



NAVIGATING 21ST-CENTURY PATHWAYS 2020-2023

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY *of* **PARIS**

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FOREWORD

For 60 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 in Europe to graduates capable of "bridging the gap of narrow nationalisms." The University still pursues that mission today, and since that time has become a learning community in which students of 105 different nationalities, taught by faculty of 30, pursue their dream of living a globally defined and connected life, so much *of* the world themselves that they take responsibility *for* it.

RE-FOUNDING AUP

Today AUP offers an American-accredited, globally-attuned, student-centered, academically rigorous, liberal-arts-based *and* professionally-enabling curriculum—indeed, the best of its kind in Europe. In addition, the University has been increasingly recognized internationally as a site of both disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholarship and academic convocation. Today, the University thrives in a context of strong leadership and cross-institutional commitment to continuous improvement on all fronts. Over the last decade, thanks to a robust 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 successfully completed two five-year strategic plans designed to *re-found* the University during its sixth decade.

The first of these, ***The Time is Now: 2010-2015***, permitted us to strengthen enrollments and negotiate sustaining partner programs that served to diversify our enrollment portfolio and extend our visibility worldwide, as well as to rebuild our financial position and cash reserves via multi-year, expert financial planning. The University also achieved two major institutional goals during the first five-year 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 aspired further, AUP's second successful plan, ***AUP Ascending 2015-2020***, supported by a first capital campaign of the same name, came to a close in Spring 2020 at the moment of our successful decennial

Middle States Commission on Higher Education reaccreditation review. Its achievements were substantial:

- Identification of our ideal student and alignment of every program, process, space, and strategy with the needs and aspirations of that student
- Articulation of a recruitment and financial aid strategy designed to attract a “fit” student body
- Significant investment in career exploration, experiential learning, internships, and the mental health of our students
- Renovation of our global liberal arts core curriculum and definition of institutional core competencies to be achieved by every graduate
- Realization of excellent alumni outcomes providing tangible evidence of graduate school admissions and international career pathways, ultimately proof of delivery on mission
- Founding of five research centers focusing on genocide and human rights, critical democracy studies, environmental science, writing and translating, and civic media
- Renovation of every single building on campus over a six-year period, including the purchase of 69 Quai d’Orsay as our flagship student learning commons
- French professional recognition of AUP’s Master’s in Global Communications
- Address of faculty and staff salary equity issues, significant improvement of faculty salaries, doubling of course releases for research, investment in research funding and sabbaticals
- Strengthening of AUP’s assessment, planning and budgeting culture
- Creation of a centralized communications function that supports every unit of the University
- Growth of our database of alumni and former students from 5,000 in 2005 to over 20,000 today
- Significant fundraising for capital projects and academic programs via the campaign
- Vast improvement of AUP’s financial ratios and position
- Installation of a massive security and crisis management apparatus in 2015

Six years ago, we mined all available data to understand whom we existed as a University to serve, identifying the *global explorer* as AUP’s “fit” student. Although the plan focused initially on recruitment of this student—via a scoring system of “fit” characteristics and the targeted recruitment of IB students worldwide—we intentionally aligned, over the five-year life of the last strategic plan, every aspect of university functioning with the needs of that student. We have brought into coherence everything from our mission statement to our institution’s goals (the five pillars of the last plan), from our institutional core competencies to our integrated core-curriculum (GLAAC), co-curriculum (GPS) and majors and minors.

Indeed, for the past decade, **the theme of our work at AUP has been that of *alignment***: of our curriculum with the learning goals and career prospects of the global explorer; of our entire physical plant with the appropriate pedagogies and technologies a global liberal arts approach requires; of the excellence in teaching, scholarship, and renown of our faculty with our improved, expanded and communicated academic reputation; of faculty salaries, course releases and sabbaticals with international standards for teacher/scholars; of our practices, ethical standards, and policies governing academic integrity with our

mission and core values.



As we move into our next strategic plan, what began as a recruiting strategy five years ago has become our *raison d'être*. What began with a definition of our ideal student became the outline for a fully integrated 21st-century curriculum for such students and the renovation of purpose-built learning spaces across campus to support our kind of learning. What began as a search for “fitter” students led to recruitment of stronger students entering with higher average GPAs, new faculty hires, a rise in faculty research productivity, and the founding of the five research centers. What began as an effort to widen our Admissions funnel began a process of all boats rising that resulted in the heightened academic reputation of our institution. Indeed, the Middle States Commission’s report on AUP’s Periodic Review Report 2015 ended with the compelling challenge: “AUP’s strategic plan provides a sound roadmap that if clearly laid out, executed and evaluated periodically would enable it to be a model for international education.” We believe that during the *AUP Ascending* years 2015-2020, AUP did become—in every aspect of its functioning—a “model for international education,” outpacing its historical peer group of American universities abroad in everything from its curricular plan to its campus footprint, from faculty productivity to academic reputation, from quality of students to quality of staff and faculty. The infrastructure achievements and planning practices established during the *AUP Ascending* years served us well during the Covid-19 crisis of 2020-2021, while at the same time delivering us to the door of a new strategic vision.

CHARTING THE UNIVERSITY'S FUTURE

During academic year 2020-21, following upon our two-year, successful Middle States reaccreditation cycle, AUP's Board, leadership team, faculty, staff, students and alumni discussed, drafted, and ultimately ratified *Navigating 21st-Century Pathways: 2020-2023*. More information on the broad participative process that produced this plan can be found [here](#). In light of AUP's upcoming 60th Anniversary and the current opportunity to write a new strategic plan, **we determined that the five pillars, or strategic directions, of the last strategic plan had been the right ones for AUP, and thus chose to keep the pillars in place, while inflecting them differently.**

COMMUNITY	CURRICULUM	CAMPUS	COMMUNICATION	CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
Extending AUP's Learning Community of Global Explorers	Designing an Integrated, Experiential 21 st -Century Curriculum and Navigating Pathways to Meaningful Careers	Consolidating AUP's 7 th Arrondissement Campus on the Seine and Securing our Student Housing Program	Building AUP's Global Reach and Reputation	Achieving Institutional Sustainability

From 2015-2020, multiple factors contributed to our strategic and unwavering focus on the recruitment of the right community of students and renovation of the campus. **With both of these substantially achieved, in the years ahead we will focus our attention predominantly on AUP's 21st-century curriculum—which will become the jewel in the crown of our recruitment strategy—and sustained and broader communication of our authentic story/ies to all of our constituencies.** We will also take up the issue of AUP's citizenship and identity: as an American institution in terms of pedagogy and academic traditions; as a French one in terms of our fiscal functioning and experiential learning partnerships; and as an international institution in terms of our recruitment reach, institutional alliances, consortial partnerships, and research collaborations.

We began this new cycle of strategic planning with some important questions:

- In 2014, we thought of the *global explorer* as a prospective student or a recruit. Today we have graduated multiple classes and have conducted extensive institutional research on global explorer alumni journeys. What can their various pathways to meaningful careers tell us about AUP global explorers once they leave AUP? Do we need to revise our understanding of the needs of our ideal students in light of their evolution over the past five years?
- How should such updating of the global explorer's portrait and our research on global explorer pathways impact our thinking about the curriculum? How could an innovative, integrated, experiential, individually tailored, 21st-century curriculum better support our students? What are

our missed curricular opportunities? What new subjects should we be teaching in the third decade of the 21st-century?

