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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN BULGARIA

SELF-STUDY REPORT

October 2015

Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria

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Institutional Characteristics Form

Revised September 2009

This form is to be completed and placed at the beginning of the self-study report:

Date **February 3, 2016**

1. Corporate name of institution: **American University in Bulgaria**
2. Date institution was chartered or authorized **(US) June 11, 1991; (BG) September 18, 1991**
3. Date institution enrolled first students in degree programs: **September 30, 1991**
4. Date institution awarded first degrees: **May 7, 1995**
5. Type of control: **Private, Independent, not-for-profit**
6. By what agency is the institution legally authorized to provide a program of education beyond high school, and what degrees is it authorized to grant?

(US) NEASC, (Republic of Bulgaria) Ministry of Education and National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency. Bachelor of Arts, Master of Business Administration Degrees.

7. Level of postsecondary offering:
Master's and Four-year baccalaureate degree granting program.
8. Type of undergraduate programs (check all that apply)
Liberal arts
9. The calendar system at the institution is: **Semester**
10. What constitutes the credit hour load for a full-time equivalent (FTE) student each semester?
 - a) Undergraduate **15** credit hours
 - b) Graduate **12** credit hours
11. Student population:
 - a) Degree-seeking students **(numbers as of fall 2015 – “current year”)**

	Undergraduate	Graduate	Total
Full-time student headcount	903	20	923
Part-time student headcount	7		7
FTE	967.4	20	987.4

- b) Number of students (headcount) in non-credit, short-term courses: **N/A**

12. List all programs accredited by a nationally recognized, specialized accrediting agency.

Program	Agency	Accredited since	Last Reviewed	Next Review
Business Administration	NEAA¹	2008	2014	2020
Computer Science	NEAA	2008	2014	2020
Information Systems	NEAA	2009	2014	2020
Economics	NEAA	2007	2013	2019
European Studies	NEAA	2009	2015	2021 (tentative date)
Political Science and IR	NEAA	2009	2015	2021 (tentative date)
History and Civilizations	NEAA	2007	2015	2021 (tentative date)
Journalism and Mass Communications	NEAA	2007	2013	2018
Mathematics	NEAA	2008	2014	2020

13. Off-campus Locations. List all instructional locations other than the main campus. For each site, indicate whether the location offers full-degree programs or 50% or more of one or more degree programs. Record the full-time equivalent enrollment (FTE) for the most recent year.

Main Campus is in Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria.

Additional instructional location: Elieff Center for Education and Culture in Sofia, Bulgaria, Executive Master of Business Administration offered.

In 2015 – 2016 (“current year”) FTE = 20, headcount = 20

14. International Locations: For each overseas instructional location, indicate the name of the program, the location, and the headcount of students enrolled for the most recent year. An overseas instructional location is defined as “any overseas location of an institution, other than the main campus, at which the institution matriculates students to whom it offers any portion of a degree program or offers on-site instruction or instructional support for students enrolled in a predominantly or totally on-line program.” **Do not include study abroad locations.**

15. **Degrees and certificates offered 50% or more electronically:** **N/A**

16. Instruction offered through **contractual relationships:** **N/A**

17. **List by name and title the chief administrative officers of the institution.** (Use the table on the following page.)

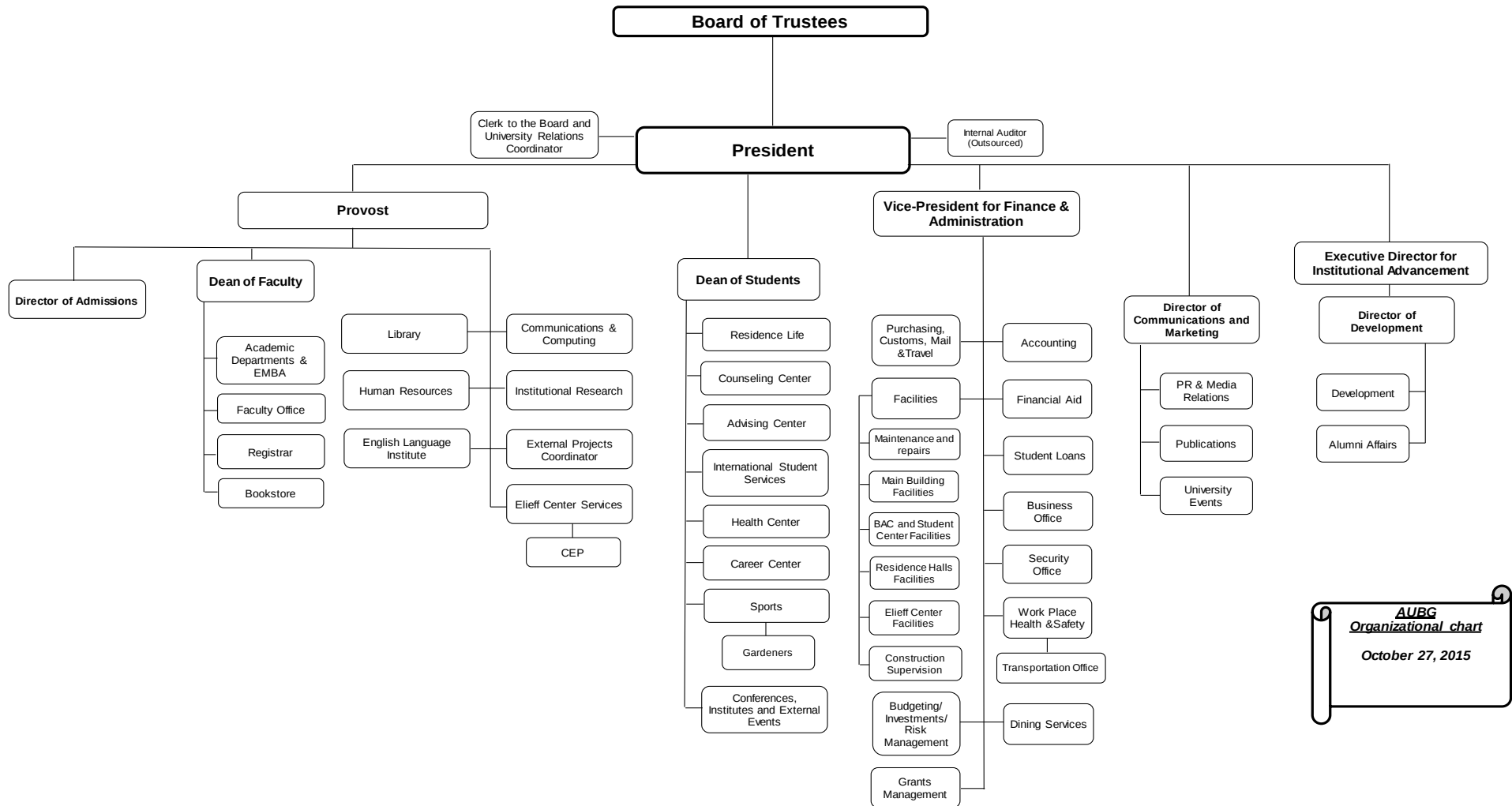
¹ Bulgarian National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency

18. **Supply a table of organization for the institution.**
19. Record briefly the **central elements in the history of the institution:**
- 1991: AUBG established.**
- 2001: Granted initial Bulgarian and US accreditations, continued since.**
- 2005/2006 AY: first break-even budget, self-sustainable since.**
- 2006: US Government financial support ended.**
- 2003, 2007, 2009, 2013: New buildings owned by the University came into operation.**

CHIEF INSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS

Function or Office	Name	Exact Title	Year of Appointment
Chair Board of Trustees	Ivan M. Manev	Chair of the Board of Trustees	2014
President/CEO	Stratsi Kulinski	President	2015
Chief Academic Officer	Steven F. Sullivan	Provost	2012
Deans of Schools and Colleges	Lucia Miree	Dean of Faculty	2013
Chief Financial Officer	Alexander Alexandrov	VP for Finance and Administration	2004
Chief Student Services Officer	Lydia Krise	Dean of Students	1994
Institutional Research	Vladimir Elezov	Associate for Institutional Research	2001
Development	Majzoub, Rami	Executive Director For Institutional Advancement	2015
Library	Sophia Kartzarska	Director of Library	2008
Chief Information Officer	Latchezar Filchev	Director, Office of Communications and Computing	2007
Admissions	Boriana Shalyavska	Director of Admissions	2013
Registrar	Tanya Markova	Inspector/ Registrar	1991
Registrar	Maria Sotirova	Administrative Assistant/ Assistant Registrar	2008
Registrar	Rengin Nalbantova	Administrative Assistant/ Assistant Registrar	2013
Financial Aid	Kristina Doneva	Financial Aid Coordinator	2000
Public Relations	Rossen Petkov	Director of Communications and Marketing	2015
Public Relations	Albena Kehayova	Public Relations and Media Coordinator	2005
Alumni Association	Ivan Gramatikov	AUBG Alumni Association President	2013

Organizational Chart



AUBG
Organizational chart
 October 27, 2015

Introduction

Organizing to Prepare the Self-Study

With a comprehensive evaluation visit scheduled for Spring 2016 in mind, a [calendar](#) (Enclosure 0.1) for the self-study process was designed in August 2013. To begin the process of preparing the self-study and with a good understanding of how to proceed, in September 2013 the President appointed a Self-Study Committee as an official University Committee. The Provost and the then Faculty Assembly Chair were appointed as co-chairs. The Committee was structured in eleven subcommittees, each responsible for an individual standard, with faculty, student and administrative representatives in each.

The first organizational meeting of the Self-Study Committee took place on November 18, 2013 to discuss detailed framework and tasks at hand. The collection of information for Data First Forms and Student Achievement Forms began in the fall of 2013. Also in the fall of 2013 a space on the AUBG website was designated for the self-study process, and previous reports, CIHE notification letters, the self-study guide, and other relevant documents were uploaded.

The idea of the original self-study calendar was to collect information in fall 2013, to finalize the description section in spring 2014, appraisal – in fall 2014, and projection – in spring 2015.

Campus Involvement in the NEASC Self-Study

To ensure the broadest possible involvement of faculty, staff, and students in discussing and analyzing AUBG, a series of events was organized.

In April 2014 the Self-Study Committee Co-Chairs organized a workshop with the writing teams. By then the sub-committees had had the chance to get acquainted with the Standards for Accreditation, the two most recent reports AUBG had submitted to CIHE/ NEASC, and all notification letters sent by the Commission to AUBG since the previous comprehensive evaluation of the University as a reference point for measuring progress and effectiveness. Work groups for each standard analyzed this information in light of the current situation to identify the development and achievements over the years, and distributed the work among their members.

In August 2014 a town meeting was organized with faculty. The faculty were organized in groups of five to seven individuals, each to discuss one of the standards. The facilitator of each group was the faculty representative to the Self-Study Committee for the particular standard. Charts with short summaries of each standard were prepared, and each group filled them in with a list of the current strengths and weaknesses of AUBG, major points of focus for the near future, as well as with free text comments. After that, the faculty went back together to hear the considerations of each individual group.

In February 2015 two more town meetings were organized – one with staff and one with students. On average about 25 individuals turned out for each meeting. The same summaries of each standard, organized in charts, were filled out with the students' and staff's opinions as to the strengths, weaknesses, and future focus of the University, as well as free text comments for each criterion in each Standard. The AUBG community responses were then summarized and uploaded on the self-study website, and thus made available to the subcommittees to incorporate into their narratives.

Each subcommittee had a different process for writing. In some cases members submitted sections to be integrated into a single document. For others, the chair was the major contributor to the first draft. Information from the data forms was gradually incorporated with the narrative, in parallel with its update each semester. Lists of references, enclosures and exhibits were developed as well. The Provost worked to make sure that each section was complete, presented fully and candidly the institution, while responding to all requirements for the Self-Study report. The other Co-Chair of the Self-Study

Committee, also a member of the English faculty, worked as a Final Editor with the goal to give the Self-Study a common style and tone throughout.

The draft Self-Study report was made available to the AUBG community, including the Board of Trustees, for feedback. Suggestions from the community were used to finalize the document. The Board of Trustees endorsed the document during its October 2015 meeting. The final draft was published online in February 2016. Public comments were invited through publications on the AUBG website and in the media.

Goals of the Self-Study Process

Both US and Bulgarian accreditation are extremely important to AUBG as external verification of the quality of the University. Students and their families are reassured that this unique institution for the region meets the highest standards. Equally important, the accreditation processes give the AUBG community a point-in-time opportunity to evaluate progress according to very specific criteria and then plan appropriately for the future. Self-reflection and planning are essential to ensuring that AUBG remains a dynamic institution and that its mission is accomplished. We believe the self-study accurately portrays AUBG today and its future challenges, and provides the opportunity for further improvement based on its findings.

Our plan is to use the self-study, especially the projection sections, as the first stage of a new strategic planning process to chart the next several years. AUBG has always had to meet an unusual number of external documentation requirements, especially in view of maintaining dual accreditation. Recently this has included mid-term reports to the Bulgarian accrediting agency, and the beginning of the process for preparation of a full-scale self-study report for the Bulgarian institutional accreditation, with emphasis on academic programs and documentation, quality management, research, faculty development and others. Our objective remains to move beyond the descriptive documentation required by these reports and use the information and experience gathered along the way as the basis of a strategic plan that is both realistic and proactive, and for improvement of our operations. This self-study process has given us a clear sense of our accomplishments and what we want to do to continue on our successful trajectory.

Table of CIHE Actions

Actions, Items of Special Attention, or Concerns since Fifth Year Report

Date of CIHE Letter	Actions	Item of Special Emphasis	CIHE Standards Cited	Self-Study Page Number
<u>April 4, 2011</u> <u>Notification Letter</u> (accepting the 2011 Fifth Year Report)	That the fifth-year interim report submitted by American University in Bulgaria be accepted; That the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for Spring, 2016 be confirmed;	That, in addition to the information included in all self-studies, the self-study prepared in advance of the Spring, 2016 evaluation give emphasis to the institution's success with developing sufficient capacity to accommodate its growth in enrollment. The institution has ambitious goals for increasing enrollments, and it appears that institutional financial aid will continue to grow at a faster rate than tuition. We encourage the University to pay close attention to aligning continuing increases in enrollment with sufficient institutional capacity in such areas as student aid, faculty, and residential and classroom space. We look forward to learning about institution's success in aligning enrollment with capacity as part of the self-study prepared for the comprehensive evaluation in Spring 2016 as informed by the Financial Resources Standard.	9.3 The institution's multi-year financial planning is realistic and reflects the capacity of the institution to depend on identified sources of revenue and ensure the advancement of educational quality and services for students. The governing board reviews and approves the institution's financial plans based on multi-year analysis and financial forecasting. 9.5 The institution and its governing board regularly and systematically review the effectiveness of the institution's financial aid policy and practices in advancing the institution's mission and helping to ensure that the institution enrolls and supports the student body it seeks to serve.	pp. 79-82

Institutional Overview

As the American University in Bulgaria prepares to celebrate its 25th anniversary, it seems fitting that both our strategic planning process and the US accreditation process take place within the same time frame. Both processes invite us to reflect on the institution's history and accomplishments, and also to look forward to new challenges to meet. This overview provides a brief summary of what we have learned through the self-study and is organized according to each standard.

Mission and Purposes

Perhaps the members of the campus community of every liberal arts institution share the conviction that their institution is unique due to its mission, but this is particularly so with AUBG. Our founders had the vision of creating an institution that would help shape the evolution of Bulgarian society and the wider region following the collapse of the communist regimes. AUBG became quickly a symbol of America's commitment to help Bulgaria through the transition by assisting in the creation and support of the civic institutions in a democratic society. Our commitment continues to this day.

During the preparation of the self-study, we gathered input from students, faculty, staff, and other community members. The conversations focused not only on our current standing, opportunities, and challenges, but also induced the long-time members of the community to reflect on the long journey AUBG has undertaken from its inception to today. We are still a young institution and have a few staff and faculty members who have been here since the institution opened its doors. The challenges of those days seem hard to believe now. We no longer have students taken into custody on campus in order to fulfill their mandatory military service, and our challenges seem more "normal" in comparison to those times. Yet we believe that the mission "to educate students of outstanding potential in a community of academic excellence, diversity, and respect and to prepare them for democratic and ethical leadership in serving the needs of the region and the world" remains vital to the needs of Bulgaria and all the home countries of our students.

The AUBG mission is based on academic excellence in the liberal arts tradition. To establish and preserve this excellence requires us not simply to replicate the traditional liberal arts curriculum in Eastern Europe, but to practice modern and effective pedagogy and act as a model of learner-oriented education to the larger community. If we aspire to graduate students who will help catalyze change in their home communities, we must also demonstrate a commitment to doing the same within our own educational community. Our accreditation with the Bulgarian national authority gives us the chance to reflect on, demonstrate, and disseminate best practices. We must take conscious steps to avoid becoming insular. In the coming years, we must also extend outreach to the region while maintaining our core activities.

Planning and Evaluation

AUBG has been guided by strategic plans that have placed priority emphasis on the critical challenges facing the institution at the time of the plan. Earlier plans have identified the challenges of establishing financial sustainability following the winding-down of official US government support through USAID; of planning and constructing a purpose-built campus to replace the collection of facilities made available to the institution from under-utilized municipal properties; of expanding the geographical reach of our new student recruiting efforts as the intake from some of our traditional markets declined; and of expanding our mission to include activities in Sofia and in graduate education.

In addition to evaluation processes to meet the accreditation requirements of NEASC, AUBG must also comply with Bulgarian accreditation standards and criteria. AUBG has graduated from oversight from

the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which no longer operates in Bulgaria, but now we must also demonstrate effectiveness to private sector institutional donors such as the Open Society Institute and the America for Bulgaria Foundation which fund scholarship programs. Finally, planning and evaluation are undertaken to fulfill the requirements of internal constituencies such as the AUBG administration and Board of Trustees for information on effectiveness of AUBG programs, both in terms of financial results and in qualitative effectiveness.

Strategic plans have been augmented by annual action plans that address the strategic initiatives and targets to be met in the near term, and by financial and operational reporting to the Board of Trustees and reports tracking AUBG performance using Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) that compare actual performance to board-approved benchmarks.

Much of the data gathering and reporting takes place through the Institutional Research Office. The office produces an annual report with performance data covering all aspects of the university's operations. The office also compiles annual surveys of new students and of graduating students. Qualitative evaluation of academic processes is under the oversight of the Faculty Assembly and the provost.

Organization and Governance

The Board of Trustees holds ultimate responsibility for the quality and integrity of all AUBG personnel and processes. The president is selected by the board and is answerable to the board. During its three regular meetings per year, the AUBG Board of Trustees also hears direct reports from the Vice-President for Finance and Administration, the Provost, Dean of Faculty, Dean of Students, Admissions Director, Development Director, and the faculty and student representatives.

There is a well-established internal governance structure, with university committees appointed by the president to address regular, on-going activities (such as budgeting, admissions, and commencement planning). The faculty governance works through the Faculty Assembly with its supporting committees. Students elect the members of student government. In 2014–15 the AUBG staff members created a staff assembly modeled along the lines of the faculty assembly. The staff assembly begins its first year of activities in 2015–16.

The organizational structure of AUBG is similar to that of other small universities. At this small size, the impact of individual performance in administrative positions is felt throughout the organization, and turnover among key personnel can be disruptive.

The Academic Program

AUBG's curricular offerings have remained relatively stable for the past several years. The most popular majors are business administration, economics, political science and international relations, and journalism and mass communication. Double-majors are popular as well among students. New majors added recently are literature and a self-designed major that allows students to create their own interdisciplinary program under the supervision of the faculty.

The General Education (GE) Program ensures that AUBG students familiarize themselves with the broad spectrum of academic disciplines and modes of understanding. The GE courses also ensure that all AUBG students obtain core skills in English writing and speaking proficiency, research skills, mathematical literacy, scientific and philosophical reasoning, and some exposure to literary and artistic expression.

The process of curriculum management and curriculum revision is well-defined. Proposals for new course offerings, changes to program requirements, or new programs are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Assembly. The dean of faculty or provost generally participate in the early

discussions to ensure that the administration is alerted to proposed changes and can provide input at an early stage to new proposals. The committee has developed clear processes and criteria for evaluating new programs, including a risk evaluation process.

During the 2014–15 an ad hoc group of faculty met throughout the academic year to discuss how to introduce fundamentally new thinking and different options into the AUBG curriculum. The first outcome of this process is an experimental course offering called the Common First Year Experience which is designed to provide new students with a collective experience that engages them with important global issues in their first semester at the university.

AUBG's program review is coordinated with its Bulgarian accreditation process. Bulgaria both evaluates the institutional effectiveness and conducts separate evaluations for each academic program. AUBG has achieved high scores for all its programs that have undergone the review process.

Faculty

AUBG has maintained a highly-qualified and diverse faculty of about 50 full-time members, with around 20 additional adjunct faculty providing between 20 and 25 percent of the classroom instruction. The faculty consists of both Bulgarian and other-country nationals, and the proportion between the two groups has remained stable, even though all faculty searches in recent years have been directed towards hiring the best possible individual regardless of nationality. The curriculum and hiring processes are managed with a goal of maintaining comparable class sizes across academic disciplines and a university-wide student-to-faculty ratio in the range of 16:1 to 18:1. Beginning with the 2013–14 academic year, the teaching load for full-time faculty was reduced from seven course sections per year to six. The faculty agreed to accept stricter controls over low enrollment classes, and slightly higher course caps in order to maintain the overall student to faculty ratio.

Full-time faculty members are evaluated regularly according to their performance in teaching, scholarship, and service to the university. Adjunct faculty members are evaluated for teaching performance. The processes are well-developed and rely on standards prescribed by and overseen by faculty committees.

Students

AUBG is a tuition-dependent institution. The most significant institutional failure during the previous accreditation period was our inability to attract enough qualified applicants to meet our enrollment targets. Enrollment peaked at 1093 students in 2008, but has now dropped under 1000. Limitations on enrollment limit also our ability to broaden and diversify our academic offerings.

Significant steps to address this were undertaken in fall 2014, first by adopting new criteria to assess applicants' academic credentials, and second by simplifying the financial aid process. The thinking was that AUBG's US-style admissions requirements were increasingly anachronistic. Beginning with students admitted in fall 2015, we evaluate applicant qualifications based on high school GPA and English-language proficiency tests — the same measures used by European universities who are AUBG competitors for students.

The academic quality and international diversity of our student body is universally regarded as one of the most important characteristics of AUBG. The scholarship support we received from the Open Society Institute in AUBG's early years allowed us to establish a presence in international recruiting markets which we continue to assert today. We remain and expect to remain an institution with a significant international composition of the student body — between 25 percent and 50 percent of our students will be from outside Bulgaria.

AUBG offers a complete portfolio of student services based on the American model. The majority of students live in the AUBG residence halls. Student services are located in the ABF Student Center at the heart of the campus and offer the full range of support services including advising, tutoring, career services, counseling, athletics and recreational programs, and dining. A complete week-long orientation program for new students each fall includes diversity programming to help new students appreciate and adapt successfully to their new multicultural environment.

Library and Other Information Resources

The Panitza Library on AUBG's Skaptopara campus provides students and the wider community with access to a full modern range of information services, including books, reference materials, audio-visual materials, periodicals, e-books, and e-journals. The library maintains up-to-date services and collections, and members of the library staff collaborate with faculty to deliver information literacy training for all students. Library staff keeps up to date with emerging trends in information services and collaborate on acquisitions through their active membership in the American International Consortium of Academic Libraries (AMICAL).

Physical and Technological Resources

AUBG has had the use of a large public building (the "Main Building") in the center of Blagoevgrad since its founding. The Main Building is the property of the City of Blagoevgrad, which offers AUBG the use of space on multi-year leases on attractive terms. AUBG exerts on-going efforts to upgrade the facility and better adapt it to the university's needs. With the assistance of the City of Blagoevgrad, AUBG also has acquired a large plot of land (the Skaptopara Campus) within walking distance from the Main Building where we have begun the construction of our own integrated campus. With financial assistance from American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) and the America for Bulgaria Foundation (ABF), we have completed two residence hall complexes, the first stage of the third residence hall, a classroom building and library, and a student center. The campus master plan contains plans for two additional wings of the third residence hall, and an administrative and classroom building at the center of the new campus. The university also owns the Elieff Center in Sofia which houses the executive MBA program, the Center for European Programs, and conferencing activities.

Technology is integrated into all activities at AUBG. All student rooms in the residence halls feature both wired and wireless connections to the AUBG network. A major investment over the previous two years has overhauled the university's core network equipment, and migrated the wireless system to N-standard for faster wireless speed. All classrooms feature multimedia and Internet capacity. The university has adopted an electronic learning platform (e-learn) funded by a grant from the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and the European Union. Administrative systems make appropriate use of modern technology. For instance, students register on line, use their university ID cards as electronic keys to their residence hall rooms, can purchase food or items from the bookstore and charge to their student accounts by using their ID cards, complete teaching evaluations electronically, and receive grades and degree audit information electronically.

Financial Resources

AUBG's initial years were devoted to establishing ourselves as a selective private institution in a region characterized by both very low incomes, relative to US standards, and uncertain economic prospects. From this beginning, AUBG gradually established the ability to attract students able and willing to fund a significant portion of their own education. AUBG recorded its first balanced budget in 2005–06, and has operated with a balanced operating budget every year since then. We define financial sustainability by principles adopted by the AUBG Board of Trustees, and the institution's success in meeting the

requirements for sustainability through fundraising, financial aid management, and cost containment is monitored continuously by the board.

AUBG has adopted financial systems and budget processes that are modern and up-to-date. The activity-based costing system permits all unit managers to assess their own budget performance through monthly reports. Appropriate internal and external audit functions are in place. AUBG has received unqualified opinions on its audited annual financial statements for ten consecutive years.

Public Disclosure

Through electronic, print, and video materials, AUBG provides accurate and timely information on admissions criteria, tuition and fees, student accomplishments, faculty credentials, academic policies, Board of Trustees members, financial audits, crime statistics, and all other data as required by law and/or expected by accreditors and the many constituencies we serve. All recruiting materials, the catalog, handbooks, and other print documents are reviewed by a publications committee for consistency and accuracy. AUBG actively involves the local and national news media and an active student media in reporting on university activities, and also publishes its own newsletter three times a year.

In addition, these vehicles serve an important public relations role in strengthening the image of the university and supporting recruitment efforts. AUBG launched a brand new website in 2013–14. The website serves as the gateway to all information about the institution. The Office of Communications and Marketing ensures that the website is accurate and updated constantly. Although English is the primary language of the university, some materials for prospective students and parents are prepared in other languages. These are also reviewed carefully for accuracy.

Institutional Effectiveness

AUBG adheres to all standards of integrity including non-discrimination, respect for intellectual property, academic freedom, protection of privacy, and other standards of conduct. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to reinforce a culture of integrity. Constant and ongoing efforts are necessary to reinforce the importance of upholding and respecting integrity – strict observation of these values is not always the expectation in this part of the world. AUBG aims to model the highest standards and best practices at all times.

Standard One: Mission and Purposes

DESCRIPTION

Distinctive Character

AUBG was founded in the hopeful tumult that followed the fall of the Berlin Wall throughout Eastern Europe. Through a unique partnership between USAID, the Open Society Institute, the University of Maine, and the City of Blagoevgrad, AUBG opened in 1991 to provide the talented young people of Bulgaria and the region with an education that would allow them to learn in an atmosphere of tolerance for diversity and appreciation for open, democratic societies. The institution was among the first few private universities in Bulgaria and the only one fashioned after the American liberal arts model to offer English-language instruction in all of its programs. As such, AUBG was seen by its founders and backers as integral to the creation of civil society institutions in Bulgaria that would be essential for the country to undertake successfully the transition from communist dictatorship to liberal democracy and into a wider European and global economy.

The current mission statement retains the element and purposes which inspired the founding of the institution:

The mission of the American University in Bulgaria is to educate students of outstanding potential in a community of academic excellence, diversity, and respect and to prepare them for democratic and ethical leadership in serving the needs of the region and world.

The concise mission statement above was adopted by the AUBG Board of Trustees in October 2009 following a comprehensive review as part of the institution's strategic planning process. At that meeting, the AUBG Board of Trustees also approved the following statement of vision:

We envision a community of diverse and creative students of outstanding potential living and learning together in an engaging and rigorous academic environment on a campus which offers world-class academic, recreational, and residential facilities. Mentored by internationally respected faculty committed to the liberal arts tradition, graduates will be fully prepared for lives of professional achievement, personal fulfillment, and service.

The current mission replaces an earlier mission statement which highlighted "preparing future leaders" and contained 14 corollary statements that were relevant to the founding of the institution.

At the same October 2009 meeting the Board of Trustees approved a strategic plan, which further elaborated on the values shared by the university founders and which still guide the university. These values are: highest standards of excellence; a diverse and inclusive campus community; highest standards of integrity; open, participatory and democratic governance; freedom of thought and expression; active and engaged learning; discovery and creativity; and social responsibility.

In 2015, AUBG's purpose is perhaps even more important than in 1991. Indeed, at a time when a prime minister in the region can promote the idea of "illiberal democracy,"² there remains a need for citizens who understand the strengths of liberal democratic societies and their values and who can actively communicate these to their fellow citizens throughout the region and beyond. Political events in the country and the larger region demonstrate that liberal democracies are not a given. They must be

²Meyerson, Harold. "Hungary's Prime Minister a Champion for Illiberalism." *Washington Post*. August 6, 2014. http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/harold-meyerson-hungarys-prime-minister-is-a-champion-of-illiberalism/2014/08/06/143a53ae-1d9d-11e4-82f9-2cd6fa8da5c4_story.html (accessed November 3, 2014).

nurtured and protected, both from within and without. AUBG's mission is to educate people who will not only be successful in their individual careers but who will also be successful as citizens in maintaining strong democracies.

The university includes its mission statement in the opening paragraph of the annual Academic Catalog, displays the mission on its website, and also framed and mounted in prominent wall space in every academic building on campus.

How the Mission Shapes the Institution's Activities

All the university's operations are based on the values of respect for the individual, protection of rights and freedoms necessary for the individual's development, and an open society that includes openness of ideas, association, and economic activity. For the students to be prepared for such a future, they must be open, tolerant, and averse to barriers of any kind.

The mission's emphasis on democratic and ethical leadership and on serving the needs of society continues to guide our activities. AUBG opened its doors to a class consisting overwhelmingly of Bulgarian students, but quickly expanded its recruiting net to take in students from neighboring countries in the region. Today, approximately half of the undergraduate degree-seeking students are from outside Bulgaria. Most are from countries in which progress towards democracy and good government have been imperfect and unsteady.

The mission provides direction to the curriculum design, selection of faculty, and co-curricular programming for students. The [fundamental aims of the liberal arts education](#) (Enclosure 1.1) are reflected in course work that helps students develop critical thinking, understand a variety of modes of inquiry, appreciate different perspectives, and understand the consequences of ideas and actions. The General Education Program aims to provide all students with the skills relevant to assuming important roles in both their professional lives and as citizens. The institution has a goal of selecting faculty based on their commitment to active and engaged learning, which is unlike the curricula and pedagogy at other regional institutions. Co-curricular activities outside the classroom provide real-life context for learning how to be socially responsible, open, respectful to diversity, inclusive, and instill the idea that freedom of thought and expression goes along with responsibility.

Classes are encouraged to be taught in ways that foster free exchange of ideas and discussion. Class sizes are kept small (very few ever exceed 40 students) in order to promote interaction between the professor and students and also among the students. Increasingly, class time is devoted to discussion and debate among students rather than delivery of information from professor to students. Many opportunities are provided for teamwork and group projects among students. Increasingly, courses are seen as providing opportunities to hone problem solving and cross-cultural skills through classroom activities. [Curriculum maps](#) (Encl. 1.2) for each program reflect priorities and focus on specific program objectives, and indicate ways in which students are to acquire the essential knowledge, skills, and values for living in an open, democratic society. Students fill out evaluation surveys for each class section, and response rates are over 80%. Students are asked to evaluate whether the instructor encouraged discussion, considered students' points of view, and are given opportunities to provide written comments on what were the most valuable activities in the course and what improvements they could recommend.

The mission also directs AUBG to adopt the residential liberal arts model in order to provide its students with a model community that is multicultural, inclusive, and open. Students participate in the governance of the institution through the Student Government, student leadership in social, cultural, athletic, and professional associations, and through direct student representation in the university's governance structures. The wide variety of clubs and activities gives students outlets for planning activities, delegating, negotiating, compromising, and fundraising—activities that lead to creating more active democratic citizens. Special attention is paid to opportunities for students to move beyond regional

perspectives through participation in Erasmus and ISEP exchange programs as well as work and travel programs. These serve to introduce them to other cultural and social contexts and further help them understand the challenges and opportunities of living in a globalizing world.

The Liberal Arts model of education guides the students towards such skills and abilities as creative and innovative thinking, understanding of the context in which institutions and businesses operate, willingness to listen to different points of view before coming to a decision, ability to work productively with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures, ability to persuade, motivate, and negotiate, to write and present well, and commitment to ethical practice. Yet, this model of education is not well-understood in the region or among the students we recruit (or their parents). They often question the relevance of the liberal arts and call for a greater emphasis on career-focused curricula in hopes of immediately recouping their large investment in education. AUBG takes steps to promote the values of the liberal education. For instance, admissions counselors incorporate an explanation of the liberal arts model into their presentations to prospective students and parents – both as information and to ensure that the institution recruits students who accept and ultimately embrace the characteristics of this style of education in comparison to the European model. AUBG placed a section on “Liberal Arts Explained” on its new website. The university conducts surveys to find out whether the students have embraced the liberal education values, how important they are for the businesses and to what extent the graduates possess them.

The themes of outstanding potential and academic excellence also permeate the academic life and processes of the university. The university has been fortunate to benefit from scholarship programs from the Open Society Institute to provide scholarship support for outstanding international students to attend AUBG. The success of the program led to a proposal to the America for Bulgaria Foundation to create a parallel program for outstanding Bulgarian students. Admissions standards are held high in order to maintain the standard of excellence that is prized by students, faculty, and alumni. The faculty have special pride in the high percentage of graduates who continue their academic careers to receive advanced degrees in universities in Western Europe and the United States. The university also has an endowed scholarship program (the Tchaprachikoff Scholarship Fund) that provides support for AUBG alumni who enroll in top US graduate programs.

Impact on the Region

In 1991, AUBG faced understandable suspicions from some political quarters and confusion from students and others who were unfamiliar with an American liberal arts approach to education. It has been a considerable challenge for AUBG to both meet US standards and also fit into the local legal environment and meet the [requirements of Bulgarian accreditation authorities](#) (Encl. 1.3). Since Bulgaria’s accession to the European Union, AUBG has also had to strive to meet EU requirements, such as those of the evolving Bologna process and the creation of the European Higher Education Area in 2010. In 2015 our unique style of education is understood and appreciated to a greater extent by the Bulgarian accreditation authorities and the Ministry of Education.

One of the initial intentions for AUBG was that it would share its intellectual resources with the community and the region. In 2015, the most significant outreach efforts are in Sofia where the Elieff Center for Education and Culture was built in 2003 to house both academic and outreach [activities](#) (Encl. 1.4). An EMBA program was started in 2003. The Centre for European Programmes attracts external funding to train civil servants and others through a variety of programs. The continuing education programs have focused primarily on business strategy and technology use. Most of the activities function at a break-even level but are currently insufficient to carry the annual facilities costs of the Elieff Center. With constrained resources for the core educational program, it is difficult to maintain outreach activities that are not revenue producing or supported by grants.

APPRAISAL

Distinctive Character

After 23 years in a region of some instability, conflict, slower than expected economic growth, and continuing challenges to full democratic consolidation, AUBG has not only survived but is recognized as an established institution with distinctive character and a strong reputation for serving its core purpose: high quality undergraduate education for a diverse student body. Once considered an experiment and an anomaly, now AUBG enjoys the recognition of students, families, and people within Bulgaria and beyond for offering a strong educational experience on par with selective liberal arts institutions in the US. Recognition of AUBG's success is particularly seen in the sequence of successful Bulgarian institutional and program accreditations and in the Ministry of Education's [rating](#) (Encl. 1.5) of Bulgarian universities.

In preparation for the self-study, separate focus groups involving representatives of important AUBG constituencies reviewed all NEASC standards and requirements, and commented on how well AUBG meets each. In each of the three constituencies — faculty, staff, and students — the distinctive nature and importance of the AUBG mission is frequently identified as a strength of the institution. The student comments mentioned that the mission helped students clarify their expectations about what AUBG education would be like. Faculty were more concerned about the possibility that preparing students for “democratic leadership” needed to be made more clear and apparent to avoid having the phrase appear to be nothing more than a cliché. Many of the staff members participating in the focus group have been with AUBG for longer than students or faculty and provide continuity and institutional memory. Their concern about the mission was to maintain the relevance of the mission to changing times.

How the Mission Shapes the Institution's Activities

Perhaps more than in many institutions, the emphasis of the AUBG mission on democratic and ethical leadership plays a part in many activities and decisions that take place on campus. At the same time, it takes effort to determine which activities and experiences at AUBG make the strongest contribution to developing an appreciation of active democratic citizens.

The importance of playing a participatory role in the AUBG community in an open and democratic way is emphasized from the time prospective students are first recruited by Admissions Office personnel. New students are informed during orientation week programs of their rights and responsibilities as campus citizens. Students, along with faculty and staff, are represented on committees dealing with student conduct or integrity issues, such as the Student Conduct Council or the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council. They also serve on faculty search committees. Student representatives on these bodies take their responsibilities seriously and provide valuable contributions.

Students have the opportunity to participate in the governance activities and the evaluation activities that contribute to maintaining the integrity of the campus community — both in the academic sense and the social sense. Students interact through formal and informal means with faculty departments to help align course offerings and schedules with student interest. The participation rate in the student evaluation of instruction is high (helped along by the incentive to receive electronic notification of final course grades if evaluations are submitted).

Opportunities for students to exercise democratic and ethical leadership are provided through student clubs and activities that have academic (e.g. AUBG Political Science Club, AUBG Journal of Humanities “Thoth”), professional (e.g. Computer Science Student Union), or social orientations (e.g. Better Community Club). AUBG provides a multitude of opportunities for students to plan, organize, lead, or support the kinds of activities that mimic the civil society institutions in the larger society (e.g. AUBG Model UN Club). Student Government regulates the distribution of official support funds to

student organizations. Student input is key to determining the overall amount of student fees that fund such clubs and organizations. The lessons learned through student participation in and leadership of clubs and organizations are valuable even when they are painful ones, such as having to cancel the national musical tour in 2014-2015 for not having obtained the necessary copyright permission to perform for the public. Still, as is the case on many campuses, not all students choose to be actively engaged in student government, in leading co-curricular activities, or actively engaging in the classroom.

Connecting the mission to the curriculum is also an area in need of further discussion and action. Given the importance of AUBG's mission in the region, a more concerted effort in developing the knowledge and skills that create active democratic citizens needs to be undertaken. Partly in response to this, faculty began in fall 2014 to discuss teaching innovation and how to create an approach that would tie the individual majors, the General Education curriculum, and other elements of the community more closely to the university's mission.

With the goal to strengthen the basis for assessing how we achieve the institutional mission and purposes, in 2013 and 2014 the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee worked to articulate the [overall institutional goals](#) (Encl. 1.6), align them with the [Bulgarian National Qualification Framework](#) (Encl. 1.7), and through it with the European qualification framework for higher education, and present them to the Faculty Assembly. The AUBG institutional goals reflect the mission and purposes of the university, build on the Essential Learning Outcomes of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, and take into account the requirements of CIHE's Accreditation Standards. Consequently, a process of review of all program goals and curriculum maps was initiated in an effort to achieve better synergy with the institutional goals.

In 2008 and 2009 and in addition to the annual exit surveys, we conducted a specially designed survey in order to assess mission related outcomes comparing responses of freshmen and graduating students. The survey attempted to measure [mission related values](#) (Encl. 1.8) that the AUBG education instills in students. Interestingly, while 48 percent and 39 percent of the freshmen of both years expected their participation in governance bodies, such as Student Government, to help them develop their leadership skills, 13 percent and 15 percent of the seniors reported that this had actually happened; while 43 percent and 38 percent of the seniors reported that debates, case competitions, and simulations on campus contributed to their leadership skills. The larger part of seniors and freshmen think that AUBG provides some encouragement and opportunities for students to understand and help in the wider community, but acknowledge that they, the students, have to take the initiative. Larger percentages of seniors than freshmen believe that AUBG greatly fostered their intellectual vitality. Still, most of the students in their answers acknowledged that they had to take the initiative and chose what interested them. The majority of the seniors (69 percent and 61 percent), slightly more so than the freshmen (58 percent and 58 percent), agree that AUBG contributed significantly to their understanding of people with diverse backgrounds.

The annual graduating [seniors surveys](#) (Encl. 1.9) inquire about the extent to which the General Education Program achieves its goals through the courses offered in the various modes of inquiry — quantitative reasoning, social and cultural analysis, scientific investigation, writing intensive courses etc. The overwhelming majority of the seniors agree or strongly agree that these courses achieve their goals, for instance by being successful in teaching how theories and concepts can help explain societal phenomena in a society or across humanity as a whole, or in enabling students to evaluate different theoretical explanations of these societal phenomena.

In view of the institutional value of discovery and creativity, AUBG faculty has also provided multiple opportunities for students to engage in the creative task of generating original research. Every academic major has a senior thesis option for students interested in undertaking a research project under the supervision of a faculty member. The university also sponsors a student-faculty research conference each spring which showcases student research, faculty research, and frequently student-faculty collaboration.

AUBG has been successful in building a community of academic excellence, diversity, and respect. Maintaining academic excellence is a constant challenge, yet the university has undertaken some efforts to build this element of the community, including the use of online databases to discourage plagiarism. The university also uses a faculty evaluation process that includes student input and information about grading policies aiming to maintain teaching and academic excellence. Many, however, feel that this process is in need of further development.

The goals of diversity, excellence and service to the needs of the region have been influenced by changes in AUBG's environment, the most significant ones being Bulgaria's 2007 entry into the European Union, the drop in the country's birthrate, and the outflow of young people to Western Europe and beyond. For AUBG, these changes trend mean that past success is not enough to ensure future success. AUBG must not be complacent.

In the last ten years and partly in response to changes in the Bulgarian higher education market, the university has been recruiting more intensively students from outside the immediate region. Assisted by funds from the Open Society Foundation, students from the states of Central Asia began to enter the university during the 2000s. Students from Russia also began to enroll during this time. These students have added immensely to the diversity of the AUBG community. More recent political events and changes in the Open Society Foundation's relationship with AUBG, however, make recruitment from some of these countries more challenging.

Despite recruitment challenges, the university has recommitted to accepting only students with exceptional promise. The university's more than 3000 graduates from forty countries represent the real success of the institution. They have become active citizens in education, government, business, civil society, and community life. Alumni pursue advanced degrees at outstanding institutions including Harvard, Oxford, and Johns Hopkins. They work in their own start-ups, multinational corporations, national ministries, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations. Students' aspirations, standards for performance, and academic outcomes remain at a high level, and the institution enjoys a reputation for excellence both in the region and abroad.

The university has also been successful in creating a more diverse community than was the case ten years ago. AUBG students now come from around forty different countries. Strong ISEP and [Erasmus programs](#) (Encl. 1.10) have certainly contributed to this student diversity. Student orientation contains a diversity training component that sets a tone of respect for differences from a student's first days on campus. Students, faculty, and staff participate in planning and overseeing opportunities to celebrate different traditions. Special events such as International Week celebrate the diversity of cultures through food, dance, and music. AUBG students' respect for differences has allowed students to work together in and out of the classroom despite coming from countries that are sometimes in conflict. When these international conflicts affect the AUBG community, faculty and students have met to discuss and defuse many of the concerns on campus.

Acceptance of diversity, cultural sensitivity and conflict management on campus translate easily into equivalent values in the workplace for our students. In the [2015 employer survey](#) (Encl. 1.11), 87 percent of the employers report that AUBG graduates to a great or to some extent possess the ability to work productively with people from diverse backgrounds.

According to the same survey, even though the employers in the region may not necessarily understand the concept of liberal arts itself, they do appreciate AUBG graduates' abilities that result from liberal education. Employers believe that for their businesses it is essential or very important for the employees to be able to persuade, motivate and negotiate (73 percent), listen to different points of view before coming to a decision (87 percent), be able to use creative and innovative thinking (87 percent), be able to learn independently (93 percent), be able to solve complex problems (87 percent), etc. At the same time the percentages of employers agreeing that AUBG graduates possess these same abilities to a great or

some extent are 73 percent (to persuade, motivate and negotiate), 83 percent (listen to different points of view before coming to a decision) 80 percent (use creative and innovative thinking), 87 percent (be able to learn independently), and 80 percent (be able to solve complex problems).

Impact on the Region

The original intention for AUBG was that it serve as an exemplar and demonstrate a different way of providing higher education. To some degree that has happened insofar that AUBG is seen as a desirable alternative to public education. However, there is little evidence that AUBG has shaped new pedagogy in state institutions where large lectures and recitation sections (much like large public institutions in the US) are still the norm.³ On the other hand, AUBG has been successful in contributing to advances in uses of technology and information resources. AUBG faculty members are resources to their colleagues in Bulgarian higher education institutions and have contributed to the development of greater cooperative efforts within this field. The institution has maintained relations with Bulgarian agencies and universities and has developed relationships with other American institutions of higher education outside of the US.

It is difficult to fully gauge the direct social, cultural and economic impact of AUBG on the community and the region. With regard to our social and cultural impact, AUBG sponsors numerous cultural events, concerts, plays, lectures, summer institutes, and video conferences that serve the community and bring visitors to Blagoevgrad. AUBG is one of the largest employers in Blagoevgrad. A number of AUBG graduates go on to form their own companies, some of which have become large employers in their own right. In its institutional research report, AUBG annually studies the [financial impact on the local community](#) (Encl. 1.12).

Outreach activities in other areas are currently undergoing reevaluation as to their effectiveness and financial viability. The Centre for European Studies will need to better connect with the available faculty resources in Blagoevgrad in an effort to use AUBG's faculty and staff expertise to assist its efforts. There is room for this as Bulgaria seeks to build its administrative capacity and its ability to absorb European Union funds. The Executive MBA program serves to provide AUBG with a Sofia presence and to build future relations with the Bulgarian business community but has yet to become financially viable.

PROJECTION

Distinctive Character

The economic, social, and political characteristics of Bulgaria and its surrounding countries have undergone enormous changes in the 24 years since the founding of AUBG. We presume this process of evolution will continue in the future. The needs of society will change, and the ways in which AUBG and its graduates can fulfill those needs will change as well.

While Bulgaria may have been the "last frontier" at the time of AUBG's establishment and among the least forceful in re-shaping its economic and political life following the collapse of communism, the progress made has nonetheless been remarkable. Bulgaria is now a parliamentary democracy and a member of the European Union. Yet Bulgaria is the poorest member of the EU, and consistently ranks among the worst in terms of corruption, government transparency, and quality of public services.

AUBG's contribution to Bulgarian society is now seen as evolutionary rather than revolutionary. There is still much work to be done in both the public and private sectors in Bulgaria, but this work is the work of

³ It is telling, however, that a report on academic writing across Bulgarian higher education institutions commissioned by the EU was written by an AUBG faculty member.

generations — to make democracy more secure, to make corruption less acceptable, to make economic opportunities more abundant, to make living standards higher.

AUBG is now a part of Bulgaria's higher education landscape. We are still unique in Bulgaria, the only institution accredited in both the United States and in Bulgaria — and we expect to remain so. The other public and private higher education institutions in Bulgaria are responding to the new realities and European integration by offering more programs in English, by offering programs that are compatible with European standards and therefore closer in spirit to AUBG's American model.

AUBG will need to work harder in the future to maintain its distinction as a quality institution with high academic standards for both entering students and throughout its academic programs. We will have to work harder to integrate the curriculum with co-curricular activities and to bring contemporary issues, technologies, and opportunities to our students in ways that other institutions cannot.

How the Mission Shapes the Institution's Activities

AUBG will continue to frame its strategy, its programs, and its actions according to its mission. Initiatives that relate to the core elements of our mission — the liberal arts, democratic values, integrity, civic engagement — will command the institution's attention and resources. Initiatives that are purely market-driven will be undertaken to the degree that the market supports them, and only to the degree that these non-mission activities do not detract from mission-critical activities.

As an example, the faculty has passed an experimental first-year seminar to introduce new students to the study and values of the liberal arts. The seminar is also designed to build a sense of community among the new students, and relate the students' academic and co-curricular experiences to the values of the institution and the current issues facing society. There is also a review underway of our General Education Program. The GE requirements already work to ensure that our students receive a broad-based education involving exposure to the variety of ways humans understand each other and the world, and communicate with each other and the world. Therefore the current program conforms with our focus on the liberal arts. The faculty team that worked on the first-year seminar has also discussed re-framing the General Education requirements around values instead of — or in addition to — disciplines.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

AUBG operates in a country and a region that is a meeting point between different cultures and different historical, religious, and social influences. Often this has led to strife and conflict. The region now is undergoing a social and economic shift to re-orient towards the European Union. As the priorities shift, and as the center of gravity changes, the needs of the economy, the political society, our students and alumni will change also. AUBG must work to ensure that its mission remains relevant to the needs of the students and countries we serve, and this can only be done through balancing the unchanging values we stand for, while ensuring that the articulation of our mission responds forcefully to the needs of the society we serve.

The university periodically conducts strategic planning processes that tie all activities — academic, co-curricular, student recruiting, outreach, facilities, and financial — to the overall goals of the institution as articulated in its mission statement. The university structures involved in the evaluation of the mission and goals of the university include the Board of Trustees, the Office of the Provost, and the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee. In addition to the strategic planning activities, mechanisms supporting such assessment involve annual action plans, annual reporting on action plans, surveys with employers, students and graduates, curriculum maps and program goals assessment, and academic program review.

The current version of the mission statement was adopted in 2009. The institution is now in the midst of composing its next strategic plan for the upcoming five-year period. This is the time in which the fundamental success of the university in accomplishing its mission is assessed, and also the mission itself is reviewed and evaluated for its applicability to the university's strategic mission going forward.

Standard Two: Planning and Evaluation

DESCRIPTION

Long Range Planning Process

The last NEASC self-study in 2006 took place at a time in which AUBG needed to articulate a new strategic direction. In 2002, AUBG signed a cooperative agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that provides the university with 20 million dollars over a five-year period. As an outgrowth of the cooperative agreement, AUBG completed a university-wide strategic plan, which outlined the long-term objectives for the development of the institution as it became a financially self-sustainable institution with undergraduate education in Blagoevgrad and graduate programs, professional training services, and outreach activities in Sofia. Direct US government support for AUBG ended in 2007–08 .

