

# THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY 50 *of* PARIS YEARS

*AUP Ascending : 2015-2020*



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# FOREWORD

## A Pivotal Moment

For 52 years, The American University of Paris has occupied a unique position in the world of higher education thanks to its founder Lloyd Delamater's vision of offering a life-defining and transformative education to graduates capable of « bridging the gap of narrow nationalism. » The University still pursues that mission today, but since that time has become a learning community where students from 107 different nationalities, taught by faculty from over 25, pursue their dream of living a globally defined and connected life, so much *of* the world that they are *for* it.

Today AUP offers the premiere American-accredited, globally relevant, student-centered, liberal-arts-based and professionally enabling curriculum in Europe. In addition, the University is increasingly recognized internationally as a site of both disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship and academic convocation. At the start of its second half-century, the University thrives in a context of strong leadership and cross-institutional commitment to improvement on all fronts. Over the last six years, thanks to a partnership amongst a highly professional leadership team, an engaged and dedicated staff and faculty, and a committed and supportive Board of Trustees, The American University of Paris has nearly doubled its enrollments over the lowest numbers of the decade, negotiated several sustaining partner programs that have served to diversify its enrollment portfolio and extend its visibility worldwide, and fully rebuilt its financial position and cash reserves via multi-year, expert financial planning. The University has also achieved the two major institutional goals of the last strategic plan: the creation of a required residential program for all new entering students and renovation of one of our signature buildings as AUP's first Student Life Center. As we aspire further, this building will become the first phase in a three-part campus renewal project financed by AUP's first capital campaign, *The Time is Now*.

No unit of the University has failed to contribute to this dramatic forward motion on all fronts. Academic Affairs, led by a new Provost, is currently renewing AUP's curriculum for the global explorer, who is our "fit" student, in constant dialogue with an Admissions Department that regularly gathers intelligence from the market and from our external audiences. In the Office of the Provost, a new Dean for Assessment, Learning, and Institutional Research has taken five years of AUP assessment history online and created a sustained, systematized, and organized assessment program that informs our institutional planning and measures our progress toward our goal. Student Affairs has entirely reconfigured itself as students take possession of the new Combes Student Life facility, implemented at the same time a freshman-housing program that required a residential life function that the University had not yet known. Finance and Administration has designed a campus renewal plan that optimizes the University's owned buildings, adds new ones,

exceptionally hard to find in the *quartier* of our founding, and renovates every one of them around hubs of service to our students. Outreach and Advancement, in the hands of a seasoned professional over the past five years, has not only tripled the number of alumni in our database, and conducted a three-year destinations survey that provided a wealth of mission-critical information about our alumni outcomes, but also built up our development function to the point of launching our first comprehensive campaign. The force behind these synergies is a highly functioning and collegial leadership team that works in concert across all of our units to solve problems and enact visionary solutions.

In the course of its history, AUP has periodically reviewed its mission, re-articulated its vision, critically examined its academic programs, and renewed its sense of purpose and its engagement with an increasingly global world. But this round of strategic thinking in the wake of the world financial crisis of 2008 and the current crisis in higher education is different and has required more than rhetoric. It has required data-informed reflection and multiple strategies in order to chart a strong and steady course forward for the University. The development of a “strategy” inevitably implies, or should imply, a future context of uncertainty, if not risk, in need of an intentional plan of action. As a small, tuition-dependent liberal arts college situated in an educational marketplace either increasingly hostile to the liberal arts (US), or in complete ignorance of its approach (Europe and many other parts of the world), AUP currently faces serious challenges. First and foremost amongst these is a 40% decline in attendance at American liberal arts colleges since 1990 due, among other things, to dramatically rising tuition costs coupled with an inevitable “return-on-investment” mentality on the part of consumers, a shift in perception from college as a place of intellectual exploration and growth to college as a credentialing pathway to a career (89% of American students say that the first purpose of college is employment), the lack of visible pathways from liberal arts disciplines to careers, faculties and advisors at liberal arts colleges untrained to confront these challenges and sometimes unwilling to do so, and so on. This particular “American” problem of higher education, however, is compounded at AUP because of its European setting in which the tradition of the post-secondary, exploratory liberal arts curriculum and general education are both virtually non-existent. Indeed, most international students, including many of our own, are unaware of the deep, time-released learning outcomes and career-enhancing power of the liberal arts, do not immediately see any relation to their career choice, and often resent general education and elective requirements, considering them a waste of time and money. The demise of the liberal arts in public opinion, ironically enough, is occurring at the very moment when thought and industry leaders are calling for its return in multiple ways—design thinking, creativity, innovation—as much for economic reasons as for intellectual ones. *In the face of such challenges, how, at AUP, do we articulate a special value proposition for our institution and make the case for the comparative and cross-cultural, life-changing education—both liberal arts and pre-professional—that we offer in American context in the heart of Europe?*

For the last two years, members of AUP Leadership, the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and students, speaking amongst ourselves and to a broad range of external constituencies about the University’s future, have been immersed in conversations about the special role AUP can play in a



diverse world of higher education institutions, and about the kind of student we as an institution have always existed to educate. As the ensuing plan argues, and, we hope, demonstrates, once we know who our ideal AUP degree-seeking student is, we can reach more of them, bringing them to Paris in ever-greater numbers to benefit from the 21<sup>st</sup> century education we provide. In fact, we at AUP believe that college exists to do both—to help our students to become better people *and* to deliver them to the door of a meaningful career.

### **AUP's Global Explorer**

Supported by a curriculum that promotes active learning and faculty that mentor them closely, AUP's students today enjoy unequalled cultural experiences and opportunities for lateral learning amongst a diverse group of peers, close relationships with members of staff, integrated advising and career services with demonstrable professional outcomes, and access to a life and learning center in the 7<sup>th</sup> arrondissement of Paris that puts the student learning experience at its heart. The vast majority of our students are self-selecting, reporting to us that AUP was their first choice (from 70-84% of the entering class over the past few years), drawn as they were to our location in Paris, our multicultural, multilingual community, the reputation of the University, and the adventure of studying in a country that is not their own. These are the students we exist as a university to serve.

In 2013-14, preparing for a new cycle of strategic planning, we undertook a yearlong study of our most successful, self-selecting students--our *global explorers*—relying upon institutional research on current and former students, correlation of “fit” characteristics, graduation success and alumni outcomes, as well as a host of retention and financial aid measures. Subsequently, we have been reviewing all processes and practices from recruitment to the curriculum, from student to alumni services, in light of our research into the “fit” AUP student who flourishes in the University's particular institutional culture. In fact, the University does attract a more mature, independent, globally minded, high-potential student than the average college-going recruit. Global explorers know what they want. The global explorer is hungry for a journey of intellectual, cultural, *and* personal exploration. Such a student is not daunted by the experience of being “not at home” or being “in the home of another” and is comfortably independent in a foreign environment. Global explorers seek to go beyond the curricular and cultural bounds of their national university systems in search of both intellectual adventure and the cultural challenges of studying abroad. They seek a university experience that helps them to affirm their global citizenship and to shape an international trajectory, both personal and professional. Our research shows that the vast majority leaves AUP, at least initially, to seek careers in the global workplace. A significant minority, using AUP as a springboard to prestigious graduate schools, enjoys the support and mentoring offered by high-profile faculty teacher scholars to pursue post-graduate degrees.