- Should we broaden our notion of the AUP global explorer to include English-language learners in Paris and beyond, local professionals seeking certificate programs and English-language proficiency, adult global explorers in search of short, intense experiential learning either in Paris or online?
- How do we capture AUP's powerful integrated learning experience and put it at the center of AUP's story in a way that makes it accessible and desirable to prospective students?
- What is or should be AUP's citizenship or multiple citizenships (understood metaphorically as our multiple identities or belongings) as we go out with these stories about who we are? As our student body becomes increasingly international, should we be learning new recruiting languages and styles? In 2020, does it behoove us to remain as American as we have been in our outlook and address, or should we be making significant strides to be increasingly French, European and international, while remaining faithful to our American student-centered culture and curriculum?
- What values should inform our ongoing curricular renovation and storytelling?

As we framed *Navigating 21st -Century Pathways*, one single overarching goal inflected all others: **AUP aims to secure its place as the premiere American international institution of higher learning in Europe, a reputational journey we embarked upon five years ago.** In order to complete the full re-founding of AUP as such, we will:

- complete the work of integrating and then putting at the center of our recruitment focus our signature 21st-century curriculum;
- restructure and extend our graduate programs, doubly accredited to all extent possible in France and the US;
- increase the influence of our research centers internationally, adding several relevant to current and future curricular development;
- assume full ownership of AUP's residential life program;
- move steadfastly forward with our cross-university plan for massive digital transformation, from systems to classroom, including the upgrading of our entire information resource-management system;
- diversify our student population further by means of broadened global-explorer recruitment;
- create a portfolio of strategic partnerships with academic institutions and consortia, corporations and governments to leverage the University's reputation, growth, enrollments, curricular reach, faculty development and scholarship;
- extend the University's reputation and reach in France, the US, and internationally;
- and, with an eye to future sustainability, inspire an increasingly faithful alumni and parent community in order to build annual giving, planned giving, and an endowment for AUP.

Every unit of the University will contribute to this vision for AUP's unfolding future. **Academic Affairs**, led by Provost William Fisher, in partnership with AUP's faculty, is currently implementing a powerful new vision for the curriculum integrating deep liberal arts learning and career exploration. The University's 21st-century curriculum is being designed so that global explorers may navigate their own hybrid, holistic pathway through our offerings. These efforts are being accomplished in constant dialogue with **Admissions**, led by VP Timothy Rogers, that regularly gathers intelligence from the market and from our external audiences. Admissions continues to refine the criteria that defines the global explorer as our "fit" student, guiding our work of alignment of all programs and processes with the needs of that student. In the Office of the Provost, Claudio Piani, Dean of **Institutional Research, Assessment and Effectiveness** has created a sustained, systematic, and organized assessment program that informs our institutional planning, guides budget allocations, and measures our progress toward our goals. That office achieved our MSCHE decennial reaccreditation in Fall 2020 and our State of Delaware reauthorization to offer American BA and MA degrees in Spring 2021, and will track progress made on the new strategic plan. **Student Affairs**, led by VP Marc Monthéard and Dean of Student Development Kevin Fore, rising to the challenges imposed by Covid-19, is vastly extending its capacity to meet student learning differences and mental health needs, its efforts to support students from underrepresented and minority groups and has taken on the responsibility for repossessing and managing our own residential life program for the first time in AUP's history. EVP Valérie Fodé, leading **Finance and Administration**, ensured the significant improvement of AUP's financial position over the past decade; her office will complete in year one of this new plan the final renovation in our six-year Campus Master Plan, bringing to a successful close the vast optimization of the University's campus that reached its apex with the purchase and renovation of our flagship building at 69 Quai d'Orsay in 2019. Finance and Administration will also oversee the upgrading of the University's integrated information resource system (IRIS) and digital transformation over the coming three years. **Communications**, led by director and alumnus Kilian Ordelheide, has ensured University-wide re-positioning of AUP within the constellation of international institutions and will accompany in every possible way the reputational advances at the heart of the *Navigating 21st-Century Pathways* strategic plan. **Outreach and Advancement**, in the hands of a seasoned professional, VP Mary McLean Evans, will be working in the years ahead to ensure AUP's long-term sustainability by launching specific fundraising, planned giving, and endowment campaigns. The force behind these synergies is a highly functioning and collegial leadership team, in partnership with a devoted Board, that works in concert across all of our units to resolve problems and execute visionary, yet lasting 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 under the duress of the global pandemic that is Covid-19 and ancillary crises within higher education itself has been of a different order. It has required data-informed reflection and multiple overlapping strategies, not to mention the seizing of some powerful opportunities in order to chart a strong and steady course forward for the University. Changes we have made to University functioning for Covid-19 are not merely adaptive and temporary; they will have lasting impact on our decisions for years to come.

LIBERAL ARTS TODAY

As a small, tuition-dependent liberal arts college situated in an educational marketplace either increasingly hostile to the liberal arts (US), or in ignorance of its approach (still much of Europe and many other parts of the world), AUP has sought to position itself between Europe and the US. Foremost amongst these challenges has been a 40% decline in attendance at American liberal arts colleges since 1990 due to, among other things, dramatically rising tuition costs coupled with an inevitable “return-on-investment” mentality on the part of consumers. College, once perceived as a place of intellectual exploration and growth, is seen now as a credentialing pathway to a career (89% of American students say that the first purpose of college is employment). Liberal arts disciplines can appear to some publics to lack a visible or “paved” pathway to careers, while some faculties and advisors at liberal arts colleges can be untrained or unwilling to confront the future employment challenges of their students. 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 experience have no equivalence in the early-tracked and vocationally-focused European curriculum (although that has clearly started to change with the rapid rise of liberal-arts-style university colleges within the national university systems). Indeed, some international students, including some 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 resent core-curriculum and elective requirements, considering them a waste of time and money. The demise of the liberal arts in public opinion, ironically enough, has occurred at the very moment when thought and industry leaders are calling for the return of design thinking, creativity, and innovation, as much for economic reasons as for intellectual ones. In the face of such challenges, given our positioning between Europe and the United States, how, at AUP, do we articulate a special value proposition for our institution and make the case for the comparative and cross-cultural, hybrid and holistic, life-changing and transformative education—both liberal arts and pre-professional—that we offer within an American educational context in the heart of Europe? **Indeed, AUP—founded and grounded within the European liberal arts tradition—continues to uphold the idea that liberal education must be the foundation of all university inquiry, and the belief that liberal studies become particularly relevant to our students when paired with a hands-on, experiential, career-enabling set of learning experiences.** At the heart of such exploration is always the iconic liberal arts experience going as far back as the Greeks: that of a student learning at the knee of a beloved mentor.

For the last three years, AUP’s 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 reflecting on the relevance to our curricular offer of the term liberal arts, even inflected as the *global* liberal arts, at the current moment. It may simply be a question of language, of cultural translation. Often misunderstood, especially in our European context, as referring either to the “arts” or to specific political approaches, the liberal arts is not a broad enough descriptor for the curriculum we offer to our students at AUP, although liberal learning remains core to our goals. **As the ensuing plan demonstrates, AUP’s 21st-century curriculum emerges from our research on ten years of alumni career paths since**

leaving AUP, faculty-led horizon scanning at both undergraduate and graduate levels for future curricular opportunities, and our profound belief that our plan to integrate intellectual and life skills is uniquely suited to the particular students who self-select to learn at AUP. What we promise those students, equally in search of intellectual stimulation and personal development, is that an AUP education will enable them *both* to become the best version of themselves *and* to open the door to a meaningful first career.