In 2006, a full-scale Strategic Planning process was launched alongside the self-study for NEASC accreditation. The last tranche of support from USAID was received in December 2006, thus the timing was right to ensure that the long-range financial plan of the university was also fully integrated with other processes including: annual action plans, curricular plans, capital plans, and annual budget development. The strategic planning process was delayed until 2008–09 as a new president began his term in August 2007. The [Strategic Plan 2010-2015](#) (Enclosure 2.1) *Fulfilling the Promise* was approved by the Board in October 2010.

The strategic planning process was guided by the president and provost and involved several task forces on key issues, the most important of which focused on enrollment. Enrollment of Bulgarian students faced several changes in the environment — including the demographics of the regional student population, changing social and political conditions, the impact of population decline, and Bulgaria’s accession to the European Union. The low tuition of institutions in Western Europe made them even more attractive to Bulgarian students in the wake of the global financial crisis. AUBG responded to these pressures by expanding its efforts to recruit students from Central Asia and also successfully sought external scholarship aid for Bulgarian students.

Once again we find ourselves integrating the efforts of self-study for accreditation purposes and for strategic planning. For a small institution such as AUBG, the economies of time and energy achieved by integration may justify the pressure on those who must organize the information and self-analysis used for both processes.

Annual Action Plans

In order to track and measure progress towards meeting the goals set out in the Strategic Plan, AUBG developed a mechanism to create an “Annual Action Plan” for each academic year that would articulate which actions foreseen in the Strategic Plan would be undertaken during a given academic year. [Annual Action Plans](#) (Encl. 2.2) are reviewed by the AUBG Board of Trustees, along with “completion reports” of previous year’s action plans. The discipline implied by the planning and reporting of accomplishments of earlier plans helps the institution overcome discontinuities in planning and direction that can occur and are prone to happen when there are changes in the University’s leadership positions.

With the habit of translating strategic goals into annual targets already established, the Strategic Plan *Fulfilling the Promise 2010-2015* included not only goals and initiatives to be undertaken over several

years, but also specific measures of progress. Changes were made to the planning and reporting processes in order to ease the integration of strategic objectives with the annual budgeting process. The link of planning to budgeting decisions ensures that there are sufficient resources to support activities. The evaluation of progress each December enables administrators to adjust plans during the year as they review progress toward institutional goals and focus on the financial and human resources needed for continuous improvement of the university. The Office of Institutional Research and the Office of the Provost coordinate the Annual Action Plan completion report. The Office of Institutional Research in recent years has increased its capacity to collect and analyze data in support of decision making and assessment of institutional effectiveness. Its many reports and studies are available on the AUBG website. Key reports and findings, including the Annual Report, are shared with the board, administrators, and faculty.

Time spent writing plans or preparing reports can come at the expense of putting energy and time into implementing ideas. Therefore, we will look for ways to streamline the Strategic Planning and reporting process. The Board of Trustees is particularly interested in clearer (and fewer) priorities. Finding the right balance between a comprehensive strategy and the few key priorities that will make the biggest difference will be the challenge, especially for preparation of the next Strategic Plan process now underway. Developing mechanisms for experimentation and learning on the go over a five-year period is also critical for the future strategic planning efforts as the current situation in the industry and the region would probably require some degree of risk-taking and experimentation.

Financial Planning

Budget and financial planning is facilitated by the regular use and update of the Long-Range Financial Forecast from the Office of the Vice President of Finance and Administration. This document uses updated enrollment data of new students and forecasts of future intakes of new students, tuition and fee changes, and budget expenditures to forecast the institution's future financial results over the next five years. This model helps the administration to foresee the future financial consequences of both current changes and the potential impact of decisions on future budgets.

Many of the academic and financial decisions made have consequences felt over a period of several years. The university makes multi-year scholarship and financial commitments to incoming students, it allocates funds devoted to scholarship support with the need for continuing support in mind. A smaller-than-expected incoming class affects total tuition revenue for the current and following three to four years. The long-range financial forecast incorporates all of the known facts today and builds a forecast of future financial results, so that corrective action can be taken at appropriate times.

APPRAISAL

Evaluation of Achievements

Good institutional data is central to AUBG's capacity for evaluation of the achievement of its mission. When first formed, AUBG's Office of Institutional Research (IR) was a part of educational outreach. The initial focus of the office was to provide information used in applying for grants and in supporting the development of educational outreach efforts.

The role of IR at AUBG continues to evolve and the office is now the official source of information about AUBG, and also conducts important studies. The office works collaboratively with offices such as Admissions and the Registrars to access and collect data for standard reports such as the Key

Performance Indicators and Student Retention and Attrition. In 2004, a sixty-page Annual Report (“Fact Book”) was created to provide a clear view of all key academic and financial performance indicators. This report has been improved and developed further each year based on recommendations from its users. The [2014–15 Institutional Research Annual Report](#) (Encl. 2.3) contains 8 sections with over 100 different pages of graphs and charts.

The institution evaluates its performance of its mission through qualitative and quantitative measures. Graduating students are asked if their AUBG education helped prepare them for their roles as citizens – and over 70 percent responded positively in the [most recent survey](#) (Encl. 2.4). A smaller majority respond positively to the statement that serving on University governance committees allows them to participate in university decision-making. The [assessment of the academic mission](#) (Encl. 2.5) is measured using a variety of instruments — qualitative and quantitative, internal and external. In addition to exit surveys of graduating students, AUBG [surveys employers of graduates](#) (Encl. 2.6) to obtain feedback on the preparedness of AUBG students for the job market. Bulgarian academic requirements include either a thesis or State Exam for bachelor’s degree candidates. AUBG provides options for both. State Exams are cumulative exams covering wide portions of the student’s degree program administered just prior to graduation, and are graded by at list two different faculty members who do not know the identity of the student. Exam results can be compared to each student’s academic record – in most cases the State Exam results show strong correlation with the student’s GPA-in-major. This result supports the integrity of the course grades and provides feedback on what students have achieved at the end of their academic careers. The Economics Department uses the ETS Major Field Test as its State Exam – the [results](#) (Encl. 2.7) of AUBG Economics graduates are consistent with those from other US institutions using the test. Finally, the high placement rate of AUBG students in graduate programs provides a qualitative validation of our outcomes. The [Bulgarian Ministry of Education rankings data](#) (Encl. 2.8) show that AUBG’s graduates excel in earnings, employment rates, unemployment rates, and in percent working in their professional fields compared to other universities in Bulgaria.

The IR office also prepares many custom designed analyses to support decision-making, such as enrollment yields, recruitment costs, and correlations between admission test results and academic performance. The resources of the office are readily available to administrators, faculty, and student affairs staff to provide institutional data and reports upon request to support both internal and external needs. The schedule is varied and also includes support for grant proposals, the accreditation self-studies, academic program review, the economic impact study, and external surveys. The Office maintains information on US institutions to provide context for AUBG data and is particularly interested in comparison data from a peer group of US liberal arts colleges with enrollments below 1500. Most recently, the Office has been supporting Admissions efforts by collecting and submitting official institution information used by college and university search engines such as US News and World Report and Big Future.

In addition to its reporting and analytic functions, the Office of IR conducts a number of systematic evaluation surveys aimed at measuring institutional effectiveness, including: Senior Exit Survey (including questions related to student satisfaction with the major), Alumni Survey, and Employer Satisfaction Survey. The results of these surveys help the University’s management and faculty improve the university’s policies, procedures, programs, and levels of service. The information has been particularly important in curriculum development and supports faculty efforts to improve teaching and learning at AUBG.

Long Range Planning Process

The purpose of the long range planning process at AUBG has remained largely unchanged over the years. But the process' output has been used to frame University actions in remarkably different ways under the different phases of the institution's early growth. From its founding in 1991 until 2001, AUBG's success was defined primarily in terms of its external relations with U.S. and Bulgarian government entities. To some degree, that emphasis on external relations constrained the influence of AUBG's planning processes on institutional development in the context of a rapidly changing and unstable environment. Accordingly, AUBG developed data and comparative information primarily to support external relations, rather than to strengthen the institution and improve AUBG's resource allocation.

In AUBG's second phase from 2001 until 2006, the establishment of a financially sustainable business model was the critical institutional priority. AUBG established an Executive MBA and other outreach [programs in Sofia](#) (Encl. 2.9); expanded efforts to recruit additional students -- particularly non-regional students; and began to allocate student financial aid to achieve its own budget targets as well as attract promising students. At the time, AUBG lacked the ability to collect and assimilate the information that would inform such decisions at more mature institutions in more stable environments. Subsequent analysis of the environment has demonstrated that some of the institution's goals were premature.

The third phase began when the university achieved its first balanced operating budget in 2006. Having established the institution as a viable, going concern, the focus shifted to maintaining and enhancing quality, ensuring effectiveness, and careful expansion of the university's activities in areas that shared consistency with the university's mission and a strong basis for anticipating success. The university's quasi-endowment is carefully managed to ensure that the purchasing power is maintained and grown. Comparative information is collected and used coherently to assess AUBG's progress toward both its operating and financial objectives.

To strengthen the success of the institutional plan, efforts are ongoing to help departments and units develop their own detailed plans linked to the strategic plan. The budget process requires that units report on strategic initiatives in the previous year and the goals for the coming year as background for budget requests. The elements of a strong planning process are in place.

As expected for a tuition-dependent institution, careful enrollment planning must underlie financial planning and ultimately long term planning. One important change made in 2014-15 was the decision to adopt an SAT-optional admission process. This decision was based upon data on the number of official SAT-test takers in AUBG's target markets, the study of survey data of enrolled students, applicants who did not enroll, and students who did not apply, and data from previous classes on the predictive power of the SAT results for AUBG academic performance in comparison to other available measures. Consequently, the Board was able to endorse an important change in the process of attracting and selecting new students without taking a "leap into the dark". AUBG has also commissioned studies of AUBG's image among students and parents to identify what factors determine the decision of students to select the pool of universities to which they apply. The study of the data from the last several years indicates that our difficulty in reaching enrollment targets stems principally from our inability to induce students to apply, not from inability to convince admitted students to enroll.

Annual Action Plans

The strategic plan includes many initiatives designed by faculty, students, staff, and administrators aimed at accomplishing the goals. The 2010 Strategic Plan included many goals related to nearly every aspect of the University. We soon came to realize that success would be based not on ticking every box, but on

identifying the most critical goals, and measuring our progress towards these. The Annual Action Plan sets the focus for the year, and we aim to be realistic about which initiatives will be accomplished. The Provost provides a [report at each January](#) (Encl. 2.2) Board of Trustees meeting on the accomplishment in the previous calendar year of the previous year's Action Plan, and shares the Annual Action Plan for the coming year.

Much of the success of the planning and budgeting process depends upon how carefully the two are linked. The university has long had a Planning and Budget Committee whose main activity is to create the institution's operating budget for the following year. The Provost and Vice-President for Finance and Administration both serve on the committee to align financial allocation with the institution's academic priorities. When financial resources are fully-stretched, this focus is particularly important. Our conservative resource allocation may sometimes inhibit curricular or other innovations.

Financial Planning

The long-range financial forecast continues to play a key role in management of financial resources, and allows longer-term consequences from variances in enrollment, average net tuition, development revenue, etc. to be understood and acted upon promptly. The members of the Budget Committee have developed a good sense of understanding of the institution's "business model" and budget allocation decisions reflect the institution's strategic priorities. In recent years, the committee also encloses a ["budget memo"](#) (Encl. 2.10) that accompanies the actual budget recommendation. The memo explains the priorities in the budget and also makes recommendations about any other issues that arise during the budget process, whether related to technology, budget management, processes, fee structure, etc. The memo is also included with the budget itself for Board of Trustee review and evaluation.

While many of the assumptions built into the long range financial forecast do not materialize in the way anticipated, the manner in which the forecast translates input assumptions into budget implications has allowed the management to accumulate a solid overall record of prudent fiscal management. This conservative approach preserved the strategic direction of AUBG unchanged during long periods of deep environmental shifts and also contributed to institutional predictability and alignment between tuition numbers and its business model.

PROJECTION

The need for institutional mechanisms to gather and analyze information for data-driven decision-making will continue to grow to include information pools previously outside of the range of interest. Decision-making will require additional special studies such as enrollment yields, recruitment costs, and correlations between admission test results, academic performance comparative performance with benchmark institutions. The institutional research office, registrar, admissions office, and finance division all contribute information to support decision-making and resource allocation.

AUBG is still a young institution, but we have reached the degree of maturity at which we have a record of data collection, storage, and interpretation that allows data-based decision-making to take root. We have established a record of collecting comparable data of many kinds, such as that collected through the Senior Exit Survey, Alumni Survey, and Employer Satisfaction Survey. We have the ability now to use our own institutional experience to inform decisions about possible changes to admissions criteria, financial aid allocation, faculty retention, class sizes, student evaluation results, and so forth. Although institutional research is not common in Bulgarian institutions, our goal is to match the capacity of the US

and relevant regional institutions and make use of data for planning and decision-making a standard practice at all levels.

AUBG is subject to external review by the Bulgarian National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency for [both the institution and all programs](#) (Encl. 2.11) and this keeps us in a continuous cycle of measuring effectiveness according to our Quality Management System. We anticipate some new requirements as European ideas develop, such as the standards and guidelines for quality assurance in higher education. Until recently, Bulgarian accreditation requirements had tended to place greater emphasis on quantity of specific inputs to the educational process – while we at AUBG tend to focus on quality measures of outputs rather than inputs. But now Bulgarian standards are also evolving and are now beginning to converge with AUBG’s emphasis on evaluation of outputs.

The Bulgarian Ministry of Education maintains a rating system of universities and academic programs, based on standard quantitative and qualitative measures of inputs of faculty and facilities; the quality of outputs as measured by the earnings and career placement of graduates, and the reputation as measured through impact on the community and survey data. We do not control the methodology and weighting system in use (and we have objections to the fairness or appropriateness of some) but these measures do provide us with a powerful external measure of evaluating the effectiveness of our academic programs. Despite our concerns about some of the criteria and/or weights used in the ranking, all of our academic programs [rank highly](#) (Encl. 2.8) in the system.

Long Range Planning Process

AUBG’s approach to long-range planning also shows that AUBG is becoming a mature institution. Our earlier strategic plans were composed in unstable environments both internally and externally, and the institution itself had little experience with the execution of planning processes. As a result, each time the process is repeated, some changes in the process are made to avoid repeating the shortcomings of earlier attempts. We know that our pursuit of growth, quality, and sustainability depends upon the University remaining realistic, adaptable, flexible, and willing to take measured risks. Thus we view the strategic plan as a statement of our aspirations but not a straightjacket that would have us overlook opportunities or continue to pursue doomed initiatives.

Annual Action Plans

Annual Action Plans are a powerful tool for sustaining progress toward long-range goals. The process must become more inclusive (particularly for faculty), or risk becoming merely an administrative “to-do list.” We have learned that shorter plans containing a smaller number of key performance objectives will help Board members understand the strategic initiatives focused on quality and sustainability. Comprehensive planning that is integrated with the institutional plan must also take place at the department and unit levels.

Although Action Plans and Completion Reports are included in “Board Books” made available to all Board members, students and faculty, the information is not always internalized deeply enough among the other stakeholders to enable the community understand its collective progress. More work can be done here.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The Office of Institutional Research must continue to build its capacity to collect and analyze data. AUBG can tolerate only a small margin for error in planning decisions. AUBG will continue to rely on

collaboration among the Dean of Faculty, Registrars, Admissions, faculty and others to complete institutional research projects. One source of support that might be more fully utilized is AUBG students and faculty. Under committed faculty supervision, recent class projects and surveys designed by the Student Government have already shown that students have the capacity and interest to conduct meaningful research. The faculty member supervising the student work and the institutional research staff person must ensure that the student project is undertaken with a sound research design. This type of student research initiative also supports our goal of helping students develop their capacities for critical inquiry and analysis.

Creation of a “culture of evidence” is an on-going task, and more progress will be made over the next few years in spreading this culture among faculty, staff, students, and administrators. This will require leadership and systematic effort to establish productive ways to plan, work, and measure progress together.

AUBG as an institution can work towards a culture of participation and celebration of accomplishments in areas that are in sync with the strategic objectives of the university and can gradually establish a culture of excellence.

Standard Three: Organization and Governance

DESCRIPTION

The American University in Bulgaria is registered under the provisions of corporate legislation regarding not-for-profit corporations in the State of Maine and also registered as an educational corporation in the Republic of Bulgaria. The university is regulated, therefore, by the requirements and provisions for not-for-profit organizations in both the United States and Bulgaria.

AUBG is accredited by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and by the [National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency](#) (Enclosure 3.1) of Bulgaria. The organizational design and governance structures are consistent with the requirements of both entities.

Board of Trustees

Each board member is appointed for a term of three years and board members are normally not appointed for more than three three-year terms. The terms of board members are staggered to insure continuity of membership. A plurality of the Board of Trustees (including ex-officio trustees, as per the bylaws) must be United States citizens and a two-thirds majority of the board must be citizens of the United States and the Republic of Bulgaria. Currently the AUBG Board of Trustees consists of twenty-three members: nine US board members, eight Bulgarian board members, and six third-country nationals.

[Members of the Board of Trustees](#) (Encl. 3.2) are drawn from many fields and include those with expertise in finance, government, higher education, banking, law, and media. The Committee on Trustees nominates new members for the board who must then be voted on by the entire Board of Trustees. All members of the board are bound by the conflict of interest policy outlined in the bylaws.

The president of AUBG is an ex-officio member of the board along with the president of the AUBG Alumni Association. A member of the faculty, elected by the Faculty Assembly, and a member of the student body, elected by the student body, are appointed as official representatives of their respective groups to the Board of Trustees. The faculty and student representatives are voting members of appropriate standing committees but are not voting members of the Board of Trustees. During the board meetings, opportunities for informal communication with additional faculty and students are included in the schedule.

The officers of the board include a chair and a deputy chair. By custom, the deputy chair of the board has been a Bulgarian and the chair has been an American. The board appoints a clerk who is also a university employee. The clerk is charged with keeping the minutes of all meetings and arranging the scheduling and details for all board meetings and activities. The actions of the board are communicated to the campus community immediately after each board meeting and all board reports are filed in the President's Office and are open to faculty, students, and staff.

The Board of Trustees meets three times a year, with the fall and spring meetings held in Bulgaria, and the winter meeting held in the USA. The Executive Committee of the board is empowered to act, if necessary, between board meetings and may hold special meetings as needed. From time to time the board holds a pre-meeting retreat in order to spend more time on issues central to the fulfillment of AUBG's mission. The retreats also give the board an opportunity to informally review its performance and make recommendations to improve communication and decision-making.

The board conducts its business utilizing a committee system consisting of the following: Executive Committee, Finance and Property Committee, Educational Policy Committee, Committee on Trustees, Student Affairs Committee, Legislative Liaison Committee, Audit Committee, University Development

Committee, and Investment Committee. Regular communication between the chair of each committee and the administrator assigned to the committee ensures a working relationship throughout the year. In addition to his ongoing communications with the board chairperson, between meetings the president sends periodic written updates on campus activities to the full board.

The authority of the board is defined in the [University Bylaws](#) (Encl. 3.3), most recently reviewed and amended in October 2013. The bylaws define the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and the duties and responsibilities of the president, who is the chief executive officer of AUBG and reports directly to the Board of Trustees. The president is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the university and has all the rights and privileges customary to the office. The board sets performance goals for the president and is responsible for evaluation of his/her performance.

Administration and Institutional Governance

The president is the chief executive officer of the institution and is assisted by two senior vice-presidents, the Provost and the vice President for Finance and Administration. Others with a direct reporting relationship to the president include the Dean of Students, the Executive Director of Institutional Advancement, the Director of Communications and Marketing, the Internal Auditor, and the Clerk to the Board. Each senior administrator has responsibilities delegated by the president consistent with the overall mission and purposes of the university. These goals serve as the basis for the annual evaluation of the administrators by the president.

The administrative and staff organization of AUBG is typical of other colleges and universities, and the [organizational chart](#) (Encl. 3.4) is updated as staff or functions change. The senior management meets regularly as a leadership team with the president to organize work, make decisions, and assure effective oversight of the institution. Each administrator, in turn, meets regularly with the mid-level managers in the division to ensure good communication and efficiency. The Administrative Council meets monthly to bring together managers and staff representatives, the chair of the Faculty Assembly, and the president of the student body to review current issues with the president. Periodically, the president holds open forums for the university community on significant issues. In addition, administrators try to maintain an open-door policy, appropriate for a small institution, in order to be responsive to concerns and initiatives from faculty, staff, and students.

Much of the work of the institution is conducted through the [university committees](#) (Encl. 3.5) with membership drawn from faculty, students, and staff. The committees meet as needed for the type of work they do. The university committee rules posted on the university website include prior announcements of meetings and postings of the minutes on the webpage so that those who wish to attend or keep abreast of decisions can do so. The committees include, for example, Student Financial Affairs Committee, Admissions Committee, Student Services Committee, Staff Development and Policies Committee, Academic Standing Committee, and Budget and Planning Committee. Many efforts are made to make institutional decision-making transparent and efficient. Most committee meetings are open, but the nature of the work undertaken by some committees in areas such as salary administration, discipline, and academic standing require that the committee's deliberations be confidential.

Both the faculty and the students have organizations that govern their activities, represent their interests, and provide for direct involvement, input, and interaction with the administration. All full-time faculty are members of the Faculty Assembly, a conscious choice to include all voices rather than use a smaller representative body such as a faculty senate. Discussion and decision making of the assembly is conducted in monthly meetings in accordance with its bylaws, published in the [Faculty Manual](#) (Encl. 3.6). The agenda for each meeting is set by the Faculty Assembly Steering Committee. Much of the work of the Faculty Assembly is conducted through a system of committees that meet regularly. The committees are Faculty Evaluation Committee, Faculty Evaluation Team, Curriculum Committee,

Faculty Life Committee, and Academic Affairs Committee. The senior administrators provide regular written reports to the Faculty Assembly and attend the meetings to answer questions.

The [Student Government](#) (Encl. 3.7) is the directly elected representative body of the students of AUBG. The student body holds open elections for Senate members to represent each class and the officers. Weekly meetings have a carefully constructed agenda, and students take up issues that are related to their own special interests such as student fees and issues of general university importance such as safety and security. A faculty member serves as advisor to the Student Government and provides training and advice on democratic processes. Periodically, the Student Government hosts university-wide forums to encourage student involvement in campus dialogue on such issues as technology.

In 2014–15 the first steps were taken towards establishing a [staff assembly](#) (Encl. 3.8) to facilitate communication, collaboration, and staff professional development.

[Academic Organization](#) (Encl. 3.9)

The Provost is responsible for academic leadership and overall program, faculty, and student quality. Reporting to the Provost is the Dean of Faculty who provides oversight and leadership on a variety of issues including academic policies, faculty hiring, curriculum, and research support. Effective AY 2015–16, an Associate Dean of Faculty was appointed to help with issues related to student outcomes assessment, accreditation, teaching, research, service excellence, and faculty development. Much of the decision-making for academic affairs is organized through a departmental structure consisting of eight departments introduced in 2004 to replace the three-division structure that had existed. The departmental structure ensures greater flexibility and improves communication and academic management within groups of faculty involved in the same or related fields of study and responsible for offering one or two majors within the field, such as Computer Science major and Information Systems major in the Computer Science Department, or Political Science and International Relations major and European Studies major in the Department of Politics and European Studies. The EMBA program at the Elieff Center is coordinated by the Dean of Faculty who works collaboratively with the chair of the Department of Business, and the Provost, as appropriate. The Dean's Council meets every month so that the Provost, Dean of Faculty, department chairs, and the Chair of the Faculty Assembly can address issues of common concern and make collaborative decisions such as authorizations for new hires, distribution of research or teaching-related funds, or enhancements to the registration system. The council also provides a forum for more immediate management concerns than cannot be handled through the Faculty Assembly such as course scheduling.

The departments are small and function most often as a single unit. For issues with cross-departmental impact, such as hiring and new curriculum development, faculty from several departments work together. Students are members of the relevant departmental committees as well. Students take full advantage of these opportunities and their contributions are well respected, especially with regard to faculty hiring.

In order to ensure that all units that support overall academic quality can work collaboratively, the managers of admissions, library, computing, English Language Institute, human resources, conferences and institutes, institutional research, and the Dean of Faculty meet together regularly with the Provost. The agenda covers issues ranging from facilities needs and staff evaluation to technology support and service quality. When appropriate the Vice President for Finance and Administration or managers are invited to join the discussion.

APPRAISAL

Board of Trustees

The institution has a system of governance that facilitates the accomplishment of its mission. While the board faces all the challenges typical of a small, liberal arts college with limited endowment resources, it also must conduct its business in a multicultural environment and meet the standards of both US and Bulgarian higher education. Adapting to cultural diversity is an education for the board as much as it is for the students and faculty. Given the complexity of the institution's funding and its multi-government relations, the board has been active, while keeping the line between governance and management clear. It has been successful in making difficult personnel decisions and managing leadership transitions without letting the institution lose momentum. Effecting such changes when the US and Bulgarian members of the board have very different experiences with how to handle employment problems has been no easy task and underscores the strength of the board and its leadership.

During the transition between presidents in 2014, the university operated for three months without a president. During this time, the board assumed more management responsibilities than usual by establishing a Presidential Transition Support Committee. With the new president in office, the board has returned to a more traditional relationship with the institution. Equally important, the board has made a number of important decisions such as the change in admissions criteria, the faculty teaching load, and established principles for financial stability, that have set a clear course for the future of the institution under new leadership.

The current president is a 1992 graduate of Auburn University (B.S. International Business) and Oklahoma State University (M.S. Entrepreneurship). He was a business consultant and private investor in a variety of industries including technology, semiconductors, pharmaceutical, and education. In 2002 he joined Ohio University to create applied learning programs and a new integrated MBA program. He has extensive international experience, both in business and academia, throughout the Balkan and Eastern European region. Most recently, his higher education programs in Hungary have been recognized by the EU as a model for 21st century education that not only educates students, but also impacts the community. The president has established a clear and cooperative relationship with the board. He uses e-mail, informal reports, individual meetings, and phone calls to keep members of the board and the board chairman informed of campus issues. This is especially important with a board that meets only three times a year. The president also seeks feedback from the board prior to implementing important management ideas, such as the strategic direction to take with regard to the Sofia operations. Members of the board work with the senior management of the institution when seeking input or information from the campus and, as schedules permit, visit the campus individually.

The Board of Trustees is committed to AUBG and clearly understands the mission and direction of the institution. As the institution and the board mature, the board is taking steps to further strengthen its capacity. Board members are well aware of the importance of analyzing the board's effectiveness and evaluating its capacity to help raise significant funds. Careful attention is being paid to selection of new board members, continuity in the board, and training of committee chairs. The board relies on an internal committee structure and benefits from experienced chairs who can establish a good working relationship with the administration. Recent changes in the schedule at board meetings have resulted in concentrating the reports, discussion, and recommendations for decision-making within the committees.

Administration and Institutional Governance

There is good communication and confidence among the unit heads at the university, but there is not much depth of management. Consequently, there is heavy reliance on a few key individuals who do not have enough backup at the mid-level of management and thus, are often distracted from a more proactive style of administration by the need to handle routine details. In part this was the reason for introducing

the new Associate Dean of Faculty position. There are some important positions, including directors of development and human resources, which are presently unfilled. In addition to developing a plan to fill key positions, succession planning for all key functional areas of the administration needs to be strengthened.

Within the institution there are appropriate channels of communication for the constituent groups. Both the Faculty Assembly and the Student Government work well and have clear access to the administration and the president. Several open meetings this year have revealed that even on a small campus it is hard to stay informed.

Students and faculty are involved in the formal institutional decision-making process, at the campus level and at the board level. Given the type of student enrolled at AUBG there is no shortage of interest or involvement by students in the life of the university. Thoughtful responses from the Student Government on campus issues are the rule rather than the exception. Similarly, the faculty take their committee responsibilities seriously. Unfortunately, because of the small size of the university, both faculty and students are overwhelmed at times by the number of obligations they have. To address this, in 2012–13 the committee structure was simplified for both university and faculty assembly committees to make their work more efficient. Additionally, in 2014–15 the service-related section of the Faculty Handbook was updated and improved. Traditionally, faculty maintain a strong commitment to shared governance and participation in shaping the future of the university.

Academic Organization

When AUBG was smaller, faculty and programs were organized in three divisions. In 2004, to flatten the organization and involve more people in decision-making, departments were established. At the time, a task force of the Faculty Assembly, after considering the strengths and weaknesses of both the department and divisional structures, confirmed a commitment to the departmental structure and established [expectations for department chairs](#) (Encl. 3.10). These expectations were enhanced in AY 2014–15 to involve the opinion of departments/ disciplines in evaluating the faculty service component. Regular meetings with the Dean of Faculty and Provost facilitate handling day-to-day management issues.

AUBG's liberal arts philosophy requires integration of in-classroom and out-of-classroom learning. Faculty are involved in student clubs, co-curricular activities, and student trips, for example. The staff in Student Affairs have a good understanding of academic expectations and provide appropriate support services through the Advising Center, Counseling Center, and Residential Life programming. Issues such as academic integrity and diversity are collaboratively addressed. The Dean of Students and the Dean of Faculty work well together to encourage broad engagement of both faculty and students, as is appropriate for a residential campus.

PROJECTION

Board of Trustees

Members of the Board of Trustees serve as advocates for AUBG's future. Just as AUBG seeks to maintain and enhance the international character of its student body and its faculty, it is also very important to maintain the international character of the Board and to diversify the backgrounds of board members. It is vital to preserve the understanding and legacy of those who founded the university, while at the same time expanding the board's membership to strengthen its ability to guide the institution through new challenges. As the priority shifts from the importance of governmental relations and lobbying, so essential to the initiation of the university, new US Board members with access to both governmental and private resources will be sought. AUBG must continue to have well-placed Bulgarian

board members who can provide help in governmental relations. The newer members from the larger region provide for better geographical representation and also can help enhance recruiting efforts and stimulate regional cooperation and understanding of trends in European higher education.

The effectiveness of the board will continue to depend on its committee structure. Some attention might be paid to streamlining activities, refining the overlapping membership on committees, and strengthening committee work between board meetings. The wide geographical dispersion of board members hinders communication between board meetings and increases the necessity for board members to review written materials ahead of meetings and participate in committee conference calls ahead of the actual meetings.

The recent survey conducted for strategic planning revealed a gap between student and faculty perceptions and board perceptions on some key issues. Some work may be necessary to overcome the perception that the board is isolated on some issues. More informal ways need to be found for the members of the board to interact with faculty and students. Toward that end, we will review the types of information that is shared, how new faculty can be introduced to the board, and how best to use the unstructured time during board meetings.

Administration and Institutional Governance

As the new leadership settles in, some of the structures for communication and decision making will likely be revised. The current president has made some changes to the composition of the leadership team and has also some key administrative positions to fill. The university committee structure spreads the work of the institution effectively; however, a small number of faculty serve on several committees in addition to their work in their departments and in the Faculty Assembly. Also, we could do a better job in posting complete sets of committee minutes so that those interested, or those in need of this information to accomplish their jobs, could have easy access.

The Faculty Assembly is effective in representing the interests of faculty, and its committees enjoy good leadership. Greater attention to the timelines for decision making would facilitate committee work as the habit is to leave many decisions to March and April, traditionally the busiest time of the year. This schedule leaves little time for bringing forward decisions that need to be reviewed and approved by the board. The Student Government is also considering how best to do its work and hopes to revise its bylaws and hold elections in the spring to facilitate an early start to its work.

A major project that has emerged from the Bulgarian accreditation process is the need to have clearer documentation of all institutional structures, policies, processes, and decisions, as well as the way quality is managed and enhanced at the university. Although it is unlikely that we would want to meet the level of documentation that is taken for granted in the Bulgarian universities, we do need to do a better job of outlining procedures, recording the date policies are approved and by whom, and annually documenting all decisions guided by those policies and procedures. To some extent, in recent years we have relied too heavily on electronic records. This limits access to information when personnel change. Furthermore, it is difficult to demonstrate the expected “paper trail.” We are in the process of preparing a more comprehensive description of quality management at AUBG and plan to submit the required interim accreditation reports to indicate how we might better meet the [criteria of the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency](#) (Encl. 3.11).

Academic Organization

As a young institution that has experienced significant turnover in leadership over the past decade, the university is more than usually vulnerable to disruption caused by turnover of key personnel. The administration is thin, and we have not done enough to identify who could take over, not just in academic affairs but throughout the university. As resources must currently be put into front-line service to students, we need to turn to growing our own mid-level managers. We have budgeted for professional

development to address that issue but need to use some of the funds for organizational development in addition to individual development. At the same time, as funds become available they must be allocated to fill in some important missing functions in development, alumni affairs, grants and contracts, facilities, engineering and more.

As the faculty has grown, the division structure has given way to departments. Small departments of faculty with similar interests have improved efficiency and accountability, but there is still a need to refine expectations of the roles of the department chairs, Dean of Faculty, and Provost in communication. It will be important to find ways to keep the organization from hardening along disciplinary boundaries to such an extent that interdisciplinary work is limited. This is even more important now that the new academic building is completed and faculty are no longer co-located on a single floor. Evaluation of department functioning, allocation of authority, and communication will be an ongoing process.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The AUBG Board of Trustees is autonomous and self-regulating. It evaluates its own effectiveness through its membership recruitment and renewal processes. It maintains appropriate oversight over the performance of the president through its formal and informal reports from the president as well as through the board's direct communication with other administrative officers, faculty representatives, and student representatives.

Standard Four: The Academic Program

DESCRIPTION

Overview

The AUBG academic program is an American-style liberal arts four-year baccalaureate program. It includes course work in the arts, humanities, social sciences, mathematics, and natural sciences as well as in the professional programs of business, computer science, information systems and journalism and mass communication. The careful integration of traditional liberal arts education with programs focused on career opportunities is consistent with the mission “to educate students of outstanding potential in a community of academic excellence, diversity, and respect and to prepare them for democratic and ethical leadership in serving the needs of the region and the world.” All major and minor programs emphasize substantial content, attention to methods of the discipline, reflection on individual and shared values, and practical application to current issues of the region and the world. In this way the overall academic program supports the development of informed, engaged, and thoughtful graduates.

All academic programs fall under the purview of the [Curriculum Committee](#) (Enclosure 4.1) and the Faculty Assembly, which is the official faculty governance body of the university. The Curriculum Committee also includes student representatives and by custom the Dean of Faculty. The dean ensures that new courses, programs, or requirements are clearly articulated, that they have learning outcomes consistent with the university norms, that are executable under the university’s course registration system, and are included in the Undergraduate Catalog when approved. Proposals for new courses or programs typically originate in the department that will be hosting the course or program. Academic departments have some flexibility in offering “special topics” courses without prior approval, but these cannot carry general education credit or be repeated more than twice without approval.

All academic programs are constructed to be consistent with the academic goals and outcomes of the institution. Admissions standards are set to ensure that students have the preparation necessary to begin the program upon entry. New first-year students are placed in foundation courses in English language and mathematics if the initial assessment of their skill levels indicates that they require additional training in these subject areas. The General Education Program and all academic majors and minors have appropriate gradation of content and learning outcomes so that students advance to progressively more sophisticated mastery of the learning outcomes. All program requirements are published in the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) (Encl. 4.2), which is also available online through the AUBG website.

Foundation Skills in English and Information Literacy

Admissions recommended minimum requirements — sufficiently strong academic performance in secondary school and a minimum 80/213/550 TOEFL — ensure that students enter with well-developed English proficiency. Aspiring applicants who do not meet these standards may enroll in the English Language Institute (ELI) for a semester or a full year of preparation in order to meet the admissions standards. Although proficient in English, all first-year students take two courses designed to strengthen their abilities to speak and write at a high level of competence in English. Writing skills are further developed as students take three upper-level writing-intensive courses. The Writing Center, staffed by trained peer tutors, provides individualized support for students as well as workshops for students and faculty on how to design writing assignments and provide useful feedback to students. Many courses provide ongoing oral communication practice through class discussion, small group work, and formal presentations.

Students are introduced to information literacy and technology skills in their first year. Emphasis is placed on students learning how to access, evaluate, and present information as outlined in the American Library Association's guidelines on information literacy. Library staff work in partnership with the English faculty to provide direct instruction in the first year writing courses (ENG101 and 102), and they also provide library research workshops throughout the year for both students and faculty. After each information literacy instruction the first-year students are [surveyed](#) (Encl. 4.3). In 2009 a more comprehensive [study](#) (Encl. 4.4) was conducted before and after the information literacy training to assess the skills gained and to improve the information literacy program. (A fuller discussion is included in Standard 7: Information Resources and Technology).

AUBG maintains both an internal program assessment model and submits to regular program accreditation through our Bulgarian accreditation process. The internal process ensures that AUBG academic programs are consistent with our mission, meet our learning goals, and fulfill NEASC requirements, while the external process evaluates programs according to the quality and quantity requirements of Bulgarian higher education. AUBG's internal assessment programs evaluate programs based on fulfillment of academic mission, effectiveness in doing so, and evaluate the programs in light of the financial resources necessary to support and enhance the programs.

Academic planning takes place through a consultative process involving the faculty members in the academic departments, the department chair, the dean of faculty, and the provost. New programs proposed through the Curriculum Committee are evaluated in terms of risk, with programs involving few new course commitments and no new faculty hires considered low risk and programs requiring new full-time faculty hires being "high risk". The risk assessment determines the degree of research into likely student demand and incremental cost necessary to support the project. The dean of faculty consults with the provost and department chairs to determine a faculty hiring plan for the year which ensures that all academic programs are adequately staffed, and class sizes are comparable across programs and within university guidelines to balance individual attention to students with cost efficiency.

Whenever a program is eliminated or program requirements change, the university ensures that any student affected may complete his or her degree program according to the requirements set out in the Undergraduate Catalog published in the year the student matriculated. When specific required courses are no longer offered, reasonable substitutions are made for the requirement under the supervision and approval of the faculty advisors.

The university owns all of its facilities on the Skaptopara site in Blagoevgrad and in Sofia. The Main Building in Blagoevgrad is owned by the municipality. AUBG leases the space on attractive terms and maintains close communication with the municipality. We do not anticipate any impediment to our continued use of the facility.

Undergraduate Degree Programs

The design of the AUBG undergraduate curriculum is consistent with that of many liberal arts colleges in the United States. All students are required to complete the General Education program consisting of foundation courses (required of all students in their first year), plus 12 courses divided among seven general education modes of inquiry, plus three writing-intensive-courses. Graduation requirements also include completing the requirements of a major which requires in-depth study in a particular discipline or interdisciplinary field. Each student can take free electives at his or her choice from among all courses offered. The complete descriptions of the general education requirements and all majors are described in the Academic Catalog. The catalog is distributed to all entering students and is also available online at the AUBG website.

A number of new programs were introduced during the time period covered by the self-study report. This followed surveys of the students by the Curriculum Committee to assess the appeal of such new programs.

Thus, and as of spring 2015, ten regular majors are offered: Business Administration, Computer Science, Economics, European Studies, History, Information Systems, Journalism and Mass Communication, Literature, Mathematics, and Political Science/International Relations. Beginning in fall 2014, students could also complete a Self-Designed Major which allows a student to construct his/her own interdisciplinary program under the supervision of a committee of faculty members under structured requirements. Most require 12 courses. One exception is Journalism and Mass Communication — which is a 10-course major to encourage students to study another field in depth either with a full second major or a minor. The other exception is European Studies, which requires 9 regular courses plus a language sequence in French, German, or Spanish which (depending on how much language proficiency the student already has) can require between one and five additional courses. Each major has a coherent structure of foundation courses, substantial work at the 300 and 400 levels, and electives. All offer a capstone experience such as a senior course, a project, a thesis, or an internship, as appropriate to the program.

Each major has established a [curriculum map](#) (Encl. 4.5) based on program outcomes and each course is designed with specific objectives to support program outcomes. A variety of pedagogies are used to give students both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Many of the programs include cross-listed courses and faculty stress interdisciplinary connections. Indeed, several of the majors are interdisciplinary by design: nearly all of them provide opportunities for a student to satisfy the major requirements with some courses from outside the specific discipline. For instance, an Information Systems major can count Econometrics towards his/major, and a business student can count Public Relations (a journalism course) towards his/her major. A good library collection and our electronic resources ensure that students are introduced to the methods of inquiry and information resources in each field. Students have access to the same research materials as the faculty, including current databases, journals, and books through interlibrary loan. The curriculum map for each major includes information literacy outcomes.

In addition to the majors, the following new minors were introduced during this evaluation period: American Studies, Literature, Public Policy, Integrated Marketing Communications, Modern Languages and Cultures (in French, German, Spanish or Bulgarian), Entrepreneurship, and Film Studies.

All syllabi are available to students during the first week of class and are also sent electronically to department chairs and to the Provost's Office. The complete catalog of courses is available in print and on the website. Curriculum development follows the typical pattern with course and program proposals developed by faculty in the departments, then reviewed by the Curriculum Committee before approval by the Faculty Assembly. Final approval is by the provost, except in the case of new majors that go to the Board of Trustees for final approval.

General Education Program

In addition to the 11 credits of foundation courses in English and Statistics, all students take 36-39 credits in the fields of Arts and Humanities, Science and Mathematics, and Social Sciences (Some courses are writing-intensive and are taught as four-credit courses). The General Education Program is structured with distribution requirements in seven modes of learning: literary analysis, historical analysis, quantitative reasoning, social and cultural analysis, moral and philosophical reasoning, scientific investigation, and aesthetic expression. The distribution model for the program fits the current resources of the university as well as student expectations for choice and flexibility. Both introductory courses at the 100- and 200- level and advanced courses at the 300- and 400-level meet the requirements. The

requirements in literary analysis and historical analysis are structured hierarchically, so that students complete one entry-level course in the area and one more advanced course which builds on the skills and learning outcomes of the first course. Most students take general education along with requirements for their major fields of study rather than complete the program in the first two years. The Faculty Assembly's Curriculum Committee reviews course proposals and syllabi to establish that the course learning outcomes conform to those of the intended general education mode of inquiry. Faculty members are required to indicate in their syllabi specific general education goals along with program goals. The Senior Exit Survey includes a number of questions specifically targeted at assessing the outcomes of the General Education Program. Regular assessment rubrics are applied to courses taken at other institutions (either transfer students or AUBG students on exchange) to ensure that such courses meet our criteria.

Graduate Program

AUBG has only one functioning graduate program, a 16-course Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) taught in four semesters starting in January and finishing in May of the next year. In 2015 the program is serving its 14th cohort of students. Entry requirements are appropriate to the expectations of the program. In order to enter the program, applicants must have completed a bachelors' degree, have good English-language skills, at least two years of managerial experience, and pass a face-to-face interview with program faculty. The majority are from the immediate region. Many companies add support by sponsoring their employees in the program.

The curriculum is comparable to graduate business programs in the US and includes the following courses: Business and Society, Business Communications, Financial Accounting, Managerial Economics, Decision Sciences, Managerial Accounting, Marketing Management, Organizational Design and Management, Corporate Finance, Organizational Behavior, Entrepreneurship, Operations Management, Business Law, International Business, Human Resource Management, and Strategic Management. Students also participate in a faculty planned and led international trip to leading multinational companies and financial institutions. Formal coursework is complemented with guest speakers at leadership seminars to provide examples of professional practice and increase the students' professional network.

The program faculty members are a mix of regular AUBG faculty and visiting faculty who provide expertise in specific areas. Faculty meet together regularly to integrate their courses, expectations, and case-based pedagogy. All faculty members for the semester are available to the students during the first week, which combines orientation and introductory work for all courses. Students and faculty then meet on alternate weekends for intensive work throughout the semester supplemented by e-mail interaction and small group work.

All faculty members teaching in the graduate program are evaluated after each iteration of the course for both teaching and scholarship. The evaluation is based on a dossier which includes student evaluations, course materials, syllabi, the faculty member's curriculum vitae, and self-evaluation. The evaluation is carried out by a team of full-time AUBG business faculty, reporting to the provost.

A second graduate program, a Master of Computer Science in Software Engineering (MSSE) program was approved by the Board of Trustees in 2011 and was scheduled to be offered for the first time in September 2012. However, due to organizational and logistical problems, the program is in abeyance.

Integrity in the Award of Credit

All of the majors offer the B.A. degree and are consistent in number of credits and content with both the NEASC requirements and comparable programs on other campuses. The B.A. degree requires a

minimum of 120 credits. All but two majors (EUR and POS) are 36 credits, and minors require 18 credits. Students often take a second major or complement their major with one or more of the minors. All of the majors except Business Administration offer the minor, and in addition, there are currently minors in Anthropology, Fine Arts, Philosophy and Religion, Literature, and Southeast European Studies. In May 2014, 160 students graduated with a double major, and 78 students graduated with one or more minors.

Credit hours are assigned based on contact hours except for the four credit writing intensive courses. Rather than require an additional contact hour for classroom-based group instruction, students are expected to do additional independent work and faculty members provide individualized feedback to develop writing skills. Three- and four-credit classes meet two times a week for 75 minutes each. The academic calendar consists of two semesters, 15 weeks each. Students spend a significant amount of time outside of class on reading, tackling problem sets, conducting research, and engaging in group projects.

The standards for accepting coursework completed elsewhere are comparable to other selective universities. Transfer credit is carefully evaluated and limited to 60 credits of courses with a C+ or better. Advanced placement credit is given only for a score of 4 or 5, and International Baccalaureate credit is accepted only for a score of 5, 6, or 7. AUBG has very few transfer students who complete their degree at AUBG because of the difference in language and philosophy relative to regional alternatives. However, there are regional students who start their studies in the US and then return to AUBG to finish. In the last three years, approximately 40 AUBG students annually studied abroad in the US and Europe in approved exchange programs (ISEP, [Erasmus](#) (Encl. 4.6), etc.). All students must complete at least 30 of their final 60 credits of coursework in residence at AUBG. There has been only one instance in the thirteen-year history of AUBG's graduate program in which a student transferred credit from another institution to AUBG.

All students must maintain a 2.0 grade point average each semester to remain in good standing, and must have at least 2.5 GPA in their major to graduate. In the graduate program the requirement for good standing and graduation is CGPA 3.0. First-year students and all students on probation receive mid-term grades. The Registrar's Office maintains academic records and students may access their degree audit forms which spell out clearly the requirements which have been satisfied, and which requirements remain. The Academic Standing Committee reviews all academic records following each semester and decides which students are placed on academic warning, probation, suspension, or must be dismissed. Students are notified of the reasons for the decision and have the right to appeal. All [academic policies](#) (Encl. 4.7) with regard to requirements for continuation, readmission, graduation, and academic integrity are published in the catalog.

The four-semester EMBA program consists of 16 three-credit courses plus a one-credit international trip. The EMBA semester starts with an intensive first week of classes, and continues with classes every other weekend, for six weekends of classes (twelve calendar weekends). Each course meets five times during the first intensive week and for a total of thirteen times on alternate weekends. The student-professor interaction comprises the 90-minute intense instruction in each class plus in-person or electronically mediated communication between the professor and the students as needed. The students have to commit at least two hours to independent work for each hour of direct student-professor interaction. The threshold for good standing or probation and for graduation for the EMBA is CGPA of 3.0 or higher. The complete [EMBA Academic Policies](#) (Encl. 4.8) are posted on the AUBG website.

[Assessment of Student Learning](#) (Encl. 4.9)

AUBG has a Student Outcomes Assessment Committee (SOAC), made up of faculty and students, and chaired by the provost. Each year the committee plans appropriate assessments at the program and institution levels and reports the findings to their colleagues. Specific outcomes measures that are in

place and handled by the Institutional Research Office include: a senior exit survey, an alumni survey, and an employer survey. In addition, SOAC identifies and designs new projects that are particularly relevant to current improvement initiatives. For example, in 2011 and 2012, the committee focused on articulating [institutional goals for AUBG](#) (Encl. 4.10) on the basis of the AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes and NEASC's Accreditation Standards' assessment related requirements. These goals were presented to the Faculty Assembly in fall 2013. Departments followed up by considering how their course outcomes [mapped](#) (Encl. 4.5) into their program goals using grids prepared by the Office of the Provost.

For the most part, faculty rely on course-based direct assessment to ensure that course and program outcomes are met. At the individual student and course levels, direct assessment of learning is well developed. Syllabi state clearly not just a description of the course content but also a description of objectives and assessment methods, including papers, projects, problem sets, oral reports, and exams. Most syllabi also include the criteria for awarding grades. The distribution of grades in each course shows that faculty do discriminate among different levels of performance and give students a clear sense of their achievement. Faculty are available, not just in office hours but throughout the week, to meet with students for both formal and informal assessment of their learning and course progress. Samples of graded assignments are required in the faculty evaluation dossier as an indicator of faculty attention to the importance of constructive feedback.

Program Quality Assurance

AUBG has a [formal process for periodic review](#) (Encl. 4.11). These periodic program reviews are designed to evaluate the quality of the curriculum, faculty performance, resources and facilities, and student opportunities. The process also includes a financial analysis and external evaluation.

The [Bulgarian Program Accreditation process](#) (Encl. 4.12) provides an external and comparative perspective for our programs, along with the findings of the employer, alumni, and current student surveys. The History and Civilizations, Business Administration, European Politics, Economics, Political Science/International Relations, Computer Science, Journalism and Mass Communication, and Mathematics major programs successfully completed the first Bulgarian program review process during the period 2007 - 2009. A second round of Bulgarian program accreditation is now underway. The Economics and Journalism and Mass Communication majors successfully completed this in fall 2013, and the Business Administration, EMBA, Computer Science, Information Systems and Mathematics majors, in 2014. Reviews of the History and Civilizations, European Studies, and Political Science and International Relations majors will follow in 2015–16. AUBG is also subject to post-accreditation monitoring.

Additionally, AUBG as a whole is subject to the [Bulgarian institutional accreditation process](#) (Encl. 4.13). This review was successfully completed in fall 2012 and its next round starts in 2016.

The Dean of Faculty meets regularly with department chairs and serves on the University Budget and Planning Committee where she has direct input into decisions that align resources with academic priorities to ensure quality. The Dean of Faculty pays careful attention to effective use of limited resources to ensure the strength of the academic programs. Classes with fewer than five enrollments are cancelled in consultation with department chairs; faculty hiring is based on workload and program need.

APPRAISAL

Overview

The main elements of AUBG's mission statement focus on academic excellence, diversity, and leadership.