Global Explorers are all different and they follow different pathways to and from AUP. The portrait of the AUP student we serve requires nuance, as the University hosts a range of different kinds. Our “fit” students hail from the entire globe, may have parents of two different nationalities and

have lived in a third country, speak three or four languages upon entrance, and feel comfortable in a learning environment of great demographic diversity. Another kind of global explorer may have never left his or her country before coming to AUP, but has yearned for the “bigger life”—the study, the languages, the travel, the cultural connections, the feeling of global belonging, the transformative experience—that only an international college degree such as ours can provide. Still other global explorers feel at home in the AUP classroom with its characteristic mix of different nationalities, languages, cultures, ethnicities, ideologies and faiths. Finally, given AUP’s location in Paris and our globally mobile population, our planning and curriculum must take into account the different points of entry of *all* of AUP’s student constituencies: our three- and four-year degree-seeking undergraduates, one-to-two-year Master’s students, first-year partner program students, third-year study-abroad students, independent visitors, and transfer students.

All of our global explorers, whatever their origins, come forth in search of AUP’s special “third place”—neither wholly American nor French--international community. Since our founding, we have defined our natural diversity as the air we breathe, one in which no national majority, location, or shared heritage connects members to one another. Instead, such an environment privileges intellectual and social collaboration amongst people from diverse mono-cultural, bi-cultural, and third-culture backgrounds. Members’ sense of belonging emerges from relationships to others of similar aspirations and ideas and values. There are pocket communities of internationals all over the world that attract global explorers. AUP is one of them.

### **AUP’s Strategic Plan 2015-2020**

At the center of the plan governing our work as an institution for the next five years are several guiding ideas. The first and framing idea behind *AUP Ascending: 2015-2020* is to tailor our every process and program, strategy and space to the aspirations of our global explorers. We do this to build a flourishing community of global explorers at the University, to renovate the curriculum and the campus according to their needs, and to provide pathways to the careers that they seek. The second is to build out our global community, by reaching out to our own alumni and parent communities, to high schools that nurture our “fit” students, to the corporations, agencies, organizations, and associations that will provide our students with pathways to jobs, and to the partner institutions that will diversify our enrollments and extend our academic reach. The third is to assume a leadership role amongst American universities located abroad, sharing best practices and building faculty and staff partnerships with other institutions, cross-listing courses and developing student mobility programs, disseminating our particular model of the global liberal arts across the 25 universities, 20 languages and 16 countries represented in our intersecting consortia abroad, sharing our work on globalizing liberal education with colleges and universities in the US via our partnerships there. The last is to strengthen the University in the face of many external challenges by sharpening AUP’s planning and assessment culture, increasing its reserves, investing in its faculty and staff, and building a campus and an endowment for the future.

*AUP Ascending 2015-2020*, charting a path for the University's second fifty years, revisits the University's strengths and **core values**, analyzes the challenges posed by an uncertain **external environment**, advances a revised **mission** and **vision** statement, and maps out **five priorities**, as well as the **core initiatives and collaborative strategies** that will support them. The five institutional priorities that drive the 2015-2020 Strategic plan are:

- Building a Learning Community of Global Explorers
- Creating a Global Liberal Arts Curriculum and Multiple Pathways to International Careers
- Designing a Campus for a AUP's Global Community
- Communicating AUP's Global Reach
- Achieving Institutional Sustainability

AUP's strategic plan for 2015-2020 is the fruit of an institutional process designed to generate a shared vision of the University's future, guarantee our institutional independence, broaden our visibility and advance our academic reputation, and set achievable objectives for and measures of institutional advancement and sustainability in the volatile current climate of higher education and in the local context in which the University operates. This plan is the result of two years of sustained and broadly shared institutional planning, the second year of which coincided with the preparation of AUP's Periodic Review Report for our US accrediting agency, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. After the year's worth of preparatory research into AUP's ideal student, in 2014-15 various University constituencies undertook a year-long strategic planning process involving every constituency of the University from the Leadership Team to the Board, the faculty and staff to students, parents, guidance counselors, and friends, from recent graduates to alumni located around the globe, from former students who had become staff members to members of the President's Alumni Advisory Council. The goal of the process was to ground our sense of institutional purpose, focus, and vision in the priorities, core initiatives, and tactics that will ensure their realization.

The *grandes lignes* of the Plan were first articulated by AUP's President and Provost, Leadership Team, and Senior Staff in September and October 2014, then shared with a small sounding board composed of the Chair of the Board of Trustees and a co-Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. Its central priorities were presented in early draft form to the Trustees at the October 2014 meeting at which agreement was reached on forward direction. The draft was then shared with the full faculty and staff at regularly scheduled meetings in the fall of 2014, after which written input was solicited and the draft revised accordingly. Alumni at various PAAC meetings around the world (London, Paris, New York, San Francisco, Dubai) over the course of the year added their insights to the work by engaging in serious conversations about the future of AUP. In a meeting with the Student Senate, the major lines of the Plan were shared with student leadership and their responses were also recorded. Hundreds of informal conversations, focus groups, interviews,

surveys, and letters also flowed into the writing of the Plan and responses and new ideas have been incorporated at every stage of the process.

*AUP Ascending 2015-2020* sets a high-level agenda for the University—strengthening service to students, our pedagogies and curriculum, our production of scholarship, our staff and faculty engagement with our mission, our enrollments, reputation, and recognition, our portfolio of partnerships and consortia, our relationship with our extended community, including parents and alumni, our financial position, business plan, and endowment. We will allocate resources and monitor annual progress against our five priorities and their supporting initiatives, commitments and aims, using relevant performance indicators, benchmarks, and targets. This five-year plan, updated annually, will enable us to remain focused on our goals and will frame curricular and campus development, guide recruitment strategies, and enable us always to respond with agility to challenges and opportunities in the external environment. The unit plans created by all members of the Leadership Team expressed in the annual planning and budgeting process will provide the framework for making the Strategic Plan operational across all academic departments and non-academic units.

AUP is well positioned for a leadership role in global higher education and must rise now to meet that challenge with the help of its global community. A number of recent achievements have brought us to the door of a new strategic plan:

- renewal of University self-governance from the Board through student government
- recruitment of top talent to the leadership team and senior staff
- renewal, since 2007, of 35% of the faculty, following upon retirements
- creation of joint programs with prestigious universities, such as the Sorbonne and Oxford
- replacement of all University technology, both administrative and pedagogical
- successful celebration of AUP's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- identification of our “fit” students and design of a curriculum aligned with their needs
- shift in focus to an integrated and student-centered experience for all students
- transformation of our housing offer, which in its turn enabled
- new strategic partnerships buttressing enrollment and reputation
- expansion of our alumni, former students, and friends database from 5,000 five years ago to 16,000 today
- creation of the President's Alumni Advisory Council with 100 members worldwide
- realization of excellent alumni outcomes providing evidence of international careers and delivery on mission

With these achievements in hand, the moment has come for our launch of a newly focused curriculum, a three-year Campus Plan, and *The Time is Now* campaign to resource both campus and endowment. We are now poised to take the next steps toward enacting our vision. The American University of Paris is at a pivotal moment in its history—*un moment charnière*—for which *AUP Ascending: 2015-2020* will be our roadmap.