AUP's GLOBAL EXPLORER UPDATED

In 2013-14, AUP's leadership and Board undertook a year-long 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. We wanted to understand those students for whom AUP exists as a University to serve. In fact, the University naturally attracts a more mature, independent, globally minded, high-potential student than the average college-going recruit. 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 living 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 belonging to the global commons in order to shape an international trajectory for their lives. The portrait of the AUP student we have served over the past six years 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 or fourth country, have experienced travel opportunities, speak two or more 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, languages, travel, cultural connections, feeling of global belonging, transformative experience—that only sustained study abroad can provide.

All of our global explorers, whatever their origins, come to Paris in search of AUP's special “third place”—neither wholly American nor French. 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. 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, ideas and values. There are pocket communities of internationals all over the world that attract global explorers. AUP is one of them.

How has AUP's global explorer changed since 2014? As we sharpened our own recruitment and communications strategies to “call” such students to campus, we have first and foremost increased recruitment across the board (from 448 *new* students in 2013/14, the year before our new strategy, to 646 in 2019/20) while successfully recruiting students at the top of our “fit” scale. An average of 75% of our entering students receive merit-based global citizen scholarships in recognition of their high “fit” which in AUP terms translates to *likeliness to thrive within the University's international culture*. **Indeed, today's degree-seeking global explorer is an increasingly international (non- US-based) student and an increasingly strong student, presenting higher entering GPAs and stronger levels of English. An ever-higher number comes from international high schools with whom AUP has had a sustained or “feeder” relationship (63% of all applications in the Fall 2020 recruitment cycle).**



Anecdotally, today's global explorers come with a stronger record of high-school volunteer and community-building work and are engaged in study at AUP that supports their activism and interest in socially meaningful careers. **While our research six years ago showed that the vast majority of global explorers left AUP, at least initially, to seek careers in the global workplace (84% at the time went directly to work), today the majority (54%) goes on to graduate training in a host of fields, mentored by faculty teacher-scholars, to pursue post-graduate degrees at prestigious institutions around the globe.** Today 93% of our graduating students are either in graduate school or are working within a year of graduation; of those, 74% say they are enrolled in or intend to enroll in a Master's-level degree, and 15% say they are enrolled in or working toward a professional degree (law, medicine) or a doctorate.

Additionally, in recent years, the global explorer drawn to AUP's Bachelor's and Master's programs has begun to come from outside our traditional 18 to 24-year-old recruiting group, including increasingly members of the military after active duty, older graduate students seeking to "pivot" or change career directions, adults wishing to gain or finish degrees started earlier in their lives, and even retired adults or older alumni in search of powerful learning experiences in Paris. AUP faculty have described the positive impact of a broader age spread in the classroom and the exciting intergenerational exchange the presence of such students has facilitated. Despite these shifts in our global explorer population over time, we have steadily maintained our vast demographic diversity: a 2020-21 entering class of 65 nationalities speaking 45 languages, and an overall count of 105 nationalities in the entire student body, speaking nearly 70 languages and dialects. All of these changes in the composition of our global explorer student body are being taken into account as the Provost- and faculty-led review of the curriculum envisions how future AUP students will navigate 21st-century pathways at AUP and beyond.

Over the past six years, we have also conducted research on the post-AUP trajectories of our global explorer alumni, identifying the various ways they deploy the hybrid curriculum we offer in the international marketplace. This research shows that students armed with liberal arts majors can essentially go anywhere, but it also surfaced a few fields that AUP faculty horizon-scanners and curricular-planners are considering for development: travel and tourism; global health; art, culture and design; education and public administration, and NGO and non-profit management. Already, new pathways focusing on data science and analysis, as well as some of the aforementioned, are in development. A new Master of Science in Data Analysis and Human Rights will launch in 2021-2022.

NAVIGATING 21ST-CENTURY PATHWAYS: 2020-2023

This strategic plan was written during the exceptionally challenging **Covid-19 global health crisis**, which has inevitably left its mark on our reflections and catapulted several long-term goals into strategic prominence, while setting a few in abeyance until the crisis is fully resolved. In the immediate, we must take on several strategic efforts foisted upon us by circumstance. First and foremost, we recognize that in the years ahead massive amounts of dedicated management time; thoughtful, agile, alert leadership; and steady communication will be required to **survive the Covid-19 crisis both humanly and financially intact**. Second, given the bankruptcy and abrupt withdrawal of our long-term housing partner, AUP has had to pivot twice during the 2020-2021 year to take on the Spring and Fall housing of our incoming students, amassing in the process a **housing park sufficiently large, yet adequately flexible, so as to accommodate all incoming students for whom we facilitate residential life**. Third, the crisis has set in stark relief the critical importance of effecting **digital transformation across AUP**. Not only do we need to upgrade AUP's entire information technology resource system, we also need to update our technology infrastructure, hardware, and software for online teaching and collaborating. We must permanently renovate our pedagogies for online learning, as well as our academic support systems, while integrating (in

Admissions and Advancement, for example) those online techniques for recruiting and yielding our incoming class, for friend-making and fundraising, that have worked even better than our traditional, in-person approaches so dependent on overseas travel. Fourth, our **plans to launch SAGE, the School for Adult Global Explorers**—given the sharp curtailment of travel, especially for the target demographic—have been accordingly slowed. In short, Covid-19 has both delayed some planned initiatives and moved others into sharper focus and lent them greater urgency.

At the same time, we have come to understand that **important longstanding initiatives—such as the invention and implementation of a signature 21st-century curriculum and the goal of raising AUP’s reputation and reach internationally via strategic communications—should continue at the slower, steadier and uninterrupted pace that befits deep cultural change over time.** Facilitating our students’ pathways through the rich array of AUP classes, majors, minors, study trips, co-curricular activities, modules, programs, research-centers, leadership-training opportunities, mentoring relationships and professional experiences requires two kinds of important work. The first of these is that of synthesizing curricular components into a legible whole. The second is that of ensuring that advising frame intentional learning choices throughout a student’s academic career: at the outset more formally as students design their pathways, but also informally in close relationships with inspiring faculty mentors. The design and implementation of the new curriculum—integrating many parts of the curriculum that had already been set in place by faculty, in addition to a host of new ones—will unfold over the coming five years. During the same period, the communication of AUP’s increasingly prominent position in the international landscape of American education abroad will be articulated in parallel with the new curriculum it is preparing to foreground.

This new strategic plan 2020-2023—*Navigating 21st-Century Pathways*—charting a renewed path forward for the University at 60, revisits the University’s strengths, **mission and core values**, analyzes the challenges posed by an uncertain **external environment**, and maps out **five strategic priorities, as well as the core initiatives and collaborative efforts** that will support them. AUP’s strategic plan for 2020-2023 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, all of these at the moment of an unprecedented global health challenge. The goal of our extended process, as a community, to recognize our strengths and build upon them, to reflect upon threats and challenges, devising strategies to work through or around them, to identify opportunities and move forward with alacrity to seize them is to ground our sense of institutional purpose, focus, and vision in the priorities, core initiatives, and tactics that will ensure their realization.