There are a number of indicators that point to AUBG's commitment to academic excellence, and its success in meeting that commitment. AUBG tracks the quality characteristics of its applicants, admitted students, and enrolled students. The quality indicators have remained high — favorable even in comparison to well-regarded US liberal arts colleges — over the past several years. AUBG strives to admit only students who are prepared for the AUBG environment and who welcome the AUBG's different educational model. Admissions materials stress AUBG's commitment to the liberal arts model and admissions personnel take pains to explain the liberal arts model to potential applicants (and parents) during the recruiting process.

AUBG achieves [student retention and graduation rates](#) (Encl. 4.14) that exceed the standards of most US-based colleges. Over 80 percent of the first-year students who enter AUBG ultimately graduate.

A large percentage of AUBG graduates — close to one third in most years — immediately proceeds to graduate study in the USA and Europe. Each one of the academic programs can name graduates who have gone on to earn Ph.D. degrees and begun academic careers at highly regarded universities. AUBG maintains a [consistently high overall standing](#) (Encl. 4.15) in the Bulgarian university ratings. In 2011, the Bulgarian Ministry of Education launched a national ranking system for universities. This ranking system compares academic disciplines in Bulgaria-accredited higher-education institutions and its results are based on more than 80 indicators, such as teaching and learning conditions, scientific research, career development opportunities, prestige, academic resources, and facilities. AUBG leads all Bulgarian universities in terms of the employability of its graduates and the incomes they earn, as well as the percentage of graduates employed in their professional field. In addition, AUBG has the best academic and residential facilities in the country. AUBG graduates are among the most sought-after specialists in their respective fields, and the AUBG Career Fair draws many national and international firms who recruit AUBG graduates.

Respect for diversity is taken very seriously at AUBG. Our unique position as a global university in one of Europe's most ancient civilizations gives us a point of view not to be found elsewhere. We have students from 40 different countries and faculty from five continents. The diversity program at AUBG is a participatory program that increases awareness of differences among various groups. It aims to help participants identify the accurate and inaccurate information they have learned about other groups, to gain a deeper understanding of people different from themselves, to identify the personal and cultural similarities, and to learn to appreciate and celebrate the differences that may be encountered at AUBG. AUBG has a dedicated diversity team (made up of a representative cross-section of students, staff and administrators, all of whom get special training) that promotes many varied events through the year to inspire and encourage students of all nationalities to get involved. Some examples are diversity workshops and International Week and Taste Fest.

The university also follows its mission directive to promote the development of ethical leadership abilities among its students. A Model United Nations simulation has been incorporated into the Political Science major curriculum and is offered as a regular course under faculty supervision. The Model United Nations introduces students to the UN institutional framework and prepares them for participation in the Blagoevgrad International Model United Nations (BLIMUN). The European Studies major also offers two simulations: the European Council and the Council of Ministers. In both students engage in negotiations of specific EU directives or regulations as representatives of EU member states or in inter-

institutional negotiations (in which students are assigned roles across the EU institutions from MEPs, commissioners and government representatives and discuss a current EU legislative proposal). In the simulations, students have to know the official government/commissioner/EP political group position, similar positions or other players around the table and the EU legal framework that relate to the piece of legislation they have to discuss. Over the years the students have conducted mock negotiations on a variety of EU policies and EU pieces of legislation such as the Blue Card Directive, the Return Directive, and the EU-Russia Partnership.

In 2014, AUBG hosted a prestigious international student leadership conference where, in addition to students from AUBG, participants from Greece, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Kosovo, Italy and Spain also attended.

Foundation Skills in English and Information Literacy

In 2013, a study of information literacy was conducted at AUBG by examining the syllabi of 200 AUBG courses — all of the courses that were offered that academic year, except for those from Mathematics, Computer Science, Modern Languages, and Fine Arts, which typically do not require academic research. A [curriculum map](#) (Encl. 4.16) was prepared showing which courses require research and what kinds of assignments incorporate research. The study concluded that in general students are required to conduct and present research in more courses than had been assumed. It was also found, however, that in a few academic programs there is almost no writing involved and that many professors do not teach students how to write or research, but expect the students to know how to do so. It was recommended that these professors be given help by the composition faculty to design better assignments with clearer descriptions of the kind and number of sources that are required and encourage them to pay more attention to students' bibliographies in order to prevent students from relying exclusively on questionable Internet sources.

Also, in that year, 137 students — freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors — took the SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) [test](#) (Encl. 4.17). AUBG students performed about the same compared to the Baccalaureate Liberal Arts Institutions benchmark, and a little better compared to all institutions and to AMICAL institutions.

General Education Program

The [Senior Exit Survey](#) (Encl. 4.18) conducted each year generates a high response rate (over 80%) and includes questions about students' academic and extracurricular experiences at AUBG. Students generally respond that their General Education courses helped them better achieve the learning outcomes associated with each GE mode of inquiry. The strongest endorsement is that the writing intensive courses helped develop the students' research and writing skills. Over 85 percent of respondents either agree or strongly agree that these courses fulfilled the goals.

During the 2014–15 academic year a group of faculty met informally on a bi-weekly basis to discuss cross-disciplinary means to re-invigorate the AUBG curriculum and the General

Education Program in particular. The first outcome of this is the Common First Year Experience seminar series that was launched in 2015–16. This course is for one credit, taken on a Pass/Fail basis. In the Common First-Year Experience, all first-year students have the opportunity to hear guest speakers, respond to common readings or film viewings, and meet with faculty discussion leaders to reflect on fundamental social and personal issues. The goals of the program are to integrate new students immediately into the cross-disciplinary evaluation of the major social, cultural, and economic issues of the day, and also ensure that they are reminded of (and exposed to) the portfolio of academic and co-curricular services offered by the university.

Although the rationale behind our current General Education Program is solid, faculty and students at the university are alert to other possibilities that may make this program more immediately relevant to the twenty-first century.

Undergraduate Degree Programs

We actively evaluate programs and [eliminate or add programs](#) (Encl. 4.19) (majors and minors) depending on student interest, relevance, and current educational practices. For example, after two years, the American Studies minor and major were removed due to low enrollment in courses and programs. This experience led the Curriculum Committee to establish more clearly delineated processes for [considering new program proposals](#) (Encl. 4.20), including more careful assessment of likely student demand and resource implications of any proposal.

Over the current evaluation period, the distribution of students majoring in the various disciplines has been reasonably consistent. Business Administration is the most popular major, followed by Economics and Political Science/International Relations. Enrollments for the Information Systems major have steadily increased, from 39 students in 2011 to 69 students in 2014. Numbers in Computer Science have also increased. However, numbers in some majors show a decrease, e.g. European Studies, History and Civilizations and Mathematics and these are the programs that we are monitoring closely.

Graduate Degree Programs

The Executive MBA program serves a need in the region for advanced professional training in business practices for a global context. The case-study methodology favored by many courses stresses inductive reasoning and practical application. The program is taught by a mix of visiting faculty from other universities in the USA and Western Europe, and some courses by regular AUBG Business Administration program faculty. Both groups are regularly evaluated according to procedures outlined in the AUBG Faculty Handbook. Over the years, the enrollment for EMBA has remained fairly steady between 20 and 25 students per year.

The program has been integrated with the academic administration of the Blagoevgrad campus. Currently, the dean of faculty, the chair of the Department of Business, and the EMBA coordinator oversee the program according to university policies, procedures, and standards. Recently the curriculum has been updated to include courses in entrepreneurship and leadership communication. The program is successful in that nearly all of the students who begin the program graduate even though they are working adults. The graduates also report that the program helped further their careers. Referrals from program alumni are one of the most common means of attracting new candidates for the program.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

AUBG has relatively few transfer students. Any transfer credit for non-AUBG courses must be pre-approved and approval is based upon the examination of course descriptions, syllabi, textbook titles, and sample exams. AUBG has an effective system in place to ensure that students participating in out-going exchange programs select courses at the host institution that will advance their AUBG degree. Students are required to have the prior approval of the relevant faculty advisors in order to have work completed elsewhere count towards a major or general education requirement.

The departmental governance system supported by the Dean of Faculty provides oversight to the academic programs. Requests for exceptions to requirements or academic policies are carefully scrutinized. Faculty have access to the institutional grade profile and can compare their own standards to that of other faculty. Every semester, the dean reviews standards with individual faculty members whose grades are at the tail of the institutional distribution in order to discuss ways of improvement. The

university does not impose a mandatory grade distribution, but encourages consistency in grading standards and policies so that expectations and requirements are broadly comparable across faculty members and across programs.

Academic integrity with regard to plagiarism, collusion, and cheating is addressed seriously. [Standards to uphold integrity](#) (Encl. 4.21) are consistently enforced. Syllabi carry clear statements of expectations for academic integrity. Faculty are supported by the administration when they report cases of integrity violations. Serious violations may be reported either to the Dean of Faculty or to the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council, which can review alleged violations and determine any sanctions to be taken against the students. Students may also appeal to the council if they feel that their grade was assigned in an improper manner. Software (Turnitin) for the detection of plagiarism is available to all faculty, and its use is encouraged for all significant writing projects.

Assessment of Student Learning

AUBG utilizes systematic and broad assessment tools of various kinds. Direct assessment is applied primarily with class- and program- level assessment, supplemented by studying the perceptions of students, alumni and employers about student achievements, teaching and learning process and student support, facilities etc. through surveys designed by the Student Outcomes Assessment Committee (SOAC). In addition to periodic reviews of surveys and student evaluation forms, this committee has reframed the [institutional goals](#) (Encl. 4.10) for AUBG on the basis of the AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes and the NEASC's Accreditation Standards' assessment related requirements; has prepared a [draft assessment](#) (Encl. 4.22) and improvements for academic writing at AUBG; and has revised [program curriculum maps](#) (Encl. 4.5).

Bulgarian program accreditation provides regional perspective. Insight into the achievement of the institutional goals is sought primarily through indirect measurements, such as the [employer survey](#) (Encl. 4.23) or an [especially designed survey](#) (Encl. 4.24) for freshmen and graduating seniors (2008 and 2009) attempting to study mission related qualities and values that don't have quantitative dimensions, such as team work skills, leadership skills, civic responsibility, integrity, intellectual community at AUBG, cross-cultural competency, preparedness for successful careers, etc. In the last few years (since 2011) evidence about the achievements of our students is also provided through the ranking system of Bulgarian universities. The major source of quantitative assessment information to support managerial decisions is collected and published in the [annual report](#) (Encl. 4.25) of the Institutional Research Office.

All of the major programs have refined their guidelines and practices for the Bulgarian State Exams so that the State Exam process can be used as a measure of how well students have achieved the learning outcomes of the major. State exams are cumulative exams given in each major after completion of all course work, just prior to graduation. The exams are graded by at least two different faculty members. The exams are identified only by number so that the faculty grading the exams cannot be affected by any bias towards a particular student. A comparison of the results of the State Exams with the students' GPA-in-major shows a high correlation between the State Exam scores with the grades the student has earned in the major. In addition, some departments incorporate external evaluation systems for students in their programs. For the past two years, the Economics Department has been using the ETS Major Field Test (MFT) as its [State Exam](#) (Encl. 4.26). The use of this test allows the performance of AUBG's Economics graduates to be compared directly to the scores of the universe of economics majors at US colleges and universities.

AUBG also has a unique endowed scholarship (the [Tchaprachikoff Scholarship](#) (Encl. 4.27)) that provides financial support to Bulgarian AUBG graduates who are accepted for study in the top-ranked US graduate schools. Not all AUBG alumni are eligible (since the scholarship is limited to Bulgarian students) but [24 alumni](#) (Encl. 4.28) have been awarded such scholarships between 2009 and 2014. This

is direct evidence that AUBG does prepare students for the most demanding academic programs in the world.

The results for AUBG in the Bulgarian Ministry of Education's university ranking system demonstrate a strong external endorsement of the success of our students. AUBG's graduates had [the lowest unemployment rates and the highest average earnings](#) (Encl. 4.15) of nearly any university in Bulgaria. The most recent [employer survey](#) (2015) (Encl. 4.23) praised AUBG for achieving mission-related goals such as integrity, teamwork, communication skills and critical thinking.

PROJECTION

Overview

AUBG's principal focus will continue to be the provision of undergraduate education in Blagoevgrad, augmented by master's degree programs oriented towards professionals and offered in Sofia. The undergraduate programs will continue to emphasize academic quality, commitment to the principles of liberal education, and civic engagement. The graduate programs respond to market requirements but also conform to our mission to offer education that prepares our students to assume ethical leadership roles in society, business, or their communities.

Foundation Skills in English and Information Literacy

AUBG has just implemented this year a new set of requirements for admission to the undergraduate program. The students entering in fall 2015 will include the first admitted under the new criteria, but this class includes many who had already begun to prepare their application materials and these applicants provided also the test scores we no longer require. Careful evaluation of the English language readiness of new students will be necessary to discover whether the new admissions process will result in any change in the readiness of our admitted students to undertake successfully a college education in English, and to ensure that the university understands correctly the English proficiency of its students and tailors its programs and services correctly to meet their needs.

The library staff and faculty will continue to collaborate to integrate information literacy training into the first-year English composition sequence and to build on those skills throughout the students' academic program.

General Education Program

The General Education Program adopted by AUBG has served the institution and its students well. There is growing interest in the faculty in updating the structure and content of the General Education program to integrate some of the mission-related values into the General Education curriculum to provide thematic purpose to the requirements in addition to exposure to various academic disciplines. There is interest in expanding the GE curriculum program to include inter-disciplinary categories of courses in areas that could include themes such as sustainability or the construction of identity (in which gender and ethnicity could be explored).

Undergraduate Degree Programs

AUBG will continue to expand its offerings of undergraduate majors as the growth in enrollment permits. The programs that are most likely to be offered are those that are complementary to the majors already offered, so that courses in the new major can be combined with elective courses in existing programs to lower the cost and risk of building programs in new disciplinary areas. The university is

seeking now to identify an adjunct faculty member who can offer introductory courses in psychology. If successful, upper-level courses that can also serve as electives in existing programs (such as Organizational Behavior and Consumer Behavior in Business, Political Psychology in Political Science) can be combined to create first a minor and ultimately a major in psychology if student interest justifies it.

Graduate Degree Programs

AUBG's only graduate program to date has been successful in academic terms and served the interests of its students well, but has not attracted enough enrollment and applications to justify expansion. An attempt to introduce a master's program in software engineering was postponed due to insufficient enrollment. AUBG will continue to explore the market for graduate education in Sofia.

Integrity in the Award of Academic Credit

AUBG will continue to meet or exceed the conventional US standards for academic credits. We do not receive enough applications for transfer credits to require articulation agreements with other institutions, and the small number of transfer applicants who come to AUBG are served well by the existing criteria in which transfer credit is awarded for coursework at other accredited institutions in areas comparable to AUBG offerings. Our process for guiding students into appropriate choices when participating in exchange programs in the USA or Europe works well and will be continued.

Assessment of Student Learning

AUBG has created a solid foundation of assessment of student learning at the institutional level and at the program level. Progress remains to be made in the direct assessment of student learning in the General Education Program — particularly as the stated learning outcomes for some of the general education modes of inquiry are subjective.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

AUBG constantly monitors the effectiveness of all its academic programs from recruiting materials and admissions standards through graduate school placement and career advancement of graduates. AUBG is the most expensive university education alternative in Bulgaria, and AUBG must ensure that it offers students an education with academic quality and relevance that justifies this cost. The maintenance of high academic quality and high academic integrity standards are critical to the mission and viability of the university.

Standard Five: Faculty

DESCRIPTION

Number and Qualifications of Faculty

AUBG's faculty classifications are the customary categories of rank (professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, and visiting) and contract status (full-time and part-time/adjunct). Visiting faculty are those in the EMBA program in Sofia. Usually these faculty members fly in from the USA or Europe specifically to teach the one course. The university also hosts Fulbright Fellows from time to time. Some faculty members are hired as "Balkan Scholars" for one term or one year to supplement the full-time faculty with a part-time load. In 2014, the Board approved a new status of Faculty Emeritus, for retired faculty.

Over 80 percent of full-time [faculty hold terminal degrees](#) (Enclosure 5.1), and over 50 percent of part-time faculty hold terminal degrees. Of the part-time faculty some also hold appointments at other institutions, others are practitioners with master's degrees and professional experience directly relevant to their teaching duties.

The target student to faculty ratio is 16:1 to 18:1. The actual ratio has been within or close to the target range for the last 5 years. The distribution of faculty according to contract status and rank is given in the table below:

<u>Number of Faculty Academic Year 2014-15</u>					
Rank:	Prof.	Assoc.	Asst.	Inst.	Visiting Fulbright
Full-time	10	20	16	4	1
Part-time	3	4	9	6	8

At the undergraduate level, AUBG employs part-time faculty to provide specific expertise not filled by full-time faculty and to provide some flexibility in the number of sections needed to meet student demand. In the past five years, the number of part-time faculty members has remained between 30 percent and 36 percent of total faculty members and the proportion of sections taught by adjunct faculty has been between 20 and 22 percent.

For the EMBA program in Sofia, the faculty consists of a mix of visiting faculty members and regular AUBG faculty. Each visiting faculty member teaches one or two courses for each cohort in the program. Twenty-five percent of the courses in the EMBA program were taught by regular full-time AUBG faculty for the cohort enrolled from January 2014 to May 2015.

Faculty Characteristics

One of AUBG's strengths is in its diversity and its faculty reflects the same type of diversity in terms of background, experience and nationality. The faculty members originate from, and have degrees from Europe, the US, Oceania, South America, and Asia. While the faculty members have diverse backgrounds, what the faculty members do have in common is their commitment to high quality American-style liberal arts education and to the institution's mission and values.

Bulgarian faculty played a critical role in the founding of the university and their links with colleagues in Bulgarian institutions continue to serve AUBG's mission to extend the pedagogy of a small liberal arts campus beyond its own faculty. They are also instrumental in helping AUBG continue to meet the

standards for accreditation through the Bulgarian National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency. AUBG's more recently-hired Bulgarian faculty typically have earned their advanced degrees in the USA or in the European Union. Currently 3 full-time faculty members are AUBG alumni. The university's American character is reflected in the fact that 12 of the full-time faculty members are US citizens, while 10 of the others earned advanced degrees in the USA. The AUBG [Institutional Research Annual Report](#) (Encl. 5.2) contains a variety of information on faculty characteristics.

Faculty Hiring

[The process for recruiting and selecting new full-time faculty members](#) (Encl. 5.3) is documented in the [Faculty Handbook](#) (Encl. 5.4) and is consistent with standards for equal employment opportunity in the US, in the European Union, and in Bulgaria. Early in the academic year, the chairs of the departments meet with the dean of faculty and the provost and discuss staffing projections for the following academic year, allowing for known departures among present faculty and based on enrollment projections. The provost, in consultation with the president, approves the list of new and replacement positions. The Office of the Dean of Faculty coordinates the searches.

Each search committee is composed of faculty members in the discipline, plus one student representative and a faculty member from outside the discipline. All searches are advertised internationally with no *a priori* preference for either expatriate or Bulgarian candidates.

The faculty search committee reviews credentials, conducts interviews, checks references, and makes a recommendation to the dean of faculty to invite the candidates to campus for interviews and a teaching or research presentation. The dean of faculty confers with the provost, communicates with the potential candidate about employment conditions (salary, benefits, work load, etc.), and then issues an invitation for the top candidate(s) to visit the campus. The campus visits involve meetings with faculty, administrators, and students, and the presentation of a guest lecture.

Part-time faculty are recruited in a similar manner as full-time faculty, but with less formal procedures. Frequently candidates are identified through the professional contacts of faculty members. The process of hiring part-time faculty is outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

Salaries and Benefits

AUBG pays full-time faculty using a scale with ranges by rank and area of specialization, while adjunct faculty members are paid on a per credit basis. Salaries are paid in US dollars or Bulgarian leva, and statutory benefits are provided for faculty members dependent upon the legal jurisdiction of the individual faculty member.

In addition to regular benefits, Bulgarian faculty members receive a supplemental pension insurance. Expatriate benefits at AUBG include health, disability and life insurance, AUBG tuition benefits for dependents, and an allowance for travel and relocation. Expatriate faculty members also receive a supplement (10 percent of pay) in lieu of retirement contributions.

Salaries are reviewed annually, with increments for length of service, and cost-of-living adjustments are made when appropriate and as resources permit.

Faculty Contracts

AUBG does not have a system of tenure. Faculty contracts are either "regular" and subject to renewal upon satisfactory performance, or "fixed-term" with no guarantee or expectation of renewal. The full-time faculty in 2014–15 consisted of 47 faculty on regular contracts and 3 faculty on fixed-term contracts. Regular contracts are for three-years, and renewed for a second three-period following a

successful evaluation in the second year. In the fifth year (the second year of the second contract), another evaluation occurs. If the evaluation result is positive, the faculty member is offered a five-year contract. Thereafter, the faculty member is evaluated regularly for renewal of five year contracts.

In the event of a late faculty opening, a one-year fixed-term contract may be offered, with the expectation that the person could apply for a three-year contract during the following academic year.

The teaching load for faculty was seven courses per year until the AY 2013-2014 when it was reduced to six courses. (Prior to 2003, the load had been six courses but it was raised to address financial challenges.) As noted in appointment letters, all faculty members are expected to be available on campus to their students and colleagues across four days of the week, with the fifth day reserved for their scholarship and professional activities.

Teaching and Advising

Teaching is carried out according to the university's mission to provide an American-style liberal arts experience. Faculty members are encouraged to adopt methods of instruction appropriate to the liberal arts philosophy, the learning objectives of the course, and the learning needs of the students. Faculty Orientation Week sessions typically include several sessions led and organized by faculty members on pedagogical issues such as academic integrity, simulations, group projects, and classroom technology.

Faculty development at AUBG is faculty-sponsored and consists of two parts: (1) seminars and workshops; and, (2) funds for individual faculty teaching development. The Academic Affairs Committee of the Faculty Assembly provides a number of seminars and workshops for faculty on teaching effectiveness. The highlight each year is a workshop involving students presenting their experiences in learning at AUBG and sharing their perspectives on issues surrounding enhancing education within the university. The notes from these presentations and discussions are shared with all faculty.

Faculty members are eligible to apply to the Dean's Council for funding of up to \$800 from a Fund for Teaching Development. The process consists of submitting a proposed activity and budgets, which is then reviewed by the Dean's Council (chairs of all departments, the chair of the Faculty Assembly, and the dean of faculty) for a recommendation. The total amount available depends upon the annual budget. This fund has been used by a number of faculty to complete workshops or courses related to educational effectiveness.

Departments have established mentoring programs where new faculty members work with one or two mentors throughout their first year to assist in acculturation at AUBG and in the teaching development of the faculty members. Faculty members also receive peer reviews of their teaching as part of the evaluation process, and student course evaluations also provide faculty with ideas on effective teaching for each class every term. Departments also meet to review program-specific goals and outcomes. Part-time faculty are included in department meetings and share in the goal-setting, assessment, and evaluation.

Academic advising is a joint responsibility of the faculty and the Student Advising Center. All incoming students are assigned a faculty advisor, and are required to meet with their advisor during orientation week prior to finalizing their class registration. Once the student declares a major, the department assigns an advisor. The faculty advisors are provided training by the center prior to the actual registration period and receive a faculty [Advising Handbook](#) (Encl. 5.5). Assisted by the coordinator of the Advising Center, faculty members meet with students as requested and provide advice to them on programs of study and careers.

As a small institution, AUBG has fewer courses that are taught by multiple faculty members than other institutions. In cases in which there are multiple sections and multiple instructors, common course

syllabi, readings, and learning outcomes are explicitly adopted by the departments offering such courses, to ensure consistency in learning outcomes.

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

AUBG provides a wide range of support for faculty scholarship and professional development. The university provides direct support to faculty research, scholarship, creative activity and teaching through four main means: the individual Faculty Instruction and Research Enhancement (FIRE) account, the International Conference Travel Fund, the Faculty Research Fund, and the Faculty Teaching Development Fund. The FIRE account is an annual allowance of \$1400 (AY 2015–16) allocated to each full-time faculty member. (Faculty members on fixed-term contracts receive an allowance of 50 percent of the regular amount.) The allowance can be used for expenditures related to scholarship or instruction, as well as other related expenses such as long-distance telephone, technology, desk copies of textbooks, and travel to meetings. The other funds (approximately \$20,000 per year) are competitive, and are distributed based upon proposals submitted to the dean of faculty and reviewed by the Dean's Council. The International Conference Travel Fund provides grants of up to \$800 to faculty members presenting competitively accepted research papers at conferences. The Faculty Research Fund supports expenses associated with faculty research projects. The Faculty Development Fund offers support for individual faculty members in pedagogy development. In the fall 2015, the Teaching Enhancement Fund was adopted by the Dean's Council to encourage faculty to participate in pedagogy-related conferences or modules.

All forms of faculty support funds are reviewed annually as part of the regular budget cycle.

Faculty members across the disciplines supervise students in senior theses or senior projects in which students undertake their own scholarly research. Several of these student projects result in published articles in peer-reviewed journals, sometimes with the supervising faculty member as a co-author. Faculty engage students in research in the field through regular courses, especially courses designated as "writing intensive". One of the General Education requirements is that each student completes a course in "historical research" in which the student must undertake a piece of original research as a course requirement. The Student Faculty Research Conference, which takes place near the end of each spring semester, provides another opportunity for showcasing student projects or collaborative research work between students and faculty.

Each faculty office is supplied with a personal computer connected to the university's server and requests for program- or major-specific software are reviewed each year. Faculty members serve on the Information Resources Committee that collects and prioritizes all requests for capital purchases in the area of technology, including software, dedicated hardware, and databases.

The AUBG library houses an up-to-date collection of print and electronic resources to support faculty research as well as student needs. Library funds are allocated to make acquisitions in collaboration with the faculty for departmental needs. (See Standard 7: Library and Other Information Resources)

The university also provides the opportunity for full-time faculty members on regular contracts to apply for sabbatical leave after six years of service with AUBG. During this evaluation period 31 faculty members took approved sabbatical leave, that is, three per year. Faculty members may also request unpaid leave for personal or professional reasons.

Faculty Evaluation

Evaluation of faculty is conducted on a regular basis according to procedures adopted by the Faculty Assembly. Every full-time faculty member is evaluated in the penultimate year of his or her contract by the Faculty Evaluation Team (FET). The team is composed of faculty members chosen on the basis of both seniority and representation of the various disciplines. The process, timetable, and evaluation

criteria are specified in the [Faculty Handbook](#) (Encl. 5.4) for both contract renewal and promotion. The faculty member is evaluated on each of the three areas of performance – teaching, scholarship, and service. The FET provides recommendations for improvement as well as praise for accomplishments in its evaluation letters. The dossiers and evaluation letters from the FET are sent to the provost for review and recommendation to the president. Faculty members have a right of appeal at all stages. This process was extensively revised in the spring of 2015 to include departmental feedback and to add two more rankings to the evaluation scale.

Part-time faculty members are evaluated primarily on the effectiveness of their teaching after the third semester of teaching at AUBG, as a condition of reappointment. Visiting faculty members (EMBA program faculty) are evaluated after each semester. All procedures and criteria are outlined in the Faculty Handbook.

Integrity

The university supports the principle of academic freedom in teaching, research, scholarship, and creative activities. Ethical and professional expectations of faculty are noted in the Faculty Handbook. The procedures for faculty appeals and grievances are outlined in the Faculty Handbook. (See standard 11: Integrity for a full discussion.)

APPRAISAL

Number and Qualifications of Faculty

AUBG seeks to maintain appropriate numbers of faculty members to staff all of its academic programs, provide students with a range of elective courses in and out of their major, maintain approximate equity of faculty workload across disciplines, and to deliver quality instruction to its students under strict financial constraints.

The AUBG Board of Trustees has endorsed a target student to faculty ratio of 16:1 to 18:1. AUBG seeks to manage faculty teaching loads while maintaining moderate class section sizes by carefully monitoring student demand and matching course offerings to actual demand. If successful, the desired student-to-faculty ratio is achieved with very few large classes (over 40 students) and also few very small classes (under 10 students). The administration and the board monitor not only the student-to-faculty ratio, but also how the ratio is achieved in terms of distribution of class sizes. An example of this reporting is in the “key statistics” that are maintained each year and reported below for the spring 2015 semester.

The actual ratio has been within the target range for the last 5 years. The distribution of actual class section sizes is given in the following table:

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Instruction (Undergraduate)					
Student / Faculty (FTE) Ratio	16.9	16.8	17.5	17.1	16.3
percent Credits Generated by Students	24 percent	23 percent	23 percent	22 percent	20 percent
percent Credits Taught by Part - Time	21 percent	21 percent	22 percent	18 percent	16 percent
Classes with 1 Student Only	17 percent	15 percent	16 percent	28 percent	30 percent
Classes with 2-9 Students	10 percent	9 percent	9 percent	5 percent	6 percent
Classes with 10-19 Students	21 percent	21 percent	23 percent	16 percent	13 percent
Classes with 20-29 Students	35 percent	38 percent	35 percent	31 percent	32 percent
Classes with 30-39 Students	17 percent	16 percent	16 percent	20 percent	18 percent
Classes with 40-49 Students	0 percent	1 percent	2 percent	1 percent	0 percent
Classes with 50+ Students	0 percent	0 percent	0 percent	0 percent	0 percent
Total Number of Classes (Sections)	464	455	452	400	380
Average Credit Load per Student	15.9	15.8	15.8	15.7	15.6
Average GPA	3.21	3.17	3.16	3.19	3.18

In terms of qualifications, AUBG's faculty is extremely well-qualified, particularly for a teaching-oriented institution. Over 80 percent of full-time faculty hold terminal degrees, and some of the remainder hold masters degrees that are considered equivalent to terminal degrees in their field — such as law or fine arts. Part-time faculty frequently hold appointments at other universities, or are experienced practitioners in fields directly relevant to their teaching — such as journalism.

AUBG does not rely unduly on part-time faculty to deliver its undergraduate program. For the graduate program, the majority of courses are delivered by visiting faculty, but the program coordinator is always a full-time AUBG faculty member. There is substantial continuity among the visiting faculty — most return each year to teach the new cohort. In the last two years, more of the EMBA courses have been taught by regular AUBG faculty. This serves to integrate the EMBA program more closely with the undergraduate program and provides development opportunities for AUBG faculty.

Faculty Characteristics

AUBG is able to attract an international student body because it offers an educational experience that meets international standards. Many potential students view [the presence of expatriate faculty](#) (Encl. 5.6) as an essential characteristic and guarantee of international quality. At the same time, AUBG's commitment to non-discrimination makes it difficult to justify any requirement that any particular faculty search must result in an expatriate hire (or conversely in a Bulgarian hire). By advertising internationally and selecting the best-fitting candidate, we have avoided having to make any direct nationality preference in hiring decisions.

Turnover among faculty is frequently cited as a concern among students. [Faculty turnover statistics](#) (Encl. 5.7) are monitored in the Institutional Research Annual Report. The pattern of turnover is stable over time. Turnover is concentrated among recently-hired faculty (within previous 3 years) and among expatriate faculty. Below the surface-level “churning” of faculty within those groups, there is a stable foundation of long-serving faculty members.

Faculty Hiring

The processes undertaken to conduct faculty hiring are well-established and good practices are followed. Committees undertaking faculty searches nevertheless frequently find that there are few well-qualified candidates in their search pools. AUBG tends to be an attractive potential employer either to faculty just

beginning their academic careers (but without family obligations) or to those nearing retirement. Turnover is expected among those groups.

Salary and Benefits

Disparity of pay scales between expatriate and locally-hired faculty is a continuous source of discontent among faculty. Now that some expatriate faculty are paid salaries denominated in Bulgarian leva while US faculty are paid in US dollars, variations in the dollar-leva exchange rate also changes the value of one person's salary relative to another's — and this creates a source of friction when exchange rates are volatile.

Faculty Contracts

In 2013–14 the full-time teaching load was reduced from 7 course sections per academic year to 6. This step was a response to a long-standing concern from the faculty and done in consultation with faculty and the Board of Trustees. The financial impact on the university (and by extension the students) was managed by adjusting the system of standard section sizes to permit small increases in section caps and by limiting the number of very small course sections. The goal was to minimize the impact on the student-to-faculty ratio and thereby minimize the impact on cost to students. By and large, this was successful. The student-to-faculty ratio declined slightly after the change.

In this evaluation period there has been [no significant increase](#) (Encl. 5.8) in the reliance on faculty on short-term contracts or on adjunct faculty. Generally, the contract and evaluation system are regarded as appropriate and fair. Although some faculty members favor a move to a conventional tenure system, there is little interest in such a change among members of the Board of Trustees.

Teaching and Advising

The AUBG mission is principally focused on teaching, and quality of teaching is the most critical criterion used in faculty hiring and evaluation decisions. All full-time faculty candidates are invited to campus and are required to give a guest lecture or teaching demonstration in front of a class audience composed of actual students and potential faculty colleagues. Some candidates are disqualified based on the teaching demonstration.

Teaching is evaluated by students for each class section, with very high (over 80 percent) participation rates. Overall student satisfaction rates are high, with the mean score for student overall satisfaction with both the professor and the course being over 4 (with 5 being the highest score.) The dean of faculty works with faculty with lower-than-average results to identify approaches to improving the student satisfaction level. The official evaluation criteria include other considerations of effectiveness beyond student satisfaction. The Faculty Evaluation Team also reviews course design, evaluation instruments, samples of student work, and so forth. Its evaluation letters to individual faculty often make suggestions for improvement, for instance of the pedagogical practices or grading standards or else.

Faculty Orientation Week sessions devoted to pedagogical issues such as academic integrity, simulations, group projects, and classroom technology are generally well-received. The sessions also facilitate the training of faculty members on the use of teaching tools such as the Turning Point response devices or anti-plagiarism software packages, as well as basic skills such as how to embed videos into the PowerPoint presentations.

Faculty advise students from the moment they first arrive at AUBG and throughout their four years of undergraduate learning. This student advising is divided into two basic levels. New first-year students are assigned a faculty advisor who reviews the student's course selection. The student must make an individual appointment with the faculty advisor prior to finalizing his/her course registration. First-year advisors are trained by the advising coordinator, and are alerted to patterns of student choices that are

indicative of potential trouble for new students — such as over-concentration on their future major to the detriment of GE courses. Advisors act to ensure that new students in their first semester enroll in a distribution of courses that draw upon different skills and learning styles.

Advising of returning students is less formal as students can register without a face-to-face meeting with their faculty advisor. However, students on academic probation must obtain advisors' signatures for certain registration transactions. Students are assigned an advisor within their major after they have declared a major. The student information system also contains a "degree audit" function which allows each student to check his or her own progress towards meeting all requirements for the General Education program, major or minors, total credits for graduation, plus GPA requirements for graduation (2.0) and major (2.5).

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

After AUBG achieved financial sustainability with balanced operating budgets, the amounts and types of funding to support faculty research and creative activity became subject to regular budget review and normal incremental increases. The most flexible form of support is the individual's Faculty Instruction and Research Enhancement (FIRE) account. The Dean of Faculty supervises expenditures out of these accounts, but the principle is that any expenditure that can be connected to a faculty member's teaching or scholarship activities is approved. This gives the faculty member the flexibility to spend the research support funds on travel, conference fees, software, books, or any other item related to teaching or scholarship. The institution does not "micro-manage" the use of these funds — the individual faculty member is responsible for demonstrating that outcomes or results appropriate to the support are generated.

The other funds (Research Fund, International Conference Travel Fund, Teaching Development Fund) exist to provide additional support for a faculty member with a project requiring support that would otherwise consume most or all of his/her personal allowance. The grant requests are collected by the Dean of Faculty and reviewed with department chairs. The individual requests are seldom reviewed in great detail, but the open process serves to assure all that the support funds are managed in a way consistent with the university's goals and without favoritism.

Each full-time faculty member has an office on campus equipped with a desktop computer connected to the university's infrastructure. All of the library's electronic resources are available to the faculty member in his/her office and most are available through web interfaces from off-campus. The library staff do an excellent job of promoting their services and training to both faculty and students.

The university has been supportive of faculty who have research plans requiring extended time through provision of sabbatical leave.

Faculty Evaluation

Each evaluation of a faculty member serves the purpose of both development and eligibility for contract renewal. The procedures and safeguards built into the evaluation process for full-time faculty ensure that each faculty member receives an evaluation that is conducted principally by their peers and is as free as possible from subjectivity and bias. This introduces a degree of formality into the process. The creation of less formal mentoring programs within departments as well as the conversations undertaken by the Dean of Faculty with individual faculty members is meant to provide the purely developmental feedback that can be especially helpful to a new faculty member.

Service as a member of the Faculty Evaluation Team (FET) is a serious responsibility of the senior faculty members, and the role is not undertaken lightly. Some faculty members find it uncomfortable to sit in judgment of their peers, and some are reluctant to serve on the FET for this reason. The community of faculty members is very small, and the possibility exists that friction resulting from the professional

evaluation would spill over into personal relationships. For this reason, confidentiality of FET discussions is strictly maintained, and the FET strives to compose evaluations that represent the consensus opinion of the entire team, rather than the individual viewpoints of specific team members. The provost also reviews each file and makes a separate evaluation. There is also feedback between the provost and the FET following the conclusion of the process so that the incidence of different ratings is kept to a minimum.

In 2014–15, the provost asked the Faculty Evaluation Committee (the body charged with articulating and amending the procedures for evaluation of faculty) to consider changes to the procedures to address two shortcomings. First, the requirement that an evaluatee had to achieve a rating of “excellent” in teaching to qualify for a second contract renewal had the perverse effect of diluting the standard for “excellent”. Several times over the years a faculty member with a good-but-not-great teaching record had been rated “excellent” in teaching in order to continue teaching at the university, especially if this colleague was valuable for his/her scholarship or service to the institution. In order to achieve consistency in ratings, anyone else meeting that same teaching standard would also be rated “excellent”. A more flexible set of criteria for contract renewal was needed to address this problem. The second problem is that there seemed to be no institutional reward for any faculty member whose service to the institution was better than “professionally competent” — which is the second-highest rating (and lowest satisfactory rating). Therefore, any faculty member who devoted enough time and effort to achieve an “excellent” rating in service felt that his/her contribution was inadequately valued.

The result was a new set of [evaluation criteria](#) (Encl. 5.9) that are in effect for the 2015-16 evaluation cycle. It is now possible for a person whose teaching does not get the highest rating to offset this by stronger contributions in the areas of scholarship or service. Because service is now a potentially decisive factor, the evaluation dossier must have better evidence of a person’s service contributions, so the dossier must now contain an evaluation of a person’s service contributions from his/her department colleagues.

The evaluation of part-time faculty members is based solely on teaching effectiveness. As the institution does not rely on part-time to offer more than 25 percent of course sections at the undergraduate level, part-time faculty who cannot sufficiently demonstrate that they are effective teachers are usually not re-appointed.

Integrity

The university’s observance of the standards of academic freedom and professional integrity with regards to faculty hiring and evaluation meet the highest standards.

The existence of disparities in pay among faculty is seen by some as damaging to the institution’s integrity. The university has undertaken steps to reduce the disparities, although some differences are unavoidable as they are based on the different legal or tax status of different individuals. Undoubtedly, the long-term trend is for the differences based on nationality to be reduced and ultimately eliminated.

PROJECTION

Number and Qualifications of Faculty

AUBG is a tuition-dependent institution, and barring some transformative event in Development, will remain so for the foreseeable future. The AUBG Board of Trustees has provided prudent guidelines for balancing the diversity of academic offerings that a larger faculty would be able to provide with the financial necessity of keeping the cost of an AUBG education within the means of our students. Within these guidelines, the number of faculty will be determined in the aggregate by the number of students we

serve. If AUBG is successful in raising its enrollment to 1200 full-time students, this would imply that we would expand the size of the faculty by about 20 percent from its current levels.

We expect that nearly all full-time hires will hold terminal degrees. We hire with the hope that a person will become a successful permanent member of the faculty, so the ability to fulfill scholarship expectations for re-appointment is a strong consideration at the time of the initial appointment.

We anticipate that part-time and visiting faculty will continue to provide flexibility and diversity of offerings to the same degree as currently.

Faculty Characteristics

AUBG will continue to have a faculty that is predominantly full-time, with both expatriates and Bulgarian faculty well-represented. Although the proportion of faculty between these two groups has remained roughly constant over time, there has been among the expatriate faculty a gradual increase in the proportion of non-US expatriates and an offsetting decrease in the number of US citizens. This decline has triggered a conversation about how important the presence of US faculty is to the AUBG identity as an “American” institution, and whether there is a minimum proportion of American faculty we require, or whether our American identity can be maintained if we have American curriculum, American teaching methods, or American-trained faculty.

Faculty Hiring

AUBG will continue to employ best practices in faculty hiring and search internationally for all full-time positions. Greater efforts to ensure we have sufficient visibility for US faculty may be necessary in light of the concerns about the number of American faculty.

Salary and Benefits

AUBG faculty salaries are compared to those of US institutions using the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA) data. While AUBG “headline” salaries are below those of US-based colleges on a dollar-for-dollar basis, such comparisons do not attempt to factor the difference in cost-of-living between the USA and Bulgaria. According to 2014 data in www.tradingeconomics.com, GDP per capita in Bulgaria in 2014 was \$4916, but \$16,048 on a purchasing power parity basis. This implies that the cost of living in Bulgaria is about 31 percent of the US average. Nevertheless, AUBG will continue to recruit faculty from a thin pool of applicants, as language, school, and spouse employment barriers are significant for many possible faculty members.

Faculty Contracts

The system of 3-year and 5-year faculty contracts works reasonably well and is consistent with the circumstances and resources of the institution. No significant change is foreseen.

Teaching and Advising

AUBG will continue to be an institution that stresses quality of teaching. The Faculty Assembly has voted to establish a teaching award, and the process that accompanies the establishment of this award can be used to help spread good practice in teaching across the institution. AUBG is also a European institution, and as such participates in the [EU Erasmus programs](#) (Encl. 5.10).

These involve exchanges not only of students, but also faculty and staff. AUBG faculty have already begun to participate in Erasmus exchange programs and visited other universities in Europe. This program also helps AUBG and its faculty overcome the isolation of being the only completely English-language institution in the area.

Student advising will continue to feature a combination of active involvement by faculty and staff and passive information systems that inform students of unfulfilled requirements and pre-requisites through the online registration system and the Advising Center web site. The Academic Standing Committee — consisting of faculty members plus Registrar’s office staff plus the advising coordinator — review the academic records of struggling students each semester and seek to identify patterns among such students that can be used to alert advisors to students at risk.

Scholarship, Research, and Creative Activity

AUBG’s current structure of support for faculty scholarship, research, and creative activity is consistent with its mission to integrate teaching and research. We will continue to explore opportunities for collaboration and research support within the European framework, and update the amounts and policies regarding support funds.

Faculty Evaluation

The faculty evaluation process has evolved over time according to the institution’s experience, and we have achieved a process that has the trust and support of all stakeholders. The evaluation process will continue to observe the underlying principle that the evaluatee assembles the dossier on which the evaluation is made. We have solid information on which to assess the quality of the candidate’s teaching performance, and performance in scholarship. External benchmarks in the form of student evaluation of teaching and peer-reviewed publication support the evaluation in those two areas. The weakest area had been the evaluation of service to the institution – which relied entirely on the self-reported (and self-assessed) contributions to service. We have just instituted a requirement that evaluatees include a letter from their department which articulates the contributions made inside the department according to a specific list of service roles a faculty member may play within the department. The efficacy of this new requirement will be evaluated over time as it comes into use.

Integrity

The university will continue to observe the standards of academic freedom and professional integrity in faculty hiring and evaluation.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The role of the faculty in teaching and scholarship is central to the AUBG mission, and AUBG has structures in place to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and scholarship on a continuous basis.

The institutional research annual report contains a section on faculty which tracks faculty numbers, qualifications, ranks, status, and retention. Each semester the institutional research office produces a “key statistics” table on class sizes, student-to-faculty ratios, and other critical operating results. This table is shared with the board as part of the regular reporting of the administration on the institution’s operating results. Faculty scholarship support amounts and outcomes are also reported to the board by the dean of faculty.

Salaries, benefits, and amounts dedicated by the institution to the various faculty development and support funds are reviewed annually by the Dean of Faculty and Provost, and reviewed by the university’s Budget Committee and ultimately (along with the rest of the institution’s budget) approved by the board.

[Student evaluation of teaching](#) (Encl. 5.11) is conducted online during each semester, with results reported to individual faculty members following the end of the semester. The instrument itself is evaluated and reviewed by the appropriate faculty governance bodies. Two new questions were included

in the questionnaire in 2013. The results are aggregated by course section, by instructor, by department, and for the whole institution. Other specialized reports are created for specific groups of courses (all ENG 101 and ENG 102, e.g.). The Dean of Faculty and Provost review teaching evaluation data on a semester by semester basis.

The accreditation office collects reports on faculty scholarship, these are included with reports for Bulgarian accreditation reports. The faculty representative to the Board of Trustees includes in his/her May report the accomplishments of the faculty in terms of scholarship.

Faculty evaluation procedures are reviewed by a standing committee of the Faculty Assembly (the Faculty Evaluation Committee). There is a practice for the faculty members completing service on the Faculty Evaluation Team (carrying out the evaluation) to move onto the Faculty Evaluation Committee to bring their experience and knowledge of the process into the group charged with improving the process. The FET also at times debriefs the provost with suggestions for process improvements when necessary.

The institution monitors and upholds its commitment to integrity through several mechanisms, including the Academic Appeals and Integrity Council, the written reports of the administrators to the Faculty Assembly, the grievance processes, the Faculty Handbook, and through written reports to the Board of Trustees.

Standard Six: Students

DESCRIPTION

Admissions

AUBG's mission statement emphasizes the themes of liberal education, ethical leadership, and high academic quality. Consistent with these objectives, AUBG actively recruits students from Bulgaria and nine regional countries, and accepts applications from students from around the world. As a result, AUBG has a diverse student body from more than 25 countries, with students from outside Bulgaria representing about one-half of the student body.

The active recruitment activities consist of school visits, educational fairs, online advertising campaigns, on-campus events, open-house evenings in various cities, among others. AUBG also engages in indirect recruiting campaigns through web pages, presence on various search engines and platforms, and database marketing through TOEFL and SAT databases.

The American liberal arts model of undergraduate education is frequently unfamiliar to prospective students and their parents, so AUBG Admissions Office staff and recruiters are careful to explain the liberal arts type of education and high level of performance expected of all students. All promotional brochures and publications are evaluated by the appropriate management levels to ensure accuracy and fair representation.

AUBG's undergraduate enrollment has been between 900 and 1100 students for the last 10 years. AUBG aims to increase the size of incoming classes to 300 new first-year students each fall toward an ultimate goal of 1200 enrolled students. Achieving this will require AUBG to attract a significantly larger number of qualified applicants than has been achieved recently. In order to make this increase possible, the admissions requirements were restructured in 2014–15, so that the SAT test is no longer a requirement for consideration. Applicants will be evaluated according to their high school GPA and TOEFL scores, with the goal of maintaining the same level of selectivity as was previously in place with a minimum SAT score.

The [admissions policies](#) (Enclosure 6.1) are published in the AUBG application materials, Undergraduate Catalog, Student Handbook, and university website. Beginning with the students entering the university in fall 2015, applicants are evaluated based on the strength of their TOEFL scores and high school grades. The minimum admissible applicant would have an iBT score of 80 and a high school GPA of 3.00 on a 4.0-point scale.

During this recruiting cycle, a new admissions interview requirement was implemented with each applicant interviewed by phone or Skype with two interviewers who score the applicant's response according to a standardized rubric. The interview scores will be saved and evaluated for their predictive power over student performance. Based on this evaluation, the scores may be included in the admissions decision weights for the next cycle. The Admissions Committee, consisting of three faculty, two staff members and the Director of Admissions, meets regularly to provide oversight for decisions and ensure that admissions decisions are consistent with university policy and procedure. The committee pays special attention to individuals from under-represented populations.

AUBG offers remedial support for students whose preparation in the most critical subjects is less than that of most other entering students. All entering first-year students are given placement tests in English and basic mathematics during orientation week. Students with low scores on the placement tests are enrolled in ENG 100 and/or MAT 100, the courses designed to help students reach the proficiency in

English and mathematics needed to be successful in college-level courses. For students who need to develop their English-language skills further in order to begin college level work, AUBG offers several levels of English language instruction and test preparation through its [English Language Institute](#) (Encl. 6.2).

Advising and Academic Support Programs

AUBG uses both faculty advisors and an Advising Center to support students. Each first year student is assigned to a specially trained faculty advisor, who continues to advise students on course selection and academic plans until the student declares a major course of study. At that time, a new faculty advisor within the major field is assigned. The Advising Center is available to all students for assistance in course selection, time management training and other study skills, and tutoring. The Advising Center also operates a peer tutoring program, as well, for writing, mathematics, economics, and accounting. Many faculty members individually organize tutoring sessions, review sessions, or help sessions for students in their classes. The Counseling Center is available for individual students who need support with adjustment or personal problems that may interfere with their academic success.

AUBG also helps students take advantage of the co-curricular opportunities available to them. The Career Center provides advice and information on internships, summer employment, graduate school admissions and test preparation as well as employment after graduation. The Career Center also organizes the annual Job and Internship Fair in which potential employers come to campus to interview students for jobs or internships. The Dean of Students provides information on international conferences, study abroad and exchange opportunities, and advises all visiting students to make sure their semester at AUBG is productive. Faculty members give guidance on special opportunities such as business case competitions and political simulations.

Retention and Graduation

The [retention and graduation rates](#) (Encl. 6.3) across all populations confirm the success of admissions policies. The six-year graduation rate has been over 80 percent of all full-time students for the past eight years. (The six-year rate is more indicative of retention success than the four-year rate, since many students take one or more leaves of absence in order to work or complete internships.) (See table 2.06 on retention)

Disabled students are also accommodated. The university's facilities are handicapped-accessible and the university has enrolled several such students over the past five years.

The policies on academic standing are clearly stated in the Undergraduate Catalog and are administered through the Office of the Dean of Faculty and the Registrars' Office. The Academic Standing Committee, which includes faculty, meets each semester to make decisions about academic warning, probation, and suspension. Students placed on probation are required to take a course in study skills and meet regularly with the Coordinator of the Advising Center. A student with a GPA below 2.0 for the semester, yet with a 2.0 cumulative GPA, receives an academic warning. The data on earlier student experiences indicates that most students with acceptable overall records but one weak semester recover with or without intrusive intervention by the university.

Actual attrition due to academic reasons is low. AUBG's experience with student performance shows that student GPAs at the end of the first year correlate with the student's incoming level of preparation. Most students are able to overcome any deficiencies at entrance over the course of their studies. Some of attrition for academic reasons occurs among students with high ability whose performance suffers for personal or motivational reasons. Equally often, students initially considered to be "at risk" perform well through hard work.