For half a century, AUP has provided a transformative experience to American and international students alike, inspiring them to global citizenship and enabling them to lead productive, satisfying lives in the 142 countries in which they now reside. That history is a great resource for AUP, as is the University's enduring sense of extended community. In AUP's unique learning environment—characterized by faculty expertise and enthusiasm and the open-mindedness of its community of motivated learners—the vastly diverse perspectives of students and faculty intersect to produce culturally nuanced insights into the most important issues of our times. At this moment, the current global marketplace for goods, services, and ideas combined with the University's rich heritage as an educator of creative, innovative, culturally fluent graduates, its considerable intellectual resources, growing financial stability and present clarity about the nature of its “fit” student inspire us to reach for ambitious goals.



## MISSION

Chartered as a liberal arts college in 1962, The American University of Paris is today an urban, independent, international university located at the meeting point of France, Europe, and the world. The University provides a student-centered, career-enabling, and transformative learning experience to the global explorers who are its Bachelor's and Master's students, empowering them to cross both disciplinary and cultural borders with ease in order to assume their places as responsible actors in over 140 countries worldwide.

AUP's mission is to educate its graduates to communicate effectively in a world of many languages; to read well, listen carefully, and write intelligently in a voice of their own; to become critical thinkers about history and human societies, economics, culture, literature, the arts, science, politics, psychology, business, and communication; to develop creative interdisciplinary solutions to contemporary global challenges; to be digitally literate in a world of swift-paced change; to understand the ethical imperatives of living in such a world; and to move across the cultural borders of the contemporary world with a sense of commitment to and responsibility for a world held in common.

The University achieves its mission by providing to its students a curriculum combining liberal arts inquiry and preparation for professional life, student-centered and active learning in small classroom settings; dynamic, engaged teaching informed by both disciplinary and interdisciplinary faculty scholarship; a host of opportunities for direct experience of the world and its many cultures; a wealth of intellectual exchanges on campus at conferences of global reach; and an integrated learning model that marries classroom learning and its application to real-world contexts, preparing students to master *and* to make, to reflect *and* to apply, to analyze *and* to act. In these ways, an AUP education supports professional skills development and cultural fluency, the sense of global engagement and the capacity to negotiate difference that emerge from the natural diversity of AUP's student and faculty bodies. Upon graduation, AUP students take part in and benefit from the global network that is our worldwide alumni community, creating lifelong connections to one another and to the University.

## VISION

By 2020, The American University of Paris aims to be recognized internationally as offering the finest and most demographically diverse American education in Europe to the global explorers who fit its unique educational culture and flourish within it. That reputation will rest in part upon the continuity of the University's mission over half a century to offer a student-centered, transformative education in the heart of Paris that pushes students to transcend the confines of "narrow nationalism." AUP's reputation will also rest upon its excellent record of graduating global citizens who are successful and have impact on the world, and its goal of being an internationally recognized site of disciplinary, interdisciplinary, and cross-cultural teaching, of scholarship, of creativity, and of academic convocation.

To achieve these aims, we will put the student life and learning of our global explorers at the center of our work, tailoring our processes and programs, strategies and spaces to an enhanced student experience. We will further develop the relevance and quality of a curriculum aligned with the aspirations of global explorers that combines the best of liberal arts inquiry, integrated student-life and cultural programs, and professional preparedness—thereby creating a path from curriculum to career or graduate studies for every single student. In our curricular development, we will take into account the intellectual and cultural experiences requisite to all of our student constituencies, from first-year visitors to transfer students, degree-seeking undergraduates to graduate students. We will support the curriculum by creating an integrated advising process combining academic and career support, promoting and providing internships and developing the professional skills required by our students' first employers. Our students will graduate with the cultural competencies required to live productive, personally and socially meaningful lives wherever they choose to live in the world.

As a result of steady commitment to these priorities, we will extend our recruitment reach and reputation globally, strengthening enrollments while increasing selectivity along with "fit" and supporting students who require scholarship aid. We make this last commitment in order to compose a student body as socio-economically diverse as ours is culturally and linguistically. We will also prize the inextricable links between excellence in teaching and research, at once providing resources and expecting accountability for our faculty's scholarly and professional productivity, establishing viable career advancement steps and rewarding them appropriately. At the same time, we will provide the faculty development funding necessary to ensure inspiring teaching and active pedagogies, as well as faculty engagement and intellectual renewal. We will encourage our faculty to invest in AUP's rising academic reputation, supporting its scholarship, professional activity, and conferences. As our faculty retires, we will restore the ranks with talented teacher-scholars deeply invested in AUP's mission in fields appropriately supporting the evolving curriculum.



We will create a diverse portfolio of strategic partnerships with other academic institutions and consortia, corporations and governments, to leverage the University's reputation, growth, enrollments, curricular reach, and faculty development.

We will invest in renewal of our facilities, renovating our distributed urban campus in the 7<sup>th</sup> arrondissement of Paris, creating in the process dedicated student and faculty space, refreshed learning environments, and coherent hubs of service. We will continually upgrade the learning resources and technologies that support the work of all students, faculty, and staff.

We will continue to build on the success of the University's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to create a vibrant worldwide community of alumni who support current students' career aspirations and participate regularly in the University's development and capital growth. By creating a global President's Alumni Advisory Council with annual meetings in the US, Europe and the Middle East, and a thriving virtual network of alumni worldwide, we will draw increasing numbers of alumni to join its Board of Trustees, thereby taking responsibility for leadership of AUP's future.

We will ensure the University's sustainability by multiple means, investing in AUP's faculty and staff and ensuring the engagement of both with AUP's mission; delivering continuous development of our academic offerings and administrative functioning by strengthening our planning and assessment culture; creating a solid business model that rests on appropriately expanded enrollments and reduced dependence on tuition; and, resourcing the Strategic Plan by means of a capital campaign to provide both an appropriately renovated campus and endowment funds.

## CORE VALUES

We began the planning process by asking community members, on campus and off, to identify the greatest strengths of The American University of Paris. A remarkable consensus grew out of this conversation, emerging from our long identity as an international community located in the capital city of Paris, with a naturally diverse community of students, faculty, and staff. Strengths identified included the extraordinary diversity of the AUP learning environment, the importance of location as endowment, AUP's exceptionality as the only foreign-accredited university in France, and the University's strong sense of community, agility, resilience, and survivability in the face of challenges.

### **Diversity as Medium**

At AUP we know ourselves to be different, and we celebrate that difference. Where other universities house students on the ordered floors of student dormitories, our students live in the studios, *chambres de bonne*, and apartments of Paris' 20 *arrondissements*; where other universities provide athletic facilities and wellness centers, our students are at home on the streets of the 7<sup>th</sup> in the cafés, bakeries, museums, theaters, and streets of the surrounding neighborhood, and in all the multicultural neighborhoods of the city of Paris, the cities of Europe and beyond; where other universities require standard intermediate language mastery, our students are expected to learn French while at AUP, integrating the language into their everyday lives as they communicate with their landlords, their neighbors, shopkeepers, and French friends. In fact, AUP already is the kind of learning environment that universities around the world are seeking to provide for their students in the place of traditional study abroad—a fully international learning community initiating students into the worlds of linguistic and cultural *métissage* that the world is becoming. Home to 1200 students of 107 different nationalities, and a faculty body of nearly 25, we work and study in an environment where cultures speak to one another, meld, and create sturdy new hybrids in all sorts of unexpected ways.

