



Webster
UNIVERSITY

Vienna
Private University

2019

2020

Webster Vienna Private University

Annual Accreditation Report



Vienna
Private University

WEBSTER VIENNA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

for the academic year June 2019 to May 2020

(reporting period: June 1 to May 31)

Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria

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By the University Council of the Bildungsvereins für die Freunde
der Webster University (St. Louis, USA)
and the Executive Board of WEBSTER VIENNA PRIVATE UNIVERSITY

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1. Development

Webster Vienna Private University (WVPU) concentrates on student mentorship and teaching excellence bringing research into the classroom and combining it with practical real-life skills. Founded in 1981 as a foreign extension of Webster University of St. Louis, Missouri, WVPU has evolved from a teaching institution to a research-led, student centered private university. Initially accredited in 2001, WVPU has graduated more than 3,000 students and successfully passed 3 re-accreditations. In 2019, the university received a positive decision on the accreditation of a new bachelor's degree program and began preparing to enter its fifth accreditation period starting in 2022. It also faced one of the most challenging circumstances of our time, a global pandemic that challenged the very foundation of its business – personalized and in person university education – impelling the university to respond rapidly, communicate strategically, and innovate education amidst a running semester.

WVPU met these challenges and was well prepared to move courses online in both synchronous and asynchronous modes where necessary and teach in hybrid mode from the classroom when possible. For many institutions and in many regards the spring of 2020 was surrendered to COVID-19. WVPU's preparation for a possible future lockdown began in late January. That early preparation helped save it from key losses and facilitated success in the most trying of times. As a result, the university finished the academic year with increased undergraduate student numbers and a positive operating margin.

It was through the joint efforts of staff and faculty that we were able to uphold our core functions: to deliver the best education possible to our students. However, while the technological challenge was mastered quickly, the human costs only began to appear later in 2020. It became clear that learning is a truly social activity. No online teaching can ever replace the community of scholars, the intricate relationship between faculty and student body our relatively small campus allows for and we take pride in. The Palais Wenkheim, usually bustling with activity was deserted. However, the unprecedented crisis also showed us the global nature of Webster University again. Best practice examples, information exchange, dedication, and endurance across four continents were important ingredients in doing our part to fight this crisis. And those practices and values will be needed in the years to come.

Prior to the arrival of COVID-19 and the resulting economic and social lockdown that followed, the university was on track to meet its strategic goals for the year, and most important among them was to begin the preparation to submit an application to AQ Austria for its next institutional re-accreditation.

Preparations for WVPU's fifth re-accreditation period

WVPU initiated the process to prepare its application for re-accreditation during the academic year 2019-2020. The foremost relevant chapters of the application include the university's development plan and its research concept for the period 2022-2028 with particular focus on WVPU's internal quality management system. The Executive Board initiated the process of formulating its development strategy in October 2019 with an eye on maximizing engagement, input, and reflection among stakeholders of all ranks and positions. Their inputs were essential in evaluating WVPU's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Dialogue, critical analysis, and multiple rounds of feedback helped define the strategic objectives, identify and compile relevant measures, achievable milestones, expected effects, and associated budgetary implications.

This structured process began with a progress assessment of the previous Strategic Plan 2016-2022, an evaluation of the university's current programs in the context of market needs and student interest, and external expert evaluations of research output and teaching. It involved parallel tracks to gather the views of the scientific staff with regard to research opportunities and trajectories, teaching loads, and program development as well as administrative policies that effect student learning, engagement, and workloads. Proposals were discussed and evaluated by the Executive Board for viability and best fit with

the university's mission and integrated into further drafts in close cooperation with the University Council. In formulating the goals, the Director, Associate Director, and Head of Finance and Administration held in person meetings throughout the fall semester and early spring (virtually following the COVID-19 lockdown) with each of the individual administrative units and academic departments including their heads and staff, the Student Government Association, and the University Senate. A survey of all personnel provided detailed insights into internal perceptions of the university's previous Strategic Plan and the successes and shortcomings of its implementation as well as essential input as to the direction, goals, and means of implementation as did the conclusions and recommendations of external reviewers. More than 20 student focus groups involving more than 100 students provided comprehensive and unvarnished input from students enrolled in all of the university's programs and at all levels.