Student Services

AUBG provides an array of services to its student body similar to that of any US-based residential college. The mission of Student Services is to assist students outside the classroom to achieve their highest potential, to support their transition from admission to graduation, and to help them with entry into the job market or graduate programs. Complete information about all AUBG Student Services is readily available to students and prospective students through the web site and the on-line [Student Handbook](#) (Encl. 6.4) found at www.aubg.edu. Newly-enrolled students receive a week-long orientation that helps them to understand and fit into the new environment of a liberal arts university. The complete orientation schedule for first year, transfer, and visiting students is also published each semester on the AUBG website.

The Department of Residence Life and Housing oversees the residence halls through live-in hall directors and resident assistants. These directors and RAs provide regular wellness, community building, and enrichment programs. Located in the residence halls, the Advising Center helps students make informed choices about courses and major programs and works closely with the Career Center and Counseling Center to assist students with career and life plans. Diversity training is designed to reduce potential misunderstanding among members of the increasingly multicultural community. AUBG has a campus chapter of the National Coalition Building Institute, which provides training in diversity for the campus community, as well as the local community through student-led projects. A chapter of Phi Beta Delta encourages international study and scholarship among faculty, staff and students and works closely with the Diversity Team to promote international activities.

Student Handbook, Student Orientation

Through policies, programming, and services, the university makes clear its commitment to a safe and supportive environment. Procedures are in place and well publicized for academic grievance procedures, sexual harassment complaints, and student conduct issues. AUBG operates a Health Center staffed by a qualified general practitioner, a registered nurse, and a health educator. All students have regular access to health care and health education programs. The Security Office works to address safety issues through educational programs, publications, and presentations. Safety statistics are published regularly and a safety committee of the Student Government collaborates with the Security Office to respond to student concerns. Recent changes include improvements to outdoor lighting, security cameras around residence halls, and swipe card entrances in the residence halls and the main building.

Co-curricular programs are an important aspect of student life and are student-driven. Athletics are very popular and range from soccer and volleyball to Latin dance and martial arts. Intramural programs are conducted in a fair and well-organized manner under the supervision of coaches and officials employed by the university. The Community Service Club organizes the efforts of students interested in serving the needs of the community. Many clubs have both recreational and academic elements to them, for example, Chess, Gaming, the Model UN, and the Golf and Business Club. Student media produces weekly on-line newspapers, a news magazine, a literary magazine, and radio programs. The Student Government allocates funding for clubs and activities according to carefully designed procedures.

Financial Aid

The university provides [financial support](#) (Encl. 6.5) to students according to both their academic merit and their financial needs. Support funds are either donor-funded scholarships or institutionally-funded support. Donor-funded scholarships respect the wishes of the donor in terms of amounts, number of years, and eligibility. Institutionally-funded support is allocated according to the academic merit of the student and financial need, and is (with few exceptions) awarded prior to the student's enrollment. Institutional funding is divided between support for the student's first year of study and a four-year level of support based on a percent of total tuition. Financial need is based upon the information provided in

the Financial Assistance Form and supporting documents submitted as part of the application packet. Financial aid preference is given to students from the in-region countries in accordance with the special mission of the university. Academic merit evaluation is based upon the strength of the applicant's overall academic record prior to entering AUBG. 50 percent of entering students in 2014 received institutional aid. Both Bulgarian and non-Bulgarian students who need additional financial assistance in order to attend AUBG have access to a good program of bank loans to support their study. Some donor-funded scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement and potential for future performance (according to donors' preferences) for upper-class students. All scholarships are widely publicized on the AUBG website and in special print materials from the Office of Admissions and are administered by a scholarship committee.

Leadership Opportunities

The Student Government provides an opportunity for student participation in the university governance process in several ways. Students may choose to run for election as senators or as the student representative to the Board of Trustees. They may also apply to become representatives to all university and most faculty committees, including search committees for faculty hiring. Students are active in forming clubs for social, academic, or sports pursuits, and many students cite their leadership roles in club activities among their most memorable AUBG experiences.

Recreation and sports programs

From its opening, AUBG has provided sports and recreational activities to its students. The mountains surrounding Blagoevgrad provide opportunities for hiking in warm weather and skiing in the winter. AUBG has also rented facilities to provide students with opportunities to use local recreational sports facilities for soccer, basketball, volleyball, and other sports. In spring 2013, AUBG opened the America for Bulgaria Foundation Student Center. The ABF Center contains a multi-purpose sports hall for basketball, volleyball, indoor soccer and indoor tennis, a running track, and weight room and fitness center. AUBG provides coaches and trainers for sports activities according to students' interests.

Qualifications of Student Services

The Dean of Students has 18 years of experience at AUBG and leads an experienced team of professionals. All Student Services staff members have appropriate training and/or work experience to effectively meet the needs of students. They attend professional meetings and conferences in the US and Europe in order to continue their professional development in accordance with staff development policies. The Dean of Students is active in the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and National Association of International Educators (NAFSA). The director of the Health Center regularly attends meetings of the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA). The International Programs Coordinator has lived in the US and is a member of the National Coalition Building Institute (NCBI). The Advising Center Coordinator has an advanced degree from the US. These and other development activities keep the staff current in best practices based on student development.

AUBG maintains readily-available policies on student rights and responsibilities, which are first presented to new students as part of orientation each semester. Policies are published in the on-line [Student Handbook](#) (Encl. 6.4) and are reviewed and updated regularly. Policies are administered through the Student Conduct Council, the Academic Standing Committee, and the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council. All committees are composed of faculty and staff. Students are also represented on most committees (excepting those that handle confidential student data). The university complies with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) Standards on

Good Practices and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in its admission and retention of students, and in its student services practices.

AUBG is subject to US, Bulgarian, and European Union standards on records retention and confidentiality requirements. AUBG follows whichever standard is stricter. Records retention policies are published in publicly-accessible places on the AUBG website. The Admissions Office, Student Financial Aid Office, and Registrars' Office all carry out annual purges of files for unneeded documents. Documents to be discarded are shredded on the spot. AUBG does not release confidential student information without the written consent of the student.

Permanent registration and academic records are maintained in both paper and electronic form. The Registrars' Office has a fire-resistant store room for permanent records, and all electronic records are simultaneously backed up with storage in two locations.

AUBG does not have stated co-curricular learning goals in its mission, although the liberal arts character of our mission carries a strong implication for co-curricular learning. A thorough and systematic [survey of graduating students](#) (Encl. 6.6) and their experience with co-curricular learning is carried out each year, and is subjected to annual review by management and the Student Services staff.

APPRAISAL

Admissions

Current recruitment and admission practices work well in terms of identifying and cultivating applicants who understand and appreciate the differences between the American-style undergraduate education AUBG offers and the alternatives in their home countries. Attracting enough qualified applicants to meet our overall goals for enrollment has been a constant challenge. A review of processes in summer 2013 revealed that the SAT requirement was more onerous than we thought — the number of official test-takers was dropping precipitously in all our target markets, and at least some applicants would abandon the application process rather than devote the time, money, and energy to preparing for and taking the test. Data on two successive entering classes showed that entering SAT scores were not strong predictors of academic performance. A weighted average of high school GPA and iBT scores (called “admissions points”) could predict student success equally well, if not better. As a result, AUBG adopted an SAT-optional admission process in fall 2014, with the first class admitted under the new process in fall 2015.

An interview with each applicant was added as an admissions requirement. Each interview is scored according to a standard rubric by two evaluators. Training sessions for interviewers were held during 2014–15 to ensure reasonable consistency in interview scoring. Preliminary analysis of interview scores among applicants for the fall 2015 entering class shows that interview scores are correlated with iBT scores and with the weighted average “admissions points” at about 0.20. After the 2015–16 academic year we will be able to assess whether the predictive power of admissions points among the admitted students continues to hold as expected.

The most important recruiting market for AUBG remains Bulgaria, and it is in Bulgaria that our “brand recognition” is most critical. Image surveys conducted through the Office of Communication and Marketing have found that our brand is recognized in Bulgaria, but without the clarity that we would wish to have. Modest investments in image and brand-building campaigns during the last year are showing some results. Although Bulgaria remains our single largest market, yielding about 50 percent of the current student population, AUBG is deeply committed to maintaining an internationally diverse student body. This requires active recruiting in other countries. Each fall, AUBG admissions counselors visit the key international markets for school visits and recruiting fairs. AUBG also employs local representatives in key international markets. These recruiters are brought to the AUBG campus at regular

intervals to see the campus, meet the on-campus team, and be trained to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge about AUBG to represent us to prospective students accurately.

All admission decisions are based on sound and consistent criteria including test results, personal essays, and teachers' and counselors' references. The Admissions Committee makes special allowances from time to time for applicants from special situations or applicants from under-represented populations. Research undertaken by the Office of Institutional Research and the Dean of Faculty ensures that admissions standards place appropriate weight and balance between the risk of rejecting an applicant who could have become a successful student, and accepting an applicant whose incoming profile suggests a higher risk of academic difficulty.

Advising and Academic Support Programs

Every AUBG student has an academic advisor assigned from a group of faculty volunteers. Training sessions and handbooks for advisors are prepared by the Advising Coordinator. Advisors are alerted to steer students away from choices that place them at higher risk of academic difficulties, such as over-concentration in mathematically oriented courses. The Academic Standing Committee evaluates student performance after each semester, with graduated steps ranging from warning letters, to academic probation, to suspension for a semester, to dismissal from the university. Academic probation carries with it the requirement to enroll in AUB 106 Strategies for Academic Success, which addresses issues such as test-taking skills and time management. Good performance in this course is positively correlated with improvement in the remainder of the student's grades. The very high retention and graduation rates of AUBG indicate that the advising and support programs fulfill their objectives well. Graduating students also evaluate their experience with support and advising in the senior exit survey. The survey results are diluted somewhat by the neutral responses from students who had little experience with support programs.

Retention and Graduation

[Retention and graduation rates](#) (Encl. 6.3) from AUBG exceed the norms for nearly any US institution. Because many AUBG students self-finance their education through earnings in US work-and-travel programs, there is a sizable proportion who extend their period of study in order to take fuller advantage of an employment or internship opportunity. Although the four-year graduation rate is significantly lower than the five- or six-year rate, the difference is not the result of weak academic performance or part-time study, but rather an intentional strategy on the part of the student. The attrition rate is low, and consists of students who choose to transfer to other institutions (often for personal reasons) and a small number who discontinue their studies for academic reasons. It appears that the latter category consist principally of those whose motivation (rather than ability) was absent.

Student Services

Student Services are comparable to US-based institutions. The 2013 opening of the America for Bulgaria Foundation Student Center provided for the relocation of all student service functions in one unified space on the most-accessible part of campus. This allows for the creation of a "one-stop-shop" provision with all student services from advising and counseling to visa assistance and career counseling to be provided in one area. The senior exit survey results show that graduating students demonstrate awareness of the Counseling Center services by a "agree/disagree" ratio of nearly 2:1, Advising Center services by a ratio of 2.6:1, Health Center services by a ratio of 3.4:1, and the Career Center services by a ratio of 1.9:1.

Financial Aid

The AUBG financial aid program is designed to help admitted students of high academic quality and reasonable financial need enroll and sustain their education at the university. The final award is determined by three distinct processes. The strength of the applicant's overall academic record is evaluated for eligibility for the portion of assistance provided for "academic merit". Prior to the 2014–15 academic year, this evaluation rested primarily on the combined SAT score. Now that the SAT is optional, the merit evaluation is based on the "admissions points" weighted-average of high school performance and English proficiency tests.

Scholarship awards funded by external donors may have specific eligibility requirements. These are allocated by the Scholarship Committee with the intention of first respecting the donors' intentions and then by making scholarship awards from most-generous to least generous. Institutional financial aid is then used to supplement external scholarships when necessary. Applicants who file an Application for Financial Assistance (AFA) form are also considered for assistance based on the financial resources available to the applicant.

Finally, applicants who submit all materials by the early deadline receive also "first-year financial aid" (FYFA) equal to 10 percent of gross tuition for their first year of study. The FYFA serves to encourage early applicants, and also to assist students in meeting their first year financial obligations, which are often the hardest since the student's earnings from work-and-travel frequently fund a significant part of the tuition payments in later years.

For the applicants for fall 2015 entry to the university, 46 percent received some form of externally-funded scholarship, 66 percent received AUBG institutional financial aid, and 48 percent received FYFA.

Government-guaranteed student loans are available to Bulgarian students, and bank loans are available to non-Bulgarian students. AUBG is significantly more expensive than state-sponsored universities or other private universities in the region, so affordability is a constant issue for students. The effectiveness of the financial aid processes can be evaluated by the yield rates of applicants by tiers of academic merit and by financial support levels. Recent experience has shown that yield rates are roughly comparable across most tiers except for the lowest levels of support. These levels include students who did not submit AFA's and possibly have had less serious interest in attending AUBG.

Leadership Opportunities

AUBG does a commendable job in providing leadership opportunities to its students. In addition to the Student Government positions, there are student representatives to the Board of Trustees, student representatives on university committees, faculty search committees, university task forces on issues such as accreditation and strategic planning, budgeting, etc. Student organizations publish print, radio, and online news publications, literary magazines, perform musicales, organize athletic competitions, and so forth. In the senior exit survey, students agree that serving on committees allows students to participate in decision-making by a 4.4:1 margin; they agree that extra-curricular activities met their interests by a margin of 6.6:1; they agree that they were encouraged to participate in sports activities by a margin of 3.1:1.

Advising and Academic Support Services

The university and its admissions staff make conscious efforts to select those students who best fit our liberal arts program. The university makes sure that English, math, and other academic support programs are available to new and returning students. There is a continuous effort to identify and offer support to students with learning needs throughout their time at AUBG. Once identified by GPA monitoring, the student is referred to the Advising Center, Counseling Center, or for peer tutoring. Our continuing focus

is better training for faculty advisors, strengthening the peer tutoring system, and revising the required course in study skills to give students more assistance in achieving their academic goals at AUBG.

The Career Center continues to add new services and to increase the number of recruiters to the annual Job Fair. Better test preparation materials for GRE, GMAT, LSAT are now available. The center also posts job and internship opportunities for both alumni and current students. Additional outreach is necessary to involve more students earlier in their academic career in taking advantage of the services of the office.

Retention and Graduation

The retention and graduation rates for AUBG are far above the norms of US colleges. We understand that our unique circumstances play an important role in these results. There is no alternative in the region that is “similar” in the sense of English-language, American-model, multi-national and multi-cultural. We accept only students whose academic backgrounds indicate that they are academically well-prepared for college-level work. Our existing system for monitoring students’ academic performance works well, as students know what their status is, know what level of performance they need to deliver to meet academic requirements, and know how to access the services the university provides to help them.

Effectiveness of Student Services

Student Services staff members have appropriate experience and training to serve the AUBG student body well. Most have been in their current positions for at least five years. Consequently, the staff work well together, share ideas, and provide backup support for each other’s programming. Student Services regularly assesses its programs and services through questionnaires and makes changes based on student responses. In recent years, in response to students’ replies to the survey, several significant changes have been made to new student orientation such as increased information literacy training.

PROJECTION

Admissions

AUBG will continue to recruit and admit students of good academic preparation, excellent English language skills, and outstanding potential. As the number of institutions seeking to enroll these same students increases each year, each year the competition becomes more intense throughout our recruiting area. During 2014–15 we restructured our admissions and financial aid processes to make them easier for applicants. These steps followed the recognition that our primary competition now is not colleges and universities in the USA, but rather in Europe. By requiring the conventional documents for a US college, AUBG became a bothersome institution to include in a potential student’s consideration set. Now we are committed to evaluating applicant quality using the same criteria as high-quality European universities. We are also gaining skill in using the modern tools of recruiting. We are now visible on US-based college search platforms, and US students may apply to AUBG using the Common Application. As a result, the interest we are receiving from US students is increasing. We are also supporting our “ground forces” of recruiters visiting schools with online campaigns to raise visibility among our target students and their families. Our goals have not changed — we wish to enroll quality students from Bulgaria and the region, but the tactics must keep up with the times.

Each summer the Admissions Office staff conducts a retreat in which they gather their experiences from the previous recruiting cycle, evaluate the success of the previous efforts, and plan new initiatives. We are actively building relationships with language centers and teachers as a means of offsetting the increasing difficulty and declining effectiveness of traditional school visits. We also plan to host more events on campus that will bring potential students to AUBG in person. AUBG is a tuition-dependent

institution, and meeting the goals of student enrollment and maintaining or increasing the academic quality of the student population were among the objectives which emerged most strongly in the summer 2015 survey of AUBG stakeholders conducted for strategic planning purposes.

Bulgaria will continue to be the first priority for recruiting new students, while maintaining a substantial proportion of international students is also of paramount importance. An issue that is likely to continue to challenge international student recruiting is the difficulty of obtaining student visas for new students in a timely manner. As Bulgaria prepares to enter the Schengen zone, the procedures involved in obtaining visas for non-EU students becomes more and more complex, leading to longer delays. While our staff stay on top of changing requirements and are experienced in helping students process the application, we may still find it challenging to obtain visas for new international students in time for orientation week arrival.

Student Services

AUBG will continue to provide a full range of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities to students, and to provide a complete range of services in terms of health and wellness, counseling, advising, international student services, and career and placement services. Our plan is to “de-triple” all rooms in the residence halls — but this reduces the capacity of the residence halls. If our enrollment progresses according to plan, we will have a shortage of residence hall accommodation within two or three years that will require us to complete the construction of the third residence hall, which was built with a design that permits expansion to include two additional wings to increase capacity.

Financial Aid

AUBG will continue to offer financial aid and scholarship support to help students afford an AUBG education. The limits of scholarship support will be determined by the generosity of donors. The limits of AUBG financial aid is set by the AUBG Board of Trustees’ directives to management regarding the overall tuition level (endorsed by a Board vote each year) and the directives regarding financial management — principally that the annual operating budget must remain balanced.

AUBG will continue to offer multiple-year support packages to students. We have found that the predictability of support and tuition is very important to students and their families in this part of the world where so much else surrounding them is unstable. AUBG has implemented a system of monitoring student academic performance to maintain eligibility for scholarship or financial aid (each type of support has a minimum GPA requirement) that includes warning letters and appeals processes for those whose support is at risk.

The financial aid process has also been restructured in 2014–15 to simplify the process for applicants. There is no equivalent in Bulgaria to a FAFSA, and AUBG has its own financial aid application form (AFA) and supporting document requirements. We now require the AFA only for students who want aid based on financial need: students may receive some aid without filing the application. We are also taking measured steps towards squeezing the distribution of student aid awards towards the middle, so that we have fewer students on full scholarship support and fewer paying 100 percent of the tuition. This action is based both on grounds of fairness and enrollment management.

Leadership Opportunities

AUBG will continue to include students in on-campus decision-making processes, as well as support students’ own initiatives through Student Government and student organizations.

Advising and Academic Support Program

AUBG relies heavily on faculty involvement in advising and in academic support programs. The outcome-based measures of the effectiveness of these programs at AUBG would seem to indicate that there is little improvement to be sought — retention and graduation rates are extraordinarily high. Students have their own well-developed informal network of advice to pass along peer-to-peer. The problem is that this network is pervasive but utterly outside AUBG's control and frequently passes along incorrect or out-of-date information.

AUBG provides advising and academic support, but students are reluctant to access it if it seems in any way “remedial”. Frequently faculty members take it upon themselves to schedule tutorials or review sessions led by a student tutor or the faculty member. These are well-attended.

Retention and Graduation Rates

AUBG is not an institution whose mission is to provide access to higher education to traditionally marginalized populations. Such institutions must be able to demonstrate that the institution maximizes the opportunity for a student who starts the program to finish it successfully. Our student population consists largely of students with successful academic backgrounds, and financial backgrounds that are usually middle-class or better by regional standards. This background and the environment in which we operate make our exceptionally strong graduation and retention rate possible. We must be alert to changes in this environment that might change our operating assumptions.

Effectiveness of Student Services

Student Services undertakes its own assessment of programs, services, and activities, but more is possible. The exit survey for graduating seniors has been in use for many years and provides valuable feedback for Student Services in assessing program effectiveness.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Admissions

The Admissions Office has an annual recruiting plan prepared during the summer which allocates its budget, time, and manpower to determine how the goal for new student recruiting is to be met. It includes specifics such as recruiting targets per country, plans for events, database purchases of contacts, fairs, etc. The Admissions Office informs the administration on a regular basis of the progress during the year with bi-weekly status reports showing the progress-to-date on inquiries, applications in progress, admits, and confirmations. The numbers are listed alongside the equivalent numbers from previous years as well as current-year targets. Quality characteristics of incoming students are recorded in comparison with previous years' results in the Institutional Research Annual Report (IRAR), with reports, tables, and charts on student numbers, characteristics, yield rates, test scores, first-year GPA, and other parameters.

Entering students are asked to complete a comprehensive survey during orientation week that requests information on their backgrounds and expectations and on their experience with the AUBG admissions process.

Students who enter AUBG after spending one or more semesters in the University Preparation Program are also monitored separately, with test scores upon entering and exiting the UPP program, progress reports on their first-year success at AUBG's regular program, etc.

Advising and Academic Support Programs

The Advising Coordinator is responsible for the effectiveness of AUBG advising programs. She is a member of the Academic Standing Committee that reviews the performance of all students following the end of each semester. Particular attention is paid to the performance of first-year students. Any pattern in course selection and student behavior or background is used for feedback to faculty advisors for “red flags” for future advisees. Based on this type of feedback, advisors steer new students away from enrolling in multiple sections of mathematics, computer science, or economics in their first semester; or in choosing to enroll in four (instead of five) courses in their first semester. The Advising Coordinator also monitors the usage and feedback from the subject tutors and keeps an eye out for issues that could be addressed. The Academic Standing Committee monitors progress of each student at risk and sends letters to each student, sometimes customized to reflect the specific course of action recommended for that student. Analysis of the incidence of students on probation, suspension, or dismissal is also recorded and tracked in the IRAR. The effectiveness of the various actions regarding academic standing is also tracked on a regular basis.

Retention and Graduation

Student retention and graduation statistics are tracked and reported in the IRAR.

Student Services

Each year the professionals in Student Services set goals for the year based on feedback from the previous year. AUBG uses a number of surveys to do regular and systematic evaluations on its effectiveness in admitting, retaining, and servicing students, including the seniors’ exit survey; exit interviews with graduating students; new class survey during orientation; and other surveys to evaluate individual events or activities.

In addition, several offices have their own processes for inviting feedback from students aimed at improving services.

Financial Aid

Effectiveness of financial aid is measured in many different dimensions. The IRAR records the number of student withdrawals and leaves of absence, and reports the reasons cited by students for the action. “Financial reasons” is always among the most-common. Other measures indicate that the financial aid system is working well. The number of students accessing the student loan programs through commercial banks remains very small. Some who do access these loans appear to use the loans as “bridge” loans to last only until summer earnings can be used to repay the balance. The Vice-President for Finance and Administration (VPFA) maintains and reports to the senior management and the Board of Trustees a “long-range financial forecast” which is updated several times per year as new information emerges on enrollment, student tuition payments, donations, etc. An allocation mechanism for financial aid is approved by the VPFA and the Provost at the beginning of the recruiting cycle in order to plan how a net tuition revenue target is to be achieved. Following the conclusion of the admissions cycle, a review of actual net tuition payments and enroll-to-admit yield rates of applicants at different financial aid levels is undertaken to ensure that the institution is meeting the financial needs of students as well as its limited resources allow.

Standard Seven: Library and Other Information Resources

Overview

Library and information resources are the responsibility of two units at AUBG — the Panitza Library and the Office of Communications and Computing. Both units operate under the direction of the Provost. While each unit has a distinct mission and role, their functions are interrelated and they collaborate on many projects and initiatives. In addition, the Information Resources Committee and the Academic Affairs Committee, consisting of faculty, staff, and students, provide guidance and inspiration for new ways to achieve quality enhancements to support the educational program.

The vision for the library and information resources and technology services at AUBG is to respond to an evolving information marketplace with increased emphasis on understanding users' needs, while offering a rich blend of resources, technology, services, and physical and virtual learning spaces. The rapid development and proliferation of information and communication technologies in the last decade has led to significant and fundamental changes in the ways that the AUBG community accesses, shares, and makes use of information, resources, and services.

AUBG takes full advantage of new forms and functions of technology to further develop its information resources and to introduce the latest products and services. All resources support the academic and research programs and the intellectual and cultural development of students, faculty, and staff. Extensive assistance is available to help users keep up with changes and use the resources effectively.

DESCRIPTION

Resources and access

The Panitza Library plays a key role in the educational and research process of AUBG. Its mission is to facilitate the creation, application, and dissemination of knowledge through the effective and efficient provision of information resources, services, and instruction in a supportive, research environment. AUBG articulates a clear vision for the information and technology resources and achieves this vision through strategic, operational and financial [planning](#). Allocation of budget in support of the library's objectives is provided both at the library and university levels with the participation of library staff, administrators, and the university's Budget Committee. The library management engages in an annual planning process to identify goals and objectives that are responsive to the institutional mission and priorities. Individual and departmental goals respond to and support the overarching library goals. Robust planning enables the library to select the most impactful actions and areas of staff and financial investment.

For a period of twenty years, the Library has developed a collection of about 117,000 print monographs, of which 4,920 are reference materials, 206 current periodicals subscriptions, 9,900 volumes of periodicals back issues, and 1,594 AV materials. The physical collections are augmented by access to digital content through license to more than 30 databases containing full-text of 133,000 e-books and 39,000 e-journals.

The broad variety of resources is sufficient in quality, diversity, and currency to support the institution's academic offerings and to fulfill AUBG's goals as a quality liberal arts institution. The [core collection](#) (Enclosure 7.1) covers all subject areas and effectively corresponds to the university's curricula. The selection, acquisition, creation, cataloging, storage and preservation of library resources are guided by the collection development policy and are in line with the needs and requirements of the university community.

The library aims at facilitating the access to all of its resources thus increasing their efficient and comprehensive usage through:

- The physical organization of the space in the library and the arrangement of the collections on open access. Reference and study zones are visibly differentiated and have comfortable seating, study carrels, and team tables. All facilities are accessible to people with disabilities.
- The flexible and convenient working hours. The library is open 88 hours per week Monday through Sunday. During exam weeks the working time is extended with additional 18 hours and the library works until midnight every day. The library is open free of charge to the general public.
- The online library [catalog](#), which was accessed 146,000 times in AY2014/15 as well as the integrated library system VIRTUA.
- The library's agreement with three different consortia locally and globally in order to fulfill constituent needs of materials not available in the library.
- The library's [website](#), which was visited 54,000 times in AY2014/15, acts as a gateway to all resources and services. The licenses of all electronic resources allow full access to all AUBG networks so that they can be accessed 24/7 by students and faculty. Remote access to available electronic databases is provided, which has increased their [usage](#) (Encl. 7.2).
- Regularly informing users about available services, newly-purchased books, subscription and trials of new databases, as well as how to access and use the library resources; additionally, all announcements are posted on the university website, as well as on the library's [Facebook](#) page and [Twitter](#) account.
- Helping students and faculty make better use of the library's resources by developing various tutorials, online subject guides, brochures, and by organizing instruction sessions and hands-on training for students, faculty, and staff.

Library services are student-centered and emphasize personal attention even when interaction is not face-to-face. The library staff is made up of 6 professionals, 4 paraprofessionals, and a number of student assistants, all highly committed to offering quality services to end-users. The library's [policies map](#) (Encl. 7.3) the scope, objectives, responsibilities, and the expected output pertinent to every job.

With an average gate count of over 300 persons entering the library on a daily basis, AUBG's Panitza Library is a center for campus activity where students use the library's physical and virtual collections to complete course requirements, work on group assignments, and get help from librarians.

Information and Technological Literacy

The diverse background of all students enrolled in AUBG calls for the need of library training and instruction on its resources and services. Most of the students have not had adequate library training in their high-school education and therefore experience difficulties when faced with the variety and volume of what the Panitza Library offers. This makes information literacy (IL) instruction absolutely essential and the main responsibility of the library.

All freshmen, EMBA students, and new faculty attend library training during orientation. There are also general in-class trainings for all sections of the mandatory course ENG 102 (Persuasion), discipline-specific library instruction, as well as individual IL instruction for all students, faculty, and staff upon request. EMBA students use the library resources (mostly electronic) and services through off-campus access. Since mandatory IL training has been incorporated only in ENG 102 course, training on demand appears to be the most effective approach for all the rest of the courses. All library educational programs give students a solid foundation for improvement of their IL skills, good reading habits, and opportunities for professional development.

The library has adopted and follows the standards and guidelines of the Association of College and Research Libraries for IL instruction. Regular assessment of the instruction program has been conducted over the years. Among all, one of the most outstanding achievements is the participation in the

international standardized assessment IL skills test (Project SAILS), which provides benchmarking opportunities.

Technology Systems and Resources

The Office of Communications and Computing (OCC), with a team of 15 highly qualified IT professionals, supports the information technology resource needs of the University through administrative systems, instructional technology, networks, phone system, audiovisual support, academic labs, a help desk, and consulting and technology training for students, faculty, and staff. The role of this office is to acquire, install, maintain, upgrade and enhance hardware, software, and network resources used by the AUBG community. An important goal for OCC has always been to adopt new technologies in order to create a productive environment for students, faculty, and administrators. Through careful planning and systematic enhancements, AUBG enjoys a technology environment that is far ahead of other institutions of higher education in Bulgaria.

The modern IT infrastructure is capable of providing all required services for the normal operations in a rapidly changing and demanding world. In 2015 the backbone interconnects all AUBG Blagoevgrad-based buildings, and via dedicated VPN connection, the Elieff Center for Education and Culture in Sofia. The optical backbone operates at a speed of 10Gbps, the end-point connectivity is 1Gbps via copper Cat 5/Cat 7 cables and 802.11 a/b/g/n standards for Wi-Fi connectivity, and the internet connectivity is 800Mbps (400 Mbps national and 400 Mbps international). AUBG authentication is based on MS Windows Active Directory 2008 Services and local implementation of 802.1X authentication protocol. More than 4000 personal devices are connected to the AUBG network (computers, servers, printers, etc.).

The AUBG IT infrastructure is designed to provide the required level of security and protection to the data stored. To be able to respond properly to possible disasters, four core high-productive network switches are located in the Main Building and the Balkanski Academic Center. The switches are equipped with redundant power supplies, fiber and copper modules. Thus a high level of redundancy of the core network is achieved.

A comprehensive set of policies and procedures regulates all aspects of the access to the information resources and their use by students, faculty and staff. All policies and procedures are posted on the AUBG web-page for quick reference and information. Students are oriented to the information technology environment during Student Orientation and receive updates from OCC. The OCC staff monitors student behaviors and enforces the IT policies strictly.

The Office of Communications and Computing bases its activities on the goals set forth in the strategic plan of the university, the computer replacement [guidelines](#) (Encl. 7.12) approved by the Information Resources Committee along with the [priorities](#) (Encl. 7.13) for technology requests, and the [disaster recovery plan](#) (Encl. 7.14) in line with the university's mission and purposes.

APPRAISAL

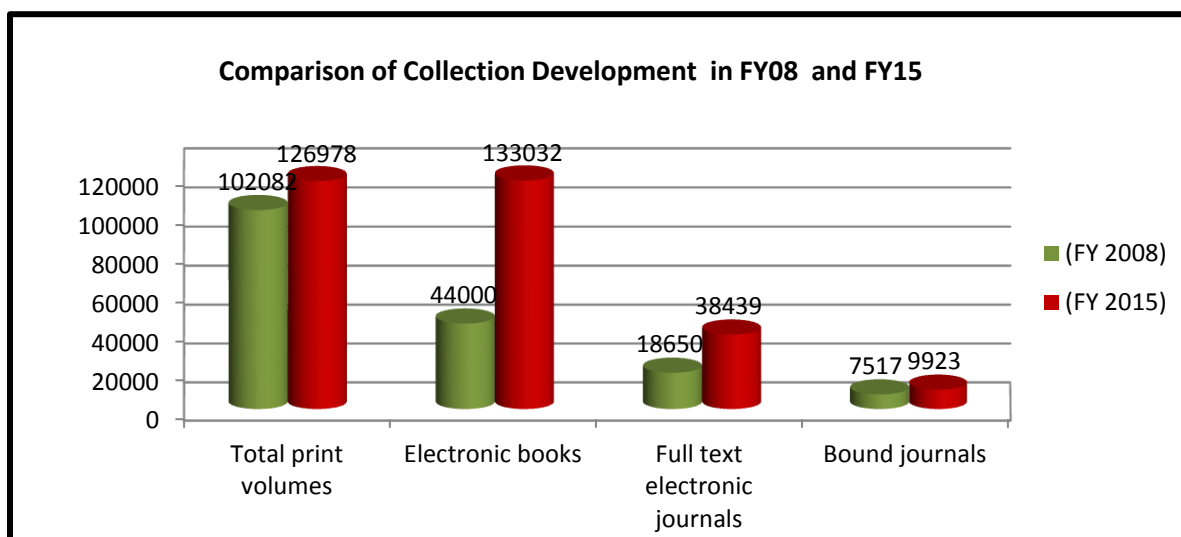
Resources and access

Since 2006, the library has undertaken several initiatives to bring its collections up-to-date and improve access to resources and services. The newly-built library facility provides a larger number of comfortable seating for a variety of studying styles, contemporary open-play layout and architecture, well-designed furniture and group-study areas, adequate lighting, ventilation, air-conditioning, wireless Internet, improved signage, and contributes towards the goal of offering users with a library space that is a pleasure to use. The RFID security and inventory system implemented in 2012 increased the quality of

services, the efficiency of the main processes carried out at Panitza Library, as well as librarians and patrons' convenience and satisfaction.

Through IL training, research assistance, promotional materials, participation in campus-wide activities as well as committees, providing different means of contact (such as live chat, email, telephone, etc.), the library staff and administrators collaborate and communicate regularly and frequently with students, faculty, and staff to ensure the effectiveness of library collections, services, and instruction. User needs assessment tools were developed to improve the library's programs and services and to respond to the changing needs of the AUBG community. The effect of these assessments helped to build a more focused collection that supports the current university curriculum. Surveys of graduating seniors over the last few years indicate that more than 89 percent of the respondents are [satisfied with the library resources](#) (Encl. 7.7).

A review of the last decade of spending reveals two dramatic shifts in collecting patterns. The first one is that library collection development shifted from ownership to access. The second clear trend is the shift from print to digital. The physical collections increased slightly (3 percent annually), while the [growth](#) (Encl. 7.4) in e-resources was over 200 percent. 60 percent of the materials budget was spent on electronic resources.



The above graph shows the changing proportion of physical to electronic items. The shift in the format has been in response to students' requests for flexible access to materials supporting their coursework.

Due to the consistent hyperinflation in the information marketplace, the library has less spending power despite growth in collection support. Similar to most modern libraries, the Panitza Library responds to the crisis of increasing needs and limited resources by proactively looking for partners and collaboration, resource sharing, and networking. The library has invested in journal bundling and other purchasing strategies through consortia arrangements to address price hikes as well as the explosive growth in publishing in the fields of technology, social sciences, and humanities.

The AUBG Library has taken a leadership role in partnering with library consortia to safeguard information investments and provide greater access through initiatives like the RESPOND project for free sharing of resources among the American International Consortium of Academic Libraries ([AMICAL](#)) institutions, the National Academic Library and Information System ([NALIS](#)) project for integration of Bulgarian university libraries by creating an online union catalog, as well as through our continued partnership with the [Journal Donation Project](#). Despite the enhanced collaboration for sharing resources with partner institutions, further investments in acquiring and subscribing to digital resources must be secured for the upcoming years.

The modern trends in the development of library activities define the academic libraries primarily as social spaces where academic activities are performed. The newly-constructed building provides greater opportunities for extracurricular projects. The library has made itself a center of intellectual life on campus. The Panitza Library has strengthened its role as a social place by launching a series of presentations of faculty's newly-published books, poetry readings, and exhibitions. The "Friends of the Library" initiative was organized to collect contributions by offering discarded library books. The Library cooperates with the university's Writing Center in organizing "The Long Night against Procrastination", when the students are able to spend all night at the library to work on their writing projects and/or assignments with the assistance of librarians and writing tutors.

Since our last report, the staff has focused its activities on promoting the library services and resources thus increasing their usage. The library website has become a key source for research, information resources and services. In 2011 a survey among students and faculty revealed a need of improvement of its navigation and functionality. Based on the results of the survey, the library completely redesigned its website twice, in 2011 and 2015, and garnered higher satisfaction rates in the second survey. The website improvements underscore the importance of a virtual library and have contributed to the increased visibility of the library. Live chat reference was introduced to assist patrons with research and study needs.

The library has been particularly effective in repositioning its staff for the future through the implementation of a comprehensive and systematic [program](#) (Encl. 7.9) for professional development and training as well as through on-going review of positions. As a result, the staff has gained new skills and knowledge to work in the advanced technological environment. It is worth mentioning that the librarians are seen by most of the AUBG community as knowledgeable, welcoming, courteous, helpful, and available whenever needed. [Surveys](#) (Encl. 7.7) of graduating seniors over the last few years show that more than 92 percent of the respondents are satisfied with library staff assistance.

An early pioneer in the development and implementation of computer-based systems to support access to library collections and services, the Panitza Library has continued over the last decade to deploy a more sophisticated discovery mechanism. The library has been a founder and partner of NALIS project for the application called [PRIMO](#) – a state-of-the-art Google-like search of aggregated content with highly desirable relevancy ranking of search results. However, a key issue that remains to be addressed is the development of a strategy for preserving and maintaining access to information as the digital world evolves and more and more information is stored in a digital format.

The analysis of the [curriculum map](#) (Encl. 7.10) developed by the library identified that IL skills need to be included in the students' learning outcomes. This necessitates the integration of library resources in the teaching and research processes. We plan to achieve this through the creation of a library liaison program, where a library staff member will be assigned to each academic department to assist the professors in IL instruction as well as to work with faculty representatives in building curriculum-based collections. The liaison will need to prepare a proper communication plan so that faculty members include relevant library resources in their syllabi. Thus instructors will encourage their students to make better use of authoritative online and print collections in their course work and assignments. Training should also be enhanced among adjunct faculty on how to better use the library resources in order to convey to students why and how to use them effectively in completing their coursework.

Equally important is the establishment of a university archive and a special collections department. Its role will be to create a digital archive of the faculty's and students' research publications and to ensure its preservation and promotion. Furthermore, this archive will be a base for building a digital institutional repository, fundamental for preserving important university development documents and materials.

Information and Technological Literacy

A dedicated IL librarian works collaboratively with faculty for the successful development of the program. To help improve it, an IL group was also created within the library. Through in-class trainings, we teach library patrons to locate, evaluate, and use information ethically and thus become information literate, life-long learners. However, this cannot be achieved at all levels since the program is incorporated in only one mandatory course, ENG 102. Therefore, one of the library's goals is to increase the number of in-class IL trainings through librarian-faculty collaboration.

A major focus of library instruction is to guide students to library databases and to expand their information horizons beyond Google. Databases are constantly updated and the more we invest in them, the more instruction our users need. A set of online video [tutorials](#) produced by the library offers users self-service options for IL instruction. Furthermore, librarians create numerous web-based, customizable, and constantly upgraded [Subject Guides](#) to provide point-of-need assistance.

In fall 2013, the library together with the English faculty integrated the online platform *Imagine Easy Academy* into all sections of ENG 102. The platform is embedded in the Blackboard Learn module of the courses so that students can use it anytime anywhere. With well-designed content that is frequently updated, the platform is a supplementary tool to the library's IL program for teaching students all the steps of the research process. In addition, this platform effectively addresses the need to integrate library resources with students' research activities.

Although significant efforts have been made in IL assessment, more work is needed in this area. The [results](#) (Encl. 7.5) from the Project SAILS show that AUBG students' information literacy skills are equal (if not better) to students' from American and other international peer institutions.

Technology Systems and Resources

The continual development of technology systems and resources is aimed at facilitating the efforts of faculty and administration to provide a modern and active learner-centered environment at AUBG. Even though we cannot be as fast as we would like in keeping up with the fast development in this area, the objective evidence suggests that the available IT resources are sufficient to support our academic programs. As indicated in the Data First Form, currently 100 percent of our classrooms are supplied with wired and 95 percent - with wireless network connection, and 100 percent of the residence halls have access to network through wired and wireless connection. Each classroom is equipped with multimedia cubes. The Institutional Research Office data indicates that the number of personal electronic devices connected to the AUBG network has gone from 706 in 2007 to over 4000 in 2015. AUBG features comprehensive [software packages](#) supporting [multimedia](#) production, interactive learning materials, simulation software, etc. Students at AUBG are comfortable in using technology to prepare assignments and are exceptionally technologically "savvy." They develop high-level skills in using information to find new approaches to problems or researching new areas. The faculty are clearly the models for this way of learning. Since 2007 AUBG has made significant progress with the upgrade of its IT technologies. During the years 2007 - 2013 four new AUBG buildings were equipped with information technologies through extensions of the existing infrastructure – Residence Hall Skaptopara III (2008), Balkanski Academic Center (2007), Library (2008), and ABF Student Center (2013). The installation of the AUBG wireless connections started in 2007. However, increased need for secure IT services and applications and a significant increase in the number of personal devices connected to the AUBG network resulted in the need for improved capacity and access to an often overloaded network. In response to this demand OCC implemented a major renovation project in 2013 and 2014. The old equipment was completely replaced. The core switches were doubled, from previously two to four. Optical backbone was installed and the backbone speed was increased from 1Gbps to 10Gps. The end-point connectivity speed was increased from 100 Mbps to 1 Gbps. The Internet connection speed, formerly 100Mbps, became 800Mbps. Wireless connection was established at all AUBG buildings,

including individual access points in each room in the Residence Halls. Most recently the implementation of the 802.11.n protocol allowed wireless connectivity speed of up to 300 Mbps. This made it possible for more than 4000 student, faculty and staff personal devices to be connected to the AUBG network.

All computer labs have their computers replaced in cycles of 3-4 years according to the accepted guidelines for regular replacement. The renovations in the last few years have included furnishing the multimedia cubes—standard equipment for all AUBG classrooms— with new computers, equipping a new computer science experimental lab in 2013-14, furnishing a new computer lab in 2014-15 with 35 units, increasing the number of units in the journalism and information system labs by four each, replacing the computers in the information systems and multimedia labs and others. Blackboard and Blackboard (“eLearn”) systems have been implemented to support on-line course administration, cooperative learning and electronic course management.

The annual survey with graduating seniors is a major source of feedback regarding the services and technologies provided to students. Students are asked whether the computer labs meet their academic needs and whether they receive the support needed from the OCC. Even though the percentage of seniors who agree or strongly agree has been relatively stable for the last five years, and even slightly increases, the satisfaction reported is not as high as for other services offered at AUBG. To address this, AUBG invited in 2013 an external consultant – Dr. John Gregory, IT Executive Director at the University of Maine, to conduct an evaluation of the AUBG IT services. As a result of the recommendations in [his report](#) (Encl. 7.15), OCC subscribed to a professional organization, EDUCAUSE, to stay up-to-date with developments. EDUCAUSE, introduced a help-desk function, introduced on-line registration of wireless devices to its network, outsourced the e-mail of its alumni (now based on a Google service), and changed the university domain from AUBG.BG to AUBG.EDU. Steps towards improved communication include working with the Office of Communications and Marketing on regular publications in AUBG Daily electronic magazine and regular information e-mails to the AUBG community.

PROJECTION

The Panitza Library will continue to develop and maintain its excellence in support of teaching, research, and learning while serving as a model of modern library practice in the region. The emphasis will be on providing inviting learning spaces, relevant services and collections, sustainable improvement, and meaningful collaboration. The central goals of the library’s strategic plan are to market our services, develop greater visibility of the resources, make online resources easier to use, and strengthen our role as a social place. Another important library goal will be the development of a collection of university publications and documents. We envision the library as the main instrument of storing and promoting the history of AUBG in a digital archive.

The newly-established course Common First-Year Experience will be an essential part of our freshmen’s transition from a traditional type of education to the liberal arts style of learning. Some of its core themes will be related to critical thinking skills, creativity, problem solving, library literacy, etc., which are part of the overall information literacy training in the 21st century. Therefore, we will put a great effort to be an integral part of this course and to incorporate specific IL outcomes into the general education curriculum.

One of the library’s biggest challenges is to ensure that students are aware of physical and electronic resources and are served well by them. Greater emphasis will be placed on teaching students how to use finding tool features in all sections of ENG 102. The rapid changes in the role of libraries call for adaptability. The Panitza Library is well into this transformational process from a conventional and collection-focused library to a flexible, inspiring, and student-focused one. Additional funds will be

needed in order to adequately cope with the ongoing technological advances that affect access to resources and the usability of the learning space.

Since social media plays a vital role in students' lives, we will use it as a tool to help us advertise our resources and services. The Panitza Library will follow the trends and constantly upgrade its communication infrastructure. To foster extensive collaboration and communication among librarians, faculty and students, we will need to introduce a library liaison program. Thanks to it, we will be able to improve our collection development in view of the specific needs of the academic programs offered at AUBG, to satisfy in-depth research needs as well as master IL skills among students.

The professional growth of the library staff to meet the needs of the changing user environment will continue to be of high priority. Membership in the consortia AMICAL and [BIC](#) (Bulgarian Information Consortium), and participation in the NALIS project will allow staff to keep up with the changes and provide service and leadership to others.

Technology Systems and Resources

The data center (including servers and storage system) is reaching the limit of its life. To respond to the steadily increasing demands for secure storage space and more and more storage requiring applications, and with the completion of the entire network renovation, these should be upgraded. The Computer Replacement Guidelines approved by the Information Resources Committee along with the Priorities for Technology Requests will keep AUBG at the appropriate level of personal computing for students, faculty and staff. As financial resources allow, more training for students, faculty and staff would help for better utilization of the existing technologies.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Library

Regular and systematic assessment has been performed on how well the library is meeting users' needs and expectations, including the use of and proficiency in information and technological literacy. Several types of surveys have been conducted by the library in order to align effectively its services and collections with the needs of end-users. Regular assessment indicates that students and faculty consistently rate the library's resources and services very highly.

The strategy of establishing ongoing assessment includes the following activities:

- Gathering detailed analytics to gauge students' use of recommended resources
- Assessing the online [survey sent to faculty](#) (Encl. 7.11) and [students](#) (Encl. 7.6) for feedback on library resources and services
- Collaborating with professors teaching marketing research courses to assign group projects to evaluate [students' perceptions](#) (Encl. 7.8) of library initiatives
- Analyzing the results of senior students' satisfaction survey
- Conducting pre- and post- tests to measure the effectiveness of IL instruction
- Participating in Project SAILS (Standardized Assessment of Information Literacy Skills) test for assessing students' IL skills
- Evaluating constantly the print monograph collections for effective weeding of unused material
- Assessing regularly the use of journals to identify low-use journals and proceed to cancellations of journal subscriptions as necessary
- Benchmarking against peer institutions, mainly members of the AMICAL consortium
- Gathering informal input from end-users during activities held in the library
- Evaluating annually the performance of library staff

- Establishing a suggestion box for library improvements

An assessment plan has been prepared to gather further data that provides information on how the library meets patrons' needs and expectations. Ultimately, this process will establish proper directions for improving quality and user satisfaction.

Technology Systems and Resources

The structures and mechanisms in place for regular assessment of the OCC activities include the Information Resources Committee, whose proposals are prioritized by the Budget Committee; graduating seniors' annual survey; and annual staff evaluation. The Office of Institutional Research collects quantitative data annually to support informed decisions. During the years since the previous accreditation continuation, external assessment report was completed by Dr. John Gregory, IT Executive Director at the University of Main, following a study by an ad-hoc AUBG study group on resources, technologies and facilities. The external evaluation also benefits from the regular Bulgarian institutional and program accreditations procedures.

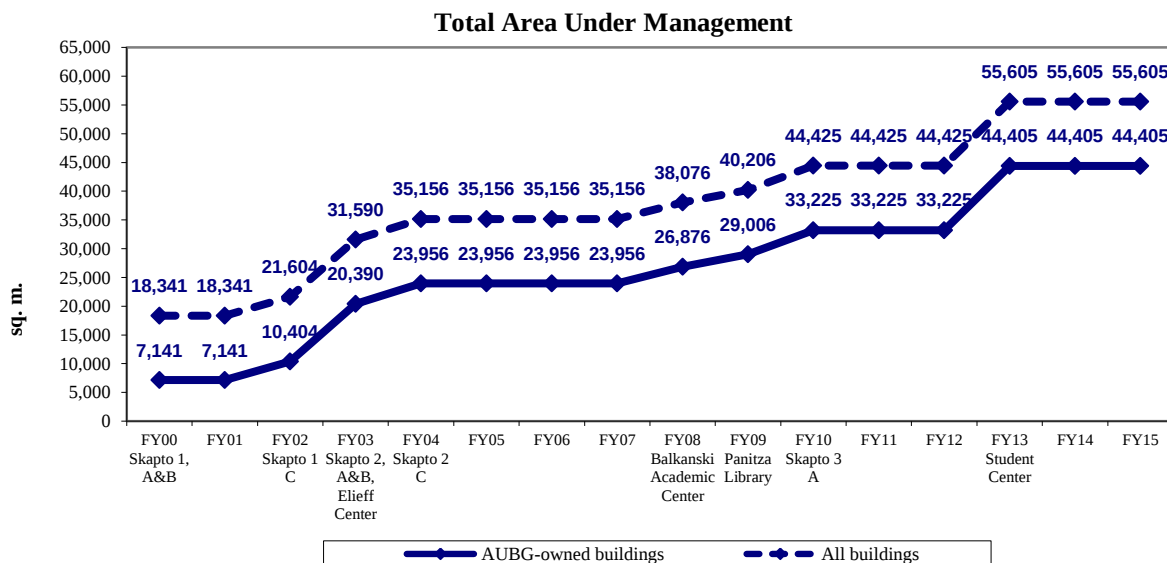
Standard Eight: Physical and Technological Resources

DESCRIPTION

When AUBG opened its doors in 1991 it had one rented classroom building and several rented residence halls. In 1997 AUBG started an ambitious program to complete its own university campus that is on par with residential liberal arts schools in the US.

As of today, AUBG's physical plant in Blagoevgrad currently consists of seven facilities: a central classroom and administration building (Main Building), a second classroom and office building (the Balkanski Academic Center), three student residence halls, the Panitza Library, and the America for Bulgaria Student Center. The university is currently divided into two locations — the Main Building on the city square and the Skaptopara Campus, along the Bistritsa river, that includes the other six buildings.