We recognize and cherish the differences amongst us—our languages, worldviews, disciplines, talents, scholarly productivity and pedagogical engagements, our varied means of contributing to university functioning. We are one of the most international universities on the planet. To make matters more complex, most of us think of ourselves as bi- and tri-cultural, holding several different passports rather than identifying ourselves with a single nationality. We have become an institution with a faculty, staff, and student body so increasingly diverse as to make our American project, at times, challenging. We are characterized more by this mix of cultures than by any simple French-American hybridity. In this interesting third culture environment, where accented English often reigns, everyone starts on a level playing field, at once leaving his or her cultural

baggage on the sidelines and bringing it inside to share with others. AUP is a community of foreigners that feels like home.

We strive to be a University that does not reify or efface difference by “tolerating” it merely; we know that difference is edgy, requires skillful negotiation, cannot always result in consensus, and often requires a vote. This means that we can engage in lengthy debate over process, procedures, and outcomes, but we never debate our fundamental commitment to hear one another out, understand our differences, and seek to bridge them. We translate whenever necessary, and speak in at least two of our many languages, in class and committee meetings.

We strive as well, within our tuition-driven limits, to be a University that addresses head-on the implications of vast human inequities across the planet—differences in economic conditions, political conditions, and opportunity. To that end, we believe scholarship funding to be amongst our top priorities, so that the “wealth” of an AUP education can be truly shared amongst students from all backgrounds. Each year, we turn back systematically 15% of our annual budget to institutional scholarships and we are determined to secure funding for more. *The Center for International Communication*, founded by former president Lee Huebner and Berna Huebner, has funded scholarships at AUP for Asian and African students over the past decade, and its important successes must be built upon and multiplied.

This singular mix of identities—there is no national majority—does not come without struggle. The utopian multiculturalism (“it’s a small world after all”) of many college viewbooks is not for us. Often our classrooms and committee meetings and public events are sites of conflict resolution (and prevention), at which divergent views are aired and learned from. Faculty members experiment perennially with ways to use our demographic diversity to deepen and enhance learning. The special alchemy of the AUP classroom, in which many different nationalities are regularly represented, has an impact on all learning, even that of professors and staff. We all understand that we need to reflect upon, theorize, and disseminate the outcomes of our remarkable learning environment, as it is a microcosm, a laboratory, of the world our students are inheriting.

### **Location as Endowment**

The President and Board of Trustees determined in 2008 that we would maintain our location in central Paris. That historic decision set our educational mission in its proper setting and gave AUP a permanent address for its global aspirations. Ours is an urban campus whose neighborhood is the vibrant city that surrounds the University and serves as an extended classroom for our global citizens. Not just any city either—for many universities have urban settings—but arguably one of the grandest, most international cities in the world. By making our decision to set down roots in the 7<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement*, and to take our place resolutely as a university in and of the city, The American University of Paris reconnected with a vision that has nourished higher learning since the founding of the first universities in Europe. Higher education has been an integral part of

negotiating the relationship between the city and the world since the emergence of the great universities of Paris and Bologna. Additionally, today's global cities have responsibilities to the world, responsibilities of service to their citizens and responsibilities of sustainability to the environment.

As many of the French universities move their campuses to the suburbs, our international mission has convinced us to stay proudly where we are. To students, faculty, staff, and alumni—despite the evident sacrifices in space that staying in Paris entail—an urban campus feels like AUP's rightful home. It is well worth noting that virtually all of AUP's constituencies—including the French who cross important educational, if not geographical, barriers to reach us—come self-selecting to AUP from elsewhere. Hence, the terrific importance of maintaining and capitalizing upon our central Parisian address.

Our 7<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement* strategy has given us the opportunity, not just to create a campus that brings together AUP's academic resources, offices, and public spaces in a unified, though distributed, architectural whole, it also offers the opportunity to better align curricular development with our urban location by opening our doors to service learning, internships, neighborhood collaborations, and new courses and interdisciplinary programs. AUP's general education program—the signature program or general curriculum all students share—is configured around AUP's urban, civic, and global values. The university in and of the city is inevitably home to that complex cosmopolitanism that Martha Nussbaum, in her book, *Cultivating Humanity*, believes is essential to our development as morally responsible individuals in a globalized world and critical for the development of leadership in modern democracies. Nowhere more than at AUP are we shaping future citizens for an age of cultural diversity in an environment ideal for the cultivation of our students' humanity. Nussbaum believes that liberal education should create three essential capacities: that of “critical examination of oneself and one's traditions,” rather than bowing to authority or prejudice; that of “seeing oneself as a member of a heterogeneous nation and world”; and that of being able to “think what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story.”<sup>1</sup> To be a world citizen, in her view, is most radically to feel one's primary loyalty to human beings the world over, that is, to humanity itself. Cultivating that kind of world belonging is the charge and challenge our University willingly assumes today.

### **AUP at its Best**

One thing that this small, stable, and deeply committed community agrees upon is the exceptional nature of The American University of Paris. No university in the world can boast comparable demographic diversity, and few can hold up an urban campus so elegantly situated as our own—between the Eiffel Tower and the Invalides. Mapping work accomplished by our architects point to

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<sup>1</sup> Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1996), pp. 9-11.

the nearly ideal location of the University in one of Paris' most prestigious *quartiers*. In addition, AUP is the only foreign-accredited comprehensive university in France. In recent years, AUP has emerged as a leader in the American international university community, a visible and increasingly respected institution in France, and as an innovative laboratory for American-style international education. AUP's upward loft over the past decade has been rewarded by significant grant awards, prizes, and French, US, and international recognition.

Consensus has grown around our vision—to count AUP, a university of the future amongst the most visible and academically excellent private universities in Europe—and our mission—to educate our students to cross boundaries, disciplines, political and educational systems, languages, and cultures with ease and engagement. Our curriculum has stabilized and strengthened around faculty passions, research agendas, and core strengths in a coherent pattern of mutually reinforcing majors, minors, and Master's programs. Today we are agreed upon an academic vision that fosters in our graduates the capacity to be at once cultural translators, global communicators, agile agents in a global workplace, practitioners of sustainable development, and active contributors to an increasingly just world. We are agreed that we intend to take AUP to full global recognition as a unique, academically rigorous, private American learning community located in Paris.

Since its founding in 1962 as The American College of Paris, AUP has transformed itself several times, notably from a two-year college for American expatriate children that built bridges back to prestigious US institutions to a four-year Bachelor's degree granting University, and finally, in 2005, to a Master's university. Today our American majority has given way to stunning multiculturalism. Despite the many ways in which we have reinvented ourselves over the years, responding both to environmental challenges and opportunities, several aspects of our identity have remained the same. We continue to believe, after fifty years, that our demographic diversity and our location in the very center of Paris are our greatest endowment. We continue to believe that our radical independence from ideologies, national curricula, and constrictive disciplinary structures explains the extraordinary tolerance that reigns amongst all of our very real differences. We are nimble and entrepreneurial, and have been so historically, responding to opportunities as they arise, moving quickly when necessary.

Most important, we measure our own excellence by the impact of our graduates on the world they inherit, having shaped our curriculum around such values. It is not the criteria of the rankings, all those things we call "inputs," not the facilities, not the number of books in the library, not the size of the endowment, not even the number of publications produced by faculty that make for greatness in a university, but rather the capacity of an institution to develop the world citizenship of its students in an era when, as borders fall, identity politics escalate. A world university such as ours has the capacity to produce young leaders who are at home in the world and who have the capacity to make others feel at home.