AUP AT 60

Our vision for AUP's long-term sustainability rests upon our accurate re-calibration of the global explorer, our successful recruitment of more of them from new regions, targeted settings, and via strategic partnerships, as well as our full articulation of an integrative, experiential 21st-century curriculum for that student which will be tailored to each student's pathway toward a first career. **The Quai d'Orsay Learning Commons in its very architecture—its glass bridge joining student life and the learning commons—emblemizes a curricular approach that recognizes no separation between life and learning. Envisioned as a 1930s *paquebot*, the Quai building emphasizes in multiple ways—the compass mosaic on the lobby floor, the navigation desk signposting student traffic to the service hubs throughout the building—the way we conceive of an AUP education as a personal journey for each student.** The components of student success in this endeavor will include a holistic, integrated advising program (supported by interactive software), a strengthened exploratory first-year experience and summative capstone experience, a fully implemented four-year GPS experience (which can be modular for three-year and transfer students, and will be recorded, via the AUP Engage platform, on a co-curricular transcript), engaged research guided by faculty mentors, and a host of experiential learning projects that span the curriculum, core curriculum and co-curriculum.

We also aim to continue the work of rendering visible our faculty's research productivity and talent for international scholarly convocation, leveraging these strengths to rise in “next-level” reputational directions. The University has been on this path for some time, with significant success. The reputational advance we undertook five years ago aimed to take AUP *beyond* our peer group of American universities in Western Europe and *toward* a group of Europe-based institutions that are both academically rigorous and globally attuned. Moving beyond the purely emotional appeal (in our value proposition to students) of the “global family” group, we set our sights on crossing the line to membership in a peer set of “academic explorer” institutions that were more academically prestigious *and* at the same well known for their global engagement and demographically diverse faculty and student bodies. Many of these are in Europe, where we increasingly have a more apt peer group. The work of the last five years by everyone on campus, especially faculty, has ensured slow, steady and safe passage to much-enhanced academic reputation. The quality and quantity of faculty scholarship can be explored in our annual compendia [here](#); the reach and reputation of our hosted academic convocations across all departments and the increasing visibility of our research centers may be sampled [here](#). The growing preparedness and strength of our students themselves, however, provide the most convincing evidence of our having significantly advanced toward this goal. In the coming years, we will continue the work of strengthening and communicating AUP's academic reputation internationally.

In addition, our value proposition to our future students will be pitched precisely between the emotional and the rational, offering both personal development and academic achievement as outcomes of the college experience, and providing opportunities for deep liberal learning linked to and integrated with hands-on, real-world, experiential applications of that learning. This shift to

presenting AUP as a hub of engaged scholarship and vibrant and innovative teaching that offers students an opportunity to navigate their own 21st-century pathways is already evident in our recent renewal of the [home page](#) of our institutional website. Replacing what was once a video of students walking through the 7th *arrondissement* with the Eiffel Tower at their backs with a compelling overview of academic life on campus, the new home page foregrounds AUP's curriculum right on the landing page. In the years to come, we will still invite students to come to AUP to experience Paris as the French, European, and global urban center that it is, as the classroom it will always be for our global explorers, but we intend for them to come first and foremost to navigate their own 21st-century curricular pathways with the support of faculty teacher/scholars at an increasingly academically renowned AUP.



For over half a century, AUP has provided a transformative experience to American and international students alike. 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 engagement, and the open-mindedness of its community of motivated learners—the diverse perspectives of students and faculty intersect to produce culturally nuanced insights into the most important issues of our times. The current global marketplace 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 increasingly ambitious goals.

MISSION, VISION, CORE VALUES

AUP's mission identifies the “fit” student for whom the University provides a “student-centered, career-enabling, and transformative liberal arts learning experience” and the global community of alumni they become, located in 147 countries around the world. **The only change to that mission statement since 2010, is the addition of “academically rigorous” after “student-centered.”** The second paragraph of our mission identifies our core academic values—writing, communicating, reading, critical thinking in a range of disciplines and interdisciplinary contexts, the ethical commitments of living in a globalized world, and our students’ 21st-century needs for digital literacies, cultural fluencies, and career preparedness. The mission also identifies the hybrid nature of our curriculum which pairs a global liberal arts approach to learning with a plurality of pathways to satisfying, often serial careers. Finally, the mission identifies the *integrated learning model in the small, intimate setting of the classroom* and the *academic convocations of global reach* that implicitly require a renovated and reconfigured campus. The core values statement that follows the mission statement on our website and in our strategic plan points to the reputational and sustainability goals articulated in our final two priorities. Originally formulated in 2010 for our last accreditation exercise and reaffirmed in the current reaccreditation cycle, the mission has served as a planning guide for the better part of the last decade. In short, the five priorities of our strategic plans 2015-2020 and 2020-2023—community, curriculum, campus, communication, and continuous improvement—issue directly from our mission, vision and core values statements.

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, academically rigorous, 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 147 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 imperative 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 and 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 2023, The American University of Paris aims to secure its place as the premiere Anglophone American-style international university in Europe for the global explorers who fit its unique educational culture and flourish within it, a reputational journey that has been many years in the making and that measures AUP against its European rather than its US-based peers. The attainment of this goal will rest 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 nationalisms." AUP's reputation will also rest upon its excellent record of graduating global citizens who are both 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 innovation, and of high-quality, impactful academic convocation.

To achieve these aims, we will put the indissoluble 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 an advisor-informed, individually tailored path from curriculum to career or graduate studies for every single student. In our curricular development, we will consider 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,

focusing on experiential learning, promoting and providing internships, and developing the professional skills required to live productive, personally and socially meaningful lives.

As a result of steady commitment to these priorities, we will extend our recruitment reach and reputation globally, strengthening enrollments while increasing selectivity and “fit” while increasingly 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, scholarly productivity and 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 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, faculty development and scholarship.

We will maintain our recently renewed facilities and renovated urban campus in the 7th arrondissement of Paris, where we have created dedicated student and faculty space, refreshed learning environments, and created coherent hubs of service. We will continually upgrade the learning resources and technologies that support the work of all students, faculty, and staff. In light of the global pandemic, we will step up our strategy for digital transformation of the University, from finance and administration to technology for teaching and research.

As we celebrate in 2021-2022 the University’s 60th Anniversary and draw upon AUP’s global President’s Alumni Advisory Council (PAAC), at its annual meetings in the US, Europe and the Middle East, we will increasingly engage our vibrant worldwide community of alumni who support current students’ career aspirations and participate regularly in the University’s development and capital growth.

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, broadening of our community of global explorers, and reduced dependence on tuition; and, resourcing this strategic plan by means of special campaigns, planned giving and endowment fundraising to provide support for student scholarships, new curricular programs, and professors of promise, as well as the long-term financial sustainability of the University.

CORE VALUES

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 with partnership bridges back to prestigious US institutions to a four-year Bachelor's degree granting University, and finally, in 2005, to a Master's university. In the years ahead, we will open our classrooms to a broader swath of global explorers, some local, some international, some younger, some older. 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 sixty years, that our demographic diversity and our location in the very center of Paris are our greatest assets. 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, to adjust to circumstances or to innovate within the arena of global higher education.

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 a sense of belonging to the world in its students in an era when, as borders fall, identity politics escalate. A world university such as ours has the capacity to produce leaders who are critical yet tolerant, resilient yet adaptable, confident yet curious. They are capable of finding a professional and personal sense of belonging in communities worldwide and inspire others to do the same.

The City as Campus

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*, residences 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 seventh *arrondissement* in the cafés, bakeries, museums, and theaters 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 learn French while at AUP, integrating the language into their everyday lives as they communicate with their landlords, shopkeepers, and French friends.