The collection and consolidation of stakeholder inputs were essential in formulating the university's goals for the future and served as a guidepost for ongoing quality assurance. Thus, as input was collected, it was summarized and discussed in bi-weekly meetings with academic department heads, taken up in monthly meetings with administrative units and the University Senate, and presented and discussed with outside experts. The drafting of both, the Development Plan and Research Concept, involved multiple rounds of editing and review among the university's major stakeholders to assure utmost transparency and engagement. The drafting of the Research Concept incorporated specially focused retreats with academic department heads, meetings with individual faculty members, a review of all performance agreements, and a collective meeting among all research faculty at the institution. Their inputs proved vital with regard to defining the university's research goals and the identification of those factors that faculty deemed most likely to affect their efforts. Specifically, these included the need to hire additional faculty and establish cross-disciplinary themes to overcome a dearth in critical mass of faculty members and better position the university in the local research market, and to address the tenuous balance of time dedicated to research, teaching, and service.

With inputs in place from the initial rounds of interviews and dialogues, the university's leadership carefully drafted plans and submitted them for review by the University Senate, academic department heads, the Student Government Association, the senior management team, and the University Council. Their commentary was subsequently discussed in direct meetings and integrated into a second draft which was again cycled through all of the relevant stakeholders. This iterative process lasted from September 2019 to October 2020 and comprehensively incorporated the ideas of WVPU's entire community symbolizing the unity and commitment of its employees, students, and supporters in achieving its goals.

The resulting Development Plan 2022-2028 and related Research Concept, completed and approved by the University Council in November 2020, are carefully reflected, realistic plans that embody the university's values and principles and the collective goals of its employees and ensures that WVPU acts as a coherent team to prepare students for success in an increasingly complex and changing world.

COVID-19

The Executive Board (EB) first discussed the implications for the university as news spread of the COVID-19 outbreak in China in late January 2020 and began preparations for a possible shift to remote teaching. With the pandemic spreading rapidly into Europe, the EB established a special section of its intranet including tutorials, guides, and reference material and communicated instructions to all faculty to be prepared to move their courses entirely online via the university's online learning platform, specifically preparing online course features including assignments, grading, lecture notes or videos, additional reading materials, links, blogs, and exams for use in case of any disruption. Management also established a dedicated email address to respond to related questions.

In early March, the pandemic's spread forced a national lockdown in Austria, and WVPU moved all of its courses online on March 11 enabling students to continue their studies remotely without interruption. Prepared for the disruption, all classes were continued via the university's learning platform WorldClassroom. Students and faculty used video conferencing tools (first WebEx, then Zoom) to communicate directly with each other in the virtual classroom. All lectures were recorded and made available to students. WVPU was the first university in Austria to switch to fully remote teaching.

The university also quickly established procedures and guidelines for contact tracing that have worked smoothly thanks to everyone's continued efforts to keep each other safe, and established a COVID-19 task force consisting of the Executive Board, the Head of Human Resources, the chair of the Works Council, the chair of the University Senate, and the president of the Student Government Association. The taskforce still meets regularly, is responsible for any changes and updates on the COVID-19 safety measures, and regularly updates the community on developments concerning how WVPU handles the challenges posed by the pandemic and when a positive case occurs among students, faculty or staff.

From March 16 to the beginning of June, all staff and faculty were asked to work from home. They remained highly committed to keeping operations at WVPU up and running throughout. The almost 3.5-month lockdown of the university impelled the development of clear guidelines on home office regulations for staff which were worked out in cooperation with the Works Council. By fall 2020, new home office agreements were issued for all administrative staff and faculty.

The university surveyed students to collect feedback about their experience with the online learning environment and university response to COVID-19 regulations. Most students, circa 78%, reported that communication with faculty during the lockdown of the campus was easy and 75% found online learning effective. Among the most frequently raised concerns were those of a technical nature such as poor internet connections limiting their participation in online synchronous course sessions. In response, the university set up a virtual platform for faculty to discuss their experiences and share best practices and lessons learned creating a repository of helpful materials and tutorials. WVPU also invested in audio/visual technology in all of its classrooms to accommodate hybrid teaching, i.e., in class, face-to-face instruction with synchronous audio/video (live streamed) and recordings then posted to the university's online learning platform for asynchronous retrieval.

Recognizing the increased need for high quality counseling and related student services, the university worked diligently to support student learning and well-being both at the individual and community level by offering a variety of services to support student academic and professional growth, social integration, and psychological health. Immediately in March, the university switched all student support services online including the university's psychological support service via WebEx and Zoom, its virtual career coaching, Language Center, and various social media online campaigns to intensify the contact between students via the Internet. Students were particularly concerned about maintaining their legal residency in Austria or returning to the country for the start of the next fall semester. Therefore, increased attention was given to providing advice via online channels.