The stories about "AUP at its best" that illustrate the University's strength include those of survival and resilience during adverse times, stories in which a plucky, unsinkable community negotiates

challenges with fierce resourcefulness. Our stories also include those of remarkable student achievements, most of it fostered by dedicated faculty mentoring. A noteworthy number of our graduates are actively involved in social justice, public policy, environmental, and sustainable development projects around the world; others have returned to their countries, or moved on to third countries, where they use the academic and cultural skills their education gave them to conduct business, manage companies, engage in entrepreneurship, design and direct communications, commit to politics, or education, or one of the medical or service fields.

At AUP, we view research and teaching on a continuum, such that both knowledge creation and transmission are informed by each of these. We respect, alongside academic excellence and pedagogical vibrancy, all forms of professional engagement and activity. AUP's faculty has embraced a model of the engaged teacher-scholar, supported by active, inspiring teachers, and steady grant awards and increasing budget allocations have provided resources to support it. Remarkable productivity in research, in conference hosting and attendance, in public scholarship, in editing and translating, has ensued to bring honor to the University and raise our reputation as a center for interdisciplinary research. AUP has been honored as a leader in liberal education for global citizenship by the AAC&U, and has been entrusted by the A.W. Mellon Foundation with the founding of AMICAL, a consortium of 25 American academic libraries abroad. Today, AUP's President also serves as the President of AAICU, the Association of American International Colleges and Universities. We participate fulsomely in the Global Liberal Arts Alliance, building partnerships with similarly sized and oriented colleges and universities in the US and abroad. Our capacity to hold to mission yet innovate energetically has given AUP an edge and a survivability that has carried us through the past fifty years, over considerable hurdles, and onto the home stretch toward international recognition, academic excellence, financial stability, and networked relations with other institutions.

### **Shared Values**

All members of our community agree that AUP's is an academic culture of engagement, global citizenship, and community that fosters in students and faculty alike a critical sense of commitment to and responsibility for a world of interdependence. In AUP's multilingual, multicultural learning environment, students develop a capacity for ethical and political judgment that is alert to cultural diversity. In the living laboratory that is Paris, in the exceptional space of the AUP classroom, a diverse body of students and faculty meet to articulate civic values and negotiate difference, as together they question, reflect upon, and work toward creative solutions to real-world problems. The special alchemy of our exceptional learning community inspires students, faculty, and staff alike to excellence, and equips us to contribute actively and compassionately to the building of an increasingly just and sustainable world.

# EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

As we considered the core strengths of the University, we also looked carefully at the external environment: the current landscape of higher education, particularly in global context, and the specific French environment in which we are located. Both present exceptional challenges at the current moment. Some of the issues that came to the fore while we accomplished this environmental scan and held these conversations were:

- questions about the relevance and sustainability of our still-predominantly liberal arts model in an international context where the term has no meaningful translation
- an urgent sense that the liberal arts require rethinking for the globalized 21<sup>st</sup> century and that AUP is uniquely positioned to respond to that challenge
- belief that we needed to educate our students—at the same time—to become better people *and* to find good jobs in a difficult economy, and that the learning environment needed to fulfill both goals
- questions about the adequacy between our curriculum and the rapidly obsolete jobs for which we formerly prepared students and our current responsibility to provide them with the agility, critical reasoning, and confidence to transfer skills over and over during their lifetimes
- concerns about the broadly varying preparation and backgrounds of our students, coming as they do from 107 nations around the world and vastly different social, cultural and psychological backgrounds, each needing specific kinds of support
- watchfulness about the demise of even highly reputed liberal arts colleges in the US, and the sustainability of our own business model over time
- questions about the shape and makeup of our student body going forward, given the declining demographics in the United States and the increasing numbers of international traveling students; questions about the match between our curriculum and such students
- concern about the viability, as we grow, of our current campus in the 7<sup>th</sup> arrondissement, one of the most expensive neighborhoods in the world
- questions as to the flexibility and/or resistance of our academic traditions to the new ways in which knowledge is produced, taught, and learned
- concern about the natural conservatism of all departments and university curricula in the face of new models of learning, and a sense of urgency about adopting some of these newer models
- increased competition from the for-profit sector; increased competition from new European national university models that have adopted liberal arts practices; increased competition from universities transformed by the Bologna Accords, designed to align the European higher education arena with American-style degrees;



- attention to the impact and cost of technology in our increasingly global and interconnected society
- concern about the volatility of current financial conditions with increasing pressures on costs and revenues; concern over currency volatility in global markets
- clear-headedness about our increasing need to supplement tuition with grant funding, corporate funding, and gifts from individual donors
- recognition of the rising cost of higher education, the inevitability of a higher education bubble, and the importance of maintaining tuition at reasonable levels, especially positioned as we are between the US and Europe
- concern about the impact on AUP of the rigidity of the labor code in France, the high cost of social charges, and the hostility of the country and culture to private education
- apprehension about acts of terrorism and civilian violence, and increased need for security, especially in urban environments, and especially for American institutions abroad that have symbolic value as targets
- concern about the current state of Western democracies, the lack of civility and capacity to compromise for the greater good, the rise of extremist parties, and the fracturing of the global commons
- belief in the need for global leaders who speak multiple languages and slip like fish between cultures, people such as our own students who can create highly functioning and inclusive communities and inspire others to civil discourse, tolerance, and recognition of human interdependence

This review of threats, challenges, and yet opportunities for AUP to shine reminded us not only of the University's inevitable vulnerability to an unpredictable financial future, but also of the University's historical and present agility and resilience. We already have responses to many of the concerns noted above; indeed, we feel that AUP is uniquely placed to offer compelling answers to many of the issues facing higher education today, including the capacity to generate new, internationally recognized language for the liberal arts.

But we were as affected as any small college by the impact of the 2008 global financial crisis. During that period, we were able to weather the storm precisely because we had not grown dependent on payouts from an endowment, and had not permitted our operating budget to swell beyond our means. Our community came together to make the budget cuts and to accept the necessary sacrifices that it would take to steady the ship. We made changes to our financial operations in order to minimize certain risks and mitigate others. But we also came to understand—in an uncertain global economic context—the ways in which our financial model would need to change if the University were to flourish.

As we plan for our future, we recognize that we will need to develop reliable sources of income beyond tuition. The time is now for the creation of an endowment to cushion our institution during times of trouble. The time is now to invest in renovation of a campus that will set the scene

for our kind of learning. The time is now to generate scholarship funding to meet the ever-greater needs of our students and their families.

It is also true that the French context within which we live and work—the source and guarantee of our exceptionalism—is deeply challenging to our financial model. Most of our budget supports salary and benefits, with a full 65% of our annual revenue supporting our personnel costs alone. Because of our non-profit status, every single salary in the institution is taxed at 65% social charges, as compared to 21% in the UK, about 32% in the US, and 38% in Germany. Such a cost differential makes it challenging for a fiscally French AUP to be competitive in a global marketplace, especially in terms of hiring, salaries of current staff, and cost of living. In addition, we are unable to hire term labor--after a brief trial period, every employee is a permanent, long-term employee of the University—or to terminate employment without lengthy, costly legal action and indemnification. Where both US and, for that matter, French public universities rely on term or contract labor, AUP is unable by law to do so. The financial implication of having a fully tenured faculty and staff also brings with it serious financial challenges.

In the American context within which we work, costs have risen too. College costs and student loan indebtedness have skyrocketed. In all the years since the financial crisis, most US colleges raised tuition an average of 4.5% a year, passing on spiraling costs to the consumer. During this same time, AUP has kept tuition raises to a reasonable 2.3% annually. As parity has come to the dollar and the euro, our tuition remains substantially below that of comparable universities in the US. But we have had to absorb other costs without benefit of tuition to set against them, such as the rising regulatory costs across the entire American higher education sector.