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. Even as many of the French universities have moved their campuses to the suburbs, our international mission has convinced us to stay definitively where we are. Ours is an *urban campus* whose neighborhood is the *vibrant city* that surrounds the University and which serves as an *extended classroom* for our global explorers. Hence, the immense importance of maintaining and capitalizing upon our central Parisian address. In 2018, after a decade of efforts, we purchased and renovated our flagship building at 69 Quai d'Orsay, just two buildings down from the place of our founding sixty years ago in the basement of The American Church.



By making our decision to set down roots permanently in the 7th *arrondissement*, and to take our place resolutely as a university in and of the city, we have 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. Our campus in central Paris also offers the opportunity to better align curricular development with our urban location by opening our doors increasingly to service learning, experiential learning, Paris-based collaborations and partnerships, both academic and non-governmental, new courses grounded in Parisian institutions, and interdisciplinary programs. 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. 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.

Diversity, Inclusion & Environmental Justice

We recognize and cherish the differences amongst us—our languages, cultures, ethnicities, racial backgrounds, gender orientations, sexual identities, religious beliefs, worldviews, disciplines, talents, scholarly productivity and pedagogical engagements—as our varied means of contributing to the inclusiveness and diversity of the University community. We remain 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 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. As a graduating senior speaker said in recent years: “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. As stated in our Non-Discrimination Policy, AUP is committed to providing a campus community that celebrates diversity and inclusivity while ensuring an environment free of discrimination based on sex, marital status, veteran status, ancestry, pregnancy, physical appearance, economic situation, surname, place of residence, state of health, loss of autonomy, disability, genetic characteristics, moral, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political opinions, union activities, ability to express oneself in a language other than French, membership or non-membership, true or supposed, in an ethnic group, a nation, a race, or religion, or having survived, refused, or testified against hazing or sexual misconduct.

We at AUP 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. In recent years, we have willingly called into question our own understandings of diversity and inclusion on campus. Despite our long curricular history of attention to social justice issues, we have at times left some of our many differences insufficiently addressed in our policies and practices. Redressing that inattention has been at the fore of our work in 2020-2021 and will continue in the years ahead.

We nonetheless strive, 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 during this new planning cycle to secure funding for more. *The Center for International Communication (CECI)* founded by former president Lee Huebner and Berna Huebner has funded scholarships at AUP for Asian, African, and Middle Eastern students over the past decade, and its important successes must be built upon and multiplied. Recent conversations about the ways in which race has been subsumed in AUP's too-hasty celebration of its differences have redoubled our resolve to render such differences conscious, to provide more opportunities and to make significant changes at AUP. We have now published hiring practices and Board support for these changes. We have reviewed our anti-discrimination policies, and revised our approach to student and staff grievances. We recognize that there is more sustained work to do in the coming years and have allocated budgets to achieving it.

AUP's 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 view books 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. Online discussions can be passionate and even fiery, and yet we persist in our salutary willingness to debate, dissent, and disagree. Faculty members experiment perennially with ways to use AUP's diversity to deepen and enhance learning. The special petri dish that is the AUP classroom—in which many different nationalities, cultures, races, languages, ethnicities, gender identities, political ideologies and faiths are regularly represented and exchange productively—has an impact on all learning, even that of professors and staff. As a result, we all understand that we need to reflect upon, theorize, and disseminate the outcomes of our remarkable learning environment, as it is a microcosm of the world our students are inheriting. **We intend in the years that come to achieve a community, campus, and curriculum that honor full diversity and inclusion with the help of our students, who have been dignified activists on their own behalf and on that of underrepresented and minority communities.** These efforts will include substantial changes in hiring and recruitment practices, shifts in uses of language and terminology, revision of policies, the development of scholarship funds, and changes across the entire curricular reach of AUP. In the particular instance of defining the University's path toward a more diverse and inclusive community, we have found it a challenge to adhere to an American model of transparency, establishment of baselines and posting of metrics measuring improvement, while at the same time respecting French post-war anti-discrimination policies and legal frameworks. We have already begun to find bridges between these cultural differences and translations between American and French approaches, and are confident that in the process of implementing change we will transform—in a distinctly AUP way—the campus climate and learning experience for all students, faculty and staff.

These concerns are not separate from those of **environmental sustainability and environmental justice**, the focus of new science and interdisciplinary majors at AUP in recent years, not to mention founding of the Joy and Edward Frieman Center for Environmental Science. Two of our Master's programs, in international business and global communications, highlight environmental policy, practices, and advocacy. Despite our location in old buildings in an old *quartier* of Paris, we can and must make

substantial progress on our own environmental sustainability and advocacy. Moreover, we must aim to redefine what it means to be an environmentally sustainable urban campus in the 21st-century, so that we can monitor our progress and continually improve our own while acting in concert with others who also wish to take action. Two councils made up of students, faculty and staff have been created, reporting to the President and Provost, to ensure that such values are built increasingly into our practices: AUP's [Diversity Council](#) and its [Advisory Board on Environmental Sustainability](#).

Global Interdependence

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.

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 29 American academic libraries abroad. AUP's President has also served as the President of [AAICU](#), the Association of American International Colleges and Universities and participated in the *G20*, a group of visionary presidents of liberal arts institutions in the US and worldwide. AUP is also a member of 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 six decades since our founding, over considerable hurdles, and on to the home stretch toward international recognition, academic excellence, financial stability, and networked relations with other institutions.

The notion of commitment to **global awareness and interdependence**—as an approach, a subject of research, and a set of complex political negotiations—is enshrined in our mission. Not only does it infuse everything we do at AUP, but most importantly, *who we are*. American in our pedagogy and curricular structures, our academic traditions, our belief in open debate and dialogue within the frame of civility and responsible community, AUP is also European and, more pointedly French, and in the years ahead we intend to deepen our European *and* global identities and outreach. In today's world, *all* of our identities—personal and institutional—are complex, overlapping, and multiple, not the least of those AUP's.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

AUP's Board of Trustees and Leadership Team developed the *grandes lignes* of the next strategic plan, imagining the shared governance process of broad campus collaboration and consultation that would ensure its appropriateness and vitality. As we considered the core strengths of the University, and enumerated the opportunities that we must seize in the coming three years, we also looked carefully at the external environment that so inevitably impacts our planning: the current landscape of higher education, including the decline in the number of 18-22-year-old, college-going students in North America and Europe, and, of course, the impact on study abroad and student mobility of a global pandemic. We examined the specific French environment in which we are located, and the global opportunities for AUP recruitment of students and faculty. Higher education institutions such as ours—located in a host, non-Anglophone country, small to mid-sized, largely un-endowed, and somewhat buffeted by the unpredictable vagaries of currency variations and international travel bans—are facing exceptional challenges at the current moment. But AUP has always turned challenge into opportunity, not by retrenching at times of crisis, but by maintaining its strategic movement forward while keeping a clear, discerning and cautious eye on increased, but calculated, risks. We are determined to continue our approach of adapting with agility to external conditions, responding quickly to opportunities, disrupting where we can, making course corrections where we must.