Since the start of the century, AUBG has completed seven new construction projects, increasing the AUBG-owned space to 44,405sq.m. The total area under management (including the Main Building) stands at over 55,605 sq. m. (more than 610,000 sq.ft.). The chart below shows AUBG-owned space and total area under management.



Since 2011 the entrance to the Skaptopara Campus is marked with a monumental stone structure that displays the name of the university, the year of establishment and three flag poles with the flags of Bulgaria, the United States of America and the European Union. This element attracts visitors to the university grounds and is visible when approaching the campus from the North. A pedestrian walkway along the Bistritsa river and a street create the East and West borders of the campus. The space of the outdoor sport facilities marks the South end of campus.

Main Building

The Main Building houses roughly half of the educational activities of the campus, the majority of administrative functions, and the English Language Institute. The seven-story 24,500 square meter Main Building is located in the center of Blagoevgrad and half of its total space (12,000 sq.m.) is used by AUBG. The other part is occupied by the Town Library, the Pirin Ensemble, and the Business Law Faculty of Southwestern University (a state-owned school with 15,000 students). The building was

designed and constructed in 1987 to meet the needs of the Regional Offices of the former Communist Party and has since been adapted to meet the needs of AUBG.

The Main Building currently contains 57 faculty offices and 22 staff offices, 11 classrooms, 5 computer laboratories, a student radio station, 3 piano practice rooms, and 2 multipurpose rooms. There are also four workshops, several small warehouses, and a garage, currently housing three vehicles for university use.

AUBG has had the use of the building under various agreements since 1991, the most recent one being a ten-year rental contract. Currently, the university has no other rented space. Water and electricity for the building are provided by the municipal network. A power station located in the adjacent facilities of the City Theater has been recently remodeled to use natural gas, and supplies heating for the building at a lower cost than before. All of the regular maintenance of the building is paid for by AUBG. The city maintains the outside space and attractive plaza.

Balkanski Academic Center and Panitza Library

In response to the growing need for classroom space caused by growing enrollments, a new academic building was erected in 2007 with the generous support of American Schools and Hospitals Abroad, offering 12 modern classrooms, a 160-seat Auditorium, 2 computer labs, a science lab, and 22 faculty offices. In March 2010 the building was named the “Balkanski Academic Building” to honor the generous million-dollar gift by the Balkanski family.

In 2008 the library was relocated in a new, purpose-built building which is adjacent to the Balkanski Academic Center. The library is accommodated on three floors and houses the entire collection of books. The building is named after one of the founding Board Members of AUBG and a prominent supporter, John “Dimi” Panitza.

America for Bulgaria Student Center

The newest addition to Skaptopara Campus is the America for Bulgaria Student Center which was built in 2013 and is now fully operational. It is the home of the university bookstore, all offices related to Student Services, the Admissions Office, and the Registrar’s Office. A café is located on the ground floor and offers a terrace with an excellent view to the campus. The canteen was moved from Main Building to a new, modern restaurant on the top floor of the building. A multi-purpose sports hall and a theatre/auditorium with a state-of-the-art sound and lighting equipment add to the functionality of the building. A fitness center at the basement of the building offers modern facilities for sports and fitness training.

Residence Halls

AUBG students are housed in three university owned modern residence halls (Skaptopara I, II, and III) that were specially designed and constructed to meet the needs of the academic community.

The residence halls include rooms, laundry facilities, building managers’ offices, lounges, and rooms for assistant building managers, apartments for the directors of residential life, recreation spaces, music practice rooms, an assembly hall, cafés, and computer laboratories. The buildings are equipped with appropriate telecommunications and computer networks and meet high standards for energy conservation efficiency. The buildings are well-maintained and show little wear considering their heavy use, including during the summer by conference attendees, language summer camps and visiting students. The outside area is well landscaped and creates an attractive park-like setting.

In 2013 the Health Center was relocated in Skaptopara I Residence Hall in premises that were especially reconstructed to serve the medical needs of the student population. The relocation makes the health services more accessible to students who need them.

Classrooms

The Main Building includes 11 classrooms appropriate for classes ranging in size from 15 to 60.

Reallocation and improvement of space has been necessary as enrollment has increased. Further renovations were made possible by the opening of newer buildings on the Skaptopara campus. For example, the President's and Provost's office space was converted to make new classrooms in summer 2004. Acoustics and lighting were improved in several classrooms in summer 2005 and 2006. In addition, the special purpose computer labs were renovated in 2005 to add new equipment and seats to accommodate more students. Two additional labs were renovated in summer 2006. The Main Building auditorium is used for special events — often community-based music performances and recitals.

The Balkanski Academic Center contains classrooms, computer labs, and faculty offices. The building was designed to be adaptable to evolving use. Every classroom has the passive infrastructure to enable its conversion to a computer lab.

Classrooms in both locations are furnished with tables and chairs which allow flexible arrangements to suit instructional needs. All classrooms are equipped for multimedia instruction via a special multimedia rack containing a video player, a DVD player, and a computer with Internet access plus a ceiling-mounted multimedia projector. Academic spaces are maintained effectively and carefully, scheduled for efficient class use from 9:00 a.m. to 7 p.m. Faculty and students have access to the spaces after classes for additional instructional activities such as review sessions, tutoring, special events, films, and lectures.

All AUBG buildings are designed and maintained to meet all requirements for safety, access, security, and energy efficiency. All AUBG facilities are handicap-accessible. The newer buildings are designed to be energy-efficient, and the Main Building's energy efficiency was enhanced by the conversion of the heating system from fuel oil to natural gas in 2013.

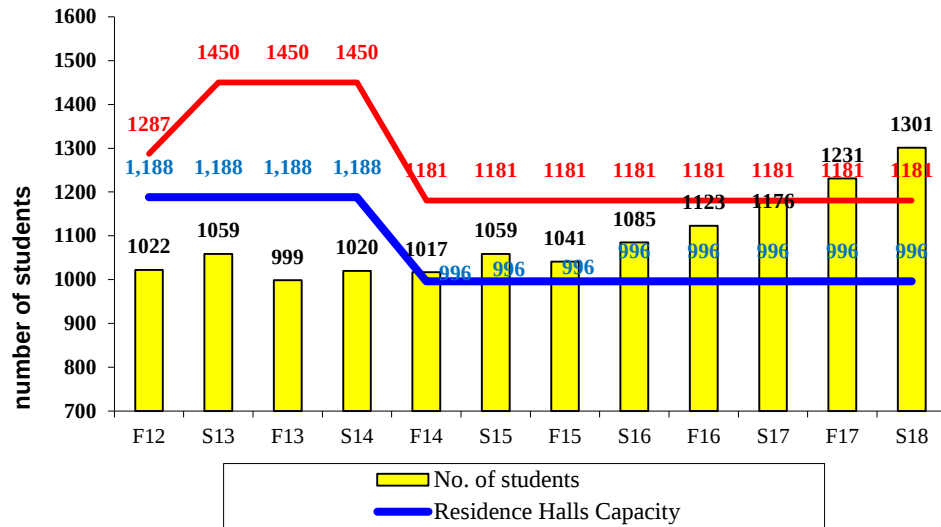
Capital Master Planning and Space Planning

The Campus Master Plan was reviewed several times over the years, preserving the original character of the site. Three final construction projects are outstanding — the completion of the third residence hall, the outdoor sports facilities and the Main Classroom and Administrative building. The land for these remaining projects has been secured and plans for the residence hall and sports facilities have been developed.

Over the last ten years, as facilities at Skaptopara were built, the use of space in the Main Building was rearranged. In the past, space in the Main Building was at a premium and many administrative functions shared space in order to provide adequate classroom space. Semi-annual inspections of the facilities by the administration and regular consultation with faculty and students complement the regular maintenance processes and help to establish realistic standards and priorities for upgrades.

The management and Board of Trustees are informed of the sufficiency of campus facilities through regular updates of the “enrollment and capacity” chart (reproduced below) that is included in the institutional research annual report.

Enrollment and Capacity



AUBG-Sofia

In January 2003, AUBG completed the Elieff Center for Education and Culture in Sofia, fifteen minutes from the center of the city. The well-designed building is a multilevel, 2,800 square-meter facility that houses academic and training activities, including the Centre for European Programmes and the Executive MBA. The development staff, president, and admissions recruiters have office space there along with those providing necessary on-site accounting, computing, and facilities support. A variety of community and cultural events as well as professional and outreach educational programs for the wider community are part of the mission of AUBG served by this facility. The building includes an auditorium, classrooms, computer laboratories, a small library, offices, café, and public areas suitable for social, cultural, and academic events.

Technological Resources and Information Systems

The Office of Communications and Computing (OCC) is responsible for the computer service and communications environment of the university. AUBG currently has about 670 university-owned personal computers interconnected by means of a local area network. At the beginning of 2013 AUBG undertook significant investment in upgrading its network infrastructure. Obsolete network equipment was replaced. The speed of fiber-optic link forms the backbone of this network was increased from 1 GBps to 10 GBps. Each personal computer is connected to the network at a speed of 1 GBps. Internet access is via terrestrial links — 300 Mbps international connectivity and 300 Mbps national connectivity.

In the summer of 2013, the second phase of the network upgrade was installed to increase the speed and coverage of the campus Wi-Fi network. A centrally managed Wi-Fi infrastructure covers almost all parts of the campus. In specific areas designated as likely to receive high visitor traffic, a second public access Wi-Fi network provides basic service without the necessity of network accounts.

Eleven student computer labs (6 in the main building, 3 in the Skaptopara residence halls, and 2 in the Balkanski Academic Center) serve the computing needs of the students and of the overall educational process. Approximately 270 personal computers, based on Windows 7, are available in these labs with a variety of software, depending on each lab's purpose. The labs have network access to printer servers. Student rooms in the Skaptopara dormitories are wired to the campus network to benefit those students with their own personal computers — currently over 3000.

Each faculty member has an office personal computer at his/her disposal and can print on three laser printers via the network. Staff members in the various administrative departments also have personal computers and access to printers. Everyone has e-mail and Internet access. Students are allocated personal file space on networked file servers. A set of firewall servers protects the AUBG network from outside attacks. The local area network is itself segmented into domains (e.g. Faculty, Registrars, Finance, etc.) for security reasons by dedicated servers, with different security measures applied in different domains. OCC maintains anti-virus, anti-threat, and anti-spam systems on all parts of the AUBG network.

The most important network devices are provided with the needed resilience and redundancy to guarantee a solid basis for a high level of data integrity and safety for all information processed within the AUBG network. All important areas that require the storage of data, including the Accounting, Registrars, and Admissions offices, are equipped with reliable disk subsystems. These storage subsystems are located in different buildings. They work in synchronous mode keeping vital AUBG data always up and available. The networking software provides a high level of privacy to be achieved in all areas, for example, e-mail, administrative information, student records, and instructional support. All accounts for access to AUBG IT resources are granted through a dedicated procedure. The connection of unauthenticated computers and users is prohibited. The Office of Communication and Computing regularly monitors the system, enforces policies, and recommends upgrades to the system.

Through its classrooms, offices, library resources and electronic resources — as well as the provision of network access to personal devices — AUBG provides its students and faculty with both physical and virtual environments to promote study and research.

AUBG maintains information systems in all areas of its operations that are designed to facilitate the planning, delivery, and evaluation of its programs and services. The systems are too numerous to be listed in full, but include systems related to student records and registration, library information resources, admissions, financial aid and billing, student evaluation of teaching, electronic learning platforms, accounting according to both US and Bulgarian accounting standards, electronic repair and maintenance request systems, electronic payments and approvals, alumni and career services, and development.

APPRAISAL

Main Building

Over the past 24 years, AUBG has made great use of the Main Building — the former Communist Party Headquarters in the center of town. Little by little the intimidating structure was made more suited to housing a liberal arts university. The grand staircase has become one of the symbols of AUBG with over 60 flags representing the countries of AUBG students, graduates, and faculty. Much of the dark wooden paneling on the walls has been replaced with white drywall to provide a brighter atmosphere. Large foyers and other open spaces have been converted into administrative offices and the large party leader's office space into classrooms. A power station located in the adjacent facilities of the City Theater has been remodeled to use natural gas and supplies heat for the building at a lower cost.

The canteen from the Main Building was moved to a new, modern restaurant on the top floor of the ABF Student Center in order to offer a wider variety of food choices to the student body, faculty and staff. The space of the former canteen is currently unused, but can be re-modeled to serve other uses.

Balkanski Academic Center (BAC) and Panitza Library

In 2013 the Office of the Dean of Faculty was relocated to BAC. Also, the President of AUBG has an alternative office there and spends several days a week in closer proximity to Campus to maintain close communication with AUBG constituencies on the Skaptopara Campus. Through its modern construction and proximity to the residence halls, the Panitza Library, and the ABF Student Center, the Balkanski Academic Center has become the preferred classroom location for most students.

The new location of the library gives students and faculty easier access to books and has increased the space for learning. The library provides both quiet areas for individual study as well as open seating for collaborative work and small conference rooms for meetings of small groups of students. The Panitza Library is constantly expanding its ability to provide access to electronic resources of all types.

Residence Halls

All residential students now live in AUBG-owned, purpose-built facilities. The most recent addition is the Skaptopara III Residence Hall (block A), which opened in February 2010 and offers additional 120 beds in double rooms with private bathrooms. AUBG seeks to provide housing services that fulfill the qualitative as well as the quantitative needs of students. Many of the rooms in the first two residence halls were designed to accommodate three students, but this arrangement is becoming less acceptable to our students, and we are in the process of “de-tripling” the residence halls.

Classrooms

AUBG has invested in both upgrading the classrooms of the Main Building and in equipping the classrooms of the Balkanski Academic Center. There are enough classrooms of sufficient diversity of size and furniture arrangement so that facility availability seldom imposes a constraint on class scheduling. All classrooms have Wi-Fi coverage, multimedia cubes with Internet connections, and whiteboards. Most classrooms are equipped with tables and chairs that can be re-arranged to suit the most desired teaching/learning style.

America For Bulgaria Student Center

Aggregating the offices of all student services in one location on the Skaptopara Campus gives the students improved access to the full range of services and saves them time. The sports hall is able to accommodate any indoor sport event, and is scheduled for a range of activities each night during the school year. The theater gives AUBG a venue for guest speakers, films, concerts, and theater productions that is a leap forward in terms of both capacity and quality. The café and the bookstore are located on the ground floor and are open not only to AUBG patrons but to the community, thus functioning as a powerful promotional tool.

As the Student Center is designed and built to accommodate enrollments of up to 1500-1600, it is adequate for AUBG’s needs for the next five to years.

Technological Resources and Information Systems

The provision of technology services is one of the areas at AUBG in which the limitation of resources most frequently clashes with the expectations. Bulgaria can be a challenging location in which to attempt to provide sophisticated IT services. Electric power outages occur much more frequently than in the USA, and the risk of damage to sensitive equipment is far greater. Software vendors who are happy to sell complex products are seldom eager to send representatives to inspect installations on-site when the software does not function properly. Faculty demand freedom to access and installation of a diverse range of programs, while licensing restrictions and security control programs frequently frustrate the fulfillment of these demands. While AUBG is seldom at the forefront of technology initiatives by US

standards, we strive to provide services that are comparable to those of US campuses within the limitations of our environment and the limited ability of students to support IT investments through their tuition payments.

AUBG employs information systems in its various functions that are well-suited to its mission and scale. We have been fortunate to have donor support for some of the major software initiatives, such as ASHA funding to support the purchase of a new student information system and a European Union grant to support the launch of an electronic learning platform.

PROJECTION

When the construction of Skaptopara III Residence Hall and the outdoor sports facilities are complete, AUBG will have adequate facilities for the next 5-10 years. Plans for the new Main Classroom and Administrative Building will continue to be developed. The new Main Classroom and Administrative Building would integrate the campus and complete the original master plan. Since these facilities would replicate the existing Main Building to some degree, there is no expectation for construction to start in the next 5 years.

Main Building

For the first 24 years since its founding, AUBG has enjoyed the use of its Main Building — the former Communist Party Headquarters in the center of town free of rent or for a nominal rent. As of today, we have 8.5 more years on the current lease. It is likely that AUBG would like to keep “town-center” presence even before that and the lease will be further extended.

Residence Halls

The first two residence halls, Skaptopara I and II were built in the period 1998-2002 and are showing modest signs of wear and tear. The university plans to renovate them and possibly build additional floors to both buildings once enrollment warrants it.

The construction of Skaptopara III, blocks B and C (the last two wings of the third residence hall) awaits financing. Both blocks have technical drawings and construction permits. Construction will start as soon as enrollment trends justify it and appropriate funding is arranged.

Outdoor Sports Facilities and Future Administrative Building

To complement the Sports Hall in ABF Student Center, an area between the building and the nearby grocery store is dedicated to the construction of outdoor sport facilities. We have finalized the technical design and have completed all necessary paperwork including the construction permit. The construction can start as early as this year, pending board approval.

The final piece of the AUBG Campus Master Plan is the new Main Classroom and Administrative Building. The procedure for obtaining all required documents to open a tender for the conceptual design of the future administrative building has started, but the project is on hold. In the next two years design documents may be obtained, but construction is not expected to start before five years from now.

Technological Resources and Information Systems

AUBG will continue to make significant and steady investment in technology to update and expand its technology infrastructure. Recent investments have upgraded the core network equipment and campus Wi-Fi network. The investment priority for the next few years is likely to be in the area of data storage, as current storage units are nearing the limit of their capacity, as well as their expected life cycle.

AUBG's information systems will continue to include all the common software applications, along with specialized platforms for accounting and billing, student information systems, electronic learning platforms, as well as database systems providing access to library resources. A careful balance must be maintained between the service and cost, as AUBG's core business model is to offer American quality liberal arts education at a cost affordable to the students from our region. Open source programs are an option, but the requirements for network and data security must be maintained.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

The university maintains a continuous process of evaluation of its physical and technological resources, and directs its planning and budget allocations towards meeting the needs identified through these processes. The Office of Communications and Computing had its services and systems evaluated by an external consultant from the University of Maine in spring 2012. The consultant's report guided the investments in equipment and software in the following year. The Panitza Library is an active member of the American International Consortium of Academic Libraries (AMICAL) which allows it to compare services with peer institutions. Investment in facilities follows the campus master plan which brings new buildings on stream as the needs of the student population require.

The budgeting and accounting systems are sophisticated and provide monthly operating reports for all budget managers. The staff in the Registrars and Admissions offices access the student information system to provide data sets used by the academic leadership to plan financial aid policy adjustments, set admissions standards, track progress on student recruiting efforts, and so forth. As a small institution, we are able to use collaboration and relatively straightforward software applications to provide management with key performance indicators, dashboard indicators, etc. The administration and the board have access to a deep pool of institutional performance data.

The performance of the institution in terms of planning and provision of physical facilities and technology facilities has been solid. As a small institution dependent on tuition payments, any mismatch between facility investment could create serious problems operationally. This we have avoided by phased construction of buildings according to need and enrollment, and carefully-staged investments in technology.

AUBG has developed useful tools to monitor and plan for facility and technology needs, and to implement important projects at appropriate times so that new facilities are brought online neither too early nor too late. As we expect to remain tuition dependent for the foreseeable future, these tools will inform management when future investments should commence. Thus facility plans are conditional on fulfillment of enrollment projections.

Standard Nine: Financial Resources

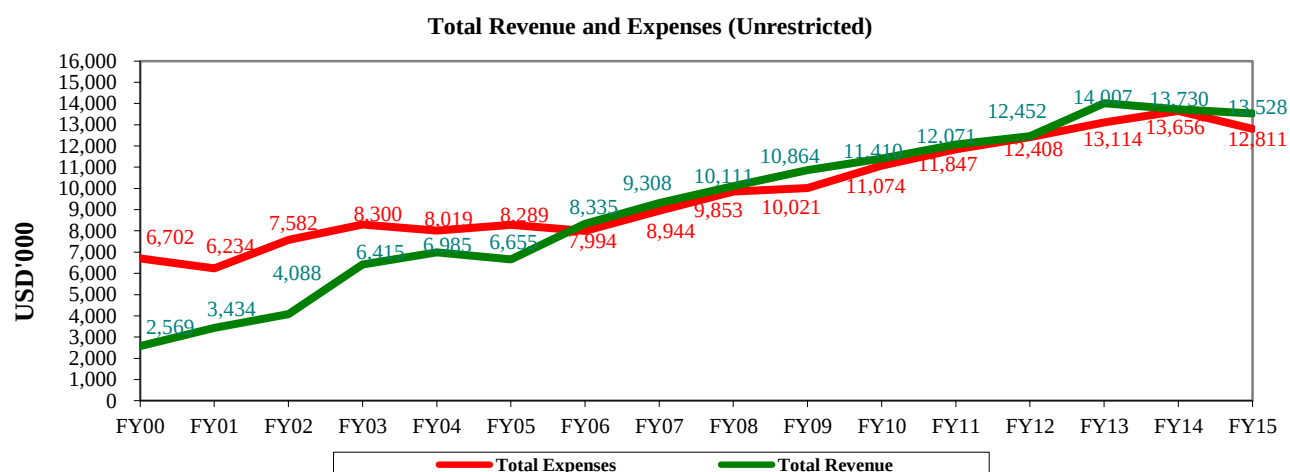
DESCRIPTION

Financial Sustainability

AUBG has just completed its tenth consecutive year with balanced unrestricted operating budgets. Total net assets have more than doubled since FY 2006 to \$61 million. AUBG stands on a sustainable financial footing — able to meet its current needs, and with an asset base and a quasi-endowment sufficient to address adverse conditions and to contribute to future development.

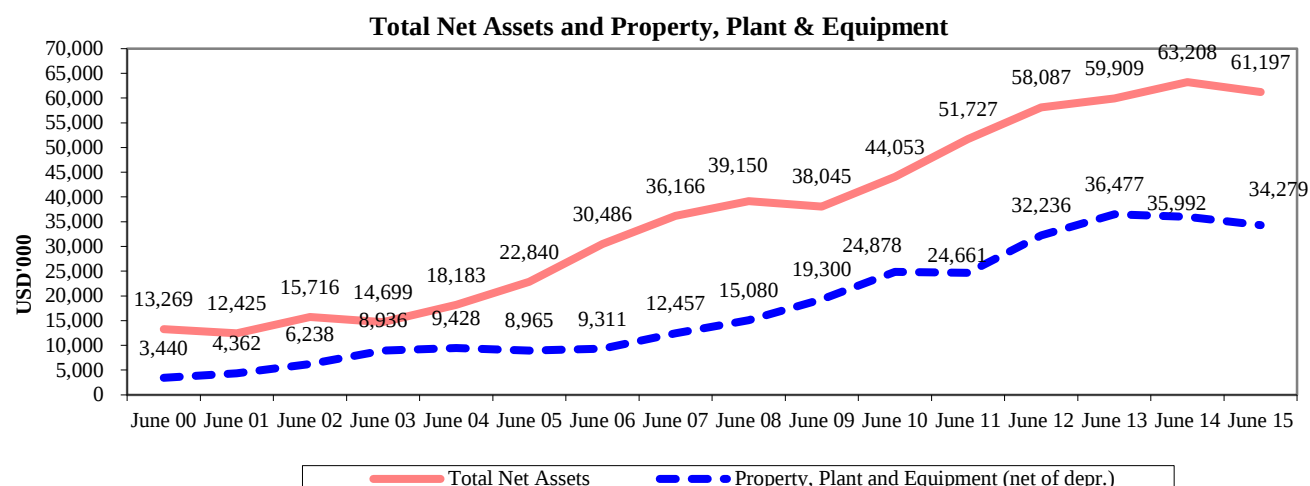
Over the last ten years, the university has generated sufficient revenues to cover educational expenses and preserve academic quality while maintaining strict cost control. Operating revenues have increased 65 percent since FY 2006 and all of the increase has been directed to enhance the educational and campus experience for our students. Graph 1 shows the unrestricted total revenues and expenses.

Graph 1



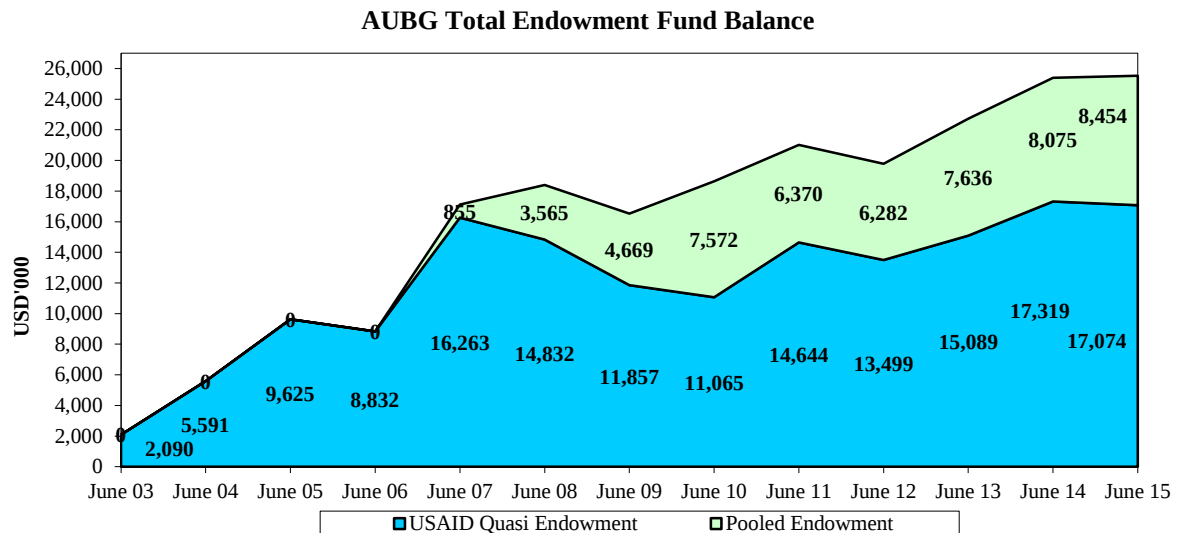
The second graph shows Total Net Assets (TNA) and Property, Plant and Equipment (PP&E). TNA have doubled and PP&E has nearly quadrupled since June 30, 2006. (See Graph 2 below).

Graph 2



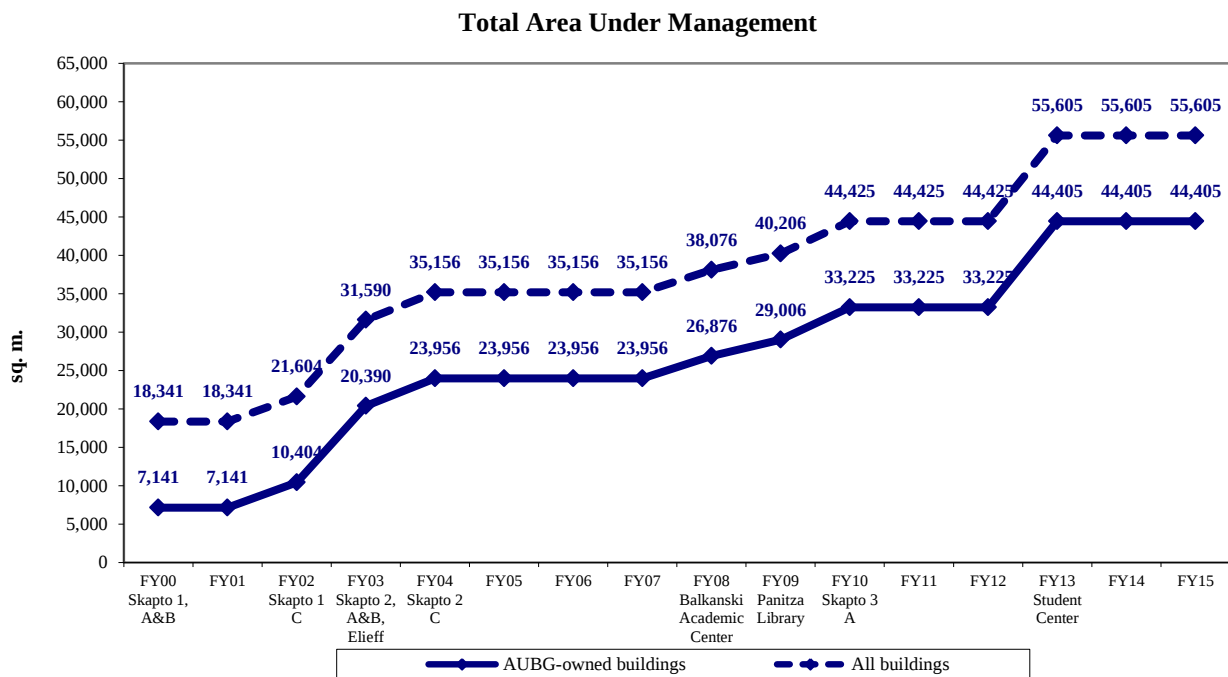
The third graph shows the balances of AUBG's total endowment, which increased more than twelve-fold in ten years — from under \$9 million to more than \$25 million.

Graph 3



The fourth graph shows AUBG-owned space and total area under management. Since the start of FY 2006, AUBG completed four new buildings to 44,405 sq.m. Total area under management (including the Main Building) stands at over 55,000 sq. m. (more than 610,000 sq.ft.). It is included here for the “asset” aspect of the issue. For more details see Standard 8.

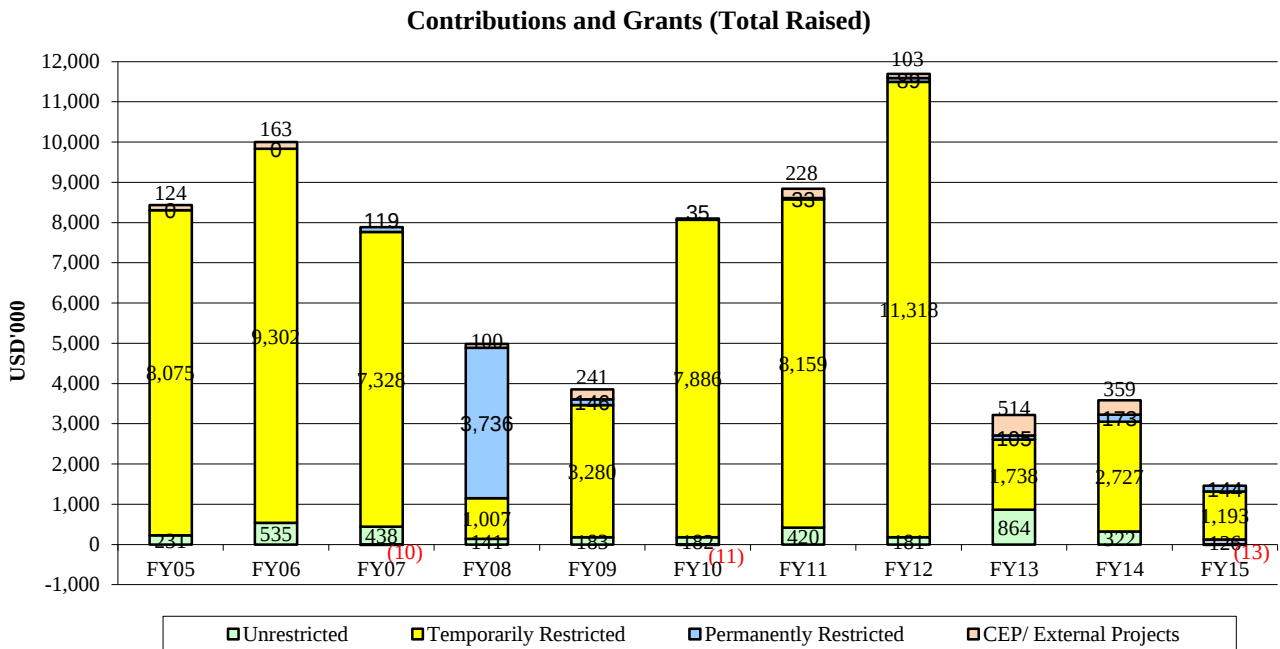
Graph 4



The four graphs above demonstrate that the balanced operating results were accompanied by simultaneous growth in property assets devoted to the university's mission, and growth in endowment balances.

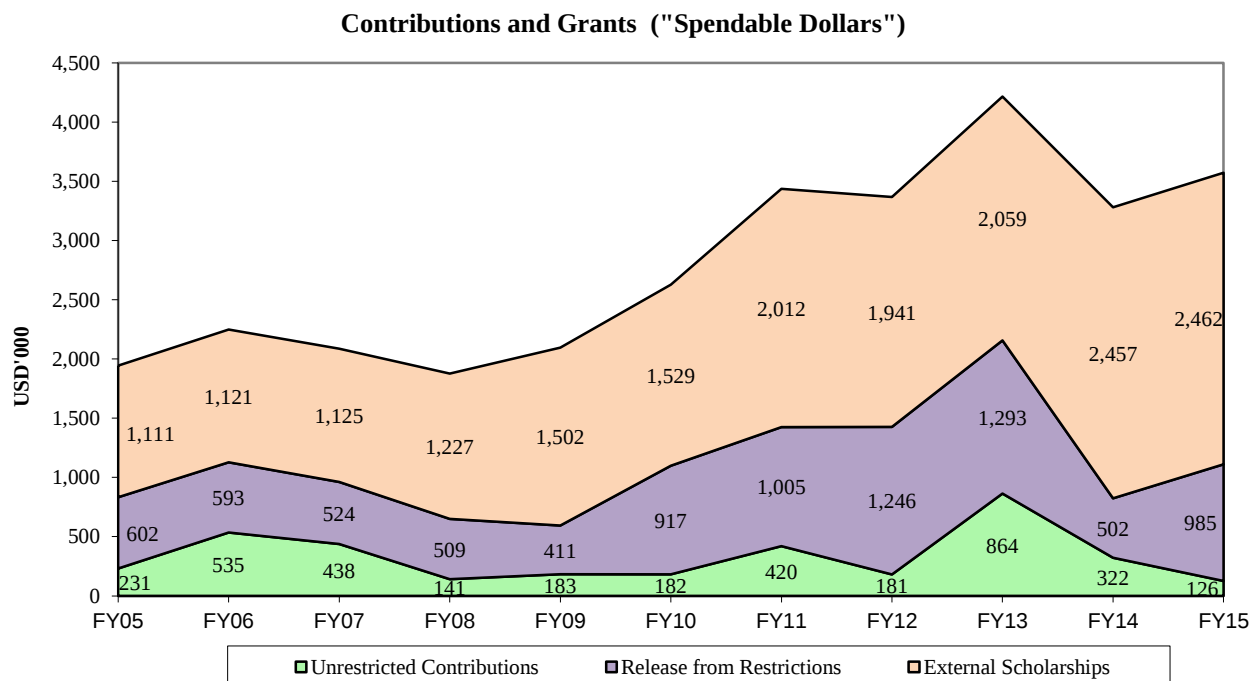
The graph below shows the development results in terms of “dollars raised”. The total amount of funds raised during that period is more than \$70 million.

Graph 5



The sixth graph shows the annual amount of “spendable dollars” (unrestricted revenue) from development activities. It includes the “released” restrictions of previously committed gifts and grants. The total has increased from \$1.9 million in FY 2005 to \$4.3 million in FY 2013 and \$3.6 million for FY 2015.

Graph 6



AUBG's financial system is maintained by a well-qualified professional staff, and many have been in the institution for 10, 15, or even 20 years. AUBG conducts annual training sessions on budget development and financial policies for all "budget managers", i.e. supervisors of unit budgets. Additionally, each budget includes funding earmarked for "professional development". All employees are eligible to apply for funding for professional training, seminars and conferences and the [Professional Development Committee](#) (Enclosure 9.1) reviews requests for funding. The Vice President for Finance and Administration is a certified financial analyst, and an AUBG alumnus whose primary responsibility is to the institution.

Financial Planning and Budgeting (Encl. 9.2)

AUBG's financial planning and budgeting framework employs both [top-down and bottom-up](#) (Encl. 9.3) features. The top-down planning process ensures that all unit plans and budgets are aligned with the university's mission, support approved institutional goals and further strategic initiatives as outlined in the institutional strategic plan. Additionally, each unit develops annual budget requests that factor the institutional goals and aspirations, but are rooted in the reality of the unit. Each year, we ask budget managers to link their budget submissions to strategic goals that are established at board and presidential levels.

The Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) then evaluates the budget requests against these overarching goals in order to recommend resource allocations. Budget managers are encouraged to review their operations to determine if there are any activities that can be discontinued in order to reallocate resources internally and self-fund new initiatives for the coming year. These budget requests are collated and reviewed by the BPC, which is chaired by the Provost with representatives of students, faculty and staff. The collaborative bottom-up planning and budget development process allows new academic priorities and new ideas from other units to help shape university goals and initiatives. These priorities are then reflected in the strategic plan, annual action plans, and the rolling five-year financial forecasts, as well as in the budget proposal that is reviewed and approved by the board each May.

A five-year, rolling long-range financial forecast is prepared to outline the financial parameters of AUBG's plans for the next five years. The key parameters of the long-range forecast are anticipated intakes of new students, the average net tuition paid by new classes, future tuition and fee levels, and forecasted development revenues. Other expenses and revenues are estimated based on established trends and elasticities with regard to enrollment. The long-range forecast enables management to anticipate future financial results based on current trends and circumstances, and to take prompt corrective action when necessary.

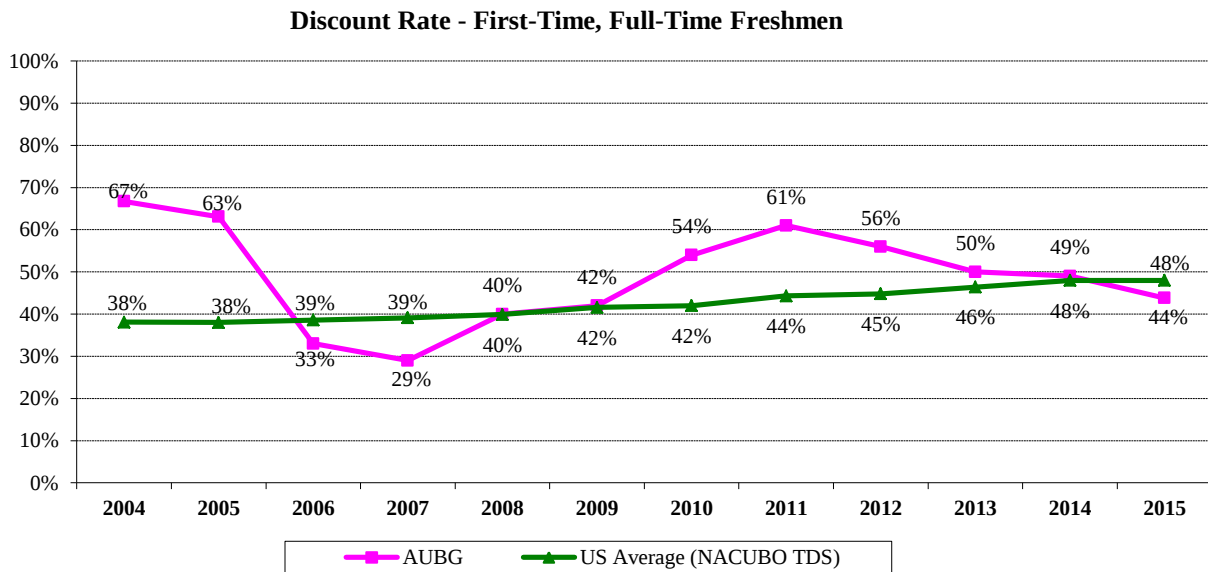
AUBG's revenue sources have remained relatively stable. Undergraduate tuition and fees revenue remains the single biggest source of funds, representing 47 percent of total revenues. Contributions and grants stand at 26 percent, with more than half of that earmarked for external scholarships. An additional 5 percent is provided by the Endowment Income Distribution. Auxiliary revenues contribute 12 percent, and other revenues (EMBA, Outreach Activities and other) add 10 percent of the total unrestricted revenue.

The AUBG Board of Trustees approves proposed tuition and fee increases at its January meeting, and approves the institution's operating budget at its May meeting. Other policies which impact finances or academics are reviewed by the board according to a regular cycle.

Financial Aid at AUBG is allocated in consideration of both the academic merit and the financial need of the student. The requirement for financial contributions from students is balanced with the institution's goals to have the desired quality, diversity, and composition of the incoming class and to enhance access for low-income students. Each year the financial aid parameters are reviewed and updated. AUBG has experimented with different financial aid and discounting strategies for incoming classes — high tuition and high discount rates (prior to FY 2006), cutting tuition in half in FY 2006 and reducing discounts

below US averages, then significantly increasing the discount rates attempting to increase enrollments. Since 2013, AUBG freshmen discount rates were gradually reduced to US averages (49 percent for AUBG vs. 48 percent for the 2014 NACUBO Tuition Discounting Survey — see http://www.nacubo.org/About_NACUBO/Press_Room/2014_Tuition_Discounting_Study.html and the comparative graph below.

Graph 7



In March 2011 AUBG signed an agreement for a loan from the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) amounting up to USD 10 million for the construction of the ABF Student Center. We are in regular repayment with more than \$2 million of principal already repaid in the last three years. The loan will be repaid in full within the next 10 years, by 2025.

AUBG has a sound budgeting and planning framework. The results of the past ten years (positive unrestricted operating result and overall increases in net assets) are the best testimony of this.

Financial Management

AUBG maintains a financial accounting system that provides a basis for executing the budget as well as for providing accurate and timely comparative reports on budgeted vs. actual variances in [revenues and expenditures](#) (Encl. 9.4). Financial controls and a set of [managerial reports](#) (Encl. 9.5) support monitoring revenues and ensure that expenditures are made in accordance with the approved budget. All financial policies and procedures are publicly available on AUBG's website. Each year the financial policies and procedures are reviewed and updated, if necessary. The Internal Audit Office reviews the university-wide financial policies and practices, as well as those specific to units under review.

AUBG meets all external standards for financial management. Best practice internal control mechanisms such as separation of budgeting, accounting, and treasury management functions, separation of duties within each of the functions, the use of an internal auditor and a Big Four audit firm for external audits ensure the integrity of the finances and financial reporting. Annual and quarterly reports are available on the 25th of the month following the end of the period.

Administrators regularly review the budget with the budget managers under their supervision to help them anticipate problems before they develop. All budget managers prepare variance reports on the semi-annual and annual budgets, which give them a better sense of where budget controls were needed and will continue to review variances in the future.

AUBG's development efforts are directed towards supporting the university's academic mission. The university's Development Office follows best practices and industry standards in the solicitation and recording of gifts. Development policies follow the recommendations of the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). Development staff attend CASE conferences to remain current on CASE standards and procedures.

In this evaluation period, AUBG finances have been made more transparent, to ensure a consistent view of the financial picture of the institution. The financial reports and annual audits are available on the AUBG website. The board materials (including budget data) are sent to all students, faculty, and staff.

APPRAISAL

Financial Sustainability

AUBG is now preparing to increase enrollment at a measured pace towards a goal of 1200 full-time undergraduate students. This enrollment increase will be accompanied by a modest increase in average net tuition. This will allow the university to exploit economies of scale through more efficient use of its physical and human resources.

Tuition and fee increases are limited to the amount necessary to fund the educational expenses. AUBG's finances have undergone rapid and consistent improvement. Fundraising has been successful (\$70 million over the last decade), and annual external scholarships have increased significantly to an all-time high of \$2.46 million in FY 2015 (see graph 6).

AUBG has nearly tripled its [endowment fund](#) (Encl. 9.6) balance since June of 2006 (See Graph 3). The annual draw-down of endowment funds has been eliminated except for the board-approved endowment income distribution calculated according to the Yale [formula](#) (Encl. 9.7). The ongoing challenge is to balance the need for revenues sufficient to cover the cost of education with AUBG's goal to attract the very best students.

AUBG has developed long range budget projections that are conservative and realistic extrapolations of what has already been accomplished. AUBG has sufficient funds to mitigate unforeseen financial difficulties both in terms of contingency funds set aside in the annual budgets and in terms of the endowment balance.

With the use of revenue and expense contingency funds built into the annual budget, AUBG has been able to meet unforeseen circumstances without negatively affecting its delivery of high quality education.

Financial Planning and Budgeting

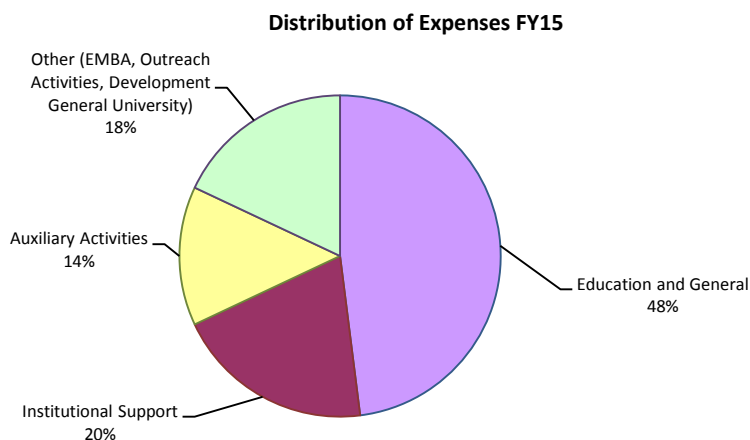
AUBG has taken steps to link the budget and planning process to the Annual Goals and the Annual Action Plan. The timing of the Annual Plan has been moved to allow congruence with the budgeting process. AUBG is planning to increase its enrollment to a new target of 1200 students. We currently have the organizational capacity and infrastructure to accommodate the new enrollment target.

The Long-Range Financial Forecast has been used successfully to anticipate important financial developments and implement corrective actions. Most of the key assumptions used to generate past forecasts in the past have been met or surpassed—with the exception of enrollment where aggressive projected increases did not materialize. According to the 2001 Long Range Forecast, AUBG was to become financially self-sustaining by 2008, a goal actually accomplished in 2006, two years ahead of

schedule. Once AUBG achieved operational self-sustainability, the rate of increase of revenues was matched with increases in expenses, so that any additional revenue was invested in the education of students (See Graph 1). Staff and faculty salaries were raised and increases in average net tuition have been reduced to single digits. In the last 10 years, no AUBG staff were laid off or furloughed.

The management of the budget process at AUBG has been both prudent and flexible. Our financial performance did not suffer due to the global financial crisis of 2008 or the shortfalls in enrollment over the past five years.

The financial resources of the institution are allocated in a way that reflects AUBG's mission and purpose, with the largest allocation to academic purposes.



AUBG's allocation of institutional financial aid based on both need and merit works well. Several fine-tunings to the system have addressed issues of access, quality and retention. The overall financial profile of enrolled students fits nearly exactly the budgeted profile, resulting in realized net tuition that is very close to the budgeted amount.

AUBG's practice to include in its annual budget contingency funds on both the revenue and expense sides of the budget has proved to be both successful and necessary. In the last three years AUBG's annual budget has included a tuition reserve of \$200,000 designed to cushion the institution from shortfalls in enrollment or net tuition. Additionally \$300,000 of revenue contingency and \$300,000 of expense contingency is available to absorb variations in revenue and expenses.

AUBG's budget development process is well-organized, collaborative, and transparent. Given the experience of the past ten years, AUBG is confident that it will manage its budgets in a consistent and predictable manner.

An internal assessment of risks shows AUBG has no legal actions that threaten its activities.

Financial Management

The last ten completed years have reinforced AUBG's confidence in its future. The AUBG community and stakeholders have witnessed ten consecutive years with budget surpluses and significant increases in net assets and endowment funds. AUBG has budget and financial management processes that are able to deal with unforeseen circumstances. All budgets in the last 10 years have been realistic, and there have been no significant negative surprises requiring revisions to the annual operating budget.

AUBG's finances have been made more transparent, to ensure a consistent view of the financial picture of the institution. The [financial reports and audits](#) are available on the AUBG website. The board materials (including budget data) are sent to all students, faculty, and staff. Key Performance Indicators

(KPIs) and “[Principles for Financial Sustainability](#)” (Encl. 9.8) have been introduced in May 2013 and regularly reported to the AUBG Board of Trustees.

PROJECTION

Financial Sustainability

Our conceptual view for the future has not changed since our last report. Over the next five to ten years, AUBG will continue to consolidate and strengthen its gains in terms of both quality and sustainability. The university must continue the efforts to have the necessary physical, human, and financial resources to accomplish its mission.

Securing external funding to support both scholarships and capital projects will remain a high priority and a major focus in the next five years. AUBG has built relationships with private and corporate donors and works with alumni to strengthen their commitment and giving to the future of AUBG. AUBG has recently been informed that two of the largest donors — the Open Society Institute and the America for Bulgaria Foundation — will be discontinuing their scholarship support for AUBG. Replacing this support for students will be an important institutional challenge over the next few years.

Overall development results have slowed in the last three years, as several of our most important traditional supporters have curtailed their giving. New sources of external support need to be identified and cultivated. A redesign of the advancement function at AUBG and authorization and filling of five new positions was completed.

Even with a successful fundraising program, AUBG will depend upon tuition for its future. As opportunities increase for students to attend colleges and universities in the US and Europe (in some cases tuition-free), it is essential that dependence on tuition revenue is balanced with resources from other sources, especially private fundraising.

Financial Planning and Budgeting

AUBG has a sound budgeting and planning framework. The results of the past ten years are the best testimony of this. Each year, we ask budget managers to link their budget submissions to strategic goals that are established at board and presidential levels. The Budget and Planning Committee then evaluates the budget requests against these overarching goals in order to recommend resource allocations. Budget managers are encouraged to review their operations to determine if there are any activities that can be discontinued in order to reallocate resources internally to self-fund new initiatives for the coming year. We believe that the planning and budgeting process is working well and will be annually reviewed for fine-tuning if necessary.

Financial Management

At the time of our last report, we recognized that budget managers need additional training and materials to guide their decisions about how best to use resources and to oversee expenditures. For the past ten years, we have utilized a budget management handbook that continues to be developed. In addition, we have held annual budget managers’ training as part of the budget preparation process. With a stable organizational structure and comparable year-to-year data, more reliable information and trend lines are now available to guide decisions.

Over the next five to ten years, AUBG will continue to consolidate and strengthen its gains in terms of both quality and sustainability. The university must continue the efforts to have the necessary physical, human, and financial resources to accomplish its mission.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

To help in the budget management process, more complete institutional information is being provided. A new Institutional Research Handbook is being used to guide our planning and reporting. It includes financial and non-financial Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The administration is using these for planning, benchmarking, and performance management purposes.

Additionally the “Principles for Financial Sustainability” help guide AUBG’s future direction. AUBG is confident that it has the processes, people and resources to ensure sound financial future. It has the ability to meet unforeseen circumstances without negatively affecting its academic quality and reputation.

The KPI’s and the Principles for Financial Sustainability are regularly updated and reported to the governing board. The internal audit function and the relevant board committees (Finance and Property, Student Affairs, Audit) regularly review the results and recommend corrective actions, if warranted.