Strategic Communication (BA)

The university received affirmation in July 2019 from AQ Austria of its approval for WVPU's application to add a bachelor's degree program in Strategic Communication (BA). Marketing and recruitment began in fall 2019. Excited to introduce the new program, WVPU launched the program in fall 2020 with a starting cohort of 11 students. Strategic Communication (BA) is the first new program introduced under the new management and part of WVPU's efforts to develop and offer attractive and innovative programs meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

Attention is increasingly becoming a commodity and so too is demand for individuals skilled in raising awareness, constructing a narrative, and using media to purposefully persuade in order to fulfill an organization's mission. Indeed, skilled communication and, in particular, the ability to convey critical pieces of information and form transferable narratives, serve as keys to success. Led by Dr. Bradley Wiggins with support from colleagues across all academic departments, the Strategic Communication (BA) program thoroughly examines the communicative practices within and among organizations and their constituencies and supplies students with the skills they need to successfully navigate the highly sensitive, attention-seeking, media environments that define our time. Strategic Communication students will graduate with the professional toolkit necessary to understand the nuances of digital media literacies, both as a producer and as a consumer of media texts and be able to apply advanced knowledge, skills and competencies in public relations, advertising, media studies, and speech communication as well as knowledge management, negotiation, leadership, persuasion, corporate and crisis communication, promotions, and communication campaigns. They will gain valuable insight into how to use strategic writing and message creation, conduct research, analyze audiences, and apply persuasion, and new/social media skills to create successful communication strategies. As a result, graduates can look forward to careers in organizational and corporate communication working on promotional campaigns, public relations, media consultation, digital messaging, as well as managing social media while others will go on to successfully complete advanced academic degrees.

2. Governance Structure & Organization

The following governing bodies were active during the fiscal year 2019–2020:

General Assembly (ex officio membership as officers of Webster University)

- Dr. Elizabeth J. Stroble, Chancellor
- Dr. Julian Z. Schuster, President
- Nancy Hellerud, J.D., Vice Provost
- Richard Meyer, Chief Financial Officer

Supervisory Board of the Bildungsverein für die Freunde der Webster University (St. Louis, USA) acting as the University Council of Webster Vienna Private University (hereinafter: “University Council”)

- Dipl.-Ing. Berghold Bayer, Chairperson
- Dipl.-Ing. Fritz Ohler, Vice-chairperson
- John Pyle, Ed.D.

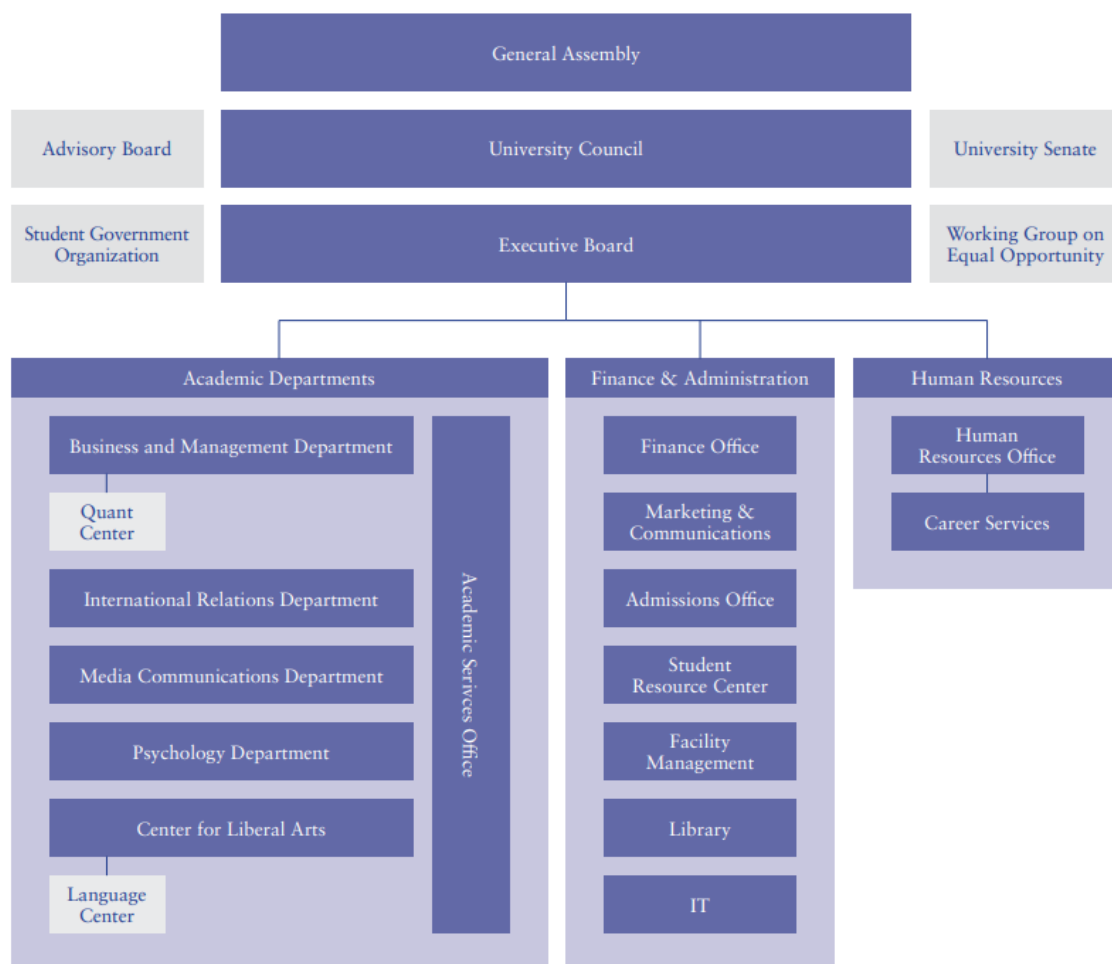
Executive Board of the Bildungsverein für die Freunde der Webster University (St. Louis, USA) and of Webster Vienna Private University