Some of the **issues** that came to the fore while we accomplished this environmental scan included:

- concern about the global impact, and specific local impact on France and AUP, of the Covid-19 pandemic
- 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 21st-century and that AUP is uniquely positioned to respond to that challenge
- belief that we need 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 experience needed to fulfill both goals
- questions about the adequacy of our curriculum in view of increasingly 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

- watchfulness about the demise of even highly reputed liberal arts colleges in the US, and the sustainability of our own financial 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 a diverse set of student backgrounds and needs
- opportunities linked to growth of IB and international schools across the world, an identified source of global explorer students
- 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 Accord, 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
- recognition that we will increasingly need to supplement tuition revenues with grant funding, corporate funding, and gifts from individual donors, and we will need to turn to endowment fundraising as the only permanent way to guarantee safe financial passage through economic emergencies
- 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, especially given our desire to further diversify our student body
- 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 cross cultural boundaries with ease, 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

At the local level of France, Paris and AUP, we identified the following **risks, some of which, properly anticipated, offer opportunities**:

- the likely permanent impact of Covid-19 on higher education practices, student mobility, enrollment patterns and pricing, use of technology in teaching
- political instability in the French/European environment in recent years and its impact on France

as a destination for foreign students

- the impact on AUP of the rigidity of the labor code in France, the high cost of social charges, and the continuing hostility of the country and culture to private education
- France's return to the world stage with the election of President Macron and France's leadership of post-Brexit European unity
- the importance of pursuing every possible form of French accreditation and recognition, such as the *Répertoire National des Certifications Professionnelles* (RNCP) and the *Conférence des Grandes Écoles*.
- opportunities linked to AUP's international reach in recruitment, notably the shift *away from* US and Middle Eastern countries *toward* Asia, South America and Africa (core initiative)
- opportunity to recruit new groups of global explorers, such as those seeking English instruction, RNCP-recognized certification programs, and adult learners (core initiative)
- need to increase resources dedicated to student learning differences and student mental health, all the more so in light of the repeated lockdowns imposed during the global pandemic
- need to balance our investments—in every sense of the word—between improvement of the physical plant and infrastructure—and attention to the quality of our curriculum and academic reputation (core initiative)
- identification of control and management of AUP's housing stock as both risk and opportunity and decision to take on such as an immediate strategic goal (core initiative)
- importance of leveraging AUP's research centers to build academic reputation internationally, create strategic partnerships in Europe and abroad, sharpen the edge of the AUP curriculum, and promote interdisciplinary initiatives on campus (core initiative)
- development of 4-year accelerated BA/MA programs to appeal to current and future students, especially those transferring in advanced credit (core initiative)
- renewal and extension of AUP's graduate offering, notably to programs that will obtain French RNCP certification (core initiative)
- leveraging of AUP's innovative "digital campus" initiative to engage various off-campus constituencies and share AUP's academic riches with a wider community
- dedication of space to accommodate rising demand in the fine arts, performing arts, film, and the cultural industries (core initiative)
- renewal of our current enterprise resource management system and technology integration across units (core initiative)
- creation of new approaches to perennial retention issues: visiting student population with less loyalty to AUP; greater student mobility associated with international location, urban environment, lack of dormitory-style residential life; potential lack of alignment of curriculum with student needs and aspirations, relative lack of student choice in first-year curriculum

This review of strengths, weaknesses, threats and new opportunities for AUP to thrive reminded us not only of the University's inevitable vulnerability, as a relatively un-endowed institution, to an unpredictable financial future, but also of the University's historical and present agility and resilience. We have already formulated 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 and relevant curricula and better internationally recognized language for the American-style liberal arts approach to learning we offer to our students.

As we planned for our future over the years spanning the 2008 global financial crisis, the 2015 Paris terror attacks, and the 2020 global pandemic, we recognized 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 the review of a signature curriculum taught by professors of promise that will differentiate us from our peer institutions. The time is now to generate scholarship funding to meet the ever-greater needs of our students and their families, and to ensure that AUP can offer its transformative education to students of all socio-economic backgrounds.

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 55% 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. While there are many benefits to having a stable, fully tenured faculty and staff, it also brings with it serious competitive and 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 2008 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—eroded again slightly during the Covid-19 crisis—our tuition still remains substantially below that of comparable universities in the US. In addition, 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 as a private institution offering US degrees 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 status as a private nonprofit; 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 certain benefits in the US and in France. We have had to rely, over and over, on ourselves.

In such a complex bi-cultural, indeed global, financial context, AUP has had to depend 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 of a fully renovated campus in the *quartier* of our founding. We are confident that the University is today better-than-ever equipped to meet the challenges of the future should it prove capable of continuing to supplement tuition revenues with the generous support of loyal alumni, corporations, governments, board members, parents, and friends of the University, should it raise an endowment in the coming years to shelter it against unforeseen challenges such as the one the world took on in Covid during the years 2020-2021.

INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES 2020-2023

The American University of Paris will continue to follow the same five strategic priorities we defined in 2015 to shape institutional forward motion: Community, Curriculum, Campus, Communication, Continuous Improvement. Where we formerly privileged the recruitment focus on enlarging AUP's global explorer community and building a purpose-built campus to receive them, we will in the coming years focus our efforts on two other pillars: **the design and launch of our new 21st- century curriculum and worldwide communication of our authentic story and rising reputation**. Each of the five priorities will be advanced by adopting appropriate unit-level core initiatives which, in their turn, require quantifiable and trackable action plans. Adherence to them in planning and resource allocation will ensure that we achieve our vision for the future.

COMMUNITY

Extending AUP's Learning Community of Global Explorers

AUP will continue to **recruit and retain the next-generation global explorers** who have thrived in the University's international environment, strengthening their self-identification as global citizens, and promoting their learning and success. We will continue to tailor all AUP processes, programs, strategies, spaces, policies and procedures to the global explorer's comprehensive, holistic educational experience.

As a result of commitment to this priority, we will **extend our recruitment reach and reputation globally**, shifting our catch basin accordingly, strengthen enrollments in hand with selectivity and "fit," calibrate our partnership programs with our expanding enrollments, and better support students who require scholarships in an effort to achieve ever-greater diversity in our student body.

As a result of the diverse community we create in our classrooms and on campus, our twin liberal arts *and* hands-on applications approach to learning, and our global professional skills co-curriculum, **our students will graduate with the capacity to live and work productively anywhere in the world they choose**. They will acquire the cultural fluencies required to feel at home in the world and the ethical commitment to inclusivity, global sustainability and interdependence that support a sense of belonging to the world.

AUP will also **extend its outreach to global explorers beyond its traditional undergraduate and graduate population**, to include English-language learners, European-based professionals in search of accredited Anglophone certification programs, and adult global explorers in search of meaningful, Paris-based, intensive experiential learning opportunities.

To create a true 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.

In so doing, AUP will engage ever more deeply its **global community of parents, alumni and friends, enlisting their support in the University's long-term financial sustainability**.

CURRICULUM

Designing an Integrated, Experiential 21st-Century Curriculum and Navigating Pathways to Meaningful 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 inflects all learning both inside and outside the classroom.

AUP will offer a **coherent, innovative, liberal-arts-based and vocationally-enhancing learning experience** arising from AUP's mission, core values, and core competencies and fully aligned with the personal, intellectual, cultural, and professional aspirations of its global explorers so as to provide a bridge to meaningful career choices upon graduation. The University will also encourage the **navigation of unique, student-designed pathways through the AUP curriculum via integrated advising** for all student constituencies, from three- and four-year degree-seeking students to visitors and transfers. AUP will provide for its students those critical features of liberal learning that guarantee the transformative power of such an educational experience: **the small intimate space of the demographically diverse classroom, lateral learning across differences of nationalities, religions, races, ethnicities, cultures, languages and creeds, and the one-on-one experience of engaged faculty mentorship**.