AUBG will continue to use its existing structures — both university committees (Student Financial Affairs Committee & Budget and Planning Committee) and board committees (Audit, Finance & Property Committee), along with the internal audit function to ensure prudent financial management and ethical oversight of its activities.

Standard Ten: Public Disclosure

DESCRIPTION

The need for a new AUBG website had been increasingly evident in the last years not only for practical purposes, but also to highlight AUBG's public presence, community spirit, and ultimately spark interest and improve enrolment rates among potential students. The new website, launched in September of 2014, features modern and elegant design, enhanced multimedia placement, improved ease of navigation, harmonization of the AUBG brand through consistency of different sections, interactive content and other typical features of a contemporary institutional digital home (accessible at www.aubg.edu). The new website helps us stay abreast of the latest tendencies in technology and academia, projects the image of the institution as a regional leader in higher education, and is an attractive and accommodating destination for forward-thinkers.

Consistent with NEASC requirements, all information on admissions, financial aid, academic programs, student services, co-curricular opportunities, faculty, resources, and educational outcomes is readily available and up-to-date. Student media and clubs are at the heart of the diverse AUBG student community and as such have been prominently listed on our new website, together with important documents explaining policies and procedures.

As part of the new website and in order to make the visitor-user experience more comprehensive AUBG has launched a first-class virtual tour, developed by a worldwide leader in the creation of virtual tours with more than one hundred such projects for universities like Yale, MIT, Stanford, West Point, UCLA to name a few. Since enrolment rates are very high among students who visit the campus, with the building of a virtual tour, AUBG website visitors are now able to explore and admire our state-of-the-art campus and facilities even from afar.

Acknowledging prospective students' affinity for social media, the university's Office of Communications and Marketing (OCM, former University Relations office) staffed by young and energetic people, is committed to enhancing AUBG's presence in the social media. The office drives and coordinates all processes associated with the dynamic media and regularly evaluates them with the available built-in analysis tool.

"Elearn" is yet another essential element that strengthens the academic experience at AUBG. It is the "Blackboard Learn" Learning Management System (LMS) used at AUBG to support professors and students in the teaching and learning processes. The elearn platform (accessible at <https://elearn.aubg.bg>) provides professors with a way to create and deliver learning content, monitor and assess student performance, and effectively communicate with students in the learning process. The system provides students with the ability to easily access course materials and assignment instructions, submit assignments, use interactive features such as threaded discussions, discussion forums and video conferences. The elearn platform is also used by the leadership of the faculty assembly to distribute materials for review and discussion preceding regular monthly meetings and as a repository of relevant documents.

As of September 2014, AUBG's OCM has been publishing *Inside AUBG*. This is an electronic newsletter that comes out bi-weekly during the school year and monthly during vacations. This newsletter is an offshoot of the *AUBG Today* print magazine and includes feature news, articles and interviews about academics, students, faculty, staff, donors, alumni and community events and achievements.

The newsletter goes out to an ever growing database of email addresses including the afore-mentioned target audiences, and currently counts 5,500 recipients. In addition to this list AUBG's Admissions

Office sends out the newsletter to over 16,000 prospective students that have registered to receive news from our institution.

To assure a cohesive community spirit the Office of Communications and Marketing also launched the *AUBG Today* daily mail in April of 2015. It includes news, updates and announcements for upcoming events in Blagoevgrad and Sofia, allowing our extended community to plan for participation.

AUBG's OCM has furthermore launched a YouTube video content channel to allow for multimedia content delivery and presentations <https://www.youtube.com/user/AUBG1991>. Since March of 2015 we are working to create more content that will present both the benefits of AUBG as an educational institution, as well as supply multimedia coverage of selected events on and off campus, that are happening with the participation of AUBG faculty, students, staff, alumni, and friends.

Despite the digitization of communication in recent years, print materials still play an important role for both internal and external audiences. All publications are now designed in a similar style to give a strong visual identity to the university, a goal identified in our projections in 2006. The designs are light and modern in order to appeal to future and current students as well as alumni and potential donors.

All materials conform to all NEASC requirements. Two core publications are both in hard copy and on the web: (1) the [Undergraduate Catalog](#) (Enclosure 10.1), which provides comprehensive information with regard to the university's mission, accreditation status, admissions requirements and procedures, tuition, fees, financial aid, academic policies, degree requirements, programs, student outcomes, course offerings, faculty, and student services information; and (2) the [Student Handbook](#) (Encl. 10.2) which provides students with up-to-date information on residence life, security and emergency information, clubs and organizations at AUBG, the Student Government, a Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities, and procedures of the Conduct Council.

All forms of print and electronic communications are designed to be consistent with the academic catalogue and student handbook content.

The Office of Communications and Marketing has enriched the recruitment materials package with a comprehensive and informative viewbook, which points all users to all information about a residential campus and a holistic learning environment, be they prospective students, interested parents, or donors and supporters of AUBG.

OCM is also working on publishing an annual (formerly bi-annual) magazine featuring select news and stories on academia, campus, student life, alumni and donors. The printed magazine called *Inside AUBG* (formerly *AUBG Today*) is a shortened teaser version (the full version is available on our web site at <http://aubg.edu/aubg-today>) part of the information package that AUBG distributes to prospective students, alumni, guests, friends and supporters.

AUBG is now producing one of the recruitment touch points (admissions toss piece) in three languages: English, Bulgarian and Russian. The information presented therein features academic programs, application procedures, the liberal arts approach to education and alumni success stories.

As of fall 2014 the university has been using recycled paper and has moved multiple print editions to digital first. AUBG is committed to protecting the environment and has adopted new ways of producing its promotional materials. The majority of the university brochures, flyers, leaflets, the viewbook, and *AUBG Today* magazine—totaling more than 100,000 sheets of paper per semester—are printed on recycled paper (see relevant story at <http://aubg.edu/news/aubg-goes-green-578>).

In support of the important goals of increasing enrollment and contributing to the community, the Office of Communication and Marketing prepares and disseminates information and stories about university activities, distinguished guests and community members. In the full academic year 2013–14 we achieved extensive and predominantly positive media coverage with over 1,000 AUBG-related articles and

appearances. Some of AUBG's key advantages were underscored in public messages, among them the top faculty, distinguished lecturers series, multinational community, a dynamic student body, and successful alumni.

In addition, many of the faculty volunteered to be part of an experts group who help us respond to media requests for expert opinions on topical issues. The media coverage presents our undergraduate and graduate programs, admissions information, success of alumni, community service, and achievements of faculty as well as public events, lectures, and concerts, to the general public thus raising awareness and sustaining AUBG's image.

Understanding our target audiences' perceptions of AUBG, and more crucially, addressing their needs, is essential for developing the right image for the university. We undertook steps in that direction and conducted a tender for an image study. The analysis of the image study/market research will be used extensively in reevaluating our positioning and marketing efforts during the next AUBG communication activities that will develop in the near future.

APPRAISAL

The web site is an important repository of consistent, accurate and up to date information. Soon after the relaunch in September 2014 our web site won first place in the category "Institutional site" and second place in "Educational site" in the Bulgarian national "BG site competition" <http://aubg.edu/news/aubg-website-wins-first-prize-at-bg-website-2014-competition-619>

Social media has been a strong tool for promoting the image of AUBG among target internal and external audiences with ever growing numbers of followers since January of 2015. The information we post is selected, managed and promoted by a new full-time administrative position, that of digital marketing coordinator, which allows us to both streamline the message and voice of AUBG, as well as deliver information in a timely manner.

The internally created newsletters have proven quite handy in assuring adequate and wider dissemination of information from and about our institution. Newsletter opening rates measure close to industry averages (17,2 percent vs. 18,7 percent), while clicks, or following previews to read full articles measure significantly higher compared to the general "Education and Training" category (7,8 percent vs. 2,5 percent).

The print materials are produced by OCM and distributed by the offices of Admissions, Development, the President's office and our Sofia Elieff Center personnel. Print materials are now considered a support to the online communication initiatives, while they used to be a driver in the past.

The new approach with printing selected materials in more than one language is helping information and content delivery to a wider audience, not necessarily proficient in English.

The Office of Communication and Marketing has extended its efforts in securing coverage and disseminating information to the wider public. The most recent strategy is to promote AUBG leadership as an opinion maker and to reveal the true spirit of the AUBG community and thus enhance the position of the university as a leading institution that sets high standards in the Bulgarian educational scene. Through its timely and proactive approach AUBG succeeds in keeping its audiences well-informed about the various events that take place on campus or are sponsored by the university and that benefit the wider community. The university always welcomes the wider public to these events. Knowledge-sharing is an important part of the AUBG character and OCM makes concentrated efforts to ensure that AUBG's excellence is showcased and that its best practices contribute significantly to the well-being of the society as whole.

Moreover, as of September 2014 the OCM department has established a direct line of communication and partnerships with prominent Bulgarian media with the goal of conveying messages on the image of AUBG, on best practices in higher education, and on university-led entrepreneurship initiatives.

As written in the descriptive part of this document, AUBG thoroughly analyzed the results of the Image Study 2013 and took corrective actions in terms of supplying the public with detailed information about the university key benefits and differentiators in order to fill the gap. The results of the study helped us streamline the messages and create and develop a micro-site that was heavily used as a landing page of various online and off line (QR codes) activities: <http://aubg.edu/aubg-is-the-place-to-be>. A comparative study was conducted in 2015 to measure and evaluate the effectiveness of OCM's communication efforts. The results show great progress in terms of information availability and comprehension of the major points that make AUBG unique. The new marketing communication efforts have contributed to an increase in unaided awareness (e.g., "which universities in Bulgaria do you know?") by 30 percent (11.5 percent net) from 33 percent to 44.5 percent.

PROJECTION

We are working on improving the web site in several directions. One of the efforts is towards search engine optimization to allow better results in the university investigation process of prospective students, employers and benefactors. The other direction is optimizing formatting and content delivery to allow for the growing mobile device usage and needs.

We are also planning to populate the multimedia channels with full information on aspects like "high quality education and the liberal arts system", "AUBG faculty and the modern classroom", "The dual accreditation of our institution and ranking in the Bulgarian education system", "How to finance education", "Presentation of Bulgaria and Blagoevgrad with their benefits for students", "Study abroad and exchange program opportunities", "Alumni network and career success".

Further plans include expanding our web site into more languages, or adding Bulgarian and Russian to the current English version. Initially we will focus on sections that are relevant to parents of prospective students and employers that operate locally. Ultimately the goal will be to feature a fully-fledged web site in the three languages.

In the next years we plan to work on fully encompassing all printed materials and bringing them up to date with the AUBG Goes Green initiative in support of sustainable development. In 2015–16 we are planning to move two further touch points, the Student Handbook and the Undergraduate Catalogue, to recycled paper formats. A final but more tentative goal is to move more offices to printing on recycled paper every day.

The latest image study has identified the importance of parents' opinion in the decision making process for choosing a university for their children. Therefore we will take the necessary steps to ensure greater visibility in all major nation-wide print publications to enhance AUBG's reputation among parents' target groups.

Adding value to the information flow through the use of the Google Search and Display Networks is also in our radar. Through the use of Google and Google partner sites we will be able to inform those audiences who are beyond the reach of the traditional Bulgarian media and will allow us to reach out to target countries and promote AUBG beyond geographical boundaries. Additionally, we are planning to expand our marketing and communication activities and start positioning the university in selected countries.

OCM is devoted to presenting the institution in an accurate and timely manner and inform its key stakeholders about recent developments and opportunities that allow the interested parties to make well-

informed decisions regarding the university. We see the emerging digital trends and the great influence of online channels as an opportunity to ensure greater visibility and we plan to take full advantage of the new digital realm in order to keep AUBG's audiences up-to-date. We will launch shortly an online platform featuring an easy interactive test specially designed to help future students to figure the fields of study that best suit their personality and interests. The "Education Mate" majors and extracurricular advisor test will help the young people in their academic journey thus allowing them take full advantage of the programs AUBG offers.

The university will continue to build on this customer-centered approach ultimately leading to unforgettable life-changing educational experiences for students.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

We track institutional effectiveness according to the following KPI's and processes for the respective areas of the public disclosure activities.

We track the effectiveness of the electronic information we deliver to our users in the areas of the university's website, our university's presence in social media, and the university's own media in various ways. For the university web site we use Google analytics monthly reviews. For our presence in social media we review the number of new followers and the engagement rate (automatic weekly reports provided by the social media platforms). To track the university's own media we review the number of recipients and the open and click-through rates (provided by the mail client for each message or newsletter.)

We track the effectiveness of print materials for both internal and external audiences (the institution's viewbook and the *Inside AUBG* magazine) by identifying several supplier sourcing options and by choosing the best price-quality ratio following purchasing procedures.

We eagerly embrace sustainable development in print. This initiative started in the summer of 2014 with the goal to move all printed touchpoints to recycled materials. We check which new touchpoints have been added to the "green" list (e.g. in 2015/2016 the academic catalogue and the student handbook were printed on recycled paper for the first time.)

We track a multitude of performance indicators in the area of media coverage, including the number of AUBG-related news items in national and regional media; the number of contacts reached through media including circulation of print; impressions in digital campaigns.

As part of our image study we have been tracking the development of the percentage of our target audience exposed to our message in the areas of top of mind awareness, total awareness, consideration to apply, as well as level of awareness with different aspects of our institutions offerings in the areas of quality education, career success, flexible education, quality of facilities, and quality of faculty.

Standard Eleven: Integrity

DESCRIPTION

Standards for Integrity

AUBG's earlier self-study reports submitted in 2006 and 2011 noted that "AUBG subscribes to high ethical standards in the management of all its affairs and has both policies and procedures in place to protect the rights of all members of the academic community and to encourage responsible behavior."

The 2011 report also emphasized that given our institution's location, and the home countries of most of our students, it is vital for us to "model integrity in every aspect and engage all members of the community — faculty, administrators, Board members, and students — in discussions of our value and standards."

As a country, Bulgaria continues to struggle with corruption in almost every area of the public sector — including institutions of higher learning (as noted in the 2006 Self Study). In a 2013 global study by Transparency International (an international, non-profit NGO devoted to anti-corruption and transparency in the public sector), Bulgaria ranked second highest in the EU on their Corruption Perceptions Index. These perceptions have been echoed by poor voter turnout and street protests against the Bulgarian government's alleged corruption and lack of transparency during the summer of 2013. In this climate of public mistrust of government and the public sector in Bulgaria, it is more vital than ever that AUBG demonstrate its commitment to transparency and integrity.

Our 2009 updated mission statement reflects this pledge: "The mission of the American University in Bulgaria is to educate students of outstanding potential in a community of academic excellence, diversity, and respect and to prepare them for democratic and ethical leadership in serving the needs of the region and the world."

Of course mission statements need to be manifest. In 2010 the university completed a comprehensive revision of the University Policy Manual which covers procedures and policies for non-discrimination, university organization and governance, human resources, academic policies, student affairs, business and finance, facilities and security, and institutional advancement and external relations. In the interests of transparency, the manual is [posted on the AUBG website](#) in both English and Bulgarian and thus ensures access by all members of the university and public. The manual is revised, as needed, at the May meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The procedure for resolution of grievances is set forth in the Policy Manual for employees other than faculty, and in the [Faculty Handbook](#) (Enclosure 11.1) for faculty. Official AUBG academic and student life policies provide many examples of appeals processes — for instance, the grade change policy in the [catalog](#) (Encl. 11.2), the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council and the Conduct Council procedures in the [Student Handbook](#) (Encl. 11.3). All possible disciplinary actions against students provide the student with the opportunity to appeal — whether for academic grievances, student conduct, academic standing, or financial aid.

The faculty and student handbooks are also revised annually. Both outline the rights and responsibilities of faculty and students, respectively. The Faculty Handbook makes clear its commitment to the policies and principles of the American Association of University Professors, and its pledge to "protect the academic freedom of its faculty." The handbook goes on to state that these rights include,

"the right to conduct research freely and to publish the results, the right to discuss freely the subject matter of their areas of specialization in the classroom, the right to speak, write or act freely as private citizens in University, community, nation and international affairs and the right to due process in any

dispute with the University related to these matters... Faculty shall also respect the right of their colleagues to freedom of speech and academic freedom. Faculty must recognize that the right to hold divergent opinions and to speak freely on controversial matters is fundamental to academic discourse.”

Faculty members are evaluated according to a regular calendar under a [carefully prescribed process](#) (Encl. 11.4). Full-time faculty members have their performance evaluated by a committee of their peers (the Faculty Evaluation Team or FET) who are elected from among senior faculty members. Those under evaluation have the right to request that an alternate FET member serve if the impartiality of any FET member is in doubt. FET deliberations are confidential, and protected from interference from either senior administration members or the evaluatees. Evaluatees can submit written appeals to the provost or president if they disagree with the FET’s judgment or interpretation. Adjunct faculty members are evaluated according to a similar method but within the academic department.

To date, there has not been a case in the history of the institution where a faculty member filed a grievance against the institution, or a fellow faculty member, for interfering with their right to exercise this academic freedom.

The Faculty Handbook also clearly states AUBG’s non-discrimination policy. This policy is reflected in [university by-laws](#) (Encl. 11.5), policy documents and echoed in the undergraduate catalog.

A [faculty manual](#) (Encl. 11.6), outlining procedures with which faculty are likely to come into contact during their day-to-day work life, exists in parallel to the Faculty Handbook and was last revised and updated in 2014.

For students, academic policies are easily accessible in print and electronic format in both the Undergraduate Catalog and the Student Handbook. It is worth noting that academic integrity is the first area covered in the academic policies and procedures section of the catalog. The section clearly explains what academic dishonesty entails with concise explanations of areas from plagiarism to cheating. Additionally, each course syllabus contains a required section on academic integrity.

Being an American-style institution but operating in Bulgaria, AUBG is subject to two different accreditation bodies and two sets of standards. The university’s goal is to meet all requirements of both sets of standards, so that the degrees it confers are recognized both in the USA and in Bulgaria (and by extension in the rest of the European Union.) Thus all degrees awarded by AUBG lead to a legitimate US diploma. In Bulgaria this authorization is maintained through accreditation of both the institution as a whole and each of its programs by the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency. [Continuing accreditation in Bulgaria](#) (Encl. 11.7) evidences the operating authority AUBG has in Bulgaria and its continuing adherence to the spirit and the letter of applicable local legal requirements. The two majors that are not included under Bulgarian accreditation are clearly identified as such in the Academic Catalog.

AUBG submits program self-study reports for its Bulgarian accreditation that express the principle that the university’s relations with external constituencies are based on truthfulness, clarity, and fairness. AUBG is the only liberal arts, American-style higher education institution in Bulgaria and as such presents to the Bulgarian accreditors a relatively unknown approach to education, which they need to reconcile with the [Bulgarian accreditation criteria](#) (Encl. 11.8). Candor on behalf of AUBG is of utmost importance for the university to be recognized for what it truly represents and stands for.

The university’s commitment to non-discrimination practices finds expression in all of its operations. In 2014 AUBG educated students from 46 countries and employed faculty with 11 different nationalities. The financial support system for students is based on both merit and need and the university strives to provide education to all students who are up to its academic standards. The university’s admissions criteria are applied equally to all students — to the extent possible given the differing secondary school

systems the students come from. The university's financial aid resources do not discriminate by nationality, although externally-funded scholarships sometimes specify the nationality of the recipient.

The physical plant makes provisions for handicapped access. A [diversity program](#) is in place to increase awareness of differences among various groups. These differences are celebrated through annual events such as International Week where students share regional cuisines, folk dances and costumes, and other native traditions.

Reinforcing a Culture of Integrity

In addition to the print and electronic resources of the Undergraduate Catalog and Student Handbook, the university constantly strives to increase students' understanding of what constitutes academic integrity, personal and social responsibility and civil conduct. From their first arrival on campus, students are educated in these areas as well as learning about expected behavior standards for residential living, interactions with peer and faculty, and responsible technology usage. To publicly reaffirm the university's commitment to integrity, the Undergraduate Catalog since 2013–14 includes a new statement on AUBG community, emphasizing the need of mutual respect, civility and professional behavior.

Diversity training is also part of each student orientation session. The university strives to create an environment of mutual respect amongst students. Additionally, all students, as part of the general education requirements, take two courses in moral and philosophical reasoning that reinforce these concepts on a curricular level.

In 2014, the syllabi for the foundation English composition courses (Exposition and Persuasion), both mandatory for first-year students, were standardized in the areas of academic integrity and include detailed explanations of plagiarism, incorrect reporting of data, misrepresentation, destruction of resources or the work of others, use of work from one course to another, and cheating. These and other courses teach students proper techniques for research and the citing of sources in both written work and oral presentations.

Faculty utilize current technology to ensure students do their work honestly and do not plagiarize. Both www.turnitin.com and Blackboard's "SafeAssign" are regularly used by faculty across the disciplines to ensure that students use proper documentation of sources and maintain academic integrity in their work.

AUBG continues to follow all US standards for copyright protection. The university's fair use policy is explicit in the Faculty Manual:

“In no case should multiple copies of copyrighted materials be reproduced for class distribution, either directly to students or through the bookstores, without permission of the copyright holder that is presented to the Dean for University records.”

Faculty also exercise appropriate “fair use” standards when making their materials available electronically on the new Blackboard, e-Learn platform.

The Dean of Faculty works with faculty during orientation and throughout the year to focus and refine policies and procedures which focus on prevention and not just punishment for violations.

In the event of violations, both the Student Conduct Council and the Academic Integrity and Appeals Council attempt to deal with cases in an expeditious and fair manner with a focus on education rather than punishment. Both councils are comprised of faculty, staff, and students and the rules and procedures for both are clearly delineated in the Student Handbook. The Academic Integrity and Appeals Council updated its procedures in 2009 to further protect the rights of student appeals and to limit hearings on cases where there is a lack of significant evidence of unfair treatment by faculty.

In its commitment to continue to adhere to the applicable legal requirements, AUBG devised a [procedure](#) (Encl. 11.9) to allow its faculty to acquire habilitation in Bulgaria, if they wish so, and three AUBG faculty members successfully completed the habilitation process during the 2014–15 academic year.

During the 2014–15 academic year, the staff at AUBG organized a staff assembly modeled on the same principles as the Faculty Assembly. The [goals of the staff assembly](#) (Encl. 11.10) are to give voice to the ideas and concerns of staff members in the governance of the university.

APPRAISAL

Standards for Integrity

The issue of academic integrity at AUBG, as well as in the US, requires constant attention. The first year composition sequence, ENG 101 and 102 — required of all AUBG first-year students — continues to devote considerable time to dealing with issues of plagiarism and intellectual copyright. In these courses students are taught proper methods of documentation in order to ensure that they use sources in an ethical manner.

The ethical research skills students acquire in first year composition sequence sometimes atrophy during their sophomore and junior years. Some students, when taking writing intensive courses as upperclassmen, have forgotten the basics of documentation and ethical usage of sources. Reevaluating integrity across the curriculum through writing and research is an area that needs attention.

The university continues its commitment to recruiting a diverse student body and seeking out students who need financial support and are from disadvantaged minorities. Likewise, diversity training continues to be a priority at the university. In addition to the initial training students receive upon arrival at AUBG, and the stress on diversity that happens on a curricular level, a number of initiatives, both student and faculty driven, have broadened the scope of the university's initial ideas of diversity.

In September of 2013 students founded the student club, SAGE (Students Advocating Gender Equality). As stated in their mission statement, "The intention of SAGE is to raise awareness about gender and LGBT issues, through round table discussions, film screenings, readings, lectures, campaigns and cooperation with NGO's." SAGE has been active in doing all of the above, hosting not only film screenings but panel discussions on tolerance and sexual harassment, as well a workshop on self-defense. SAGE has made the university's vision of diversity even more inclusive, and attempts to develop a climate of mutual respect amongst students and faculty that transcends gender and sexual orientation.

Another longer-standing student initiative is the AUBG chapter of People to People International, which aims at overcoming barriers of culture, ethnicity and other differences, further testimony to our community's commitment to a celebration of diversity.

In spring of 2015 a space in student housing was dedicated as a Women's and Gender Resource Center (WGRC). The WGRC space includes a library, a mediation room, and on-site student staff to assist with research and advice on gender related questions. It is also a designated "safe space" where students may seek out initial support in the case of harassment or assault. The WGRC operates under the auspices of Student Services and is staffed by faculty and student volunteers.

Disparity in faculty compensation between expatriate and locally-hired faculty continues to be a contentious issue. This issue is complicated by the payment of US faculty members in US dollars, while non-US employees are paid in Bulgarian leva, which is fixed against the euro. With the recent rise of the dollar against the euro, the relative compensation levels have changed and will continue to fluctuate, and this increases the sensitivity of the issue further. The disparity is sometimes framed as an integrity issue

in and of itself. In spring of 2015 an ad hoc committee was created to address this issue along with issues of faculty compensation generally.

The 2006 and 2011 reports noted the university's increased sensitivity and challenges towards making AUBG more accessible to faculty and students with disabilities. All new buildings constructed since then have been made fully accessible for people with disabilities — including wheelchair ramps, elevator width and braille keys, and bathrooms that accommodate the disabled. The university also continues to meet the needs of its few students with visual impairments, ensuring not only their access to classes but also providing them the material facility to meet the same standards as their peers.

Reinforcing a Culture of Integrity

Faculty and students periodically engage in discussions about integrity. The Committee on Learning and Teaching (COLT) and later the Academic Affairs Committee(AAC) — that brought COLT's activities into its purview in fall 2012 — hosted workshops and discussions that reinforced methods of maintaining integrity both in and out of the classroom. In March 2012 COLT offered a workshop for faculty on how to use Turnitin to more effectively detect plagiarism. COLT also facilitated two "Feedback Forums" in fall 2010 and spring 2012 where students and faculty met to openly discuss how one achieves excellence in teaching. A final forum, hosted by AAC in spring 2014 and which was perhaps the most edifying, involved a moderated discussion where students directly presented their ideas about effective teaching to faculty with recommendations for improving teaching and learning. Student responses and recommendations were posted after the feedback forums.

The university's procedures for hiring and promotion of faculty continue to adhere to non-discriminatory policies, as we try to be as transparent and fair as possible. Over the last decade the Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC) has worked to improve upon existing procedures for faculty evaluation. In the spring of 2015 the FEC submitted a new evaluation rubric based on the following objectives:

- To respond to the diversity of cases in which a faculty member may contribute to the fulfilment of AUBG mission. The current procedure allows granting long-term contract only to those who are evaluated as "excellent" in teaching. This does not allow FET to distinguish the really excellent teachers from those doing professionally their job in teaching and contributing to the university as active researchers or via dedicated service.
- To introduce input from the departments as the basic unit most closely familiar with the faculty's performance.

The new procedures, designed to fulfill these objectives, were approved by the Faculty Assembly and are included in the Faculty Handbook and implemented by the Faculty Evaluation Team (FET) for the first time in the 2015–16 academic year.

The new procedures for faculty habilitation have proven successful. Three successful habilitation cases have been completed, and the university expects to continue to habilitate a small number of its faculty on a yearly basis.

Our previous report stated that "there are fewer formal opportunities for staff to address issues of fairness and equal opportunity." In the 2014–15 academic year, a staff assembly was created to hold regular meetings where their issues and concerns could be discussed and directly addressed to the university administration.

Staff members were also surveyed, along with faculty and students, in the 2014–15 academic year, for responses about the integrity standard as it relates to the university. Overall staff responses were positive but they expressed concern on point 11.5 (AUBG follows non-discriminatory policies and practices) saying [AUBG] was "overall good with the exception of compensation practices." Staff also wanted

more discussions, focus groups and open forums before implementing new policies and procedures. They stated the need for assessment at all levels including potential employers.

Faculty comments on the survey indicated that “academic honesty is a goal” but there is room for improvement, especially in areas of favoritism and cheating. With regards to AUBG following the letter of the law faculty pointed out some notable exceptions in terms of taxation, salary and habilitation.

Some students expressed a concern in their responses that the university does not enforce rules related to integrity and lacks an “institutional code of ethics.” Some students surveyed also wrote “there is no adequate handling/assessment of complaints made to the quality of teaching/administrative work.” Finally, regarding 11.11 (Integrity is strengthened through periodic and episodic assessments), a student responded that “we are unaware of such assessments made, but we definitely believe that students should be involved in the process.”

PROJECTION

Standards for Integrity

AUBG has appropriate procedures and policies in place to insure that faculty, students and staff operate with integrity. The NEASC survey reveals that some of these procedures need tweaking and others just need clearer communication — since a disconnect seems to exist between the policies and procedures in place and an awareness of those they affect, as noted in the students’ responses.

At the same time, AUBG continues to be proud of its commitment to non-discrimination. The university hosts a unique and diverse student body and hopes to diversify even further in the coming years. As enrollment quotas are vital to the institution’s survival, the university has identified, and will continue to search for, new regions from which to recruit students of all nations and latitudes.

Equity in salaries continues to be an issue. However, it is our hope that with the work of the ad hoc committee on compensation, alongside the university administration, salaries — within the scope of university’s resources — will align with comparable institutions.

AUBG also hopes to make the new Literature and Self-Designed Majors meet the standards for Bulgarian accreditation so that all degrees awarded by the institution will be recognized in both the USA and the EU. Of course the Self-Designed Major, since it has no analog in the Bulgarian system, presents a particular challenge with the National Accreditation and Evaluation Agency.

INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

AUBG continues to measure itself by the integrity standards set forth in its academic mission and to attempt to meet the challenges set forth in its own strategic plans. The university is currently putting together its next strategic plan, to be finalized by January 2016. Once again, this is an inclusive process that involves faculty, staff and students. The first theme/challenge identified in the early stages of this process is an “integration of values into everything the institution does.” Clearly, integrity should be at the core of any institution of higher learning.

AUBG hopes to continue, and improve upon, the standards of integrity and the core values it has set for itself as it moves into the future.

Data First Forms

"DATA FIRST" FORMS GENERAL INFORMATION

Institution Name:	American University in Bulgaria		
OPE ID:	?	03442300	
		Annual Audit	
		Certified:	Qualified
Financial Results for Year Ending:	?	06/30	Yes/No Unqualified
Most Recent Year	?	2015	Yes Unqualified
1 Year Prior		2014	Yes Unqualified
2 Years Prior		2013	Yes Unqualified
Fiscal Year Ends on:	June 30		(month/day)
Budget / Plans			
Current Year	2016		
Next Year	2017		
Contact Person:	?	Steven Sullivan	
Title:		Provost	
Telephone No:		+359 73 888 410	
E-mail address		ssullivan@aubg.edu	

Standard 1: Mission and Purposes

Attach a copy of the current mission statement.

Document		URL	Date Approved by the Governing Board
Institutional Mission Statement	?	https://aubg.edu/mission-values	?
Mission Statement published			
1 AUBG Website	?	https://aubg.edu/mission-values	Print Publication
2 AUBG Catalog		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/789	AUBG Catalog
		-	AUBG Catalog
Related statements			
1 Vision Statement	?	https://aubg.edu/mission-values	Print Publication
2 Values		https://aubg.edu/mission-values	AUBG Catalog
3 Statement of Liberal Learning		https://aubg.edu/liberal-arts-explained	AUBG Catalog

Mission Statement

The mission of the American University in Bulgaria is to educate students of outstanding potential in a community of academic excellence, diversity, and respect and to prepare them for democratic and ethical leadership in serving the needs of the region and the world.

Standard 2: Planning and Evaluation

PLANS		Year of Completion	Effective Dates	URL or Folder Number			
Strategic Plans							
Immediately prior Strategic Plan	?	Jan-02	?	2002-2008	?	paper copy only	
Current Strategic Plan	?	Oct-09	?	2010-2015		https://aubg.edu/strategic-plan-2015	
Next Strategic Plan	?	Apr-16	?	2016-2021		https://aubg.edu/strategic-plan-2016-2021	
Other institution-wide plans							
Master plan	?	2005	?	according to Strategic Planning	?	Kept in Facilities Office. Will be exhibited in the work room.	
Academic plan	?						
Financial plan	?	annually in October		5-year rolling financial forecast		Kept in Finance Office. Will be exhibited in the work room.	
Technology plan	?						
Enrollment plan	?	2015		2016		Kept in Admissions Office. Will be exhibited in the work room.	
Development plan	?						
(Add rows for additional institution-wide plans, as needed.)							
Plans for major units (e.g., departments, library)							
?	1 Library Action Plan	?	2015	?	2016	?	https://www.aubg.edu/upload/upload/group-1/12/Action%20Plan%202015-2016%20.docx
	2 Library Strategic Plan		2015		2020		https://www.aubg.edu/upload/upload/group-1/13/Strategic%20Plan%202015-2020.docx
	3 Long-Range Financial Forecast		2016		until 2020		printed copy only
	4 Information Technology Disaster Recovery Plan		2015		as long as the current infrastructure remains the same		printed copy only
(Add rows for additional plans, as needed.)							
EVALUATION					URL or Folder Number		
Academic program review							
Program review system (colleges and departments). System last updated:					?	2008	
Program review schedule (e.g., every 5 years)						every 5 or 6 years	

Sample program review reports (name of unit or program)

1 History	?	printed copy only
2 Journalism and Mass Communication		printed copy only
3 Economics		printed copy only
4 Computer Science		printed copy only
5 Mathematics		printed copy only
6 Business Administration		printed copy only
7 Political Science and International Relations		printed copy only
8 European Studies		printed copy only

(Insert additional rows, as appropriate.)

System to review other functions and units

Program review schedule (every X years or URL of schedule)

every year through Annual Action Plan and Completion Report

Sample program review reports (name of unit or program)

1 Institutional Research Office Reports	https://www.aubg.edu/institutional-research-resources
2 Regular student, alumni, and employer surveys	https://www.aubg.edu/institutional-research-resources
3 Information Literacy Program Assessment	https://www.aubg.edu/upload/upload/group-1/14/Information%20Literacy%20Report%202014-2015.docx
4 Writing Program Assessment	printed copy only

(Insert additional rows, as appropriate.)

Other significant evaluation reports (Name and URL or Location)

Date

Bulgarian Accreditation Reports:

1 Institutional Accreditation Report (printed copy only)	2012
2 History Major Program Accreditation Report (printed copy only)	2015
3 Journalism and Mass Communication Program Accreditation Report (printed copy only)	2013
4 Economics Program Accreditation Report (printed copy only)	2013
5 Business Administration Program Accreditation Report (printed copy only)	2014
6 Computer Science Program and Information Resources Program Accreditation Report (printed copy only)	2014
7 Mathematics Program Accreditation Report (printed copy only)	2014

(Insert additional rows, as appropriate.)

Standard 3: Organization and Governance

Please attach to this form:

- 1) A copy of the [institution's organization chart\(s\)](#) (available on p. IV at the beginning of this report, as part of the Institutional Characteristics Form)
- 2) A copy of the [by-laws](#) (available as Electronic Enclosure 11.5), [enabling legislation](#) (available as Electronic Enclosure 3.0), and/or other appropriate documentation to establish the legal authority of the institution to award degrees in accordance with applicable requirements.

If there is a "related entity," such as a church or religious congregation, a state system, or a corporation, describe and document the relationship with the accredited institution.

Name of the related entity

URL of documentation of relationship

Governing Board

By-laws

Board members' names and affiliations

URL

Printed copy.

<https://www.aubg.edu/board-trustees>

Board committees

?

- a. Executive Committee
- b. Educational Policy Committee
- c. Finance and Property Committee
- d. University Development Committee
- e. Committee on Trustees
- f. Legislative Liaison Committee
- g. Student Affairs Committee
- h. Audit Committee
- i. Committee on Investments

(Insert additional rows as appropriate.)

URL or document name for meeting minutes

Board Book
Board Book
Board Book
Board Book
Board Book
Board Book
Board Book
Board Book
Board Book

Major institutional committees or governance groups*

- a. Faculty Assembly
- b. Leadership Team, Provost's Council
- c. Student Government
- d. University Standing Committees
- e. Staff Assembly
- f. Dean's Council

(Insert additional rows as appropriate.)

URL or document name for meeting minutes

Kept on e-learn, distributed by e-mail
Distributed by e-mail
<http://sg.aubg.bg/documents>
President's Office
Kept on e-learn, distributed by e-mail
Distributed by e-mail

*Include faculty, staff, and student groups.

Standard 3: Organization and Governance (Locations and Modalities)

Campuses, Branches, Locations, and Modalities Currently in Operation (See definitions, below)

(Insert additional rows as appropriate.)

	City	State or Country	Date Initiated	Enrollment*
Main campus	Blagoevgrad	Bulgaria	6/1/1991	913
Other principal campuses				
Branch campuses				
Other instructional locations	Sofia	Bulgaria	3/1/2003	20
Distance Learning, e-learning				Enrollment*
		Date Initiated		
First on-line course				
First program 50% or more on-line				
First program 100% on-line				
Distance Learning, other			Date Initiated	Enrollment*
Modality				
Correspondence Education			Date Initiated	Enrollment*
Low-Residency Programs			Date Initiated	Enrollment*
Program Name				

Definitions

Main campus: primary campus, including the principal office of the chief executive officer.

Other principal campus: a campus away from the main campus that either houses a portion or portions of the institution's academic program (e.g., the medical school) or a permanent location offering 100% of the degree requirements of one or more of the academic programs offered on the main campus and otherwise meets the definition of the branch campus (below).

Branch campus (federal definition): a location of an institution that is geographically apart and independent of the main campus which meets all of the following criteria: a) offers 50% or more of an academic program leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized credential, or at which a degree may be completed; b) is permanent in nature; c) has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; d) has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

Instructional location: a location away from the main campus where 50% or more of a degree or Title-IV eligible certificate can be completed.

Distance Learning, e-learning: A degree or Title-IV eligible certificate for which 50% or more of the courses can be completed entirely on-line.

Distance Learning, other: A degree or Title IV certificate in which 50% or more of the courses can be completed entirely through a distance learning modality other than e-learning.

Correspondence Education (federal definition): Education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor. Interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student. Correspondence courses are typically self-paced. Correspondence education is not distance education.

* Report here the annual unduplicated headcount for the most recently completed year.

Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Summary - Enrollment and Degrees)

"Most Recent Year"=2014-15

Fall Enrollment* by location and modality, as of Census Date

Fall 15 enrollment and FTE and 2014-2015 graduates

Degree Level/ Location & Modality	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's	Clinical doctorates (e.g., Pharm.D., DPT, DNP)	Professional doctorates (e.g., Ed.D., Psy.D., D.B.A.)	M.D., J.D., DDS	Ph.D.	Total Degree- Seeking FTE
Main Campus FTE		928						928
Other Campus FTE			20					
Branches FTE								
Other Locations FTE								
Overseas Locations FTE								
On-Line FTE								
Correspondence FTE								
Low-Residency Programs FTE								
Total FTE		928	20					948
Unduplicated Headcount Total		867	20					887
Degrees Awarded, Most Recent Year		248	19					267

Student Type/ Location & Modality	Non- Matriculated Students	Visiting Students	Title IV-Eligible Certificates: Students Seeking Certificates
Main Campus FTE		40	
Other Campus FTE			
Branches FTE			
Other Locations FTE			
Overseas Locations FTE			
On-Line FTE			
Correspondence FTE			
Low-Residency Programs FTE			
Total FTE			
Unduplicated Headcount Total		43	
Certificates Awarded, Most Recent Year	n.a.	n.a.	

Notes:

- 1) Enrollment numbers should include all students in the named categories, including students in continuing education and students enrolled through any contractual relationship.
- 2) Each student should be recorded in only one category, e.g., students enrolled in low-residency programs housed on the main campus should be recorded only in the category "low-residency programs."
- 3) Please refer to form 3.2, "Locations and Modalities," for definitions of locations and instructional modalities.

* For programs not taught in the fall, report an analogous term's enrollment as of its Census Date.

Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Headcount by UNDERGRADUATE Major)

For Fall Term, as of Census Date		4 Years Prior	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Current Year*	Next Year Forward (goal)
		(FY 2012)	(FY 2013)	(FY2014)	(FY 2015)	(FY 2016)	(FY 2017)
		Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13	Fall 14	Fall 15	Fall 16
Certificate							
Total		-	-	-	-	-	-
Associate							
	Undeclared						
Total		-	-	-	-	-	-
Baccalaureate							
	American Studies				1	1	-
	Business Administration	283	225	234	202	149	155
	Computer Science	41	37	52	54	44	46
	Economics	114	115	121	84	85	88
	European Politics/Studies	30	26	17	10	11	11
	History and Civilizations	11	10	5	8	2	2
	Information Systems	39	54	54	69	57	59
	Journalism and Mass Communication	92	90	104	77	68	71
	Literature					4	4
	Mathematics	29	24	28	12	19	20
	Political Science and International Studies	102	97	83	52	68	71
	Self-Designed					9	9
	Undeclared	565	576	525	535	589	551
Total		1,306	1,254	1,223	1,104	1,106	1,087
Total Undergraduate		1,306	1,254	1,223	1,104	1,106	1,087

*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 4: The Academic Program (Headcount by GRADUATE Major)

?

For Fall Term, as of Census Date

4 Years	3 Years	2 Years	1 Year	Current	Next Year
Prior	Prior	Prior	Prior	Year*	Forward (goal)
(FY 2012)	(FY 2013)	(FY2014)	(FY 2015)	(FY 2016)	(FY 2017)
Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13	Fall 14	Fall 15	Fall 16

Master's

P	Business Administration	24	22	22	20	20	24
	Total	24	22	22	20	20	24

Doctorate

P							
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

First Professional

P							
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

Other

?							
	Total	-	-	-	-	-	-

Total Graduate

24	22	22	20	20	24
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*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 4: The Academic Program
(Credit Hours Generated By Department or Comparable Academic Unit)

?

?

	4 Years Prior (FY 2012) F'11+S'12	3 Years Prior (FY 2013) F'12+S'13	2 Years Prior (FY2014) F'13+S'14	1 Year Prior (FY 2015) F'14+S'15	Current Year* (FY 2016) F'15+S'16	Next Year Forward (goal) (FY 2017) F'16+S'17
Undergraduate						
AUB	62	57	61	60	57	60
ALL	7,312	6,803	6,700	6,304	6,449	6,800
BUS	6,423	6,112	6,200	5,457	5,753	6,066
COS	2,131	2,415	2,667	2,853	2,394	2,524
ECO	4,644	4,733	4,438	3,818	4,193	4,421
HC+HS	2,915	2,750	2,665	2,718	2,627	2,770
JMC	2,158	2,202	2,204	2,064	2,052	2,163
MSc	4,392	4,159	3,607	3,491	3,721	3,924
PE	2,958	3,021	2,667	2,736	2,707	2,854
SDM				1	1	1
Total	32,995	32,252	31,209	29,502	29,954	31,583

Graduate						
BUS	1162	1054	1,064	972	1,063	1,063
Total	1,162	1,054	1,064	972	1,063	1,063

*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 5: Faculty
(Rank, Gender, and Salary, Fall Term)

?

		4 Years Prior		3 Years Prior		2 Years Prior		1 Year Prior		Current Year*		Next Year Forward (goal)	
		Fall 11		Fall 12		Fall 13		Fall 14		Fall 15		Fall 16	
		FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Number of Faculty													
Professor	Male	10	2	10	3	7	2	7	4	7	3	6	3
	Female	2	0	2	0	3	-	1	-	3	1		1
Associate	Male	15	3	14	2	14	3	12	2	14	2		2
	Female	6	3	6	2	6	2	8	1	6	-	6	-
Assistant	Male	12	5	10	6	9	9	10	10	8	8	11	8
	Female	6	1	8	4	8	2	7	2	6	1	8	1
Instructor	Male	1	6	1	5	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	3
	Female	1	3	1	5	2	2	2	1	1	3	2	3
Other	Male			0	0	-	-	-	-				
	Female			0	0	-	-	-	-				
Total	Male	38	16	35	16	33	18	32	19	33	17	21	16
	Female	15	7	17	11	19	6	18	4	16	5	16	5
Total Faculty													
Professor		12	2	12	3	10	2	8	4	10	4	6	4
Associate		21	6	20	4	20	5	20	3	20	2	6	2
Assistant		18	6	18	10	17	11	17	12	14	9	19	9
Instructor		2	9	2	10	5	6	5	4	5	7	6	6
Other		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		53	23	52	27	52	24	50	23	49	22	37	21
Salary for Academic Year		FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Professor	Minimum	25,500	9,737	35,661	10,005	29,201	15,701	31,900	2,481	31,000	13,849	31,930	14,264
	Mean	41,915	12,171	47,275	14,452	47,703	17,909	46,553	12,307	47,279	19,808	48,697	20,402
Associate	Minimum	26,035	6,720	27,457	3,462	28,157	6,572	28,935	2,256	27,103	1,944	27,916	2,002
	Mean	40,367	14,608	41,487	14,987	44,172	12,285	44,491	12,602	46,490	4,860	47,885	5,006
Assistant	Minimum	25,938	9,128	29,391	2,083	28,481	1,974	15,034	2,029	27,878	3,495	28,714	3,600
	Mean	36,125	12,378	37,552	11,858	39,389	9,434	44,227	11,391	47,293	9,579	48,712	9,866
Instructor	Minimum	21,170	2,519	21,805	2,885	22,895	5,732	23,528	5,412	16,778	1,036	17,281	1,067
	Mean	21,503	8,475	22,148	8,767	29,326	8,590	32,727	7,826	31,970	5,495	32,929	5,660
Other	Minimum												
	Mean												

*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 5: Faculty
(Highest Degrees and Teaching Assignments, Fall Term)

		4 Years Prior		3 Years Prior		2 Years Prior		1 Year Prior		Current Year*		Next Year Forward (goal)	
		Fall 11		Fall 12		Fall 13		Fall 14		Fall 15		Fall 16	
		FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Highest Degree Earned: Doctorate													
Professor		12	2	12	3	10	2	9	4	10	4	9	4
Associate		21	5	19	3	18	4	18	3	18	2	16	2
Assistant		12	5	10	7	13	9	12	10	10	8	16	8
Instructor		0	0	0	0	1	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other						-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		45	12	41	13	42	15	39	17	38	14	41	14
Highest Degree Earned: Master's													
Professor		0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Associate		0	1	1	1	2	1	2	-	2	-	-	-
Assistant		6	0	6	2	4	1	5	1	4	1	3	1
Instructor		2	9	2	9	4	6	5	3	5	6	6	5
Other								-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		8	10	9	12	10	8	12	4	11	7	9	6
Highest Degree Earned: Bachelor's													
Professor		0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Associate		0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistant		0	1	2	1	0	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Instructor		0	0	0	1	0	0	-	1	-	1	-	1
Other										-	-	-	-
Total		0	1	2	2	0	1	-	2	-	1	-	1
Highest Degree Earned: Professional License													
Professor													
Associate													
Assistant													
Instructor													
Other													
Total		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fall Teaching Load, in credit hours													
Professor	Maximum	13.00	9.00	12.50	12.50	10.00	12.50	10.00	12.50	10.00	12.50	10.00	12.50
	Median	9.00	7.50	12.00	9.00	9.00	10.75	9.00	7.50	9.00	10.50	9.00	10.50
Associate	Maximum	16.00	12.50	17.00	10.50	12.00	10.50	12.00	10.50	12.00	6.00	12.00	6.00
	Median	12.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	6.00	9.00	4.50	9.00	4.50
Assistant	Maximum	16.00	9.00	19.00	12.00	14.00	8.00	12.00	9.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
	Median	9.00	8.50	11.00	7.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	6.00	9.00	8.00	9.00	8.00
Instructor	Maximum	12.00	12.00	12.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	7.00	9.00	6.00	9.00	6.00
	Median	10.50	6.00		6.00	9.00	6.00	9.00	6.00	9.00	6.00	9.00	6.00
Other	Maximum		1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00
	Median		1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00		1.00

Explanation of Teaching Load (if not measured in credit hours):

*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 5: Faculty
(Appointments, Tenure, Departures, and Retirements, Full Academic Year)

	4 Years Prior		3 Years Prior		2 Years Prior		1 Year Prior		Current Year*		Next Year Forward (goal)	
	AY 11-12		AY 12-13		AY 13-14		AY 14-15		AY 15-16		AY 16-17	
	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
# of Faculty Appointments ?												
Professor	3	0	0	1	0	-	1	2	-	-	-	-
Associate	0	0	2	0	0	1	-	1	1	-	1	-
Assistant	7	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	-	1	6	-
Instructor	0	5	0	4	2	3	-	2	1	4	2	1
Other											-	-
Total	10	8	5	8	6	7	4	9	2	5	9	1
# of Faculty in Tenured Positions ?												
Professor												
Associate												
Assistant												
Instructor												
Other												
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
# of Faculty Departures ?												
Professor	3	0	1	0	0	1	3	-	2	-	-	-
Associate	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	-
Assistant	3	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	1	-
Instructor	2	4	0	3	0	7	-	3	1	3	1	2
Other												
Total	9	8	3	5	4	12	7	8	7	6	3	2
# of Faculty Retirements ?												
Professor											1	
Associate												
Assistant												
Instructor												
Other												
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-

*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 5: Faculty
(Number of Faculty by Department or Comparable Unit, Fall Term)

		4 Years Prior		3 Years Prior		2 Years Prior		1 Year Prior		Current Year*		Next Year Forward (goal)	
		Fall 11		Fall 12		Fall 13		Fall 14		Fall 15		Fall 16	
		FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT	FT	PT
Number of Faculty by Department (or comparable academic unit)													
?	Arts, Language, and Literature	10	9	9	13	10	9	9	10	9	10	9	11
	Business	12	2	10	3	10	4	12	2	10	1	12	1
	Computer Science	4	2	5	1	4	2	5	3	4	3	5	3
	Economics	9	-	9	-	9	1	8	2	7	1	7	1
	History and Civilizations	7	1	6	-	6	-	7	1	7	-	6	-
	Journalism and Mass Communication	3	2	3	3	4	2	3	3	3	3	4	3
	Mathematics	3	6	4	6	5	5	6	4	5	3	5	3
	Political Science and European Studies	5	2	6	2	4	3	6	2	6	2	7	2
Total		53	24	52	28	52	26	56	27	51	23	55	24

*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 6: Students (Admissions, Fall Term)

?

