FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Professor Sonya Stephens Named AUP’s 13th President
—Stephens selected following rigorous international search; takes over from outgoing President Celeste M. Schenck on September 1, 2022—

PARIS, France – March 3, 2022 – The Board of Trustees of The American University of Paris announced today that Professor Sonya Stephens has been appointed the University’s 13th President following a rigorous international search. As of September 1, 2022, Professor Sonya Stephens will assume the presidency from President Celeste M. Schenck as President Schenck retires from AUP after 13 years of transformative leadership at the end of AUP’s 60th academic year.

Professor Stephens currently serves as President of Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, a role she has held since 2018. She has also served as the college’s acting President (2016–18) and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty (2013–16). She is an exceptional academic leader and an internationally recognized scholar of 19th-century French literature and how it relates to visual culture. She is the author of Baudelaire’s Prose Poems: The Practice and Politics of Irony and has also edited several books, including A History of Women’s Writing in France and Translation and the Arts in Modern France.

She holds a doctorate in French from the University of Cambridge, a master’s degree in French studies from the Université de Montréal and a bachelor’s in modern and medieval languages from the University of Cambridge. Her previous academic and leadership roles include Chair of the Department of French and Italian and Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education at Indiana University Bloomington and Chair of the Department of French at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Doris Daughney, Chair of AUP’s Board of Trustees, said: “As we all welcome Professor Stephens to AUP, the Board of Trustees eagerly anticipates an exciting and progressive future working with our 13th President to lead AUP further in its mission and to see AUP recognized as Europe’s premier university in American liberal arts education.”

Sonya Stephens said: “I am deeply honored by this opportunity to serve as the next president of The American University of Paris, and I could not be more pleased, nor more excited, to be joining this vibrant global community. I look forward to our work together and, building upon the exceptional legacy of Celeste Schenck, to furthering AUP’s critically important mission. The impact of a liberal arts education is uniquely powerful and generative, especially one so intentionally and explicitly international in its context, focus and perspectives, and so contemporary in its expression. So much of what AUP represents calls to my own intellectual, professional and personal commitments, and it is an extraordinary privilege to be appointed to lead the University in this moment in its history, and in these times. I extend my heartfelt thanks to AUP’s Board of Trustees for the confidence they have placed in me.”

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About The American University of Paris
Founded in Paris as an American-style liberal arts college in 1962, The American University of Paris – this year celebrating its 60th anniversary – is an international university located at the meeting point of France, Europe and the world. It is the largest educational institution in Europe to use the US higher education system. Accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, the University has at the core of its mission the commitment to providing a student-centered, academically rigorous, transformative and career-enabling education. Students representing more than a hundred nationalities benefit from small class sizes, which combine liberal arts inquiry with an active approach to learning. World-class faculty members teach in English and the university offers 27 undergraduate majors and 4 core fields of graduate study. The University’s MA in Global Communications has received RNCP accreditation in France. AUP’s 20,000 alumni live and work in 145 countries around the globe. For more information visit www.aup.edu.

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