AUP will complete the implementation of its **core curriculum**, the shared portion of the learning experience, in which digital literacies, experiential learning, critical inquiry, quantitative and experimental reasoning, *expression française*, and integrative learning have been identified as essential skills-development pedagogies for the 21st-century. **Our exploration of how digitization is transforming the world's societies (and with them universities) will extend from our core curriculum, in which "digital literacies" are required of all students, to an emphasis on the impact of digitization in fields across the entire curriculum; from specific faculty research agendas to inter-departmental collaborations; from faculty development seminars on digital tools and teaching in our Teaching**

and Learning Center to the academic and socio-political inquiry that drives research collaborations within our Civic Media Lab.

The University will also fully implement its **co-curricular signature Global Professional Skills Program (GPS)**, offering all students an opportunity to build career exploration, professional skills development, and design thinking into their learning experience. Finally, structural work will be accomplished within each of the majors, in order to guarantee greater opportunities for stepped, integrative learning and better class and program outcomes.

AUP will better integrate **all the services that support the learning experience**—advising, peer tutoring, academic resources and support, research and reference support, internships, co-curricular learning experiences, cultural study trips, mentored research, skills-based pedagogies, leadership training and career-development services. It will develop an **integrated advising function bridging the curricular and the co-curricular** to guarantee that a student’s holistic pathway through both will be appropriately guided and mentored.

CAMPUS

Consolidating AUP’s 7th Arrondissement Campus on the Seine and Securing its Student Housing Program

AUP’s global explorers explicitly choose an urban university environment 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 students of over one hundred nationalities, each of whom, no matter his or her national origin, is a foreigner. Over the past six years, AUP has invested substantially in renovation of its campus in order to strengthen student learning, faculty intellectual activity and the work of its dedicated staff. It has raised student satisfaction via the intentional creation of appropriately configured teaching facilities, group study rooms, modern office and study environments, coherent student service hubs, and appropriate reception spaces for campus assemblies and welcoming of the public.

By 2022, AUP will have substantially completed the six-year project of creating an architecturally eclectic, modernized, rationalized and consolidated urban campus distributed amongst the shops, cafes, and clustering of international and American institutions that characterize our neighborhood on the Left Bank. **One remaining building—our historic Monttessuy building—leased since the 1960s from the American Library in Paris, will be converted into a Center for the Arts in Spring 2021, and opened to faculty and students in the Fall.** Smaller projects to enhance student life—a music room, a wellness room—will be planned and achieved annually. Henceforth AUP will maintain the quality of its physical plant via annual capital budget allocations and a dedicated campus maintenance organization.

AUP will control and manage its own mission-critical residential life and student housing program,

acquiring in its own name and/or through strategic partners both owned and leased living spaces for entering students that will ensure a first-year experience consistent with AUP’s student-centered culture. We will do so while minimizing risk and securing a fair return on our invested capital and resources.

AUP will continually upgrade the learning resources and technologies that support the work of all members of its community. Over the course of the next three years, **AUP will adopt a campus-wide digital transformation strategy** stretching from support for digital pedagogies and digital scholarship through the upgrading and integrating of our entire IT resource system and the development of digital repositories, from streamlining of our business and administrative practices to ensuring compliance with GDPR regulations and proper governance for data security.



COMMUNICATION

Building AUP’s Global Reach and Reputation

AUP will communicate by all possible means and to the full complement of University constituents its **emergence as the premiere institution of American international education in Europe.** AUP will foreground its signature 21st-century curriculum, as well as the University’s values, to prospective students and their families, to future faculty and staff hires, to partner universities, and to its alumni, friends and donors.

AUP will attain **worldwide recognition of its unique institutional identity** amongst “fit” prospective

students and their parents, guidance counselors, schools and institutions.

AUP will communicate ever more effectively the **academic accomplishments of its faculty, students and graduates**, so as to attain international recognition for its cross-cultural and global liberal arts approach, its interdisciplinary scholarship, and its faculty publications and international academic conferences.

AUP will continue to **enhance both reputation and visibility by means of its 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.

AUP will assume its role as a leader within the intersecting consortia of American universities abroad in which it participates, as the only foreign-accredited, comprehensive university in France, and, in the US and European higher education area, as an exemplar of American-style, international higher education.

AUP will devise new means of **communicating its European and international citizenship**, while at the same time continuing to offer a top-quality, accredited, distinctively American pedagogical experience abroad.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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**, driving continuous improvement by "closing the loop" and reporting effectively on assessment analysis.

AUP will create a **solid business model** that rests on appropriately expanded enrollments, management of its own student housing program, reduced dependence on tuition, expanded fundraising, and the generation of reserves for growth initiatives.

AUP will resource the 2020-2023 strategic plan by means of **targeted fundraising for special projects, much-enhanced scholarship generation, a planned giving program, and the raising of an endowment** to support 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 in turn drawing 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

Extending AUP's Learning Community of Global Explorers

1. AUP will manage the student, faculty, and staff **health challenges related to the Covid-19 crisis, marshalling all financial, logistical, and US and French government support necessary** to keep our community safe.
2. Admissions will **prioritize the recruitment of AUP's degree-seeking students while also negotiating reputation-enhancing partnerships**, broadening its appeal to worldwide global explorers by strategic recruitment in Asia, Africa and South America.
3. Admissions and Academic Affairs will **re-calibrate its definition of our ideal student**, the global explorer, based on six years of institutional research on student success, curricular pathways and alumni careers, ensuring targeted makeup of class and overall enrollment.
4. Admissions and Academic Affairs will appeal increasingly, via tailored, for-profit programs, to **new populations of global explorers, including English-language learners, local professionals seeking accredited certificate programs, and adult learners** coming to Paris for experiential learning opportunities.
5. AUP will create **more diverse and inclusive student, faculty, staff and board bodies**, setting in place new policies, new hiring and recruitment guidelines, and councils of faculty, staff, and students to ensure that such values are honored.
6. Student Affairs will develop policies and procedures designed to **support increasing numbers of students with mental health issues**, while at the same time fostering diversity and inclusion, respect for cultural differences and student leadership.
7. Student Affairs will develop **a new approach to the management of the student living experience known as residential life** in order to fulfill the mission of our new self-managed housing program.
8. Student Affairs and Academic Affairs will **strengthen retention throughout the student lifecycle** by formalizing a multi-unit retention strategy, defining metrics and implementing identified retention efforts, with particular emphasis on the critical first-year experience.

9. Outreach and Advancement will increasingly **engage its global community of parents, alumni and friends**, encouraging their support for AUP recruitment efforts, mentorship of students and financial support for the University's future.

Designing an Integrated, Experiential, 21st-Century Curriculum and Navigating Pathways to Meaningful Careers

1. Academic Affairs **will design and implement latest by 2025 its signature curriculum** *Navigating 21st-Century Pathways*, for which this strategic plan has been named, putting it at the center of our recruitment strategies, communications, and reputation-building efforts.
2. Academic Affairs will **strengthen AUP's alignment of services, curriculum, and co-curriculum, with the requirements of graduates' first destinations.**
3. Academic Affairs will **keep current all forms of American accreditation**, explore European accreditation, pursue French professional certification for new MA and certificate programs and investigate consortia possibilities in France and Europe.
4. Academic Affairs will **leverage AUP's research centers** to promote mentored research, interdisciplinary exploration and engaged scholarship.
5. Academic Affairs will **recruit engaged, proven, teacher scholars and continue to support by all possible means faculty development, research opportunities and professional career development.**
6. Academic Affairs will review and strengthen AUP's **graduate offering, developing academically rigorous, accredited Master's degrees** that align with AUP's mission and contribute to the University's reputation and financial stability.
7. The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Effectiveness will maintain a **systematic and pervasive assessment process** that promotes continuous pedagogical improvement and curricular development, while ensuring MSCHE accreditation.

