



Search for the Associate Vice President for Student Life
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PARIS
PARIS, FRANCE

THE SEARCH

The American University of Paris (AUP), a liberal arts institution that is American by tradition, French by location, and global in both intake and outlook, seeks a creative, committed, and hands-on leader to serve as its inaugural Associate Vice President for Student Life. Chartered in 1962 and located in the prestigious 7th *arrondissement* of Paris, AUP provides a student-centered, academically rigorous, and career-enabling education to degree-seeking students, both undergraduate and graduate, from around the world.

A distinctive liberal arts university, AUP's permanent faculty and staff of just under 250 engage throughout the academic year with a student body of around 1,400 students, enabling them to cross cultural barriers and academic disciplines with ease and to assume their places as responsible global citizens. Students represent 102 nationalities and speak 62 languages. The size of the student body combined with the institution's pedagogical philosophy creates an intimate, engaging, and stimulating educational environment. Classes are conducted in English, though most students and faculty speak more than one language. The University's 21st-century curriculum prepares students for tomorrow's world where critical thinking, communication skills, digital mastery, and cross-cultural understanding will be required.

The Associate Vice President for Student Life will join AUP at an exciting moment as the University is primed to build upon its strong reputation for providing a transformative education in a global context. This is an outstanding opportunity for an accomplished student affairs administrator with an international perspective to influence and shape the student experience. The AVP will serve as a strategic partner to the VP for Student Life and the other dedicated student life team members who enjoy deeply engaging with students and are committed to ensuring their success. The AVP will work collaboratively to strengthen the overall work of student life, amplify diversity, equity, and inclusion, foster a sense of belonging and close-knit community, and prepare students for leadership in a global society.

The American University of Paris has retained Isaacson, Miller, a national executive search firm, to assist in conducting this important search and to help identify outstanding candidates. All inquiries, applications, and nominations for this opportunity should be directed to the search firm as indicated at the end of this document.

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

Having recently celebrated its 60th anniversary, AUP enjoys prominence as a private, urban university and a global center for interdisciplinary research and teaching. Throughout its existence, AUP's mission has been to provide students from all over the globe with a transformational educational experience that crosses disciplines, cultures, and borders. The University achieves this mission by providing its students with a curriculum combining liberal arts inquiry, preparation for professional life, and interactive, student-centered learning in small classroom settings. An AUP education supports cultural fluency, a sense of global engagement, and a capacity to negotiate differences that emerge from diversity.

AUP is incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware in the US as a non-profit corporation, registered with the US Internal Revenue Service as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, and registered in France as a non-profit association. It is licensed by the Board of Education of the State of Delaware as an institution of higher learning; accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; and authorized by the French *Rectorat* as an *établissement d'enseignement supérieur*.

THE AUP COMMUNITY

The AUP's permanent faculty and staff of just under 250 come from 29 different nations. Three-quarters of the faculty speak three or more languages, and three-quarters hold terminal academic degrees.

The student body of around 1,400 students represents 102 nationalities and 62 languages. Of those students, about 70% are degree-seeking students, and 30% are students from affiliated partner institutions who attend AUP for semester or yearlong programs. Around 75% of the student body identify as women, and 25% identify as men.

Academic Programs

AUP educates its students to think critically, communicate in a world of many languages, develop creative, interdisciplinary approaches to important contemporary challenges, and be technologically and culturally literate in a world of rapid change.

Central to the undergraduate experience at AUP is its flagship Global Liberal Arts Core Curriculum. Eight academic departments administer undergraduate and graduate programs, which include 25 majors and 40 minors. Seven graduate programs offer Master of Science or Master of Arts degrees. Interdisciplinary programs flourish across all departments, driven by faculty research and student interests.