- Dr. Johannes Pollak, Director (Chairperson)
- Dr. Samuel R. Schubert, Associate Director (Vice-chairperson/Secretary)
- Mag. Michael Postmann, Head of Finance and Administration (Treasurer)

WVPU is guided by the principle of subsidiarity. It is logically tiered placing the General Assembly (GA) at the top, under which serves the Supervisory Board acting as the University Council (UC), which in turn monitors the management of the university in the form of the Executive Board (EB). This structure put into place in 2016 creates two layers of autonomy in the university’s governance structure. The university is led by an Executive Board (EB), consisting of the Director (chairperson), the Associate Director, and the Head of Finance and Administration. It engages university stakeholders in the formation and implementation of university policies, processes, and programs. In matters of academics, strategic development, and quality management the Director and Associate Director work closely with the University Senate, which represents the interests of faculty, scientific support and administrative staff, and students. Equally important, the EB receives vital inputs from important university stakeholders including its Advisory Board, University Senate, Working Group on Equal Opportunities (WGEO), Works Council, and Student Government Association. The university’s operations are further organized according to function with academics (teaching and research) on one side and administration, including all supporting units and business components on the other.

In fall 2019, the Executive Board established a university Leadership Team consisting of the heads of the academic departments and administrative units. The new Leadership Team underwent an external training aimed at sharpening leadership and management skills and played a vital role in engaging the university’s employees in the development of WVPU’s strategic objectives for next accreditation period.

Figure 1: WVPU Organizational Structure



In the academic year 2019/20 the University Senate consisted of the following members representing the different constituencies:

- Dr. Jozef Batora, International Relations Department
Representative for the Constituency: Employed Faculty
- Ms. Darya Makshyna, Student Government Association
University Senate Vice-Chair & Representative for the Constituency: Students
- Dr. Marc Mehu, Psychology Department
Representative for the Constituency: Employed Faculty
- Dr. Monika Mokre, International Relations Department
Representative for the Constituency: Adjunct Faculty
- Mr. Adam Louis Troidahl, MA, Business and Management Department
University Senate Chair & Representative for the Constituency: Employed Staff

Webster Vienna's Advisory Board consisting of prominent leaders in Austria advise the university's directors on how to maximize the competitiveness of the institution. They play a vital role in ensuring that Webster Vienna Private University graduates are among the best prepared to succeed in the 21st century. Their dedicated engagement helps to enhance the university's visibility and reputation throughout the region and across a diverse set of business, cultural, and educational communities. During the academic year 2019-2020 the university invited a third female leader to join the Advisory Board, Mag. Monika Stoisser-Goehring, Executive Program Manager, AT&S.

