knowledge to our students. For example, this year noted Stanford political scientist Joshua Cohen and Computer Science pioneer Terry Winograd will teach *DESIGNING LIBERATION TECHNOLOGY*, exploring how cutting-edge technology can be used to spread development and democracy in Africa.

## Partnerships

Our classes require real-world projects and partners to give students the kinds of constraints and environments that teach them to be the innovators of the future. Some of our recent partners include: Facebook, Procter & Gamble, SFMOMA, International Development Enterprises, Kaiser Permanente, Google, Henry Ford Learning Institute, Timbuk2, WalMart, JetBlue Airlines, Mozilla Foundation, and Electronic Arts.



## Highlights

• **Entrepreneurial Design for Extreme Affordability** has developed a global reputation for producing innovative solutions to the problems facing people in the developing world; alumni are game-changing social entrepreneurs. Students have started five companies out of the class, including non-profit Embrace, which makes an infant warming device that costs less than 1% of a traditional incubator. This device is positioned to save the lives of 100,000 premature babies in the next three years.

• **k-12 Education:** The d.school's k-12 Lab is bringing design thinking to elementary and high school students around the world. The lab develops curriculum, offers regular teacher workshops, and helps schools as far away as India to create design challenges. The k-12 lab works to help students, teachers and schools foster creativity, and develop the youngest generation of innovators.

• **The Next Generation of Media:** One of the areas where design thinking is being applied is in media and journalism. John Keefe, the Executive Director of New York public radio station WNYC, partnered with our *MEDIA+DESIGN* class to come up with new ideas for a recently launched morning radio show. He now uses design thinking to help transform his organization: “The most effective way I’ve found to practice design thinking is by showing, not telling. Rather than explaining what it is, I practice it myself and communicate that by saying: ‘I can get you results next week.’ When I turn around a successful prototype so quickly, people ask: ‘How did you do this?’ That’s when I explain that I’m using this thing called design thinking.”

• **Classes, workshops and programs:** The d.school offers more than 30 classes, workshops and programs each year, such as: *DESIGN THINKING BOOTCAMP*, *FROM PLAY TO INNOVATION*, *DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE ABUNDANCE*, *IMPROV + DESIGN*, *NO TEACHER LEFT BEHIND*, *PERSONAL AND INTERPERSONAL DYNAMICS*, and *CUSTOMER-FOCUSED INNOVATION*, a joint executive education program with the Graduate School of Business at Stanford.

For Press Inquires, please contact Stern & Associates at [debbe@debbestern.com](mailto:debbe@debbestern.com)