International Networks and External Partners

The University engages in multiple international networks and has relationships with institutions in the US, Europe, and elsewhere, including: The George Washington University; the University of Southern

California; Denison University; the Sorbonne; Lingnan University; Northeastern University; Oxford University; Southern Methodist University; Tulane University; Vanderbilt University; Wellesley College; University of Cape Town; and the University of East Anglia. AUP participates in three consortia that include other American universities abroad: the Association of American International Colleges and Universities; the Consortium of American Academic Libraries Abroad; and the Global Liberal Arts Alliance. The Board of Trustees is a member of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

Campus in the Heart of Paris

Situated on the banks of the Seine, AUP's urban campus occupies seven buildings in Paris' 7th *arrondissement* between *Les Invalides* and the Eiffel Tower. The University's intellectual and cultural endowment has always been its location at the center of a bustling, cosmopolitan European and world capital. AUP has successfully shaped its curriculum and extracurricular life to Paris' many centuries of art, history, literature, politics, and music. The city's monuments, libraries, neighborhoods, demographic shifts, and cultural and linguistic plurality make it a true "living laboratory." AUP students come to Paris for the city's cultural and linguistic heritage as well as for the internships and capstone experiences possible in its international public and private institutions.

In recent years, every space on campus has been built or renovated to enhance student learning and to achieve a heightened sense of community. As of 2023, AUP has substantially completed a master plan to create an architecturally eclectic, modernized, and consolidated urban campus. A recently built [Learning Commons](#) overlooking the Quai d'Orsay connects via a glass archway to the [Combes Student Life Center](#), forming the heart of the expanded campus. A new [Montessuy Center for the Arts](#), with its Olivia de Havilland Theatre, opened in fall 2021 at the foot of the Eiffel Tower. An online tour of AUP can be found here: <https://www.aup.edu/admissions/online-campus-tour>.

STUDENT LIFE

Student Activities and Student Leadership

The [Student Leadership Office](#) empowers students to develop leadership skills through hands-on experience. In today's complex, interconnected world, leadership is less about one person giving orders to others and much more about learning to reach consensus and achieve goals through effective teamwork. Students are encouraged to develop leadership skills through a holistic learning approach promoted by AUP's [Global Professional Skills Program](#), which includes a focus on four core capabilities: leadership, cultural fluency, professional development, and personal development. Students who participate in activities sponsored through The Student Leadership Office take their AUP education beyond the classroom, connecting the dots between curricular and co-curricular. The Student Leadership Office supports a wide range of student-led organizations, providing mentorship, assistance to start a club, and practical advice on everything from finding a faculty or staff advisor to requesting a budget.

Health and Wellness

The Health and Wellness team includes the health office staff, on-campus guidance counselors, and off-campus therapists. All the members of the team strive to maintain and improve the overall experience at AUP. The [Health Office](#) provides assistance to students to navigate the French health system including making sure students have proper health insurance coverage and assisting with medical appointments and other medical testing.

The [Counseling Program](#) is designed to offer a wide variety of support and guidance to students on and off campus. The program can help students who are struggling with a variety of concerns. AUP provides on-campus counseling designed to offer guidance towards finding the support needed to achieve a student's academic and personal goals. Guidance counselors speak to students about resources available at AUP, how to cope with difficult academic matters, getting organized, practical time management strategies, daily life issues that can affect their time at AUP, and many other concerns. AUP also works in partnership with off-campus therapists who can provide ongoing therapy, testing, and/or psychiatric services to AUP students.

The [Physical Activity & Self-Care Office](#) offers a variety of opportunities for AUP students. Students can participate in competitive teams, student clubs and wellness events.

Student Housing

The AUP campus lies at the center of one of Paris's oldest, most culturally diverse, neighborhoods and at the crossroads of different cultures, academic disciplines, and practical experiences. Students are able to take advantage of a wide variety of housing options to get a taste for Paris's distinctive neighborhoods. AUP Housing refers to all residences offered in Paris for incoming students at AUP during their first semester (for students attending only one semester at AUP) or first year (for full-year students). All first year students are required to live in AUP housing. The options are all furnished and are located in safe neighborhoods within an easy commute to the University.

The University offers two types of residences for incoming students: AUP Residences are managed by the University, house only AUP students, and include one or two Resident Assistants. Partner Residences are apartment-hotels and French student residences that have partnered with the Housing Office to offer quality housing to our students and include Residence Representatives selected among the residents to help foster community. Housing options include single apartments or studios, twin studios, and single and shared rooms in co-living apartments. AUP currently has around 500 beds between AUP housing and partner residences. As part of their new strategic plan, AUP will look to double the number of beds within the next 5-7 years.

