

# American University in Bulgaria

The Next Five Years and Beyond

Approved: May 2022

# AUBG at a Glance

	<b>Current - 2023</b>	<b>Goal for 2028</b>
Undergraduate students	1040	1,500
Representation from # of countries	Over 40	Over 40
% Bulgarian students	70%	50%-55%
% International students	30%	45%-50%
EMBA students	25-28	50
Full-time faculty	51	80

# Profile of the AUBG Freshman

	<b>Current - 2022</b>	<b>Goal for 2028</b>
# of enrolled students	289	445
% Bulgarian students	70%	50%-55%
% International students	30%	45%-50%
Minimum High school GPA*	B+	B+
Minimum TOEFL score*	80	80

Scholarships and financial aid      95% of the enrolled students receive a scholarship or financial aid.

\* Average High school GPA of our admitted students is 3.5 out of 4.

\* Average TOEFL score of our admitted students is 100 out of 120.

# The AUBG Strategy for Impact and Growth.

## Key Strategy Pillars:

I. Create a high-touch, low-friction, contemporary liberal arts environment that supports positive student interactions with the institution and emphasizes life and entrepreneurial skills.

II. Integrate undergraduate operations on a single campus to promote a robust community and encourage interactions among all constituencies.

III. Promote the efficacy of Democratic societies through the establishment of a Center for Information, Democracy, and Citizenship (CIDC) integrated with liberal arts disciplines and forging connections across the entire curriculum.

IV. Attract faculty from all over the world, but radiating from Bulgaria and the Balkans, with strong connections to the United States.

V. Enhance AUBG's impact by increasing the student body by 50% over the next 5 years, while maintaining quality of admitted students.

VI. Provide lifelong-learning (non-degree) opportunities and selected advanced/graduate degree programs (Sofia campus). Expand AUBG's distance learning delivery system to support degree and non-degree programming.

# How to Achieve the Strategy for Impact and Growth

*What are we aiming to achieve and how*

Create a high-touch, low-friction, contemporary liberal arts environment that supports positive student interactions with the institution and emphasizes life and entrepreneurial skills.

#### Goals or Implementation Plans:

- Enhance student learning and well-being through a comprehensive educational student life program in support of the mission of AUBG, including expanded opportunities for community and civic engagement
  - Recent gift funding for CE activities; coordination of CIDC and Student Affairs
- Optimize and digitalize organizational processes, update university policies and strengthen internal control environment
  - Project on strengthening AUBG internal controls systems and policy update
  - Empower project
- Invest in relevant technologies that should enhance students' satisfaction, improve internal processes, eliminate waste, and secure the data of all individuals
- Develop and implement sustainability projects (solar panels, energy efficiency for the residence halls) to reduce energy consumption and carbon footprint

Integrate undergraduate operations on a single campus to promote a robust community and encourage interactions among all constituencies

### Goals or Implementation Plans:

- Investigate and evaluate options for campus integration, including land purchase options, construction options for dorms and for a new academic building and renting options.
  - Skapto III
  - Campus Planner
  - Main Building migration
- Create plan and timeline for campus integration
- Raise financing for campus integration
  - Visuals and concepts for fundraising

Promote the efficacy of Democratic societies through the establishment of a Center for Information, Democracy, and Citizenship (CIDC) integrated with liberal arts disciplines and forging connections across the entire curriculum.

### Goals or Implementation Plans:

- Develop curricular and co-curricular activities and create partnerships that promote democracy values
- Partner with other comparable institutions and NGOs to support shared courses and exchange programs to provide a wider range of educational opportunities for students
- Raise the profile of AUBG as a leading global institution through the establishment of the CIDC





CENTER FOR  
**INFORMATION,  
DEMOCRACY & CITIZENSHIP**

# CIDC

A year of trial and error

# The Strategy:

A 'THINK, TALK AND ACT'  
Platform

- ♦ **Three main pillars:**
  - ♦ Understanding & researching the challenges to democracies.
  - ♦ Educating the AUBG community and interested stakeholders on research findings and recommendations.
  - ♦ Nurturing active citizens who are upskilled to make the changes in society they want to see.
- ♦ **Activity:**
  - ♦ In & outside the classroom
  - ♦ On & off campus
  - ♦ Networking with diverse array of stakeholders to ensure CIDC is relevant and not doubling others' efforts

# Past Activities

- ♦ **Why Vote? Event (*act*)**
  - ♦ Aim: bring together high school students from Blagoevgrad, AUBG students and young journalists to discuss the importance of first-time voting
- ♦ **Investigating Disinformation & Foreign Sponsored Propaganda (*think*)**
  - ♦ Aim: bring international experts to campus to train AUBG students on countering disinformation (best practice and useful tools)
- ♦ **Dis Disinformation Workshop (with ABF & Fulbright Bulgaria) (*talk*)**
  - ♦ Aim: sharing of international best practice in the fight against information influence (*off campus*)
- ♦ **Civil Society Forum (*talk*)**
  - ♦ Aim: bring leading and diverse CSOs to campus, promote a career in the civil society sector and inspire the AUBG community to take active participation
- ♦ **Fact-checking Workshop (with AEJ-Bulgaria) (*talk*)**
  - ♦ Aim: train Blagoevgrad-based journalists and scientists in fact-checking and writing about scientific topics