Credit Seeking Students Only - Including Continuing Education

	4 Years Prior (FY 2012)	3 Years Prior (FY 2013)	2 Years Prior (FY 2014)	1 Year Prior (FY 2015)	Current Year* (FY 2016)	Next Year Forward (goal) (FY 2017)
	Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13	Fall 14	Fall 15	Fall 16
Freshmen - Undergraduate						
Completed Applications	798	755	585	637	693	762
Applications Accepted	452	485	343	368	483	526
Applicants Enrolled	248	228	191	203	224	287
% Accepted of Applied	56.6%	64.2%	58.6%	57.8%	69.7%	69.1%
% Enrolled of Accepted	54.9%	47.0%	55.7%	55.2%	46.4%	54.5%
Percent Change Year over Year						
Completed Applications	-	-	-22.5%	8.9%	8.8%	10.0%
Applications Accepted	-	-	-29.3%	7.3%	31.3%	9.0%
Applicants Enrolled	-	-	-16.2%	6.3%	10.3%	28.1%
Average of Statistical Indicator of Aptitude of Enrollees: (Define Below)						
Weighted average of high school grade point average and English language proficiency score	4513	4572	4632	4606	4666	4581
Transfers - Undergraduate						
Completed Applications	25	7	10	15	20	15
Applications Accepted	12	4	10	11	12	10
Applications Enrolled	7	2	9	2	4	5
% Accepted of Applied	48.0%	57.1%	100.0%	73.3%	60.0%	63.6%
% Enrolled of Accepted	58.3%	50.0%	90.0%	18.2%	33.3%	49.0%
Master's Degree						
Completed Applications	33	30	30	24	34	34
Applications Accepted	26	28	22	23	30	28
Applications Enrolled	22	25	20	22	26	24
% Accepted of Applied	78.8%	93.3%	73.3%	95.8%	88.2%	82.4%
% Enrolled of Accepted	84.6%	89.3%	90.9%	95.7%	86.7%	85.7%
First Professional Degree - All Program						
Completed Applications						
Applications Accepted						
Applications Enrolled						
% Accepted of Applied	-	-	-	-	-	-
% Enrolled of Accepted	-	-	-	-	-	-
Doctoral Degree						
Completed Applications						
Applications Accepted						
Applications Enrolled						
% Accepted of Applied	-	-	-	-	-	-
% Enrolled of Accepted	-	-	-	-	-	-

*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 6: Students
(Enrollment, Fall Census Date)

?

Credit-Seeking Students Only - Including Continuing Education

		4 Years Prior (FY 2012)	3 Years Prior (FY 2013)	2 Years Prior (FY 2014)	1 Year Prior (FY 2015)	Current Year* (FY 2016)	Next Year Forward (goal) (FY 2017)
		Fall 11	Fall 12	Fall 13	Fall 14	Fall 15	Fall 16
UNDERGRADUATE							
First Year	Full-Time Headcount	295	289	237	246	264	287
	Part-Time Headcount	2					
	Total Headcount	297	289	237	246	264	287
	Total FTE	315.7	309.0	252.3	261.3	291.1	306.1
Second Year	Full-Time Headcount	275	274	251	215	221	241
	Part-Time Headcount						
	Total Headcount	275	274	251	215	221	241
	Total FTE	288.9	284.7	261.3	225.3	228.5	257.1
Third Year	Full-Time Headcount	196	242	253	212	193	200
	Part-Time Headcount						
	Total Headcount	196	242	253	212	193	200
	Total FTE	215.5	264.5	272.6	228.8	206.2	213.3
Fourth Year	Full-Time Headcount	202	162	192	207	185	180
	Part-Time Headcount	5	3	12	3	4	6
	Total Headcount	207	165	204	210	189	186
	Total FTE	220.3	177.1	208.9	224.0	201.8	198.4
Undassified	Full-Time Headcount	67	42	45	30	40	47
	Part-Time Headcount		2	1		3	3
	Total Headcount	67	44	46	30	43	50
	Total FTE	66.0	42.3	45.1	29.3	39.7	53.3
Total Undergraduate Students							
	Full-Time Headcount	1,035	1,009	978	910	903	955
	Part-Time Headcount	7	5	13	3	7	9
	Total Headcount	1,042	1,014	991	913	910	964
	Total FTE	1,106.4	1,077.6	1,040.3	968.7	967.4	1,028.2
	% Change FTE Undergraduate	na	na	-3.5%	-6.9%	-0.1%	6.3%
GRADUATE							
	Full-Time Headcount	24	22	22	19	20	24
	Part-Time Headcount				1		
	Total Headcount	24	22	22	20	20	24
	Total FTE	24.0	22.0	22.0	19.3	20.0	24.0
	% Change FTE Graduate	na	na	0.0%	-12.5%	3.9%	20.0%
GRAND TOTAL							
	Grand Total Headcount	1,066	1,036	1,013	933	930	988
	Grand Total FTE	1,130.4	1,099.6	1,062.3	988.0	987.4	1,052.2
	% Change Grand Total FTE	na	na	-3.4%	-7.0%	-0.1%	6.6%

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Standard 6: Students (Financial Aid, Debt, and Developmental Courses)

? Where does the institution describe the students it seeks to serve?

<https://www.aubg.edu/mission-values>

4 Years Prior	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	Most Recently Completed Year	Current Budget***	Next Year Forward (goal)
(FY 2012)	(FY 2013)	(FY 2014)	(FY 2015)	(FY 2016)	(FY 2017)

? Student Financial Aid

Total Federal Aid					
Grants					
Loans					
Work Study					
Total State Aid					
Total Institutional Aid					
Grants	\$2,552	\$2,281	\$2,016	\$1,918	\$1,787
Loans					
Total Private Aid					
Grants	\$2,167	\$2,156	\$2,457	\$2,462	\$2,906
Loans					

Student Debt

Percent of students graduating with debt*

Undergraduates	21%	20%	16%	17%	17%	17%
Graduates	18%	20%	13%	5%	5%	5%

For students with debt:

Average amount of debt for students leaving the institution with a degree

Undergraduates	\$6,650	\$5,609	\$9,902	\$14,674	\$14,674	\$14,674
Graduates	\$10,529	\$4,075	\$7,544	\$10,970	\$10,970	\$10,970

Average amount of debt for students leaving the institution without a degree

Undergraduates						
Graduate Students						

Cohort Default Rate

--	--	--	--	--	--

Percent of First-year students in Developmental Courses**

English as a Second/Other Language					
English (reading, writing, communication skills)					
Math					
Other					

* All students who graduated should be included in this calculation.

**Courses for which no credit toward a degree is granted.

***"Current Budget" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 7: Library and Other Information Resources
(Library)

	4 Years Prior (FY 2012)	3 Years Prior (FY 2013)	2 Years Prior (FY 2014)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 2015)	Current Year* (actual or projection) (FY 2016)	Next Year Forward (goal) (FY 2017)
Expenditures/FTE student						
Materials	\$ 83	\$ 97	\$ 80	\$ 110	\$120	\$130
Salaries & Wages	\$ 128	\$ 127	\$ 137	\$ 124	\$126	\$128
Other operating	\$ 33	\$ 49	\$ 25	\$ 28	\$30	\$32
Collections						
Total print volumes	122,438	124,327	125,268	126,978	129,000	131,000
Electronic books	102,100	117,970	127,300	133,032	140,000	150,000
Print/microform serial subscriptions	250	240	224	206	205	210
Full text electronic journals	34,428	39,698	41,146	38,439	39,000	40,000
Microforms						
Total media materials	1,412	1,511	1,533	1,594	1,650	1,700
Personnel (FTE)						
Librarians -- main campus	8	8	8	8	8	8
Librarians -- branch campuses						
Other library personnel -- main campus	2	2	2	2	2	2
Other library personnel -- branch campus						
Library Instruction						
Total sessions -- main campus	56	36	42	66	68	70
Total attendance - main campus	1,000	750	900	1,068	1,075	1,080
Total sessions -- branch campuses						
Total attendance -- branch campuses						
Reference and Reserves						
In-person reference questions	2,897	2,998	3,080	2,887	3,000	3,100
Virtual reference questions	625	742	647	402	600	700
Traditional Reserves:						
courses supported	90	80	96	75	80	85
items on reserve	837	603	709	779	800	800
E-Reserves:						
courses supported	8	2	3	2	5	10
items on e-reserve	93	20	12	4	10	10
Circulation (do not include reserves)						
Total/FTE student	9.14	9.15	9.35	8.70	9.00	9.50
Total full-text article requests	47,763	144,358	117,206	121,739	122,000	122,500
Number of hits to library website	45,290	19,837	56,014	53,984	55,000	55,500
Student borrowing through consortia or contract	25	36	15	15	25	30
Availability/attendance						
Hours of operation/week main campus	88	92	88	88	88	88
Hours of operation/week branch campuses						
Gate counts/year -- main campus	92,625	103,592	60,050	84,338	85,000	85,500
Gate counts/year -- average branch campuses						
URL of most recent library annual report:		https://www.aubg.edu/plans-and-reports				
URL of Information Literacy Reports:		https://www.aubg.edu/plans-and-reports				
*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.						

**Standard 7: Library and Other Information Resources
(Information Technology)**

						?
	4 Years Prior (FY 2012)	3 Years Prior (FY 2013)	2 Years Prior (FY 2014)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 2015)	Current Year* (actual or projection) (FY 2016)	Next Year Forward (goal) (FY 2017)
Number (percent) of students with own computers	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Course management system	Blackboard ("e-learn")					
Number of classes using the system						
Classes on the main campus			204	392	387	400
Classes offered off-campus			8	16	16	16
Distance education courses						
Bandwidth						
On-campus network	400	500	600	800	900	100
Off-campus access						
commodity internet (Mbps)						
high-performance networks (Mbps)						
Wireless protocol(s)	802.11 a/b/g	802.11 a/b/g	802.11 a/b/g	802.11 a/b/g/n	802.11 a/b/g/n	802.11 a/b/g/n
Network						
Percent of residence halls connected to network						
wired	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
wireless	80%	90%	95%	100%	100%	100%
Percent of classrooms connected to network						
wired	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
wireless	80%	90%	95%	9500%	95%	95%
Public wireless ports						
Multimedia classrooms (percent)						
Main campus	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Branches and locations	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
IT Personnel (FTE)						
Main campus	13.0	13.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0
Branch campuses	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Dedicated to distance learning						
Software systems and versions						
Students	Blackboard, Blackbaud					
Finances	Konto					
Human Resources						
Advancement						
Library	VTLS					
Website Management						
Portfolio Management						
Interactive Video Conferencing	Cisco Tandberg					
Digital Object Management						
*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.						

Standard 8: Physical and Technological Resources

Campus location	Serviceable Buildings	Assignable Square Feet (000)					
Main campus	8	599					
Other U.S. locations							
International locations							

	4 Years Prior (FY 2012)	3 Years Prior (FY 2013)	2 Years Prior (FY 2014)	1 Year Prior (FY 2015)	Current Year* (FY 2016)	Next Year Forward (goal) (FY 2017)
Revenue (\$000)						
Capital appropriations (public institutions)						
Operating budget	\$944	\$1,103	\$1,194	\$139	\$1,281	\$430
Gifts and grants	\$5,053	\$4,220	\$352	\$373	\$50	-
Debt	\$3,100	\$700				
TOTAL	\$9,097	\$6,023	\$1,546	\$512	\$1,331	\$430
Expenditures (\$000)						
New Construction	\$8,352	\$3,933	\$203	-\$246	\$900	\$0
Renovations, maintenance and equipment	\$131	\$1,432	\$145	\$123	\$75	\$80
Technology	\$614	\$658	\$1,198	\$635	\$356	\$350
TOTAL	\$9,097	\$6,023	\$1,546	\$512	\$1,331	\$430

Assignable square feet (000)	Main campus	Off-campus	Total
Classroom	24,036	7,427	31,463
Laboratory	8,471	1,668	10,139
Office	13,089	570	13,659
Study	26,006	0	26,006
Special	21,592	1,421	23,013
General	153,257	8,127	161,384
Support	89,836	3,165	93,001
Residential	153,084	0	153,084
Other	1,905	0	1,905

Building name	Purpose(s)	Assignable Square Feet (000)	Cost (000)	Year
Balkanski Academic Center	classroom building	31	\$3,277	2008
Library	library	23	\$3,922	2009
Student Center	student center	120	\$11,989	2013
Skapto 3A	residence hall	45	\$5,950	2010

Building name	Purpose(s)	Assignable Square Feet	Cost (000)	Year
Skapto 3 B & C	residence halls	73	\$7,000	2019

Major Renovations, past 10 years (add rows as needed)				
The list below includes renovations costing \$_____ or more				
Building name	Purpose(s)	Assignable Square Feet	Cost (000)	Year
Main Building	English Language Institute facilities renovations	13	\$420	2010

Renovations planned for next 5 years (add rows as needed)				
The list below includes renovations costing \$_____ or more				
Building name	Purpose(s)	Assignable Square Feet	Cost (000)	Year

*"Current Year" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 9: Financial Resources (Statement of Financial Position/Statement of Net Assets)							
FISCAL YEAR ENDS month & day: (6 / 30)		3 Years Prior (FY 2012)	2 Years Prior (FY 2013)	1 Year Prior (FY 2014)	Most Recent Year (FY 2015)	Percent Change 2 yrs-1 yr prior 1 yr-most recent	
	ASSETS						
	CASH AND SHORT TERM INVESTMENTS	\$3,989	\$5,224	\$6,197	\$6,982	18.6%	12.7%
	CASH HELD BY STATE TREASURER					-	-
	DEPOSITS HELD BY STATE TREASURER					-	-
	ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE, NET	\$446	\$459	\$327	\$371	-28.8%	13.5%
	CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE, NET	\$15,410	\$10,258	\$9,373	\$5,881	-8.6%	-37.3%
	INVENTORY AND PREPAID EXPENSES	\$221	\$237	\$235	\$228	-0.8%	-3.0%
	LONG-TERM INVESTMENTS	\$17,075	\$20,496	\$24,125	\$23,649	17.7%	-2.0%
	LOANS TO STUDENTS	\$82	\$57	\$37	\$29	-35.1%	-21.6%
	FUNDS HELD UNDER BOND AGREEMENT					-	-
	PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT, NET	\$32,513	\$36,780	\$36,274	\$34,561	-1.4%	-4.7%
	OTHER ASSETS	\$14	\$10	\$8	\$18	-20.0%	125.0%
	TOTAL ASSETS	\$69,750	\$73,521	\$76,576	\$71,719	4.2%	-6.3%
	LIABILITIES						
	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND ACCRUED LIABILITIES	\$1,553	\$3,598	\$4,085	\$2,060	13.5%	-49.6%
	DEFERRED REVENUE & REFUNDABLE ADVANCES	\$744	\$757	\$847	\$855	11.9%	0.9%
	DUE TO STATE					-	-
	DUE TO AFFILIATES					-	-
	ANNUITY AND LIFE INCOME OBLIGATIONS					-	-
	AMOUNTS HELD ON BEHALF OF OTHERS					-	-
	LONG TERM DEBT	\$9,208	\$9,086	\$8,264	\$7,441	-9.0%	-10.0%
	REFUNDABLE GOVERNMENT ADVANCES					-	-
	OTHER LONG-TERM LIABILITIES	\$158	\$171	\$172	\$166	0.6%	-3.5%
	TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$11,663	\$13,612	\$13,368	\$10,522	-1.8%	-21.3%
	NET ASSETS						
	UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS						
	INSTITUTIONAL	\$9,556	\$10,210	\$10,313	\$10,810	1.0%	4.8%
	FOUNDATION					-	-
	TOTAL	\$9,556	\$10,210	\$10,313	\$10,810	1.0%	4.8%
	TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS						
	INSTITUTIONAL	\$42,325	\$43,409	\$46,434	\$43,778	7.0%	-5.7%
	FOUNDATION					-	-
	TOTAL	\$42,325	\$43,409	\$46,434	\$43,778	7.0%	-5.7%
	PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS						
	INSTITUTIONAL	\$6,206	\$6,290	\$6,461	\$6,609	2.7%	2.3%
	FOUNDATION					-	-
	TOTAL	\$6,206	\$6,290	\$6,461	\$6,609	2.7%	2.3%
	TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$58,087	\$59,909	\$63,208	\$61,197	5.5%	-3.2%
	TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$69,750	\$73,521	\$76,576	\$71,719	4.2%	-6.3%

Standard 9: Financial Resources (Statement of Revenues and Expenses)							
FISCAL YEAR ENDS month & day: (6 / 30)		4 Years Prior (FY2012)	3 Years Prior (FY2013)	2 Years Prior (FY2014)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 2015)	Current Budget* (FY 2016)	Next Year Forward (FY 2017)
OPERATING REVENUES							
☐	TUITION & FEES	\$10,026	\$10,449	\$10,748	\$10,693	\$11,433	\$12,400
☐	ROOM AND BOARD						
☐	LESS FINANCIAL AID	(\$2,552)	(\$2,281)	(\$2,016)	(\$1,918)	(\$1,787)	(\$2,427)
	NET STUDENT FEES	\$7,474	\$8,168	\$8,732	\$8,775	\$9,646	\$9,973
☐	GOVERNMENT GRANTS & CONTRACTS		\$1				
☐	PRIVATE GIFTS, GRANTS & CONTRACTS	\$181	\$863	\$322	\$126	\$315	\$185
☐	OTHER AUXILIARY ENTERPRISES	\$1,498	\$1,659	\$1,807	\$1,637	\$1,782	\$1,946
	ENDOWMENT INCOME USED IN OPERATIONS	\$570	\$590	\$610	\$650	\$690	\$730
☐	OTHER REVENUE (specify): outreach activities	\$1,264	\$1,224	\$1,599	\$1,251	\$1,165	\$1,196
	OTHER REVENUE (specify): other revenue	\$71	\$94	\$92	\$68	(\$460)	(\$450)
	NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS	\$1,394	\$1,408	\$568	\$1,021	\$667	\$611
	TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES	\$12,452	\$14,007	\$13,730	\$13,528	\$13,805	\$14,191
OPERATING EXPENSES							
☐	INSTRUCTION	\$3,845	\$3,902	\$4,107	\$3,780	\$4,107	\$4,176
☐	RESEARCH						
☐	PUBLIC SERVICE	\$1,426	\$1,447	\$1,535	\$1,416	\$1,342	\$1,370
☐	ACADEMIC SUPPORT	\$1,710	\$1,549	\$1,663	\$1,513	\$1,588	\$1,663
☐	STUDENT SERVICES	\$604	\$747	\$932	\$853	\$862	\$983
☐	INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT	\$2,297	\$2,561	\$2,479	\$2,566	\$2,461	\$2,510
	FUNDRAISING AND ALUMNI RELATIONS	\$520	\$511	\$480	\$408	\$593	\$610
☐	OPERATION, MAINTENANCE OF PLANT (if not allocated)						
☐	SCHOLARSHIPS & FELLOWSHIPS (Cash refunded by public institutions)						
☐	AUXILIARY ENTERPRISES	\$1,654	\$2,021	\$1,969	\$1,782	\$1,717	\$1,849
☐	DEPRECIATION (if not allocated)						
☐	OTHER EXPENSES (specify):**	\$183	\$29	\$34	\$75	\$400	\$425
	OTHER EXPENSES (specify): interest expense	\$169	\$347	\$457	\$418	\$419	\$380
	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$12,408	\$13,114	\$13,656	\$12,811	\$13,489	\$13,966
	CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	\$44	\$893	\$74	\$717	\$316	\$225
NON OPERATING REVENUES							
☐	STATE APPROPRIATIONS (NET)						
☐	INVESTMENT RETURN						
☐	INTEREST EXPENSE (public institutions)						
	GIFTS, BEQUESTS & CONTRIBUTIONS NOT USED IN OPERATIONS						
☐	OTHER (specify):						
	OTHER (specify):						
	OTHER (specify):						
	NET NON OPERATING REVENUES	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	INCOME BEFORE OTHER REVENUES EXPENSES, GAINS, OR LOSSES	\$44	\$893	\$74	\$717	\$316	\$225
☐	CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS (public institutions)						
☐	OTHER	(\$360)	\$35	\$124	(\$243)	-	-
	TOTAL INCREASE/DECREASE IN NET ASSETS	(\$316)	\$928	\$198	\$474	\$316	\$225

** Student loans/fees reversal & scholarships for external graduate students
 **"Current Budget" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.

Standard 9: Financial Resources (Statement of Debt)								
FISCAL YEAR ENDS month & day (6 / 30)		4 Years Prior (FY2012)	3 Years Prior (FY2013)	2 Years Prior (FY2014)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 2015)	Current Budget* (FY 2016)	Next Year Forward (FY 2017)	
		DEBT						
		BEGINNING BALANCE	\$4,983	\$10,437	\$11,949	\$11,680	\$8,944	\$7,990
		ADDITIONS	\$8,384	\$4,604	\$3,985	\$938	\$490	-
	P	REDUCTIONS	(\$2,930)	(\$3,092)	(\$4,254)	(\$3,674)	(\$1,444)	(\$1,323)
		ENDING BALANCE	\$10,437	\$11,949	\$11,680	\$8,944	\$7,990	\$6,667
		INTEREST PAID DURING FISCAL YEAR	\$237	\$450	\$488	\$439	\$389	\$340
		CURRENT PORTION	\$1,137	\$2,782	\$3,347	\$1,444	\$1,323	\$833
		BOND RATING						
		DEBT COVENANTS (PLEASE DESCRIBE):						
		Long-term debt represents a loan from the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). As collateral, AUBG pledged 24,000 units in USAID Endowment Multi-Strategy Equity Fund, 24,000 units in USAID Endowment International Equity Fund, 51,000 units in USAID Endowment High Quality Bond Fund, and 27,000 units in USAID Endowment Global Bond Fund, which should equal an amount to cover 110% of the loan principal. In addition, AUBG established a Debt Service Reserve Account funded with an amount equal to the aggregate amount of Debt Service for the immediately succeeding six-month period.						
*"Current Budget" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.								

Standard 9: Financial Resources (Supplemental Data)							
FISCAL YEAR ENDS month & day (6/30)		4 Years Prior (FY2012)	3 Years Prior (FY2013)	2 Years Prior (FY2014)	Most Recently Completed Year (FY 2015)	Current Budget* (FY 2016)	Next Year Forward (FY 2017)
		NET ASSETS					
		NET ASSETS BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$51,727	\$58,087	\$59,909	\$63,208	\$61,197
		TOTAL INCREASE/DECREASE IN NET ASSETS	\$6,360	\$1,822	\$3,299	(\$2,011)	
		NET ASSETS END OF YEAR	\$58,087	\$59,909	\$63,208	\$61,197	\$61,197
		FINANCIAL AID					
		SOURCE OF FUNDS					
		UNRESTRICTED INSTITUTIONAL	\$2,552	\$2,281	\$2,016	\$1,918	\$1,787
		FEDERAL, STATE & PRIVATE GRANTS					
		RESTRICTED FUNDS	\$2,167	\$2,156	\$2,457	\$2,462	\$2,906
		TOTAL	\$4,719	\$4,437	\$4,473	\$4,380	\$4,693
		% DISCOUNT OF TUITION & FEES	46.0%	43.0%	43.0%	42.0%	41.0%
		% UNRESTRICTED DISCOUNT	27.0%	23.0%	20.0%	19.0%	16.0%
		PLEASE INDICATE YOUR INSTITUTION'S ENDOWMENT SPENDING POLICY:					
		AUBG manages its endowment and quasi-endowment funds in a way which protects the real purchasing power of the endowment over time, avoids large or no increases in some years, and preserves and enhances the growth of principal. To this end, the University has adopted the "Yale Formula", which provides annual cash distribution to the University. The endowment earnings distributed are calculated as 70% of the allowable spending in the prior fiscal year, increased by the rate of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, for the 12 months prior to the start of the fiscal year; plus 30% of the long-term spending rate of 4.5 percent (a total of 1.35 percent) applied to the four-quarter market average of the endowment, for the period ending December 31 prior to the start of the fiscal year.					
*"Current Budget" refers to the year in which the team visit occurs, or, if these forms are being completed in conjunction with an interim or progress report, the year in which the report is submitted to the Commission.							

Standard 10: Public Disclosure			
Information	Web Addresses	?	Print Publications
How can inquiries be made about the institution? Where can questions be addressed?	http://www.aubg.edu/office-directory		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog, AUBG Viewbook, Inside AUBG, AUBG toss piece
Notice of availability of publications and of audited financial statement or fair summary	http://www.aubg.edu/finstatements		Institutional Research Annual Report
Institutional catalog	http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Obligations and responsibilities of students and the institution	http://www.aubg.edu/documents/259		Student Handbook
Information on admission and attendance	http://www.aubg.edu/admissions		
	http://www.aubg.edu/how-to-apply-first-year		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog;
Institutional mission and objectives	http://www.aubg.edu/mission-values		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Expected educational outcomes	https://www.aubg.edu/academics-bachelor-degrees		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Status as public or independent institution; status as not-for-profit or for-profit; religious affiliation	http://www.aubg.edu/about-aubg		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Requirements, procedures and policies re: admissions	http://www.aubg.edu/how-to-apply-first-year		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Requirements, procedures and policies re: transfer credit	http://www.aubg.edu/how-to-apply-transfer		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
	http://www.aubg.edu/erasmus-outgoing		
A list of institutions with which the institution has an articulation agreement	http://www.aubg.edu/us-schools-outgoing		
	http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog		
Student fees, charges and refund policies	http://www.aubg.edu/documents/259		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog, AUBG Student Handbook
	http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog		
Rules and regulations for student conduct	http://www.aubg.edu/documents/259		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog, AUBG Student Handbook
Procedures for student appeals and complaints	http://www.aubg.edu/documents/259		AUBG Student Handbook
Other information re: attending or withdrawing from the institution	http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog

Information	Web Addresses	Print Publications
Academic programs	http://www.aubg.edu/academics-bachelor-degrees http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog https://www.aubg.edu/emba	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Courses currently offered	http://www.aubg.edu/academics/registrar-course-registration http://www.aubg.edu/academics/registrar-schedules https://www.aubg.edu/departments	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Other available educational opportunities	http://www.aubg.edu/study-abroad-exchange-incoming http://www.aubg.edu/cep http://www.aubg.edu/eli http://www.aubg.edu/emba	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog,
Other academic policies and procedures	http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog http://www.aubg.edu/documents/259 http://www.aubg.edu/registrar-office-main	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog, AUBG Student Handbook
Requirements for degrees and other forms of academic recognition	http://www.aubg.edu/registrar-office-main http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog http://www.aubg.edu/academics-bachelor-degrees	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
List of current faculty, indicating department or program affiliation, distinguishing between full- and part-time, showing degrees held and institutions granting them	http://www.aubg.edu/faculty http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Names and positions of administrative officers	http://www.aubg.edu/office-directory http://www.aubg.edu/staff	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog, AUBG Student Handbook

Information	Web Addresses	Print Publications
Names, principal affiliations of governing board members	http://www.aubg.edu/board-trustees http://www.aubg.edu/university-council	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog, AUBG Board Book
Locations and programs available at branch campuses, other instructional locations, and overseas operations at which students can enroll for a degree, along with a description of programs and services available at each location	http://www.aubg.edu/emba http://www.aubg.edu/conference-facilities	AUBG website
Programs, courses, services, and personnel not available in any given academic year.	http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Size and characteristics of the student body	http://www.aubg.edu/quick-facts http://www.aubg.edu/diversity http://www.aubg.edu/students-residential-life http://www.aubg.edu/residence-halls http://www.aubg.edu/students/sports-athletics-facilities	Institutional Research Annual Report
Description of the campus setting	http://www.aubg.edu/campus-dining-gallery http://www.aubg.edu/campus-virtual-tour http://www.aubg.edu/life-in-blagoevgrad http://www.aubg.edu/life-in-bulgaria http://www.aubg.edu/student-life http://www.aubg.edu/academic-offices-and-resources http://www.aubg.edu/library/	AUBG Undergraduate Catalog, AUBG Student Handbook; AUBG Viewbook
Availability of academic and other support services	http://www.aubg.edu/counseling-services http://www.aubg.edu/career-services http://www.aubg.edu/health-services http://www.aubg.edu/international-student-services	AUB Undergraduate Catalog, AUBG Student Handbook; AUBG Viewbook

Information	Web Addresses	?	Print Publications
Range of co-curricular and non-academic opportunities available to students	http://www.aubg.edu/student-life http://www.aubg.edu/career-services http://www.aubg.edu/activities-and-clubs		AUBG Viewbook
Institutional learning and physical resources from which a student can reasonably be expected to benefit	http://www.aubg.edu/library/ http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog http://www.aubg.edu/mission-values		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog
Institutional goals for students' education	http://www.aubg.edu/academic-catalog http://www.aubg.edu/institutional-research-resources		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog, Institutional Research Annual Report
Success of students in achieving institutional goals including rates of retention and graduation and other measure of student success appropriate to institutional mission. Passage rates for licensure exams, as appropriate	http://www.aubg.edu/stories?categories[]=news-category-alumni http://www.aubg.edu/institutional-research-resources		Institutional Research Annual Report; Alumni Success brochure
Total cost of education, including availability of financial aid and typical length of study	http://www.aubg.edu/cost-and-aid http://www.aubg.edu/finance-your-education		
Expected amount of student debt upon graduation	-		
Statement about accreditation	http://www.aubg.edu/accreditation		AUBG Undergraduate Catalog

Standard 11: Integrity				
?	Policies	Last Updated	?	URL Where Policy is Posted
		March 2014		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/789
	Academic honesty	August 2015		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/14
		January 2016		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/789
		August 2015		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/360
	Intellectual property rights	September 2014		https://sway.com/Db_1hExX1f6_RbZK https://www.aubg.edu/computing-policies
		May 2010		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/417
	Conflict of interest	May 2015		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/757
		May 2010		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/417
		August 2015		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/789
	Privacy rights	June 2014		https://aubg.edu/documents/259 https://www.aubg.edu/computing-policies
		September 2014		
		August 2015		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/789
	Fairness for students	June 2014		https://aubg.edu/documents/259
		May 2015		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/757
	Fairness for faculty			Student Services; Dean of Students; Faculty Assembly; Academic Integrity and Appeals Council; Academic Policies Committee; Faculty Grievance Committee
	Fairness for staff	May 2010		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/417
		May 2015		https://www.aubg.edu/documents/757
	Academic freedom			HR Office; Staff Development and Policies Committee Provost; Dean of Faculty; Faculty Assembly; Academic Policies Committee
	Other			

Non-discrimination policies

Recruitment and admissions	January 2015	https://www.aubg.edu/how-to-apply-first-year	Admissions Office; Admissions Committee;
	May 2015	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/757	Provost; Dean of Faculty;
Employment	May 2010	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/417	HR Office; Faculty Search Committee Academic Policies Committee
	May 2015	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/757	Provost; Faculty Evaluation Committee;
Evaluation	May 2010	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/417	Faculty Evaluation Team, Staff Development and Policies;
	August 2015	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/789	Registrars; Student outcomes Assessment Committee
	June 2014	https://aubg.edu/documents/259	
Disciplinary action	May 2015	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/757	Provost; HR Office;
	May 2010	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/417	Academic Policies Committee;
	June 2014	https://aubg.edu/documents/259	Academic Integrity and Appeals Council; Student Conduct Council; Staff Development and Policies Committee
	May 2010	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/417 https://www.aubg.edu/foundations-corporate-relations https://www.aubg.edu/annual-giving-fund	President; Executive Director for Institutional Advancement; Development Office; Financial Affairs Committee; Budget and Planning Committee
Advancement			
Other			

Resolution of grievances			
Students	June 2014 August 2015	https://aubg.edu/documents/259 https://www.aubg.edu/documents/789	Student Government; Student Conduct Council
Faculty	May 2015	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/757	Provost; Faculty Grievance Committee
Staff	May 2010	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/417	HR Office; Staff Development and Policies Committee
Other			
	Last Updated	Relevant URL or Publication	Responsible Office or Committee
Other			
1			



**NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

3 Burlington Woods, Suite 100, Burlington, MA 01803-4514
Voice: (781) 425 7785 Fax: (781) 425 1001 Web: <http://cihe.neasc.org>

Affirmation of Compliance with Federal Regulations Relating to Title IV

Periodically, member institutions are asked to affirm their compliance with federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including relevant requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

- 1. Credit Hour:** Federal regulation defines a credit hour as an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutional established equivalence that reasonably approximates not less than: (1) One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time; or (2) At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution including laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours. (CIHE Policy 111. See also *Standards for Accreditation* 4.34.)

URL	https://www.aubg.edu/documents/789
Print Publications	Undergraduate Catalog
Self-study/Fifth-year report Page Reference	p. 27

- 2. Credit Transfer Policies.** The institution's policy on transfer of credit is publicly disclosed through its website and other relevant publications. The institution includes a statement of its criteria for transfer of credit earned at another institution of higher education along with a list of institutions with which it has articulation agreements. (CIHE Policy 95. See also *Standards for Accreditation* 4.44 and 10.5.)

URL	http://www.aubg.edu/how-to-apply-transfer
Print Publications	Undergraduate Catalog (print and on-line)
Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	p. 28, p.32

- 3. Student Complaints.** "Policies on student rights and responsibilities, including grievance procedures, are clearly stated, well publicized and readily available, and fairly and consistently administered." (*Standards for Accreditation* 6.18, 10.5, and 11.8.)

URL	http://www.aubg.edu/documents/259
Print Publications	Student Handbook (currently on-line only)
Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	p. 51, p. 90

- 4. Distance and Correspondence Education: Verification of Student Identity:** If the institution offers distance education or correspondence education, it has processes in place to establish that the student who registers in a distance education or correspondence education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit. . . .The institution protects student privacy and notifies students at the time of registration or enrollment of any projected additional student charges associated with the verification of student identity. (CIHE Policy 95. See also *Standards for Accreditation* 4.42.)

Method(s) used for verification	N/A
Self-study/Fifth-year Report Page Reference	N/A

- 5. FOR COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATIONS ONLY: Public Notification of an Evaluation Visit and Opportunity for Public Comment:** The institution has made an appropriate and timely effort to notify the public of an upcoming comprehensive evaluation and to solicit comments. (CIHE Policy 77.)

URL	www.aubg.edu
Print Publications	To be determined
Self-study Page Reference	Introduction, p. b

The undersigned affirms that the American University in Bulgaria meets the above federal requirements relating to Title IV program participation, including those enumerated above.

Chief Executive Officer: _____

Date: _____

Student Achievement and Success Forms

Student Achievement (E Series)

Option E1: Part a. Inventory of Educational Effectiveness Indicators

CATEGORY	(1) Have formal learning outcomes been developed?	(2) Where are these learning outcomes published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	(3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	(4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)	(5) What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence?	(6) Date of most recent program review (for general education and each degree program)
At the institutional level:	Yes	Print version only				
For general education if an undergraduate institution:	Yes for each area of the GenEd Program	Catalog; syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys	General Education Council recommends changes to Faculty Assembly	Process exists for approval of syllabi of courses applying for General Education credit to make sure each syllabus includes clear outcomes aligned with the stated goals for each Mode of Inquiry.	In progress
List each degree program: 1. Business Administration	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Capstone Course, State Exam	Department, each semester	Senior Thesis and Senior Project introduced; Minor in Entrepreneurship introduced	2013 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)

CATEGORY	(1) Have formal learning outcomes been developed?	(2) Where are these learning outcomes published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	(3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	(4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)	(5) What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence?	(6) Date of most recent program review (for general education and each degree program)
2. Computer Science	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Senior Project (compulsory capstone course)/ diploma thesis	Department, each semester	The Department introduced a new Information Systems major (2009-10), and has updated the curriculum of the existing Computer Science major (changes voted in 2010); new, state-of-the-art courses developed under a Ministry of Education grant.	2013 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)
3. Information Systems	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Senior Project (non-compulsory capstone course)/ diploma thesis, State Exam	Department, each semester	New, state-of-the-art courses developed under a Ministry of Education grant.	2013 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)
4. Economics	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Senior Thesis/State Exam – Major Field Test	Department, each semester		2012 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)

CATEGORY	(1) Have formal learning outcomes been developed?	(2) Where are these learning outcomes published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	(3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	(4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)	(5) What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence?	(6) Date of most recent program review (for general education and each degree program)
5. Political Science	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Department Internal Survey, Senior Thesis/State Exam, informal collection of information	Department, each semester	Writing component of the major reinforced; research methods course introduced to enhance students' research skills; internship program developed, professional internship recognized, curriculum integrated, Model United Nations included in the program	2013 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)
6. European Studies	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Department Internal Survey, Senior Thesis/State Exam, informal collection of information	Department, each semester	Introduction of new, more applied courses; vertical integration of the curriculum; internship program developed; directly related practical extracurricular activities supervised by faculty, writing component of the major reinforced.	2013 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)

CATEGORY	(1) Have formal learning outcomes been developed?	(2) Where are these learning outcomes published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate.	(3) Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)	(4) Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)	(5) What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence?	(6) Date of most recent program review (for general education and each degree program)
7. Journalism and Mass Communication	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Capstone Project, State Exam	Department, each semester		2012 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)
8. History and Civilizations	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Senior Thesis/ State Exam	Department, each semester; Curriculum Committee, each year	Updated curriculum of the major, effective fall 2009	2014 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)
9. Mathematics	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi	Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Survey, Senior Thesis/State Exam	Department, each semester		2013 (Bulgarian Program Accreditation)
10. Literature	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi				New program (2014)
11. Self-Designed Major	Yes	Catalog, AUBG website, syllabi				New program (2014)

Institutions selecting E1a should also include E1b.

Option E1: Part b. Inventory of Specialized and Program Accreditation

(1) Professional, specialized, State, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the institution (by agency or program name).	(2) Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.	(3) List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action letter or report.	(4) Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board, or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.).	(6) Date and nature of next scheduled review.
AUBG holds full accreditation by the National Evaluation and Accreditation Agency (NEAA) in Bulgaria, including:			Bulgarian accreditation criteria emphasize on:	
Institutional Accreditation	2012	1) Development of an Internal University Research Strategy 2) Own educational facilities 3) Compliance of a remote teaching location with the Bulgarian Law	Faculty ranks**; physical facilities; information technologies; faculty research outcomes and student involvement in research; curriculum; teaching and assessment methods; quality management; competitiveness; placement of graduates	2017: Institutional accreditation; evaluation of the institution as a whole, on-site visit
Program Accreditation: Business Administration	2014	1) Habilitated** faculty	Faculty ranks**, faculty research outcomes, involvement of students in research, curriculum; competitiveness; placement of graduates	2020: Program accreditation; evaluation of the program and on-site visit

(1) Professional, specialized, State, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the institution (by agency or program name).	(2) Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.	(3) List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action letter or report.	(4) Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board, or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.).	(6) Date and nature of next scheduled review.
Program Accreditation: Computer Science; Information Systems	2014	1) Faculty research 2) Demand for the majors 3) Teaching and research capacity	Faculty ranks**, physical facilities; information technologies; faculty research outcomes, involvement of students in research, curriculum; teaching and assessment methods; quality management; competitiveness; placement of graduates	2020: Program accreditation; evaluation of the program and on-site visit
Program Accreditation: Economics	2013	1) More specialized disciplines 2) Habilitated** faculty, number of faculty in general 3) Faculty participation in European research projects	Faculty ranks**, physical facilities; information technologies; faculty research outcomes, involvement of students in research, curriculum; teaching and assessment methods; quality management; competitiveness; placement of graduates	2019: Program accreditation; evaluation of the program and on-site visit
Program Accreditation: European Studies, Political Science and International Relations	2009	1) Elective courses in the curriculum 2) Habilitated** faculty 3) Faculty Research 4) Student research 5) Number of bilateral agreements	Faculty ranks**, physical facilities; information technologies; faculty research outcomes, involvement of students in research, curriculum; competitiveness; placement of graduates	2021 (tentative): Program accreditation; evaluation of the program and on-site visit

(1) Professional, specialized, State, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the institution (by agency or program name).	(2) Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.	(3) List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action letter or report.	(4) Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board, or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.).	(6) Date and nature of next scheduled review.
Program Accreditation: History and Civilizations	2009	1) Habilitated** faculty 2) Correspondence of the breadth of curriculum with that at other Bulgarian universities 3) Faculty and student research 4) Bulgarian and European history books in Library	Faculty ranks**, physical facilities; information technologies; faculty research outcomes, involvement of students in research, curriculum; teaching and assessment methods; quality management; competitiveness; placement of graduates	2021 (tentative): Program accreditation; evaluation of the program and on-site visit
Program Accreditation: Journalism and Mass Communications	2013	1) Habilitated** faculty 2) Bulgarian related topics in the courses taught; better connect with Bulgarian academia to achieve better compliance with regional standards 3) Study more EU practices	Faculty ranks**, physical facilities; information technologies; faculty research outcomes, involvement of students in research, curriculum; teaching and assessment methods; quality management; competitiveness; placement of graduates	2018: Program accreditation; evaluation of the program and on-site visit
Program Accreditation: Mathematics	2014	1) Faculty structure and age 2) More geometry courses 3) More active student participation in research activities	Faculty ranks**, physical facilities; information technologies; faculty research outcomes, involvement of students in research, curriculum; teaching and assessment methods; quality management; competitiveness; placement of graduates	2020: Program accreditation; evaluation of the program and on-site visit

**Certain proportion of faculty with Associate and Full Professor ranks are required according to the Bulgarian Law – the so called “habilitated” faculty
 Institutions selecting E1b should also include E1a.

Student Success (S Series)

Form S1. RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES						
Student Success Measures/ Prior Performance and Goals	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Most Recent Year (2014-15)	Goal for 2015-16	
IPEDS <u>Retention</u> Data						
Bachelors degree students						
IPEDS <u>Graduation</u> Data						
Bachelors degree students						
Other Undergraduate Retention Rates (1)						
a	First-to-second year	96.5%	95.6%	96.4%	98.5%	96.75%
b	First –to- third year	89.4%	88.6%	90.8%	93.3%	90.53%
c	First –to-fourth year	88.6%	86.9%	85.4%	87.3%	87.05%
Other Undergraduate Graduation Rates (2)						
a	4-year graduation rate	70.8%	71.9%	68.2%	70.9%	70.45%
b	5- year graduation rate	87.3%	79.2%	82.7%	79.2%	82.10%
c	6- year graduation rate	88.5%	89.3%	81.0%	84.3%	85.78
Graduate programs *						
Retention rates first-to-second year (3)		96%	90.91%	100%	100%	96.73%
Graduation rates @ 150% time (4)		96%	90.91%	100%	100%	96.73%
Distance Education						
Course completion rates (5)		N/A				
Retention rates (6)						
Graduation rates (7)						
Branch Campus and Instructional Locations						
Course completion rate (8)		N/A				
Retention rates (9)						
Graduation rates (10)						
Definition and Methodology Explanations						
	First to second year retention rates – starting with class entering 2011/2012 and ending with class entering 2014/2015					
	First to third year retention rates – starting with class entering 2010/2011 and ending with class entering 2013/2014					
	First to fourth year retention rates – starting with class entering 2009/2010 and ending with class entering 2012/2013					
* An institution offering graduate degrees must complete this portion.						

Form S2. OTHER MEASURES OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS						
Measures of Student Achievement and Success/ Institutional Performance and Goals	3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Most Recent Year (2014-15)	Goal for 2015-16	
Success of Students Pursuing Higher Degree						
Percentage of alumni admitted to graduate programs vary from about 20% to over 85% depending on the major. Prevalent number of Business Administration and Computer Science graduates tend to start jobs – 80%-90%, and the larger part of Mathematics graduates (85%) are admitted to graduate programs. Roughly half of Economics, Political Science, and History graduates start jobs and half pursue higher degree.						30% on average
Definition and Methodology Explanations						
The AUBG Alumni Office maintains a database with information about graduates' placement. The percentage above are based on the number of students about whom information is available in the Alumni database.						
Rates at Which Graduates Pursue Mission-Related Paths (e.g., Peace Corps, Public Service Law)						
1	Respect to diversity: 87% of the employers responded that our graduates possess the ability to work productively with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures.					We will continue to monitor how the employers assess our graduates, and hope that the high percentages of positive responses will be maintained.
2	Democratic leadership: 73% of the employers answered that our students are willing to listen to different points of view before coming to a decision.					
3	Ethical leadership: 79% of the employers believe that our graduates are committed to ethical practice to a great or some extent.					
4	Creative and innovative thinking: 79% of the employers answered that our graduates possess the ability to use creative and innovative thinking.					
Definition and Methodology Explanations						
We believe that each of our graduates' career paths is mission related, if the graduate fulfills his or her outstanding potential in serving the region and the world through ethical and democratic leadership, with a respect to diversity, and utilizing the various skills our liberal arts program instills in them, such as critical and creative thinking, communication skills and others. In a recent (2015) survey with employers, we aimed to assess the mission-related personal, interpersonal, intellectual and specific skills and abilities of our graduates.						
Rates at Which Students Are Successful in Fields for Which They Were Not Explicitly Prepared						
1						
Definition and Methodology Explanations						
We believe that a liberal arts program, which ours is, is aimed precisely at preparing graduates to fulfill their potential in almost every sphere of human activity, so it is difficult to define for what field they were <i>not</i> specifically prepared. And yet, the recent employer survey (Spring 2015) indicates that almost 87% of employers believe that our graduates are flexible and adaptable; 87% believe that AUBG graduates possess the ability to learn independently. Interviews with employers conducted in relation to Bulgarian accreditation procedures emphasize the broad capabilities of our graduates as opposed to narrow specialization of others, strong soft skills, motivation to persevere and solve complex problems, ability to do well in various fields.						
Documented Success of Graduates Achieving Other Mission-Explicit Achievement (e.g., Leadership, Spiritual Formation)						
1						
Definition and Methodology Explanations						
Other (Specify Below)						
1						
Definition and Methodology Explanations						

Form S3. LICENSURE PASSAGE AND JOB PLACEMENT RATES						
		3 Years Prior	2 Years Prior	1 Year Prior	Most Recent Year (2014-15)	Goal for 2015-16
State Licensure Passage Rates *						
1						
2						
National Licensure Passage Rates *						
1						
2						
Job Placement Rates **						
1	Business Administration, students who graduated in the last five years	73% (top 3)	69% (top 3)	69% (top 3)	65% (top 3)	70%
2	Computer Science and Information Systems, students who graduated in the last five years	79% (top 3)	69% (top 3)	67% (top 3)	71% (top 3)	70%
3	Economics, students who graduated in the last five years	81% (first)	72% (first)	73% (first)	66% (top 3)	70%
4	Political Science and International Relations; European Studies, students who graduated in the last five years	54% (top 3)	56% (top 3)	46% (top 3)	54% (top 3)	55%
5	Journalism and Mass Communication, students who graduated in the last five years	49% (top 3)	46% (top 3)	41%	22%	40%
The Bulgarian Ministry of Education conducts an annual ranking of all Bulgarian universities according to many criteria – including the career success of alumni. Specifically, they access the national social insurance data to identify the proportion of graduates working in their professional field. The percentages shown above exclude those AUBG graduates who are employed but not in a position rated by the Ministry as “in the professional field”. The notations “first” or “top three” indicates that AUBG was ranked either first or among the top 3 (respectively) among all rated universities in Bulgaria who offer programs in the particular professional field.						
* For each licensure exam, give the name of the exam above along with the number of students for whom scores are available and the total number of students eligible to take the examination (e.g. National Podiatric Examination, 12/14). In following columns, report the passage rates for students for whom scores are available, along with the institution's goals for succeeding years.						
** For each major for which the institution tracks job placement rates, list the degree and major, and the time period following graduation for which the institution is reporting placement success (e.g., Mechanical Engineer, B.S., six months). In the following columns, report the percent of graduates who have jobs in their fields within the specified time.						
Institutional Notes of Explanation						
a						



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN BULGARIA

CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

as of and for the year ended June 30, 2015,

Supplemental Information for the year ended June 30, 2015,

Independent Auditors' Reports and

Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs

for the year ended June 30, 2015



Deloitte Audit OOD
103, Al. Stambolijski Blvd.
1303 Sofia
Bulgaria

Tel: +359 (2) 80 23 300
Fax: +359 (2) 80 23 350
www.deloitte.bg

Делойт ООД
бул."Ал.Стамболийски" 103
София 1303
България

ЕИК/RegNo121145199
ДДС / VAT No BG 121145199

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Board of Trustees of the American University in Bulgaria

1. We have audited the accompanying consolidated statements of the American University in Bulgaria (the "University"), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as of June 30, 2015 and 2014 and the related consolidated statements of activities and of cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements.

Management's Responsibility For the Consolidated Financial Statements

2. Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these consolidated financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of consolidated financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

3. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these consolidated financial statements based on our audit. Except as discussed in paragraph 4 below, we conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (the U.S. Government Auditing Standards). Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement.

Делойт се отнася към едно или повече дружества – членове на Делойт Туш Томацу Лимитед – частно дружество с ограничена отговорност (private company limited by guarantee) регистрирано в Обединеното кралство, както и към мрежата от дружества – членове, всяко от които е юридически самостоятелно и независимо лице. За детайлна информация относно правната структура на Делойт Туш Томацу Лимитед и дружествата – членове, моля посетете www.deloitte.com/bg/za_nas

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Member of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited

4. Although we have periodic quality control reviews by other Deloitte offices as well as by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Bulgaria (ICPA) and the Commission for Public Oversight of Statutory Auditors of Bulgaria (CPOSA), we did not have an external peer review by an unaffiliated audit organization as required in Chapter 3, paragraph 3.96 of U.S. Government Auditing Standards since no such program is enrolled in the Republic of Bulgaria by professional organizations. We believe that the effect of this departure from U.S. Government Auditing Standards is not material because we participate in the Deloitte worldwide internal quality control review program as well in the quality control review program of ICPA and CPOSA which require Deloitte Audit OOD to be subject every three years to an extensive quality control review by partners and managers from other Deloitte affiliate offices and by members of ICPA, respectively. The objectives of the internal quality control review to which Deloitte Audit OOD is subject to are similar to those required by Chapter 3, paragraph 3.96 of U.S. Government Auditing Standards. In addition, we do not have a continuing professional education program that fully satisfies the requirement, set forth in Chapter 3, paragraph 3.76 of U.S. Government Auditing Standards. However, our current program provides at least 80 hours of continuing education and training every two years.
5. An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the consolidated financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the consolidated financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the University's preparation and fair presentation of the consolidated financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the University's internal control. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the consolidated financial statements.
6. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

7. In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the University as of June 30, 2015 and 2014, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the years then ended in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America.

Other matters

Other information

8. Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the consolidated financial statements as a whole. The accompanying Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards is presented for purpose of additional analysis as required by Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133 ("OMB Circular A-133") and is not a required part of the consolidated financial statements. Such information is the responsibility of management and was derived from and relates directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements. The information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the consolidated financial statements and certain additional procedures, including comparing and reconciling such information directly to the underlying accounting and other records used to prepare the consolidated financial statements or to the consolidated statements themselves, and other additional procedures in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. In our opinion, the information is fairly stated, in all material respects, in relation to the consolidated financial statements as a whole.