Student Immigration

AUP's [Student Immigration Services](#) exist to assist students with navigating all of the French immigration requirements.

Cultural Studies Program

The [Cultural Studies Program](#) organizes cultural excursions and activities both in Paris and all over France, as well as coordinating faculty-led study trips around the world. Cultural Program trips are an opportunity for students to put theory into practice and live the concepts they are learning in the classroom in person. Study trips are offered throughout the year to all students. Trips range from a contemporary world literature course trip to the London Book Fair to an advertising and branding course trip to Stockholm with visits to multiple agencies in the city. A communications class might go to Morocco, or a Management class may study sustainability in the Netherlands. Each trip is led by two faculty members, whose local knowledge and expertise enhance your experience at the destination.

LEADERSHIP

President Sonya Stephens

Professor Sonya Stephens began her duties as the American University of Paris' 13th President on September 1, 2022. Professor Stephens is an exceptional academic leader and an internationally recognized scholar of 19th-century French literature. She has long devoted herself to advancing liberal arts education and is a highly skilled academic, fundraiser, administrator, and community builder in the context of higher education. Prior to joining AUP, Stephens was the 19th president of Mount Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, from 2016 as acting President and from 2018 on a permanent basis. A full bio can be found [here](#).

Marc Montheard, Vice President for Student Services and Security

Marc has been Vice President and Dean of Student Services since 2006. Born, raised and educated in France, Marc Montheard earned a master's degree in English and American Literature and Civilization and a PhD from the Sorbonne in British Contemporary Politics. His graduate work focused mainly on political parties, elections and industrial relations in the United Kingdom. Before falling in love with the American liberal arts education system, Marc taught in several education systems and countries, notably at The University of Hull (UK) and at Université Paris IV - Sorbonne. A full bio can be found [here](#).

THE ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR STUDENT LIFE

This is an opportunity for an accomplished and creative student life professional to join the student life team at an exciting time of AUP growth and to play an active role in shaping the unit for the next decade.

The new AVP will be a leader who thinks deeply about the student experience, fosters a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion in an international, French setting, and considers the success and well-being of every student as their highest priority.

Reporting to the Vice President for Student Life, the AVP is a member of the University's senior staff team and participates in setting strategic direction, anticipating, and responding to opportunities and challenges, managing resources, formulating policy, and developing critical relationships with academic and administrative colleagues to further the mission and goals of the Student Life unit.

The AVP directly oversees 11 staff members in Health and Wellness, the on-call services, the Helpdesk, Student Leadership and Cultural Program. They will also develop and manage Student Life signature events. In collaboration with the VP, they will mentor the Student Government Association and in collaboration with the Dean of Student Development, they will lead the orientation programs and the retention efforts of the unit.

KEY OPPORTUNITIES + CHALLENGES

The Associate Vice President will join AUP at an exciting moment with substantial opportunities for impact. Under the vision and leadership of President Stephens, the University is poised to further build upon its strong reputation and unique position in the world of higher education. With a broad remit to serve the liberal arts mission of the institution, the Associate Vice President will be central to partnering with the VP for Student Life to expand and promote a holistic student experience that prepares them for leadership in a global context.

Specifically, the AVP will work to address the following opportunities and challenges:

Provide visionary and strategic leadership.

The work of student life touches on many of the most complex and challenging areas in higher education: diversity and inclusion, advising and mentorship, health and wellness, residential life, safety, and student success. The AVP will partner with the VP and Dean of Student Development to set a strategic vision for student life that is responsive to current and evolving needs and in alignment with AUP's strategic plan. The AVP will develop and support programs throughout the university that serve students, qualitatively improve their experiences, promote student success and retention, and encourage and support student health and wellness. The AVP will need to pay particular attention to making sure student life maintains a personal touch and individualized approach while scaling services and programs for a growing student population.

Strengthen and unify the work of Student Life.