Finally, although AUP is fully bi-cultural—recognized in France since 1964, with further recognition of our higher education and research status following in 2009; continuously accredited by MSCHE since 1973—the University also falls between two stools. We have never had any support or subvention from the French by virtue of our private status; and we are characterized by the US Higher Education Act as a “foreign school” because, at the time of the Act, our government never imagined a global higher education context in which an American institution of higher learning would not be located “in a state.” This double expatriation effectively renders us ineligible for benefits in the US and in France. We’ve had to rely, over and over, on ourselves.

In such a complex bi-cultural, indeed global, financial context, AUP has had to rely upon its own agility, fiscal discipline, and ever-better capacity for financial management to sell one of its historical assets, build up significant cash reserves, engage in long-term financial, real-estate, and curricular planning based on sound and reliable enrollment projections in order to enact its vision. We are confident that the University is better-than-ever equipped to meet the challenges of the future should it be able to supplement tuition revenues with the generous support of loyal alumni, corporations, governments, board members, parents, and friends of the University.

# PRIORITIES

The American University of Paris has identified five major priorities that will shape institutional forward motion over the coming five years. These priorities will be implemented by adopting appropriate unit-level core initiatives that, in their turn, require enabling strategies. Adherence to them in planning and resource allocation will ensure that we achieve our vision for the future.

## **Priority 1: Building a Learning Community of Global Explorers**

AUP will recruit and retain the global explorers who thrive in its international environment, strengthen their self-identification as global citizens, and promote their learning and success. We will tailor all AUP processes and programs, strategies and spaces to the global explorer's comprehensive educational experience.

As a result of commitment to this priority, we will extend our recruitment reach and reputation globally, strengthen enrollments in hand with selectivity and "fit," calibrate our partnership programs with our expanding enrollments, and better support students who require scholarships.

As a result of the diverse community we create in our classrooms and on campus, our students will graduate with the cultural fluencies required to feel at home in the world, and to live and work productively anywhere within it they choose.

To create a truly global learning community, we will both serve and draw upon our worldwide network of alumni, parents, and friends, inviting them to support the career aspirations of current students and to provide the mentoring, role-modeling, fulfilling internships, and job offers crucial to their success.

## **Priority 2: Creating a Global Liberal Arts Curriculum and Pathways to International Careers**

The AUP classroom, characterized by its wealth of nationalities, ideologies, languages, cultures, and faiths, provides for a unique experience of lateral learning amongst students. Such natural diversity within the historical internationalism of the University inflects all learning both inside and outside the classroom.

AUP will develop a coherent, innovative, liberal arts learning experience fully aligned with the personal, intellectual, cultural, and professional aspirations of its global explorers and providing a bridge to meaningful choices upon graduation. The University will also create multiple pathways

through the curriculum for its various student constituencies, from three- and four-year degree-seeking students to visitors and transfers. The three pillars of our curriculum will be academic excellence, intellectual and cultural hybridity, and the anchoring of classroom and campus in Parisian institutions and histories.

AUP will better integrate all the services that support the learning experience—advising, internships, co-curricular learning experiences, cultural study trips, mentored research, skills-based pedagogies, leadership training and career development services--so as to provide a continuous path from curriculum to career or graduate studies for every student.

### **Priority 3: Designing a Campus for a Global Community**

AUP's global explorers explicitly choose an urban university setting and live across the city of Paris in every one of the 20 *arrondissements*. They require a campus that dedicates space to and builds community for a student body of over a hundred nationalities, each of whom, no matter what his or her national origin, is a foreigner.

By 2020, AUP will achieve its dream of having an architecturally eclectic, modernized, rationalized and unified urban campus distributed amongst the tree-lined streets, cafés and shops, and the clustering of international and American institutions that characterize our neighborhood on the Left Bank. AUP has articulated a master Campus Plan to make the most of our strategic location in the 7<sup>th</sup> arrondissement of Paris, and to provide the appropriate spaces to foster our particular learning model and the need for community across such vast diversity.

AUP will invest in renovation of its campus in order to provide a community-enhancing, learning-centered facility in the *quartier* of its founding. The University will strengthen student learning, faculty intellectual activity and the work of its dedicated staff by the intentional creation of appropriately configured teaching facilities, group study rooms, modern, well organized office and study environments, and coherent hubs of service to our students.

AUP will continually upgrade the learning resources and technologies that support the work of all members of its community.

### **Priority 4: Communicating AUP's Global Reach**

Recognition: AUP will communicate by all possible means its premiere position as the finest and most demographically diverse provider of American education in Europe to the global explorers who are its students.

Visibility: AUP will seek to attain worldwide recognition of its unique institutional identity amongst “fit” prospective students and their parents, guidance counselors, schools and institutions.

Reputation: AUP will communicate ever more effectively the achievements of its faculty, students and graduates so as to attain international recognition as a university renowned for interdisciplinary scholarship, global perspectives, and academic convocation.

Partnerships: AUP will enhance both reputation and visibility by creating a diverse portfolio of strategic partnerships with sister institutions and academic consortia, corporations and governments, in order to leverage the University’s reputation, growth, enrollments, curricular reach, faculty development and student outcomes.

Leadership: AUP will assume its role as a leader of the intersecting consortia of American universities abroad in which it participates, as the only foreign-accredited, comprehensive university in France, and as a beacon of global liberal arts education to American peer institutions seeking to internationalize their curricula.

## **Priority 5: Achieving Institutional Sustainability**

AUP will invest in its **faculty**, prizing excellence in teaching, research, and service, providing faculty development support, opportunities for intellectual renewal, and meaningful career steps that are appropriately rewarded. As our faculty retires, AUP will replenish the ranks with talented teacher scholars devoted to AUP’s mission in fields supporting its evolving curriculum.

AUP will continue to develop the professionalism of the University’s **staff**, providing viable career development to its employees and a stream of qualified managers to the University. We will thereby ensure the engagement of our staff with AUP’s mission and vision and its capacity to deliver on both.

AUP will ensure continuous development of its academic offerings, administrative processes, and institutional resources by strengthening its **strategic planning, execution, and assessment culture**.

AUP will create a solid **business model** that rests on appropriately expanded enrollments, reduced dependence on tuition, and the generation of reserves for growth initiatives.

AUP will resource the Strategic Plan by means of *The Time is Now* **capital campaign** to provide an appropriately renovated campus to support its learning goals and to build an endowment that will fund student and faculty development and the University’s learning model.

AUP will create a virtuous circle supporting its future by serving its alumni community, inspiring it to leadership of the University, and drawing in turn upon it to support the career aspirations of current students and to create a global culture of philanthropy in support of current and future generations of students.





