

Dear Members of the AUP Community,

Given the heat in Paris over the summer and even during this early *rentrée*, it hardly feels as if summer is over. I hope that each of you in our extended AUP family—students, parents, alumni—benefited from some real down time with family and friends, good books, long walks, adventure travel and whatever else permits you to disconnect and renew. I'm happy to report that we've had another seamless landing of a promising and talented entering class. Amongst the approximately **500 new students** arriving at AUP this fall, we appear to have students holding 61 nationalities, speaking 51 different languages and dialects, coming from 45 countries and 38 US states, in the usual proportion of 70% women to 30% men. 16% hold two or more passports. Overall on campus, **we're holding strong at 106 nationalities, speaking 65 languages**. After American and French, our top nationalities are British, Italian, Canadian, a three-way tie amongst Colombian, Spanish and Mexican, and then Russian, Georgian, Brazilian, with Saudi Arabian and Chinese in a tie, followed by Egyptian and Swedish. Apart from the clear and enduring gender gap, AUP is right in its sweet spot.

What a delight it was to welcome our students this fall at our new home on the Seine, the Quai d'Orsay Learning Commons. With all of our student support services at long last consolidated in this state-of-the-art complex, teaching, learning and collaboration are well underway.



Only two weeks into the new semester, our **students are already involved—via their professors and our own transnational networks—in important events on and off campus.** In March of last year, the Joy and Edward Frieman Environmental Science Center, in collaboration with alumna Gina Torry '98, senior advisor to the Nobel Peace Prize Global Programs, produced and directed a conference at AUP called “**Translating Science into Climate Action.**” Some 130 students participated in 28 faculty-led workshops in order to generate ideas and to create policy to confront the most pressing environmental challenges of our time. Earlier this month, accompanied by their professor Elena Berg, four student leaders (Michael Bowers, Sandra Lefaire, Clark Marchese, and Ilina Hristova) were invited by Gina Torry as delegates to the first ever **Oslo Pax**, an annual peace conference organized by the Nobel Peace Center. The theme for the first gathering was “Peace and Climate Change.” The Oslo Four, as they call themselves, are energetic and deeply engaged climate advocates. They heard from Nobel Peace Prize laureates, directors of human rights organizations, military generals, energy ministers, political analysts and youth activists, but found themselves wishing for even more concrete outcomes. The students will hold an event at AUP this semester to share their insights with their peers and encourage deep student engagement in a more sustainable world, a project we support heartily. I am very glad to see that student activism at AUP rejoins that of young environmentalists the world over at what appears to be a tipping-point moment in history.



Students in the **History, Law and Society** major have created their own executive board, sending out a HI/HLS Department Newsletter to the community every two weeks on the intellectual work of the department and the activist work they are accomplishing. A recent issue describes the inspiring trip HLS students took this past summer with Professors

Albert Wu and Michelle Kuo to volunteer at a detention facility in Texas. There is also an interview with Professor Miranda Spieler on her upcoming work, and a student spotlight on Jasmine Cowen. You can read the HLS newsletter describing their **journey to and at the Southern Border** [here](#).



As the gun epidemic in the US spreads via terrifying, repeated public massacres, and as American public opinion tips increasingly in the direction of commonsense gun regulation, this fall the President's Office at AUP will partner with The American Church in Paris, the Newtown Remembrance and Action Committee, and the student board of the AUP History, Law & Society Program to organize an event on December 4, 2019, entitled **Guns and the 2020 Election**. The event will explore issues of public health, gun violence, Second Amendment debates, public policy solutions, and a comparison of the presidential candidates' positions on the issue. The recently issued March For Our Lives proposal, which you can read [here](#), will be at the center of our discussion, and we hope as well to have via videoconferencing one of the Parkland students in attendance to exchange with our students.

This March, **AUP will host the third Global Liberal Arts Association (GLAA) Institute under the auspices of our Gender Studies Program and the leadership of Lissa Lincoln**. Sixty participants, both faculty and students from the GLAA institutions, will converge on the Quai complex March 10-12, 2020 to interact with members of our community on panels and in workshops around the subject of **Transnational Feminism(s)**. This is an increasingly important feminist perspective that emphasizes the differences amongst women and their struggles around the world, while simultaneously

recognizing the interconnectedness of what may at first glance seem like disparate and independent socio-political phenomena. Read more about the Institute [here](#).