AUP is fortunate to have a team of student life professionals who are devoted, knowledgeable, and passionate. The next AVP will fully apprehend the talents of the team and seek to maximize their impact, by breaking down and eliminating any impediments to collaboration. The AVP should possess the experience and sophistication to develop and formalize systems that are conducive to organizational success and exemplify U.S. higher education best practices, while making adaptations where needed within the context of the culture, customs, and laws in Paris. The AVP, in collaboration with the VP, should strive to make all student life services coherent and cohesive and assess roles and responsibilities in the context of institutional growth and student needs. The AVP should continue to develop the strength of the team and their capacity at all levels with an emphasis on flexibility and synergy.

Foster a climate of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

AUP is a very diverse community that brings students together from around the world with different nationalities and cultures. They share a common spirit of exploration, intellectual curiosity, and global citizenship. The University accommodates students with a wide range of interests, learning styles, personal needs, and abilities. The next AVP will embrace the diversity of AUP and lead the student life team to effectively and sensitively meet the evolving needs and interests of students who embody complex and intersecting identities.

Engage with students individually and collectively.

AUP has a rich tradition of friendly and extremely accessible student life staff who have sustained a high level of direct involvement with students. An appetite and enthusiasm for interaction with students will be critical. At the same time, the AVP must strike a strategic balance between engaging with students one-on-one and pursuing higher-level involvement that benefits students as a whole. Together, the VP, AVP, and student life staff will ensure that students experience the division as caring, responsive, and fair. The AVP will work closely with the VP, Dean of Student Development, the Provost, and the faculty to design programs that support the student experience and ensure that the out-of-classroom experiences amplify the curricular experiences.

Cultivate a sense of belonging for all students within the AUP community.

AUP attracts a student body that is looking to take full advantage of the benefits of living in Paris and exploring France and other countries during their time at the university. However, students also are looking for a sense of community and belonging within AUP. The AVP will work with the student life team to continue to explore ways to enhance opportunities for student engagement and sense of connection on campus. The AVP will need to be creative in finding new and compelling ways to bring students together who are geographically dispersed across Paris, including examining existing student gathering

spaces on campus and identifying opportunities to continue to meet student and student organization needs in light of a growing student body.

THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE

While few individuals will embody all of them, the successful candidate will bring many of the following experiences and qualities:

- An earned terminal degree is preferred; however, candidates with in-depth experience in the areas of responsibility and appropriate academic credentials (Master's degree in a related field) are encouraged to apply and will be given full consideration
- 8-10 years of substantial, relevant, and progressively-responsible experience in a complex higher education organizational setting
- Ability to speak fluent French is preferred but not required
- Experience living and/or traveling abroad is preferred
- A visionary, energetic, collaborative, and hands-on approach to student engagement
- Thorough understanding of student affairs best practices
- A demonstrated track record of enhancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility and improving the culture and climate for students and staff
- Leadership experience as a successful administrator with direct oversight of areas that deal with student health and well-being, student leadership, student conduct
- Experience in a leadership role coordinating with appropriate units at times of student concern and crises
- Demonstrated excellence in establishing and refining student-centered programs and services
- Experience with change management and implementing a strategic vision
- Proven ability to cultivate and develop staff and an aptitude to become an effective leadership team member
- An astute understanding of university budgetary operations and finances, experience establishing budget priorities, and serving as a responsible steward of resources
- Ability to work and collaborate effectively across areas and adjust priorities as needed
- Experience partnering with faculty and strong knowledge of the process that supports programmatic and curricular development and implementation

Compensation

The anticipated salary range for the role is \$80K-90K.

APPLICATIONS, NOMINATIONS, AND INQUIRIES

Confidential inquiries, nominations/referrals, and applications (including resumes and letters of interest responding to the opportunities and challenges outlined above) should be sent electronically to the Isaacson, Miller executive search team via the link below.

Dan Rodas, Partner
Liz Braun, Senior Associate
Nicole Sancilio, Search Coordinator
Isaacson, Miller

<https://www.imsearch.com/open-searches/american-university-paris/associate-vice-president-student-life>

We invite and encourage members of underrepresented populations to apply. The University is an equal opportunity employer and we view diversity as an essential source of our vitality and strength.