# CORE INITIATIVES BY PRIORITY

## Priority 1: Building a Learning Community of Global Explorers

1. AUP will create a **student-centered service culture across all departments** throughout the student lifecycle from pre-arrival and orientation to academic, social and cultural life in Paris, and beyond it to alumni experience. A complete redesign of the admitted student pre-arrival and orientation experience will be undertaken in year one. (“Every program and process, every strategy and space will be aligned with the needs and aspirations of the Global Explorer.”)
2. AUP will continue to **strengthen retention through the student lifecycle** by formalizing a retention strategy, defining metrics and implementing retention efforts, with particular emphasis on the critical first-year experience and the needs and interests of Global Explorers.
3. The University will **expand upon the successes of its current leadership programs**, providing “honors” and professional opportunities to develop the leadership capacity of all students. A new **Center for Advising, Internship, Career Development and Leadership** will be instrumental in supporting this critical initiative.
4. AUP’s **Admissions Office will target, communicate, recruit, select and admit the “fit” students** most likely to become successful contributors to the AUP community.
5. The Admissions and Academic Affairs Offices will collaborate to ensure alignment between **the marketing of AUP and its academic offerings**, creating a “fit” curriculum for global explorers and reflecting our unified approach in all communication channels.
6. The Admissions Office will **expand its portfolio of activities** to better target and recruit prospective global explorers from around the world. It will embark on an ambitious strategy that recruits from a wide range of countries, with special emphasis on developing the Asia market. It will further develop relationships with other international institutions and partners, while maintaining the importance of our core US market.
7. The Admissions Office will focus on developing the University’s **network of international feeder schools**. Through dedicated marketing and communications campaigns, including the use of targeted financial aid, we will further develop our relationship with international schools, particularly those with the IB Diploma program all over the world as our major source of ‘fit’ students.
8. Student Affairs will develop **a new approach to the management of the student living experience known as residential life** in order to support the new housing program for our



Global Explorers. Residential life will also include expanded services to students, ranging from the practical, social, and ethical to the medical and psychological.

9. Student Affairs will **support the educational mission of the University** by providing a variety of learning opportunities that promote students' academic endeavors and that encourage their growth and development.
10. Student Affairs, in collaboration with Academic Affairs, will improve the academic quality and visibility of Cultural Programs, **making cultural study trips a central piece of the AUP student learning experience.**
11. Academic Affairs and Student Affairs will **imagine new ways to improve General Education and French language learning via student activities** such as clubs, special housing arrangements, service learning, a French Club, and cultural programs in French.

### **Priority 2: Designing a Combined Liberal Arts and Pre-Professional Curriculum and Pathways to International Careers**

1. Academic Affairs will develop and maintain an innovative curriculum of the highest academic quality, based on the latest research and engaging the most challenging and pressing global questions of our time (**academic excellence**).
2. Academic Affairs will promote, via **compelling and transformational teaching**, interactive and “lateral” learning that views students as individuals with specific creative and intellectual capacities who are active participants in the teaching/learning process and who are viewed as a resource to one another and to the professor.
3. Academic Affairs will **align curricular and student experience with our international setting and Parisian locale**, institutions, and resources. AUP will become known for a few key academic areas that enhance its identity and that are in line with current and future student demand.
4. Academic Affairs will ensure that the **freshman academic experience is intellectually compelling and socially engaging**, the better to ensure retention from freshman to sophomore year, with focus on such areas as AUP's signature FirstBridge program, student/faculty interaction, freshman mentoring and French cultural programs.
5. In an economic climate where employers demand “job-ready” students, Academic Affairs will ensure that students are properly advised to **align academics with career options**, and to complete an academically rigorous and **professionally relevant internship**.

6. For students who wish to seek employment directly after graduation, **the curriculum will emphasize a strategic blend of broad liberal learning, technical or pre-professional training and cross- or intercultural experience.**
7. For students wishing to pursue graduate or post-graduate professional training, Academic Affairs will ensure **excellent disciplinary learning, mentored research opportunities, high-quality faculty advising, and seminars on preparation and admissions strategy.**
8. Academic Affairs will **integrate advising, internships, career development and leadership,** so that academic and career advising occur in parallel, and career advising begins in the first year.
9. Academic Affairs will **recruit engaged teacher scholars and strengthen faculty development, research opportunities and professional satisfaction.**
10. Within AUP's Graduate School of Global Studies, Academic Affairs will **maintain and develop academically rigorous and financially sustainable Master's degrees** that clearly present the promise and nature of each Master's degree to specific targeted audiences.

### **Priority 3: Designing a Campus for an International Community**

1. AUP will **embrace appropriate, cost-effective technologies that are consistent with our institutional values, needs, and interests** and that align AUP's future with academic and employment trends of our global, digital age. We will continue to invest in the most up-to-date infrastructural technologies and software, student management systems, technology-assisted instructional tools, and learning management systems, upgrading the ones we have.
2. Academic Affairs will **develop an innovative library concept** for the new Student Learning Center, within the context of current trends in library design and within AUP's financial and space constraints.
3. The Office of Finance and Administration will ensure the **planning and implementation of AUP's evolving Campus Plan in the 7th**, including all real estate acquisitions, rentals, and renovations planned as Phases II and III of the Campus Plan.
4. The Office of Finance and Administration will **anticipate the space and technology needs of the University** in collaboration with all units, in order to plan for the harmonious development of today's campus into that of tomorrow.
5. The Office of Finance and Administration will **restructure and professionalize the general administration of the campus buildings and grounds operation** to create a true culture of

service to students and employees.

6. The Office of Information Technology will **ensure that AUP's technology strategy and services include a stable and forward-looking infrastructure** with the capacity to support cloud computing and hosted services, cutting-edge technology for AUP instructional activities throughout the learning environment, and administrative systems that are enhanced for decision support through improved usability, integrated access, and reporting tools.

#### **Priority 4: Communicating AUP's Global Reach**

1. **AUP will diversify its recruitment approach and broaden its marketing reach** through a wider selection of marketing channels, ensuring that the University is present on all key study choice platforms, that the AUP website is search-engine optimized and that advertising reaches a much wider audience than ever before.
2. **A COOP program and partnership strategy** consistent with the goals and values of the Strategic Plan will be developed and accountability for COOP program development and management determined.
3. The University will **increase awareness and visibility and achieve international recognition** of AUP as the “fit” University for Global Explorers, by implementing the University's value proposition and brand messaging program across all points of contact.
4. AUP will advocate for the international **reputation** of the University **as a recognized center for interdisciplinary and global scholarship and academic convocation**, providing academic conference and association leadership and showcasing the achievements and scholarship of faculty, students and alumni on the AUP website, in publications and in the press.
5. The President's Office, Academic Affairs and Admissions will collaborate on the development and maintenance of **a diverse portfolio of strategic relationships with educational institutions, corporations and governments** to enhance the University's offerings, reputation, and overall organizational development.

#### **Priority 5: Achieving Institutional Sustainability**

1. AUP will further **professionalize and build out its planning and assessment culture** to support decision-making and the evolution and implementation of the AUP Strategic Plan and annual assessment process. Dashboard development with a view to sharing appropriate and targeted strategic information and metrics will be included, as will annual organization-wide calendar management.