Last spring I wrote about a difficult but important trend we are seeing at AUP and in college campuses around the world—a rise in students requiring support for mental health issues, sexual assault, and learning disabilities. Last year was one of reflection on our policies, our capacities and our responsibilities. I am pleased to announce that in addition to making complete updates to our policies and procedures, we have also launched a series of conversations about sexual respect on campus to give students a chance to explore how they would like to conduct themselves in relationships. We have also welcomed to the Student Services team a second guidance counselor, **Charlotte Vernier**, and an additional assistant at the Student Services Helpdesk, **Olivia Grobocopatel**. This means that students now have full and regular support from 10am to 10pm, Monday through Friday. We are also providing additional resources to parents and families. In August, **Dana Callaghan**, an AUP mother, joined AUP as our Manager of Parent Relations. Recognizing that families are an essential part of the student journey and vital members of the AUP community, Dana is here to welcome parents, answer questions, and help parents to become more involved with AUP. Dana can be reached at parents@aup.edu, and is always happy to provide advice or triage your request to the right person on our staff.

As always, there is much to be accomplished this year, and many groups across campus are hard at work, especially in the area of accreditation and recognition. This is the third and culminating year of self-study and re-accreditation with the **Middle States Commission on Higher Education** (by which organization AUP has been continuously accredited since 1973) and we will submit our final self-study in February and receive the final visiting team visit mid-March. By June, the Commission will issue its report. In his second year as Provost, Bill Fisher will be working on a vision for the future of graduate programs at AUP, will lead a Task Force for Interdisciplinary Programs, and continue “deep assessment” of departments and programs by external reviewers.

This is also critically important year for **fundraising**. Though the six-year Master Campus Plan has nearly been achieved with the historic opening of the Quai d’Orsay Learning Commons, as I wrote last fall, we made the bold decision to retain the former site of our library to create a new **Center for the Arts at Monttessuy**. This new complex will support the enormous increase in Art History and Fine Arts majors, as well as visitors enrolling in those courses, with newly constructed naturally lit studios and exhibition spaces, a lithography lab, faculty offices, and, of course, an auditorium/performance space/screening room. Watch [here](#) a wonderful film made about the Monttessuy Center by AUP film student Carlo Frescobaldi. It clearly illustrates, in its visuals of the existing studio and the emptied former library space—how badly we need to renovate! If you are interested in learning more about or supporting this project, please contact the [Office of Outreach and Advancement](#), headed by Mary McLean Evans, VP for Presidential Initiatives.

Every fall I also like to take a moment to boast about our extraordinarily productive faculty. Yet again, the annual scholarly output of our faculty was staggering. AUP's faculty consists of approximately 75 full-time faculty, with another 70 permanent part-time, or clinical professors, or outside professionals who come in to share hands-on expertise with our students. Last year, the AUP faculty produced 16 books, 140 articles, 8 exhibitions/films/videos, and over 240 participations in international conferences. Click [here](#) to read online our **Faculty Accomplishments 2018** publication and get a sense of the range of our faculty's research agendas.

How do we know at AUP that we are delivering on mission? Although there is always and inevitably room for improvement, the data points from the Spring 2018 course evaluations provide overwhelming evidence of the strength of teaching, of student/faculty interaction, and of AUP's particular approach to global liberal arts education. In another edition of this newsletter, later in the year, I will share data from our surveys of our alumni from the last three years.

- 86% agreed or strongly agreed that “the professor created an environment conducive to learning.”
- 89% agreed or strongly agreed that “the course stimulated my thinking.”
- 88% found “the subject and topics covered in the course interesting.”

As always, I enjoy hearing from members of the AUP community in response to any of the ideas I share in my newsletters. Feel free to write to me at president@aup.edu or to consult the full archive [here](#).

Celeste Schenck