# Current Activities

- ♦ Hostile Narratives Briefs (with International Republican Institute) (*think*)
  - ♦ Aim: track and understand the spread and impact of hostile narratives about the Ukrainian war in Eastern and Central Europe
- ♦ Classes (*talk*)
  - ♦ Aim: bring international experts to campus to teach at AUBG online or in person on topics, connected to the challenges to democracies around the world (human rights in the digital sphere, polarization, information influence and disinformation)
- ♦ Support to student clubs & the AUBG community (*act*)
  - ♦ Aim: align efforts across departments and community stakeholders for bigger impact

# Future Activities

- ♦ **Young Democracy Fellows & Internships**
  - ♦ Work with student assistants to undertake & publish research on CIDC topics
  - ♦ Institutionalize internship opportunities with the civil society in the Balkans for AUBG students
- ♦ **Events**
  - ♦ Organize roundtables, guest lectures and other events to bridge the AUBG community with the outside world
- ♦ **Civic Engagement Fund**
  - ♦ Provide opportunities and funding for student-led civic engagement initiatives (announcement out soon!)
- ♦ **OSUN Opportunities**
  - ♦ Provide opportunities and funding for student-led civic and community engagement projects, supported by OSUN (announcement out soon!)
- ♦ **Other Opportunities**
  - ♦ Connect the AUBG community with interested stakeholders and implement programming for the community and with the community at AUBG but with wider impact

# Attract faculty from all over the world, but radiating from Bulgaria and the Balkans, with strong connections to the United States

## Goals or Implementation Plans:

- Target faculty mix based not on nationality but on origin of degrees with emphasis on (or adaptability towards) US Liberal Arts education experience and philosophy
  - Significant growth in faculty creates opportunities to broaden faculty interests and experiences
  - Revisions to *Faculty Handbook* enable more flexible approach to searches (targeted hires, etc.)
- Target candidates who are great in teaching, and also have a good track record of ample, relevant research
- Enhance faculty development and accreditation resources. Support faculty growth and development in teaching, research and exchange
  - Flanagan Professorship
  - Panitza Professorship in Post-Communist Studies
  - Balkan Exchange



Enhance AUBG's impact by increasing the student body by 50% over the next 5 years, while maintaining quality of admitted students.

### **Goals or Implementation Plans:**

- Target students mix – attract students from all over the world, but radiating from Bulgaria and the Balkans and the United States
- Admissions strategy per target market, shaping the value proposition by an individual approach for each target market & solidifying outbound recruitment efforts and optimized channels mix
- Marketing strategies with high impact that bring the necessary Qualified Leads as per the Admissions plan

#### **• Target Student Mix**

##### **Core markets:**

55% Bulgaria

10% USA

##### **Other non-core markets:**

20% Balkans

10% Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)

5% Other countries



Provide lifelong-learning (non-degree) opportunities and selected advanced/graduate degree programs (Sofia campus). Expand AUBG's distance learning delivery system to support degree and non-degree programming.

#### Goals or Implementation Plans:

- Expand master's programs & lifelong-learning and non-degree course opportunities
- Develop summer programs/camps and co-curricular activities
- Expand distance learning delivery system to support degree and non-degree programming



# **AUBG Fees**

## **Transition from USD to EUR**

**Dilyana Mileva, *VP Finance and Administration***  
***9 March, 2023***

# Tuition & Fees shift to EUR – Strategic change

DRAFT

# AUBG Fees transition to EUR - timeline

BoT October meeting - take the strategic decision AUBG to denominate fees in EUR.

BoT January meeting – Approved tuition and other fees, denominated in EUR for AY23-24 (effective in Fall23)



# Q&A

## How?

- Fall'23 student bills in EUR will be published in the New Student Information System (SIS) “Empower” in July'23
- Outstanding student balances in USD as of June 30<sup>th</sup> will be exchanged to EUR at the current FX rate and visible in the New SIS in their EUR equivalent.

## Payments?

- Payments will be accepted in EUR, BGN and USD. Update information for payment options is available on AUBG website: [Payments – AUBG](#)

## How this will affect students, paying with WAT savings or loans in USD?

- Payments in USD will be accepted. The USD amount received will be exchanged at the current BNB FX rate (*official rate*) of the date of receiving the payment in AUBG bank account.

## How this will affect US students?

- Tuition and fees will be denominated in EUR, but payments in USD will be accepted (see section Payments above).

## What about scholarships?

- Percentage-based scholarships and aid will remain at the same ratio (university-funded waivers)
- Named and fixed-amount scholarships will be announced and applied in their EUR according to the donor's will.

# Q&A (2)

Other?