Consolidating AUP's 7th Arrondissement Campus on the Seine and Securing its Student Housing Program

1. Finance and Administration, working with University Leadership, will **renovate the Monttessuy Building as a Center for the Arts** by Fall 2021, as its highest facilities and fundraising priority for 2020-2021 and conclusion of the six-year Campus Plan.

2. Buildings and Grounds will **design and implement a campus maintenance program, a focused benchmarking program with US-based, urban universities, and a space-allocation program**. It will henceforth focus on planned annual improvements and maintenance, as well as excellent service to the entire community.
3. Finance and Administration and Student Affairs will create an **AUP-managed, comprehensive student housing program that meets the needs of all entering students**. Finance and Administration will ensure the **correct juridical framework** for the project.
4. Finance and Administration and Student Affairs will **continually update security and safety and health and wellness plans** for the entire campus, reviewing annually its emergency response program and mass-communication tools and capacity.
5. IT, Finance and Administration and Academic Affairs will define and implement a **campus-wide digital transformation strategy**, to include:
 - Implementing an **integrated resource information system (IRIS)**
 - Upgrading **hardware and software resources to facilitate remote learning** and blended learning strategies
 - **Securing AUP's data, defining data governance, and achieving institutional GDPR compliance**

Communicating AUP's Global Reach and Reputation

1. Throughout the Covid-19 crisis and beyond, the Communications Office will ensure the **top-quality, rapid yet steady crisis management communications** for which AUP has become known.
2. Admissions, Academic Affairs, and Communications will **put AUP's *Navigating 21st-Century Pathways* curriculum at the center of AUP's recruitment strategy**.
3. Communications will partner with Admissions as it **diversifies its recruitment strategy, reaches into new student markets, and makes the most of online recruitment** and yield opportunities.
4. Communications will extend AUP's reach and reputation **as a recognized center for interdisciplinary scholarship and international academic convocation**, showcasing the achievements and scholarship of faculty, the achievements of students and alumni, on the AUP website, in publications, and in the press.
5. Communications will partner with Outreach and Advancement to **leverage digital initiatives**, devising innovative, effective online means of alumni engagement, friend-raising, fundraising, and showcasing of the University's successes.

6. Communications will **adapt AUP's high-touch service culture to new high-tech recruitment and fundraising realities.**
7. 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.
8. The President's Office, partnering with Communications, will develop appropriate **messaging strategies for the French, European and international environments** within which the University functions.
9. The President's Office, partnering with Communications, Outreach and Advancement, and the Board of Trustees, will **leverage the University's 60th Anniversary celebration in 2021-2022 to raise the University's profile** amongst alumni, parents, donors, institutional partners, and governments.

Continuous Improvement and Achievement of Institutional Sustainability

1. The Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Effectiveness will monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan, measured by timely achievement of deliverables and satisfactory KPIs while building the University's culture of Institutional Effectiveness in support of Leadership and Board.
2. Admissions and Academic Affairs will **restore Summer as a revenue-driven and sustainable academic program** and contributor to margin.
3. Finance and Administration, via multiple long-range strategies and monitoring of financial ratios, will **ensure the institution's financial resilience and position.**
4. AUP will **develop a human resource function** that develops employees' strengths, provides a steady stream of qualified managers to the University, and evidences greater rigor and attention to diversity and inclusion in its hiring.
5. AUP 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.
6. Outreach and Advancement will **broaden and deepen financial support of the University via constituent engagement:** alumni, parents, friends, students, faculty and internal stakeholders.
7. Outreach and Advancement will **implement successfully new fundraising strategies to support the new strategic plan:** targeted fundraising drives aligned with special projects, research center development, signature curricular vehicles, professors of promise awards, and specific capital projects.

8. Outreach and Advancement, working with the Board of Trustees and Finance and Administration, will **develop planned giving and endowment resources to ensure AUP's long-term financial sustainability.**

AFTERWORD

NAVIGATING 21ST-CENTURY CHALLENGES

Not only has the notion of navigation provided a metaphor for student exploration of AUP's curriculum and career opportunities, it also provides, embedded in the title of this strategic plan 2020-2023, an analogy for AUP's own address of a host of 21st-century challenges. Although the University continues to face external threats linked to our tuition-driven business model, our dependence on recruitment numbers, our unique juridical situation in France, the constraints of the private, non-profit labor regime under which we function, the host of issues facing liberal-arts style higher education, the decline in the college-going population in Europe and North America, not to mention the ravages imposed by Covid-19 since March 2020, AUP has nonetheless continued to make steady, sure progress toward its goals while navigating with aplomb both local and global challenges.

AUP proudly produces graduates—to paraphrase AUP's Core Capabilities—who are independent, creative thinkers; engaged, lifelong learners; responsible actors and empowered leaders; and adaptable communicators with global perspective. 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 they want and need, as well as a series of personally relevant pathways to a series of future careers. The University has progressively strengthened its cross-unit collaborations, such that we now weather financial crises, often sparked by geo-political ones, with agile, proactive, planning strategies. We enacted a six-year Campus Redevelopment Plan that accomplished six distinct renovations, and added a flagship building on the Seine to our distributed urban campus. We raised the money to accomplish the renovation of the campus by launching AUP's first capital campaign, on the heels of which we raised in a single year the additional funds needed to convert our Monttessuy Building into a flourishing Center for the Arts with a beautiful theater named for Dame Olivia de Havilland, AUP mother, board member and legendary film actress. Alumni, Board members, donors and friends all contributed increasingly to these efforts by generously supporting our vision. Faculty scholarship and academic convocation at the highest international standards—notably AUP's centennial reappraisal of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919—have vaulted the University's reputation into prominence. In the process, we raised faculty salaries and invested in faculty research. Behind each of these carefully planned and modeled strategic moves is an ever-stronger culture of assessment, planning, and budget discipline that has transformed the way we do

business.

In a small non-profit university, however, it is always 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 supportive Board of Trustees has gathered around the University's vision for its future under the dedicated leadership of Raymond Henze and Doris Daughney, two successive, energetic chairs of the AUP Board who have brought experience in governance and fundraising 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 synergy, supported by high-performing 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 committee of the faculty; beyond that there are the Faculty and Student Senates, the Staff Assembly, and the host of committees and cross-institutional collaborations that make small universities work. Across the University, dedicated faculty members teach and mentor our global explorers, who are supported as well by a fully student-centered and devoted staff. Each individual participant on all of these teams has contributed to the vision of our future summarized in *Navigating 21st-Century Pathways: 2020-2023*. From the manifold successes realized over the past ten years upon which this new plan is built, to the steady improvement of our processes and policies, we have, as a community, shared a vision of American international higher-education preeminence for AUP's future. If it takes many people to lift a University, to ensure its loft and execute its plans, then surely each of these individuals, each of these teams, each of these constituencies, has played its part in ours.