Other Reporting Required by Government Auditing Standards

9. In accordance with U.S. Government Auditing Standards, we have also issued our report dated September 14, 2015 on our consideration of the University's internal control over financial reporting and our tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts and grant agreements and other matters. The purpose of that report is to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over financial reporting and compliance and the results of such testing, and not to provide an opinion on the internal control over financial reporting or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with U.S. Government Auditing Standards in considering University's internal control over financial reporting and compliance.

Deloitte Audit

Deloitte Audit OOD

September 14, 2015

Sofia, Bulgaria

Consolidated Statements of Financial Position as of June 30, 2015 and 2014

	<i>Note</i>	June 30, 2015 USD'000	June 30, 2014 USD'000
ASSETS			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	6,982	6,197
Accounts receivable and prepayments	4	371	327
Contributions receivable	5	3,209	5,914
Inventories		228	235
Subtotal current assets		10,790	12,673
Long-term assets			
Long-term contributions receivable	5	2,672	3,459
Investments	6	23,649	24,125
Property, plant & equipment, and intangible assets	7	34,279	35,992
Other long-term assets	8	329	327
Subtotal long term assets		60,929	63,903
TOTAL ASSETS		71,719	76,576
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
Current liabilities			
Short-term borrowings and current portion of long-term debt	9	1,444	3,347
Accounts payable	10	260	348
Accrued liabilities and current portion of retirement benefits	11	356	390
Deferred revenue and other liabilities	12	855	847
Subtotal current liabilities		2,915	4,932
Long-term liabilities			
Long-term debt	13	7,441	8,264
Retirement benefit provision	14	166	172
Subtotal long-term liabilities		7,607	8,436
TOTAL LIABILITIES		10,522	13,368
Net assets			
Unrestricted	15	10,810	10,313
Temporarily restricted	16	43,778	46,434
Permanently restricted		6,609	6,461
TOTAL NET ASSETS		61,197	63,208
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		71,719	76,576

Signed on behalf of the American University in Bulgaria:



Date: September 14, 2015

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

Consolidated Statements of Activities for the years ended June 30, 2015 and June 30, 2014

	Year ended June 30, 2015				Year ended June 30, 2014			
	Unrestricted	Temp. Res.	Perm. Res.	Total	Unrestricted	Temp. Res.	Perm. Res.	Total
	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000
REVENUES								
UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM								
Tuition	10,131	-	-	10,131	10,214	-	-	10,214
Institutionally-Funded Scholarships	(1,918)	-	-	(1,918)	(2,016)	-	-	(2,016)
Externally-Funded Scholarships	(2,462)	-	-	(2,462)	(2,457)	-	-	(2,457)
	5,751	-	-	5,751	5,741	-	-	5,741
Interest on Student Loans	16	-	-	16	29	-	-	29
Other Student Fees, net of 9/12 externally-funded scholarships	546	-	-	546	505	-	-	505
SUBTOTAL UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM	6,313	-	-	6,313	6,275	-	-	6,275
CONTRIBUTIONS AND GRANTS								
Federal Grants	-	6	-	6	-	115	-	115
Private Gifts and Grants	126	1,187	144	1,457	322	2,612	173	3,107
Release from Restrictions, net	3,483	(3,483)	-	-	3,025	(3,025)	-	-
SUBTOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND GRANTS	3,609	(2,290)	144	1,463	3,347	(298)	173	3,222
ENDOWMENT INCOME DISTRIBUTED	650	(650)	-	-	610	(610)	-	-
OUTREACH ACTIVITIES								
English Language Institute	417	-	-	417	460	-	-	460
Conferences and Institutes/ External Events	228	-	-	228	214	-	-	214
Elieff Center Services	76	-	-	76	103	-	-	103
Center for European Programs	126	(121)	-	5	63	326	-	389
External Projects	138	(140)	-	(2)	478	(481)	-	(3)
Graduate Programs	266	-	-	266	281	-	-	281
SUBTOTAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES	1,251	(261)	-	990	1,599	(155)	-	1,444
AUXILIARY ACTIVITIES								
Bookstore, net of 1/5 externally-funded scholarships	139	-	-	139	163	-	-	163
Residence Life, net of 21/35 externally-funded scholarships	1,123	-	-	1,123	1,163	-	-	1,163
Dining Services, net of 5/14 externally-funded scholarships	375	-	-	375	481	-	-	481
SUBTOTAL AUXILIARY ACTIVITIES	1,637	-	-	1,637	1,807	-	-	1,807
OTHER REVENUES	68	-	-	68	92	-	-	92
TOTAL REVENUES	13,528	(3,201)	144	10,471	13,730	(1,063)	173	12,840

Consolidated Statements of Activities for the years ended June 30, 2015 and June 30, 2014

	Year ended June 30, 2015				Year ended June 30, 2014			
	Unrestricted	Temp. Res.	Perm. Res.	Total	Unrestricted	Temp. Res.	Perm. Res.	Total
	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000
EXPENSES								
EDUCATION AND GENERAL								
Instruction and Research	3,780	-	-	3,780	4,107	-	-	4,107
Academic Support	1,513	-	-	1,513	1,663	-	-	1,663
Student Services	853	-	-	853	932	-	-	932
SUBTOTAL EDUCATION AND GENERAL	6,146	-	-	6,146	6,702	-	-	6,702
DEVELOPMENT AND UNIVERSITY RELATIONS	408	-	-	408	480	-	-	480
INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT								
Division of Finance	504	-	-	504	582	-	-	582
Physical Plant	(31)	-	-	(31)	68	-	-	68
Operations and Administration	2,093	-	-	2,093	1,829	-	-	1,829
SUBTOTAL INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT	2,566	-	-	2,566	2,479	-	-	2,479
OUTREACH ACTIVITIES								
English Language Institute	379	-	-	379	368	-	-	368
Conferences and Institutes/ External Events	209	-	-	209	193	-	-	193
Elieff Center Services	196	-	-	196	256	-	-	256
Center for European Programs	89	-	-	89	168	-	-	168
Center for Visual and Performing Arts	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
External Projects	302	-	-	302	246	-	-	246
Graduate Programs	239	-	-	239	304	-	-	304
SUBTOTAL OUTREACH ACTIVITIES	1,416	-	-	1,416	1,535	-	-	1,535
AUXILIARY ACTIVITIES								
Bookstore	158	-	-	158	188	-	-	188
Residence Life	1,095	-	-	1,095	1,102	-	-	1,102
Dining Services	529	-	-	529	679	-	-	679
SUBTOTAL AUXILIARY ACTIVITIES	1,782	-	-	1,782	1,969	-	-	1,969
Scholarships for External Graduate Studies	150	-	-	150	76	-	-	76
Student Loans/ Fees Reversals	(75)	-	-	(75)	(42)	-	-	(42)
Other Expenses (incl. interest expenses)	418	-	-	418	457	-	-	457
TOTAL EXPENSES	12,811	-	-	12,811	13,656	-	-	13,656
OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	717	(3,201)	144	(2,340)	74	(1,063)	173	(816)
Endowment Drawdown	650	(650)	-	-	610	(610)	-	-
Endowment Income Distributed	(650)	650	-	-	(610)	610	-	-
Other Gains and (Losses)	(243)	572	-	329	124	3,991	-	4,115
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS before reclassifications	474	(2,629)	144	(2,011)	198	2,928	173	3,299

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Consolidated Statements of Cash Flows for the years ended June 30, 2015 and June 30, 2014

	FY15	FY14
	USD'000	USD'000
Cash flows from operating activities		
Change in fund balance	(2,011)	3,299
Adjustments to change in fund balance:		
Revenue from fund-raising activities	(1,450)	(3,581)
(Increase) / Decrease in accounts receivable, prepayments, and inventories	(37)	134
(Decrease) / Increase in current liabilities and retirement benefits	(110)	24
Decrease in student loans receivable, net	8	20
(Increase) / Decrease in cash deposits for student loans guarantees	(10)	2
Depreciation and amortization (Note 7)	2,225	1,990
Net book value of disposed fixed assets	-	41
In-kind donation of property, plant and equipment and investment property	(5)	(6)
In-kind donation of investment securities	(254)	(13)
Net cash (used in) /provided by operating activities other than fund-raising	(1,644)	1,910
Revenue from fund-raising activities	1,450	3,581
Decrease in contributions receivable	3,492	885
Net cash provided by fund-raising activities	4,942	4,466
Net cash provided by operating activities	3,298	6,376
Cash flows from investing activities		
Construction and purchase of property, plant and equipment (Note 7)	(507)	(1,519)
(Purchase) of investment securities	(3,206)	(1,000)
Sale of investment securities	4,506	1,420
(Gain) from investing activities	(570)	(4,036)
Cash flow provided by /(used in) investing activities	223	(5,135)
Cash flow from financing activities		
(Decrease) / Increase in short-term borrowings	(1,903)	565
(Decrease) in long-term borrowing	(833)	(833)
Cash flow (used in) financing activities	(2,736)	(268)
Increase in cash and cash equivalents for the period	785	973
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period (Note 3)	6,197	5,224
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period (Note 3)	6,982	6,197
	FY15	FY14
Interest payments	439	488

The accompanying notes form an integral part of these consolidated financial statements.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. HISTORY AND NATURE OF THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN BULGARIA

The American University in Bulgaria (“AUBG” or “the University”) is a not-for-profit organization registered in the State of Maine. The University is exempt from US Federal income tax under Section 501C(3) of the US Internal Revenue Code.

The establishment of the University in 1991 was facilitated through the joint cooperation of the Initiative Committee established by the Republic of Bulgaria, the City of Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria and private and public funding sources. At the time of the establishment of the University, the laws of Bulgaria did not provide for the establishment of private educational institutions; therefore the University was incorporated in the Blagoevgrad Regional Courts as a Bulgarian not-for-profit organization. Legislation was subsequently enacted by the Bulgarian National Assembly recognizing the University as an institution of higher learning. Furthermore, the Bulgarian Ministry of Finance has acknowledged the status of the University as a “budget institution” enjoying exemption from some taxes and duties such as taxes on profits and certain exemptions for Value Added Tax.

The University offers undergraduate and graduate programs. The American University in Bulgaria maintains a campus located in Blagoevgrad.

At the end of 2001, the American University Service Company (AUSC), a wholly-owned subsidiary headquartered in Sofia, Bulgaria, was established.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

2.1. Basis of preparation

The consolidated financial statements of the University are prepared on the accrual basis of accounting in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States (“U.S. GAAP”) for non-profit organizations. The consolidated statement of activities presents the financial activities by type of net assets related to the reporting periods.

2.2. Use of estimates

The preparation of the consolidated financial statements in conformity with U.S. GAAP requires management to make certain estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the consolidated financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reporting period. Actual results could differ materially from those estimates. Estimates are made in the areas of accounts receivable, contributions receivable, inventories, investments and retirement benefits.

2.3 Basis of consolidation

The consolidated financial statements incorporate the financial statements of AUBG and AUSC, a wholly-owned subsidiary controlled by AUBG. Control is achieved where AUBG owns the majority voting interest, which is defined as direct or indirect ownership of fifty percent or more of the outstanding voting shares of another company.

Where necessary, adjustments are made to the financial statements of AUSC to bring the accounting policies used in line with those used by AUBG.

All significant inter-company transactions and balances between AUBG and AUSC have been eliminated in the accompanying consolidated financial statements.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.4. Types of net assets

Unrestricted net assets derived from educational and general operations of the University and from appropriations, gifts and grants may be used at the discretion of the Board of Trustees or their designees to meet current expenditures for any purpose in achieving the primary objectives of the University.

Temporary restricted net assets derived from educational and general operations of the University and from appropriations, gifts and grants may be used only to meet current expenditures for the purposes specifically identified by the donors or by sponsoring agencies.

Permanently restricted net assets derived from educational and general operations of the University and from appropriations, gifts and grants are to be invested and only the income earned from the investment may be used to meet current expenditures for the purposes specifically identified by the donors or by the Board of Trustees if there are no specifically identified purposes.

2.5. Cash and cash equivalents

Cash includes cash on hand and bank deposits held by financial institutions that can be added to or withdrawn without limitation.

Cash equivalents are short-term, highly-liquid investments that are both readily convertible to known amounts of cash and so near their maturity they present insignificant risk of changes in value because of changes in interest rates.

2.6. Prepayments and advances

Prepayments and advances represent payments to suppliers for goods and services, which have not been received by the end of the period.

2.7. Inventories

Inventories are recorded at the lower of cost or net realizable value. They predominantly represent supplies at the Bookstore, fuel, and goods and beverages at the canteen and cafeterias. Inventories are expensed applying weighted-average cost method.

2.8. Student Loans Receivable

Student Loans Portfolio is valued at market value representing the principal value of student loans less the provision for uncollectible loans. The provision percentage is based on the best management estimate. The interest income is recognized in the period when its collection is most probable.

2.9. Accounts Receivable

Accounts receivable represents amounts due from customers arising from transactions in the ordinary course of business. Twice a year, a complete review of all outstanding accounts receivable is made, a determination of doubtful accounts is made and allowance for bad debts is determined. This procedure is applicable to individual receivables or to groups of similar types of receivables.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**2.10. Accounts Payable**

Accounts payable are obligations, the liquidation of which is reasonably expected to require the use of existing resources properly classified as current assets, or the creation of current obligation. Current liabilities include obligations arising from the acquisition of goods and services entering the operating cycle (accounts payable, taxes payable, wages payable and other miscellaneous payables) and other obligations maturing within the current operating cycle to be met through the use of current assets, or an overdraft.

2.11. Long-term Debt

The University's long-term debt is presented under the interest method.

Costs incurred for obtaining new loan or refinancing existing loans are deferred and amortized over the term of the respective loan, using the effective interest rate method. For better presentation, the interest expenses and costs associated with the long-term debt are presented as *Other expenses (incl. interest expenses)* in the Consolidated Statement of Activities.

2.12. Investments

Investments are carried at market value, and realized and unrealized gains and losses are reflected in the Statement of Activities. In accounting for investments, the University follows the guidance contained in the Financial Accounting Standards Board ("FASB") Accounting Standards Codification ("ASC") #958-320 "Not-for-profit entities – Investments in Debt and Equity Securities" and ASC #820 "Fair Value Measurements,". Investments in equities and securities with readily determinable fair values as well as all investments in debt securities are reported at fair value as of the date of the consolidated financial statements in the statement of financial position. Fair value of investments is classified according to the Fair Value Hierarchy at Level 2 - observable inputs other than Level 1 prices, such as quoted prices for similar assets and liabilities; quoted prices in active markets that are not active; or other inputs that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data for substantially the full term of the assets or liabilities (see Note 6). Gains and losses on investments are reported in the statement of activities as increases or decreases in the respective net assets as per explicit donor stipulations or law.

2.13. Property, plant and equipment and intangible assets

Property, plant and equipment and intangible assets are recorded at cost when purchased or constructed, or at fair market value when acquired by gift. Depreciation is recorded on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful lives of the related assets as follows:

	<u>Years</u>
Buildings	40
Office equipment	2 – 6
Vehicles	7 – 12
Furniture and fixtures	3 – 7
Library books	5 – 7
Software	2 – 5

Payments for the maintenance, repairs and minor renewals and replacements are expended as incurred; major renewals and replacements are capitalized.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**2.13. Property, plant and equipment and intangible assets (continued)****Impairment of long lived assets**

Management periodically evaluates whether events or circumstances have occurred indicating that the carrying amount of long-lived assets may not be recoverable. When such indicators are present, a long-lived asset to be held and used is tested for recoverability by comparing the estimate of future undiscounted net operating cash flows expected to be generated by the use of the long-lived asset over its remaining useful life and its eventual disposition to its carrying amount. Should the carrying value of the long-lived asset exceed its estimated future undiscounted net operating cash flows, impairment is measured based on the excess of the carrying amount over the fair market value of the long-lived asset.

2.14. Investment property held for sale

Investment property held for sale is recognized initially according to Level 2 observable input when acquired by gift. A review for impairment of an investment property held for sale is carried out if events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount of the investment property held for sale may not be recoverable.

2.15. Long-lived assets held and not used

Property initially recognized as investment property held for sale that no longer meet the criteria as per FASB 360-10-45 are recognized as long-lived assets held and not used. Such assets are acquired through donations and are not used in the University's activities. Management's intention is to sell the properties and is actively marketing them. The aim of the University's management is with focused efforts to realize these properties in order to use the funds for scholarship for students.

2.16. Contributions, gifts and grants

The University reports contributions, gifts of cash and other assets as restricted support if they are received with donor stipulations that set purpose and time restrictions on the donated assets. When a donor restriction expires, that is, when a stipulated time restriction ends or purpose restriction is accomplished, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to unrestricted net assets and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

Gifts of long-lived assets with explicit restrictions that specify how the assets are to be used and gifts of cash or other assets that must be used to acquire long-lived assets are reported as restricted support. If there are no explicit donor stipulations about how long-lived assets must be maintained, the University reports expirations of donor restrictions when the donated or acquired long-lived assets are placed in service.

2.17. Pension plans

The government of Bulgaria through its national pension plan is responsible for providing pensions for Bulgarian citizens. A regular contribution is made to the State to fund the plan. In addition, since July 1, 2004, AUBG is making a BGN 40 (USD 23 as of June 30, 2015) monthly contribution for each full-time Bulgarian employee.

2.18. Retirement benefit provision

In accordance with the Bulgarian Labor Code, the University owes retirement benefits to its employees. The retirement benefit for employees who have worked for the University for more than 10 years is 6 gross monthly salaries. Employees who have worked for the University for less than 10 years are entitled to 2 gross monthly salaries. The Retirement Benefit Provision represents the present value of the payable of these benefits.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**2.19. Foreign currency translation**

The University receives the majority of its funds and incurs a significant amount of costs in United States Dollars (USD). As a result, the functional currency is considered to be the USD. The University's accounting records in Bulgaria are maintained in dual currency, both in BGN and in USD. The following exchange rates were used to translate monetary assets and liabilities denominated in BGN:

	BGN to one USD	
	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
Exchange rates	1.74799	1.43200

Non-monetary assets and liabilities denominated in BGN are measured using historical rates in order to produce the same results in terms of functional currency that would have occurred if those items had been initially recorded in the functional currency.

2.20. Revenue Recognition

Tuition and fees and certain auxiliary activities revenues are recorded as revenues in the year during which the related services are provided. Funds received in advance of services provided are included in Deferred revenue.

Contributions, including unconditional promises to give, are recognized as revenue in the period pledged or received and are reported as increases in the appropriate class of net assets. Contributions of assets other than cash are recorded at their estimated fair value. Contributions to be received after one year are discounted at an appropriate discount rate.

Other revenues are recognized at the time of delivery of goods, or providing of services, irrespective of the time when the cash is received.

2.21. Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk that a party involved in a financial instrument may cause financial loss to the other party by non-fulfillment of an obligation. The financial instruments that may expose the University to credit risk are the loans provided to students, as well as the receivables from students, vendors, and donors. The University is exposed to risk that the respective counterparties will not fulfill their obligations.

2.22. Concentration of credit risk

The University occasionally maintains deposits in excess of the insured limits. FASB ASC #825 "Financial Instruments" identifies these items as a concentration of credit risk requiring disclosure, regardless of the degree of risk. The risk is managed by maintaining all deposits in high quality financial institutions.

2.23. Exchange Rate Risk

The exchange rate risk is the risk that the valuation of the University assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currency may change due to a change in the exchange rates of the respective currency against the Bulgarian lev. The University receives most of its donations in US Dollars. Also, major portion of the cash, receivables, liabilities, revenues, and expenses (tuition revenue, expenses for salaries of foreign staff and faculty) are denominated in US Dollars, which exposes the University to a risk related to possible fluctuations in the exchange rate of the US dollar against the Bulgarian lev. The University does not apply any specific financial instruments for exchange rate risk hedging.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**2.24. Interest Rate Risk**

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of the received loans may vary due to a change in the market interest rates. The financial instrument that exposes the University to interest rate risk is the Overdraft and a short-term loan from Raiffeisen Bank Bulgaria.

2.25. Risk Management

The University is exposed to various risks of loss: torts, theft, damage or destruction of assets, errors or omissions, job-related illnesses or injuries to employees, and health care claims on behalf of employees and their dependents. The University manages these risks through commercial insurance.

2.26. Fair Value Measurements

When assets or liabilities in the financial statements are to be measured at fair value, the University defines fair value as the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants. The University has elected not to report any existing financial assets or liabilities at fair value that are not already reported as such.

2.27 Income tax

The University has no uncertain tax positions taken or expected to be taken as of June 30, 2015. The University has recognized no interest or penalties related to uncertain tax positions. The University is subject to routine audits by tax authorities.

2.28 Other comprehensive income

The University has adopted FASB ASU 2011-05, Presentation of Comprehensive Income (Effective January 1, 2012). The update requires presentation of the comprehensive income (loss) and its components, as part of the financial statements. Comprehensive income (loss) comprises net income (loss) and other changes in equity that are excluded from net income (loss).

There are no amounts to be recognized as other comprehensive income (loss) and, accordingly, no additional disclosure is presented.

3. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	<u>June 30, 2015</u>	<u>June 30, 2014</u>
	USD'000	USD'000
Deposits with restrictions	3,998	3,667
Commonfund/ State Street Institutional US Gov't Money Market	2,096	1,290
Cash on hand/bank deposits	888	1,240
Total	<u>6,982</u>	<u>6,197</u>

Deposits with restrictions consist mainly of term deposits and debt service reserve account in relation to long-term debt agreement (details are provided in Note 13).

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

4. ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE AND PREPAYMENTS

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000
Deferred expenses	251	217
Accounts receivable	65	64
Receivables from students, net of USD 20 / 14 thousand allowance	27	29
Prepayments and advances	26	15
Tax receivables	2	2
Total	371	327

Allowances for uncollectible student fees have been calculated as 100% of amounts past due over one year.

5. CONTRIBUTIONS RECEIVABLE

Contributions receivable falling due within one year are comprised of:

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000
America for Bulgaria Foundation	1,818	3,582
OSI Scholarships	675	900
European Union	289	368
Albanian-American Development Foundation	182	218
Ministry of Education/ EU Projects	125	250
ASHA	56	357
Other	64	239
Total	3,209	5,914

Long-term contributions receivable are comprised of:

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000
America for Bulgaria Foundation	1,746	2,062
OSI Scholarships	633	1,209
Albanian-American Development Foundation	228	99
Other	65	89
Total	2,672	3,459

All amounts are receivable within five years and are discounted using the interest rate for loans to non-profit organizations, for new businesses, up to 1 million Euro, contracted in Euro, published by the Bulgarian National Bank.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6. INVESTMENTS

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	Fair Value	Fair Value
	USD'000	USD'000
USAID Quasi – Endowment Fund		
Multi-Strategy Equity Fund	9,469	9,972
International Equity Fund	2,902	3,645
High Quality Bond Fund	2,211	1,938
Global Bond Fund	554	871
Emerging Markets Investors Co.	454	103
Real Estate Securities Fund	52	50
Core Equity Fund	52	48
Equity Index Fund	47	69
Subtotal USAID Quasi – Endowment Fund:	15,741	16,696
Pooled Endowment Fund		
Multi-Strategy Equity Fund	4,702	4,456
High Quality Bond Fund	1,183	879
International Equity Fund	1,015	701
Emerging Markets Investors Co.	594	617
Equity Index Fund	75	62
Core Equity Fund	45	42
Global Bond Fund	42	619
Real Estate Securities Fund	35	33
Subtotal Pooled Endowment Fund:	7,691	7,409
Other Investments:	217	20
Total	23,649	24,125

Additionally, AUBG invested USD 2,096 thousand as of June 30, 2015 (June 30, 2014: 1,290 thousand) in *State Street Institutional US Government Money Market Fund*, included in Note 3, Cash and Cash Equivalents.

The University invests its USAID Quasi-Endowment Fund and Pooled Endowment Fund with Commonfund. The management intends to hold the investments for a period longer than one year.

The following describes the hierarchy of inputs used to measure fair value and the primary valuation methodologies used by the University for financial instruments measured at fair value on a recurring basis. The three levels of inputs are as follows:

- Level 1 – Quoted prices in active markets for identical assets and liabilities.
- Level 2 – Inputs other than Level 1 that are observable, either directly or indirectly, such as quoted prices for similar assets or liabilities; quoted prices in markets that are not active; or other inputs that are observable or can be corroborated by observable market data for substantially the same term of the assets or liabilities.
- Level 3 – Unobservable inputs that are supported by little or no market activity and that are significant to the fair value of the assets or liabilities.

A financial instrument's categorization within the valuation is based upon the lowest level of input that is significant to the fair value measurement.

The following is a description of the University's valuation methodologies for assets and liabilities measured at fair value.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6. INVESTMENTS (continued)

The fair value for Level 1 is based upon quoted prices in active markets that the University has the ability to access for identical assets and liabilities. Market price data is generally obtained from exchange or dealer markets. The University does not adjust the quoted price for such assets and liabilities.

The fair value of Level 2 is based on quoted prices for similar instruments in active markets, quoted prices for identical or similar instruments in markets that are not active, and model-based valuation techniques for which all significant assumptions are observable in the market or can be corroborated by observable market data for substantially the full term of the assets. Inputs are obtained from various sources including market participants, dealers and brokers.

Fair value for Level 3 is based on valuation techniques that use significant inputs that are unobservable, as they trade infrequently or not at all.

Fair value level of investments is determined according to Fair Value Hierarchy as follows:

Fair Value Measurement at Reporting Date				
Using				
	Quoted prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)	
	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2015
	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000
Multi-Strategy Equity Fund	14,171	-	14,171	-
International Equity Fund	3,917	-	3,917	-
High Quality Bond Fund	3,394	-	3,394	-
Emerging Markets Investors Co	1,048	-	1,048	-
Global Bond Fund	596	-	596	-
Equity Index Fund	122	-	122	-
Core Equity Fund	97	-	97	-
Real Estate Securities Fund	87	-	87	-
Other Investments	217	217	-	-
Total:	23,649	217	23,432	-

Fair Value Measurement at Reporting Date				
Using				
	Quoted prices in Active Markets for Identical Assets (Level 1)	Significant Other Observable Inputs (Level 2)	Significant Unobservable Inputs (Level 3)	
	June 30, 2014	June 30, 2014	June 30, 2014	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000
Multi-Strategy Equity Fund	14,428	-	14,428	-
International Equity Fund	4,346	-	4,346	-
High Quality Bond Fund	2,817	-	2,817	-
Global Bond Fund	1,490	-	1,490	-
Emerging Markets Investors Co	720	-	720	-
Equity Index Fund	131	-	131	-
Core Equity Fund	90	-	90	-
Real Estate Securities Fund	83	-	83	-
Other Investments	20	20	-	-
Total:	24,125	20	24,105	-

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

6. INVESTMENTS (continued)

AUBG manages its endowment and quasi-endowment funds in a way which protects the real purchasing power of the endowment over time, avoids large or no increases in some years, and preserves and enhances the growth of principal. To this end, the University has adopted the “Yale Formula”, which provides annual cash distribution to the University. The endowment earnings distributed are calculated as 70% of the allowable spending in the prior fiscal year, increased by the rate of inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index, for the 12 months prior to the start of the fiscal year; plus 30% of the long-term spending rate of 4.5 percent (a total of 1.35 percent) applied to the four-quarter market average of the endowment, for the period ending December 31 prior to the start of the fiscal year.

AUBG invests in high quality, investment grade securities and maintains a prudent diversification in its portfolios. AUBG’s endowment fund is invested according to the following Strategic Asset Allocation (SAA) as at June 30, 2015, approved by the Board of Trustees:

	Strategic Asset Allocation	of which USD	Int'l
Cash & Money Market	10%	10%	-
Fixed Income	20%	12%	8%
Equities	70%	53%	17%
	100%	75%	25%

Any change to the SAA must be approved by the full Board. The Investment Committee is allowed to make tactical changes to the SAA and currency allocation without seeking full board approval as long as these changes remain within the range of +/- 10% of the SAA for each asset class.

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

7. PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT AND INTANGIBLE ASSETS

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000
Land	3,022	3,022
Buildings	34,360	34,360
Less: accumulated depreciation	(5,984)	(5,124)
Buildings Net Book Value	28,376	29,236
Main building use allowance	-	2,189
Less: accumulated amortization	-	(2,189)
Main Building Use Allowance Net Book Value	-	-
Office machines and equipment	4,610	4,105
Less: accumulated depreciation	(3,500)	(2,726)
Office Machines and Equipment Net Book Value	1,110	1,379
Motor vehicles	90	88
Less: accumulated depreciation	(61)	(88)
Motor Vehicles Net Book Value	29	-
Furniture and fixtures	2,733	2,698
Less: accumulated depreciation	(1,976)	(1,764)
Furniture and Fixtures Net Book Value	757	934
Library books	793	749
Less: accumulated depreciation	(674)	(640)
Library Books Net Book Value	119	109
Other intangible assets	1,448	1,213
Less: accumulated amortization	(1,039)	(727)
Other Intangible Assets Net Book Value	409	486
Assets under construction	457	826
Total Book Value	47,513	49,250
Less: Depreciation and Amortization	(13,234)	(13,258)
Total Net Book Value	34,279	35,992
	FY15	FY14
	USD'000	USD'000
Depreciation expenses:		
Property, Plant and Equipment	1,900	1,777
Intangible Assets	325	213
Total	2,225	1,990

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

8. OTHER LONG-TERM ASSETS

Other long-term assets include:

	<u>June 30, 2015</u>	<u>June 30, 2014</u>
	USD'000	USD'000
Long lived assets held, not used	282	282
Student loans receivable, net	29	37
Cash deposits for student loans guarantees, net	18	8
Total	<u>329</u>	<u>327</u>

9. SHORT-TERM BORROWINGS AND CURRENT PORTION OF LONG-TERM DEBT

	<u>June 30, 2015</u>	<u>June 30, 2014</u>
	USD'000	USD'000
Current portion of long-term debt/ OPIC (note 13)	833	833
Overdraft/ Raiffeisen Bank (max. amount: USD 2.2 million)	496	2,009
Short-term loan/ Raiffeisen Bank	115	505
Total	<u>1,444</u>	<u>3,347</u>

10. ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

	<u>June 30, 2015</u>	<u>June 30, 2014</u>
	USD'000	USD'000
OPIC loan interest payable	114	125
Tax and social security payables	107	128
Payables to vendors and others	28	86
Payables to undergraduate students	11	9
Total	<u>260</u>	<u>348</u>

11. ACCRUED LIABILITIES AND CURRENT PORTION OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS

	<u>June 30, 2015</u>	<u>June 30, 2014</u>
	USD'000	USD'000
Current portion of retirement benefit provision (Note 14)	176	170
Accrued vacation	137	193
Accrued expenses	43	27
Total	<u>356</u>	<u>390</u>

12. DEFERRED REVENUE AND OTHER LIABILITIES

	<u>June 30, 2015</u>	<u>June 30, 2014</u>
	USD'000	USD'000
Deferred revenue from undergraduate students	606	578
Advance payments for seminars	118	114
Advance ELI payments	102	132
Deferred revenue from graduate students	29	23
Total	<u>855</u>	<u>847</u>

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

13. LONG-TERM DEBT

Long-term debt consists of the following:

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000
Principal amount	8,333	9,166
Less unamortized cost	(59)	(69)
Less current portion (Note 9)	(833)	(833)
Long-term debt, net	7,441	8,264

Long-term debt represents a loan from the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) amounting up to USD 10 million for the construction of AUBG Student Center. As collateral, AUBG pledged 24,000 units in USAID Endowment Multi-Strategy Equity Fund, 24,000 units in USAID Endowment International Equity Fund, 51,000 units in USAID Endowment High Quality Bond Fund, and 27,000 units in USAID Endowment Global Bond Fund at the total amount of USD 10,784 thousand as of June 30, 2015. In addition, AUBG established a Debt Service Reserve Account funded with an amount equal to the aggregate amount of Debt Service for the immediately succeeding six-month period. The loan will be repaid in full by 2025.

The total amount of interest cost incurred for the year ended June 30, 2015 is USD 407 thousand (year ended June 30, 2014: USD 445 thousand).

The amounts payable for each of the following five years are as follows:

Year ended	Principal payable (USD '000)	Interests payable (USD '000)
June 30, 2016	833	369
June 30, 2017	833	330
June 30, 2018	833	291
June 30, 2019	833	252
June 30, 2020	833	214

14. RETIREMENT BENEFIT PROVISION

The calculations of the Retirement Benefit Provision are based on the following assumptions:

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000
Discount rate		
(interest rate for 10-year Government Bonds, source: Bulgarian National Bank)	2.04%	3.16%
Turnover rate	10%	10%

The Retirement Benefits are expected to be paid:

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000
Current liability (within 1 year (Note 11))	176	170
Long-term liability:		
2 years	32	27
3 years	20	25
4 years	33	13
5 years	16	31
More than 5 years	65	76
Long-term liability	166	172
Total:	342	342

The expense for retirement benefits recognized in the consolidated statement of activities for the year ended June 30, 2015 is zero (FY14: USD 50 thousand).

15. UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

	June 30, 2015	June 30, 2014
	USD'000	USD'000
Unrestricted net assets as of the beginning of the year	10,313	10,210
Reclassifications	23	(95)
Change in unrestricted assets	474	198
Unrestricted net assets as of the end of the year	10,810	10,313

NOTES TO THE CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

16. TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

	June 30, 2014 Balance	Contributions for the year	Scholarships	Satisfaction of program restrictions	Satisfaction of equipment acquisition	Program Income (Loss)	Reclassifications/ Revaluation	June 30, 2015 Balance
	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000	USD'000
USAID Endowment Fund	17,319	-	-	(650)	-	404	-	17,073
America for Bulgaria Foundation	16,151	348	(1,535)	(200)	-	(20)	-	14,744
ASHA Grants	5,252	-	-	(216)	(263)	-	-	4,773
OSI Scholarships	2,401	99	(671)	(33)	-	-	-	1,796
Balkanski Family	829	-	-	(25)	-	-	-	804
Anna Tchaprachikoff	768	(6)	-	(154)	-	109	-	717
Board Designated Endowment	699	-	-	(22)	-	19	-	696
Albanian-American Development Foundation	316	190	(97)	-	-	-	-	409
Novartis/ Carl Djerassi naming gift	-	339	-	(21)	-	-	-	318
European Union	412	(4)	-	(39)	(88)	-	(1)	280
Philippe Bertherat - Student Center gift	193	-	-	(5)	-	-	-	188
OSI New Opportunity Scholarships	200	-	(24)	-	-	-	-	176
Elvin Guri Scholarships	179	-	(21)	-	-	-	-	158
Dimi Panitza	127	-	(2)	(2)	-	-	-	123
Raiffeisenbank Scholarships	88	-	(11)	-	-	-	-	77
Telerik	84	6	(18)	-	-	-	-	72
20th Anniversary Scholarship	71	-	-	-	-	-	-	71
Other	1,345	184	(119)	(145)	(22)	86	(26)	1,303
Total	46,434	1,156	(2,498)	(1,512)	(373)	598	(27)	43,778

17. SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Subsequent events have been evaluated through September 14, 2015, which is the date the consolidated financial statements were available to be issued and has concluded that there were no such events that require adjustment to the consolidated financial statements or disclosure to the notes to the accompanying consolidated financial statements.

SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS*For the year ended June 30, 2015*

FDA Number	Grant or agency/ Program title	Grant number	Expenditure	Capitalized cost	Total
			FY15 USD'000	FY15 USD'000	FY15 USD'000
98.Unknown	US Agency for International Development (USAID) Endowment fund for achieving long-term financial sustainability	183-A-00-02-00102-00	650	-	650
98.Unknown	American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA/ USAID) Furniture & equipment for Student Center theatre and auditorium, Wi-Fi equipment	AID-ASHA-G-11-00023	29	253	282
98.Unknown	American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA/ USAID) Furniture & video equipment for Residence Halls I & II	AID-ASHA-G-12-00007	15	10	25
98.Unknown	US Embassy, Bulgaria Grant for AUBG Musical performances	S-BU800-15-GR010	3	-	3
98.Unknown	US Embassy, Bulgaria Grant for AUBG Choir	S-BU800-15-GR018	1	-	1
Unknown	American Councils for International Education Turkmen Assistance Scholarship Program	-	11	-	11
Total Expenditure of Federal Awards			709	263	972

NOTES TO THE SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES OF FEDERAL AWARDS*For the year ended June 30, 2015**Note 1: Basis of preparation*

The accompanying schedule of expenditures and capitalized cost of federal awards includes the federal grant activity of the American University in Bulgaria and is presented in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles as used in the University's basic financial statements. The information in this schedule is presented in accordance with the requirements of OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-Profit Organizations. Therefore, some amounts presented in this schedule may differ from the amounts presented in or used in the presentation of the University's financial statements. As expenditures are incurred in local currency (BGN) and translated to USD, foreign exchange differences may occur.

REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER FINANCIAL REPORTING AND ON COMPLIANCE AND OTHER MATTERS BASED ON AN AUDIT OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PERFORMED IN ACCORDANCE WITH GOVERNMENT AUDITING STANDARDS

To The Board of Trustees
of the American University In Bulgaria

1. We have audited, in accordance with the auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (the U.S. Government Auditing Standards), except as discussed in paragraph Auditor's Responsibility of the Independent Auditor's Report the consolidated financial statements of the American University in Bulgaria (the "University"), which comprise the consolidated statement of financial position as of June 30, 2015 and 2014 and the related consolidated statements of activities and of cash flows for the years then ended, and the related notes to the consolidated financial statements and we have issued our report thereon dated September 14, 2015.

Internal Control Over Financial Reporting

2. In planning and performing our audit of the consolidated financial statements, we considered the University's internal control over financial reporting ("internal control") to determine the audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing our opinion on the consolidated financial statements, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the University's internal control. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of the University's internal control.
3. A *deficiency in internal control* exists when the design or operation of a control does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct misstatements on a timely basis. A *material weakness* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control, such that there is a reasonable possibility that a material misstatement of the entity's consolidated financial statements will not be prevented, or detected and corrected on a timely basis. A *significant deficiency* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control that is less severe than a material weakness, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.
4. Our consideration of internal control was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. Given these limitations, during our audit we did not identify any deficiencies in internal control that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.

Compliance and Other Matters

5. As part of obtaining reasonable assurance about whether the University's consolidated financial statements are free from material misstatement, we performed tests of its compliance with certain provisions of laws, regulations, contracts, and grant agreements, noncompliance with which could have a direct and material effect on the determination of consolidated financial statement amounts. However, providing an opinion on compliance with those provisions was not an objective of our audit, and accordingly, we do not express such an opinion. The results of our tests disclosed no instances of noncompliance or other matters that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Purpose of this Report

6. The purpose of this report is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control and compliance and the results of that testing, and not to provide an opinion on the effectiveness of the University's internal control or on compliance. This report is an integral part of an audit performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards in considering the University's internal control and compliance. This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Trustees , the Audit Committee, University's Management, and U.S. Federal awarding agencies, accordingly this communication is not suitable for any other purpose.

DeLoitte Audit

Deloitte Audit OOD

September 14, 2015
Sofia, Bulgaria

REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO EACH MAJOR PROGRAM AND REPORT ON INTERNAL CONTROL OVER COMPLIANCE REQUIRED BY OMB CIRCULAR A-133

To The Board of Trustees
of the American University in Bulgaria

Report on Compliance for Each Major Federal Program

1. We have audited the American University in Bulgaria's (the "University") compliance with the types of compliance requirements, described in the U. S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 Compliance Supplement that could have a direct and material effect on each of University's major federal programs for the years ended June 30, 2015 and 2014. University's major federal programs are identified in the summary of auditor's results section of the accompanying schedule of findings and questioned costs.

Management's Responsibility

2. Management is responsible for compliance with the requirements of laws, regulations, contracts, and grants applicable to its federal programs.

Auditor's Responsibility

3. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on compliance for each of University's major federal programs based on our audit of the types of compliance requirements referred to above. Except as discussed in paragraph 4 below, we conducted our audit of compliance in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; and OMB Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations. Those standards and OMB Circular A-133 require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether noncompliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on a major federal program occurred. An audit includes examining, on a test basis, evidence about University's compliance with those requirements and performing such other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.
4. Although we have periodic quality control reviews by other Deloitte offices as well as by the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Bulgaria (ICPA) and the Commission for Public Oversight of Statutory Auditors of Bulgaria (CPOSA), we did not have an external peer review by an unaffiliated audit organization as required in Chapter 3, paragraph 3.96 of U.S. Government Auditing Standards since no such program is enrolled in the Republic of Bulgaria by professional organizations. We believe that the effect of this departure from U.S. Government Auditing Standards is not material because we participate in the Deloitte worldwide internal quality control review program as well in the quality control review program of ICPA and CPOSA which require Deloitte Audit OOD to be subject every three years to an extensive quality control review by partners and managers from other Deloitte affiliate offices and by members of ICPA, respectively. The objectives of the internal quality control review to which Deloitte Audit OOD is subject to are similar to those required by Chapter 3, paragraph 3.96 of U.S. Government Auditing Standards. In addition, we do not have a continuing professional education program that fully satisfies the requirement, set forth in Chapter 3, paragraph 3.76 of U.S. Government Auditing Standards. However, our current program provides at least 80 hours of continuing education and training every two years.

5. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion on compliance for each major federal program. However, our audit does not provide a legal determination of University's compliance.

Opinion on Each Major Federal Program

6. In our opinion, University complied, in all material respects, with the types of compliance requirements referred to above that could have a direct and material effect on each of its major federal programs for the year ended June 30, 2015 and 2014.

Report on Internal Control Over Compliance

7. Management of University is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control over compliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above. In planning and performing our audit of compliance, we considered University's internal control over compliance with the types of requirements that could have a direct and material effect on each major federal program to determine the auditing procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances for the purpose of expressing an opinion on compliance for each major federal program and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with OMB Circular A-133, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the effectiveness of Example Entity's internal control over compliance.
8. *A deficiency in internal control over compliance* exists when the design or operation of a control over compliance does not allow management or employees, in the normal course of performing their assigned functions, to prevent, or detect and correct, noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program on a timely basis. *A material weakness in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance, such that there is a reasonable possibility that material noncompliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program will not be prevented, or detected and corrected, on a timely basis. *A significant deficiency in internal control over compliance* is a deficiency, or a combination of deficiencies, in internal control over compliance with a type of compliance requirement of a federal program that is less severe than a material weakness in internal control over compliance, yet important enough to merit attention by those charged with governance.
9. Our consideration of internal control over compliance was for the limited purpose described in the first paragraph of this section and was not designed to identify all deficiencies in internal control over compliance that might be material weaknesses or significant deficiencies. We did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over compliance that we consider to be material weaknesses. However, material weaknesses may exist that have not been identified.
10. The purpose of this report on internal control over compliance is solely to describe the scope of our testing of internal control over compliance and the results of that testing based on the requirements of OMB Circular A-133. Accordingly, this report is not suitable for any other purpose.

Deloitte Audit

Deloitte Audit OOD

September 14, 2015
Sofia, Bulgaria

SCHEDULE OF FINDINGS AND QUESTIONED COSTS

SECTION I – SUMMARY OF AUDITOR'S RESULTS

Financial Statements			
Type of auditor's report issued:		Unmodified	
Internal control over financial reporting:			
• Material weakness(es) identified	yes	X	no
• Significant deficiency(ies) identified	yes	X	none reported
Noncompliance material to financial statements noted	yes	X	no
Federal Awards:			
Internal control over major federal programs:			
• Material weakness(es) identified ⁷	yes	X	no
• Significant deficiency(ies) identified ⁷	yes	X	none reported
Type of auditor's report issued on compliance for major federal programs:		Unmodified	
Any audit findings disclosed that are required to be reported in accordance with Section 510(a) of OMB Circular A-133?	yes	X	no
Identification of major programs:			
Grant Number:		Name of Federal Program:	
183-A-00-02-00102-00		U.S. Agency for International Development	
Dollar threshold used to distinguish between type A and type B programs :	\$	300,000	
Auditee qualified as low-risk auditee?	yes	X	no

List of Supporting Documents Available in the Work Room

These documents will be made available in the work room during the visit.

DESCRIPTION

- 01D Enabling Legislative Documents
- 02D Academic Catalog
- 03D Enrollment, Graduation, Retention Rates
- 04D Library Usage Statistics
- 05D Handbooks, By-Laws, Orientation Materials
- 06D Contracts with Outside Institutions
- 07D Policies
- 09D Minutes of Committee Meetings, Faculty Assembly, Board Meetings, etc.
- 10D Faculty CVs and Syllabi; Job Descriptions of Senior Administrators
- 11D Board Membership and Affiliations
- 12D Expected Student Learning Outcomes for General Education
- 13D Academic Calendar

APPRAISAL

- 01A Reviews of Mission Statement
- 03A Studies on Student Achievement and Success
- 04A Evaluations of Advising System
- 06A Satisfaction Surveys, Course Evaluations
- 07A Evaluation of Management Information Systems, Reliability, Security
- 08A Cost/Revenue Studies
- 09A Evaluations of Use and Effectiveness of Policies and Procedures
- 10A Program Reviews of Academic Units
- 11A Placement Studies of Graduates
- 13A Impact Studies of Endowment
- 14A Analysis of retention and graduation of Specific Populations

PROJECTION

- 01P Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, Vision Statement
- 02P Financial Plan
- 03P Outcomes of Program Reviews
- 04P Plans (Campus Master Plan, Library Plans)
- 05P Case Statements for Grant Proposals
- 06P Student and Faculty Recruitment Plans and Budgets
- 08P Scheduled Program Reviews and Specialized Accreditations
- 09P Technology Training Programs
- 11P Budget Allocations and Requests by Departments

List of Enclosures Available Electronically

- 1.1 Statement on Liberal Learning
- 1.2 Curriculum Maps
- 1.3 Bulgarian Accreditation Criteria
- 1.4 Outreach Activities
- 1.5 Bulgarian Ministry of Education University Rating Results
- 1.6 Overall Institutional Goals
- 1.7 Bulgarian National Qualification Framework
- 1.8 Mission Related Surveys
- 1.9 Senior Surveys
- 1.10 Erasmus Partners List
- 1.11 Employer Survey 2015
- 1.12 AUBG Economic Impact on Local Community
- 2.1 Strategic Plan 2010-15
- 2.2 Annual Action Plans and Completion Reports
- 2.3 Institutional Research Report 2014-15
- 2.4 Senior Surveys
- 2.5 Mission Related Surveys
- 2.6 2015 Employer Survey
- 2.7 ETS Major Field Test, Economics – Results
- 2.8 Bulgarian Ministry of Education University Rating Results
- 2.9 Outreach Activities
- 2.10 Budget Memos
- 2.11 Bulgarian Accreditation Criteria
- 3.0 Enabling Legislation
- 3.1 Bulgarian Institutional Accreditation Certificate
- 3.2 Board Affiliations
- 3.3 AUBG By-Laws
- 3.4 Organizational Chart
- 3.5 University Committees
- 3.6 Faculty Manual
- 3.7 Student Government Constitution

- 3.8 Staff Assembly By-Laws
- 3.9 Academic Organization of Faculty
- 3.10 Department Chair Duties
- 3.11 Bulgarian Accreditation Criteria
- 4.1 Curriculum Development Procedure
- 4.2 Undergraduate Catalog
- 4.3 Survey after Information Literacy Training
- 4.4 2009 Information Literacy Results evaluation
- 4.5 Curriculum Maps
- 4.6 Erasmus Partners List
- 4.7 Academic Policies
- 4.8 EMBA Academic Policies
- 4.9 Assessment Framework
- 4.10 Overall Institutional Goals
- 4.11 Academic Program Review Procedure
- 4.12 Bulgarian Program Accreditation Criteria
- 4.13 Bulgarian Institutional Accreditation Criteria
- 4.14 Retention and Graduation Rates
- 4.15 Bulgarian Ministry of Education University Rating Results
- 4.16 Information Literacy Curriculum Map
- 4.17 SAILS Test Results
- 4.18 Senior Surveys
- 4.19 Academic Offerings
- 4.20 Procedures for Submitting New Program Proposals
- 4.21 Academic Integrity Standards
- 4.22 Writing Program Assessment
- 4.23 Employer Survey 2015
- 4.24 Mission Related Surveys
- 4.25 Institutional Research Report 2014-15
- 4.26 ETS Major Field Test, Economics – Results
- 4.27 Tchaprachikoff Scholarship Fund
- 4.28 Tchaprachikoff Scholarship Awardees
- 5.1 Faculty with Terminal Degrees 2003 – 2015
- 5.2 Institutional research Report 2014-15

- 5.3 Faculty Hiring
- 5.4 Faculty Handbook
- 5.5 Advising Handbook
- 5.6 Faculty by Nationality
- 5.7 Faculty Turnover
- 5.8 Credit Hours Taught by FT/PT Faculty
- 5.9 Faculty Evaluation (excerpt from Faculty Handbook)
- 5.10 Erasmus Partners List
- 5.11 Student Evaluations of Teaching – Questions
- 6.1 Admissions Policies
- 6.2 English Language Institute Activities List
- 6.3 Retention and Graduation Rates
- 6.4 Student Handbook
- 6.5 Financial Aid
- 6.6 Senior Surveys
- 7.1 Library collections by subject areas
- 7.2 Library collections usage during last 4 years
- 7.3 Library procedures and policy
- 7.4 Library collections by type of materials during last 4 years
- 7.5 SAILS Test Results
- 7.6 Results of students survey on evaluation of library resources and services
- 7.7 Results of seniors satisfaction survey 2011-2015
- 7.8 Results of the marketing research survey Perception of the new library
- 7.9 Professional Development 2007-2015
- 7.10 Information Literacy Curriculum Map
- 7.11 Library ResultsFaculty survey 2014
- 7.12 IRC Minutes – Computer Replacement Priority
- 7.13 IRC Minutes – Computer Replacement Guidelines
- 7.14 Disaster Recovery Plan
- 7.15 AUBG IT Assessment
- 9.1 Professional Development Guidelines
- 9.2 AUBG Budget FY 16
- 9.3 Budgeting Process
- 9.4 Budget Management Control

- 9.5 List of Managerial Reports
- 9.6 Investment Guidelines
- 9.7 Endowment Spending Formula
- 9.8 Principles of Financial Sustainability
- 10.1 Undergraduate Catalog
- 10.2 Student Handbook
- 11.1 Faculty Handbook
- 11.2 Undergraduate Catalog
- 11.3 Student Handbook
- 11.4 Faculty Evaluation (excerpt from Faculty Handbook)
- 11.5 AUBG By-Laws
- 11.6 Faculty Manual
- 11.7 Bulgarian Accreditation Certificate
- 11.8 Bulgarian Program Accreditation Criteria
- 11.9 Habilitation Procedure
- 11.10 Staff Assembly Goals