2. The Admissions Office will develop **professional and sustainable approaches to its recruitment function**, including the measurement and review of all objectives and performances.
3. AUP will develop and implement a strategy for a **revenue-driven and sustainable academic summer program**
4. AUP will ensure continuous development of its academic offerings, administrative processes, and institutional resources by **strengthening its strategic planning, execution, and assessment culture**. It will create an academic culture of assessment in which the unit of analysis will be student experience rather than programs or teaching. Under the leadership of an appointed **Dean for Assessment, Learning and Institutional Research**, AUP will create a University-wide Assessment Plan, an AUP Assessment Web site, an electronic registry archiving and documenting assessment practice, and measurements for progress as specified by the strategic plan.
5. The Office of Academic Affairs will develop **academically effective and cost-efficient scheduling** processes in order to guarantee that students can take the courses they need.
6. AUP will **develop an American-style human resource function** that develops employees' strengths, provides a steady stream of qualified managers to the University, and evidences greater rigor in its hiring. The University will continue to foster the professionalism of its staff and faculty, providing viable career development to its employees and ensuring their engagement with the mission of AUP.
7. The Office of Finance and Administration will strengthen the University's business plan by putting in place the people, the processes, the technology, and the services required **to establish a fiscal planning and discipline culture**. The Finance team will be reorganized into separate finance/accounting and controlling roles.
8. The Office of Finance and Administration will **create a veritable planning, anticipation and information culture** in order to produce relevant data to support assessment of organizational strength and improvement of organizational functioning.
9. The University will continue to develop creative solutions to issues arising from the University's **dual French-American status**.
10. The Office of Outreach and Advancement will **broaden and deepen constituent engagement** with the University's alumni, parents, friends, students, faculty and internal stakeholders, creating new forums both regional and at AUP for alumni interaction with

students and for engagement with parents. The office will launch young alumni initiatives, the Alumni College program, and alumni travel programs.

11. Outreach and Advancement will **expand philanthropic support to the University via *THE TIME IS NOW* campaign, raising €15 million by the end of FY 2019-20** for AUP's student-centered, renovated campus and endowment.
12. Outreach & Advancement will **build a top-notch advancement function** commensurate with AUP's size and potential, with first-rate talent, integrated infrastructure, and a highly collaborative culture.
13. As the University's security is paramount in a world of increasing insecurity, AUP will review in the coming twelve months its **comprehensive continuity of operations plan**, with special attention to emergency planning and notification, crisis communications, and continuity of IT and financial operations.

# IMPLEMENTATION AND NEXT STEPS

The Strategic Plan 2015-2020, focusing on AUP's core strengths, mission and vision for the future, as well as its understanding of the challenges posed by its various external environments, provides a frame going forward within which service to our students, curricular development, campus redevelopment, communication of our message on a global scale, and the University's long-term sustainability may be articulated. It is an organic document, subject to change as opportunities materialize and challenges occasionally intervene, and will be reviewed annually by AUP's Board and its Leadership Team, the better to calibrate its achievement in alignment with resources and operating capacity.

Many of the ideas in these pages have already begun to be implemented, especially those pages devoted to the new housing program and the redevelopment of our Campus in the 7<sup>th</sup>. The Leadership Team, creating the core initiatives and commitments under each priority, has already imagined ways to operationalize the ideas herein and committed to achieving them. But we must still mobilize our forces to translate such an ambitious, integrated program into concerted action.

In the coming months, the following steps will be taken:

- The finished, ratified Plan will be shared by the President with all of AUP's internal and external constituencies, notably with faculty, staff, and students, the alumni and parent communities, with the public via our Web site, with our accrediting agency, the MSCHE, and with the higher education community.
- The Plan will be shared with the University's alumni in multiple ways, including dissemination to the PAAC members, and publication of the address to the online version in the fall edition of the new *AUP Magazine*.
- Leadership Team members, various University offices, faculty and staff committees, the PAAC and Board committees shall be charged, as appropriate, to act on various initiatives that fall under the priorities.
- Grant support shall be sought, in alignment with the Strategic Plan, to implement the Academic Master Plan in the three years ahead.
- All institutional studies and master plans will be updated in order to implement the initiatives, and charged with coordinating the detailed steps involved in each:
  - AUP Multi-Year Financial Plan
  - Campus Redevelopment Plan with its accompanying Campus Financial Plan
  - Facilities Master Plan

- Information Technology Plan
  - Strategic Enrollment Management Plan
  - Academic Master Plan
  - Student Engagement and Experience Plan
  - Institutional Advancement and Outreach Plan that will roll out the public opening of *The Time is Now* campaign.
- The University's Office of Assessment, Learning, and Institutional Research shall be a partner in charting progress on the Strategic Plan and its priorities and initiatives, supporting our work with accurate, updated, integrated data and providing a structure for annual review of progress made.



## AFTERWORD: AUP ASCENDING

By any standards, academic year 2014-15 was a watershed for The American University of Paris. Not only did we begin the year with the launch of the new housing program and the new freshmen partner programs, we also welcomed a new Provost and a new Director of Enrollment Management to the Leadership team. Not only did we re-engineer our entire orientation program over the course of the year, involving forty people across the University, but we also renovated two buildings and began a third, accomplishing eleven separate moves within the calendar year. We also wrote and ratified this strategic plan and devised unit plans for its execution over the next five years. We opened AUP's first capital campaign, and raised a little over 7 million euros in gifts, pledges, and commitments within the first six months. We applied for, and, at this writing hope to receive, two major grants from the A.W. Mellon Foundation, the first to fund AMICAL and the second to support the Provost's Academic Plan. At the midpoint of this decennial reaccreditation period, we also submitted our Periodic Review Report to the Middle States Commission with a sense of deep satisfaction as to the progress the institution has charted in recent years. Every unit of the University has taken on the implementation of the new directions set by the Board and Leadership Team during our strategic planning process, rising to the occasion individually and as a community. Implementation has fully begun. Over the past seven years, virtually no aspect of institutional functioning has remained unchanged, from Board and faculty governance to student governance, from human resource management to financial management, from the review of the curriculum to the review of career services, from admissions to alumni services, from course and program assessment to the closing of the feedback loop and allocation of budgets, from the query of a prospective student through the election of an alumnus to the Board.

Although the University continues to face external challenges linked to our tuition-driven business model, our dependence on recruitment numbers, our unique juridical situation in France, the constraints of French labor law and the private, non-profit labor regime under which we function, not to mention the host of issues facing our liberal-arts style of higher education at the present moment, AUP has made steady progress toward its goals. We recruit increasingly "fitter" and stronger students in alignment with our curriculum and alumni outcomes, creating for such students the campus and the support systems that they want and need. Halfway through a campus redevelopment plan, we have renovated AUP's first Student Life Center, signed a long lease on an administration building, completed plans for renovation of a classroom building, and are finishing up the planning for a Student Learning Center that will break ground this fall. Behind each of these carefully planned and modeled strategic moves is an ever-stronger culture of assessment and planning and budget discipline that has transformed the way we do business.

In a small non-profit university, however, it is the people who make the difference, and a great number of such people at AUP have toiled, stretched, sacrificed, and believed in order for the University to be where it is today. AUP's Board has completely renewed itself over the last few

years under the leadership of AUP parent Raymond Henze, whose experience as Chair of the Williams College Board has been brought to bear productively, compassionately and collegially at AUP. Today, every member of the Board looks forward with us in the same direction. The University's Leadership Team, in its turn, is a group of consummate professionals who work together in great synergy, supported by loyal and devoted teams. Beneath them is a Senior Management Staff composed of the directors of all non-academic units, and its academic counterpart, the Council of Chairs, the administrative group of the faculty; beyond that there is the host of committees and cross-institutional collaborations that make small universities work. Each individual participant on all of these teams has contributed to the vision of our future summarized in *AUP Ascending: 2015-2020*, to the manifold successes realized over the past three years, and to the steady, general improvement of processes and policies that made all of this possible. Across the University, dedicated faculty members teach and mentor our global explorers, supported by a willing, increasingly student-centered and capable staff. If it takes many people to lift a University, to ensure its loft and execute its plans for its future, then surely each of these has been exemplary.