Thus, the Advisory Board consists of the following fifteen members:

- HE Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo, Secretary General, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)
- Mag. Michael Edelsbrunner, Country Executive, Citibank Europe plc, Austria Branch
- KR Dipl. Ing. Rudolf Hamp, Vice Chairman of the Supervisory Board, HTI-AG
- Mag. Liane Hirner (CPA), Member of the Managing Board, Vienna Insurance Group
- Ing. Rudolf Kemler, Senior Partner, Roland Berger GmbH
- Prof. (FH) Dr. Christian Kreuzer, Managing Director, EY Advisory Services & Managing Director, Austrian Controller Institute
- Norbert Lessing, General Manager, Hilton Austria
- Mag. Gernot Mittendorfer, MBA, former Member of the Management Board, Erste Group Bank AG
- Prof. Dipl. Ing. Mag. Friedrich Rödler, Chairman of the Supervisory Board, Erste Group Bank AG
- Philippe Roodhooft, Executive Vice President Middle East and Growth Projects, Borealis
- Dr. Walter Schön Chief Executive Officer, Schoen Aerospace Trading & Consulting (Committee Chairman)
- Mag. Monika Stoisser-Goehring, Executive Program Manager, AT&S
- Biljana Weber, Senior Director Business Applications, Microsoft ERP and CRM
- Mag. Dr. iur. Matthias Wechner, Member of the Executive Board - SORAVIA Equity & Chief Executive Officer - ADOMO Holding
- Dipl. Ing. Martin Winkler, Country Manager Austria, ORACLE

3. Degree Programs and Teaching

3.1 Students

3.1.1 Number of students, first-year students and graduates in the reporting period

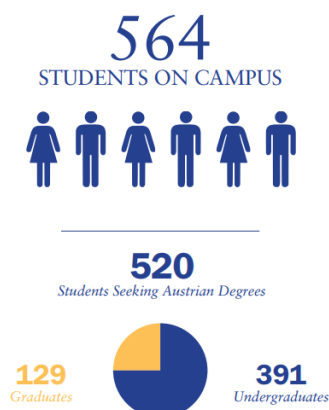
The indivisibility of teaching and research in its classrooms, a thriving culture of academic mentorship, and extensive support services for our students are the hallmarks of WVPU's academic culture. It brings out the best in our students and prepares them for success in life.

Webster Vienna Private University offers eight undergraduate and five graduate degree programs accredited in both the United States and Austria, the latter extending validity to all member states of the European Union.

Accredited Degree Programs available at WVPU	
Undergraduate	Graduate
Business Administration (BSc) Management (BA) Management with emphasis in International Business (BA) Management with emphasis in Marketing (BA) International Relations (BA) Media Communications (BA) Psychology (BA) Strategic Communication (BA)	International Relations (MA) Psychology with an emphasis on Counseling Psychology (MA) Finance (MSc) Marketing (MSc) Master of Business Administration (MBA)

WVPU's student body is both diverse and dynamic. Among the 564 students who enrolled in classes on campus in 2019-2020, 89% were residential students of 76% were undergraduates and 21% were enrolled in one of five graduate degree programs. A little more than half of all WVPU degree seeking students (55%) were enrolled in one of four undergraduate or three graduate programs in the areas of Business and Management. Another 23% were seeking degrees in International Relations, 15% in Psychology, and 7% in Media Communications. While the university continued to observe slight decreases in the number of graduate students, the undergraduate student body grew by almost 2% on the previous year.

Figure 2: Number of undergraduate and graduate students



Residential students at WVPU in 2019 – 2020 [comparative figures from the previous year in brackets]

STUDENTS	TOTAL	NEW	ALUMNI
Undergraduate	391 [381]	116 [112]	75 [73]
Graduate	129 [137]	32 [43]	27 [36]
All	520 [518]	148 [155]	102 [109]

The majority of the residential undergraduate students (55%) enrolled into the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, the Bachelor of Arts in Management with an emphasis in International Business and the Bachelor of Arts in International Relations. On the graduate level, more than 50% of the students enrolled in the the Master of Science in International Relations and the Master of Business Administration.

Undergraduate Programs/Students	
Degree Program	Head Count
Business Administration (BSc)	78
Management (BA)	28
Management with emphasis in International Business (BA)	67
Management with emphasis in Marketing (BA)	49
International Relations (BA)	77
Media Communications (BA)	34
Psychology (BA)	53
Undecided	2
WVPU Undergraduates Enrolled on Campus	388
WVPU Undergraduates Studying Abroad	-3
Webster Study Abroad Undergraduates @ WVPU	56
Total Undergraduates Enrolled at WVPU	441

Graduate Programs/Students	
Business Administration (MBA)	27
Finance (MSc)	9
Marketing (MSc)	23
International Relations (MSc)	40
Psychology with an emphasis in Counseling Psychology (MA)	25
WVPU Graduates Enrolled on Campus	124
WVPU Graduates Studying Abroad	-5
Webster Study Abroad Graduates @ WVPU	4
Total Graduates Enrolled at WVPU	123
Totals Programs/Students	
Total WVPU Students (Seeking Austrian Degrees)	517
Total WVPU Students enrolled on campus	512
Total Students enrolled on campus	564

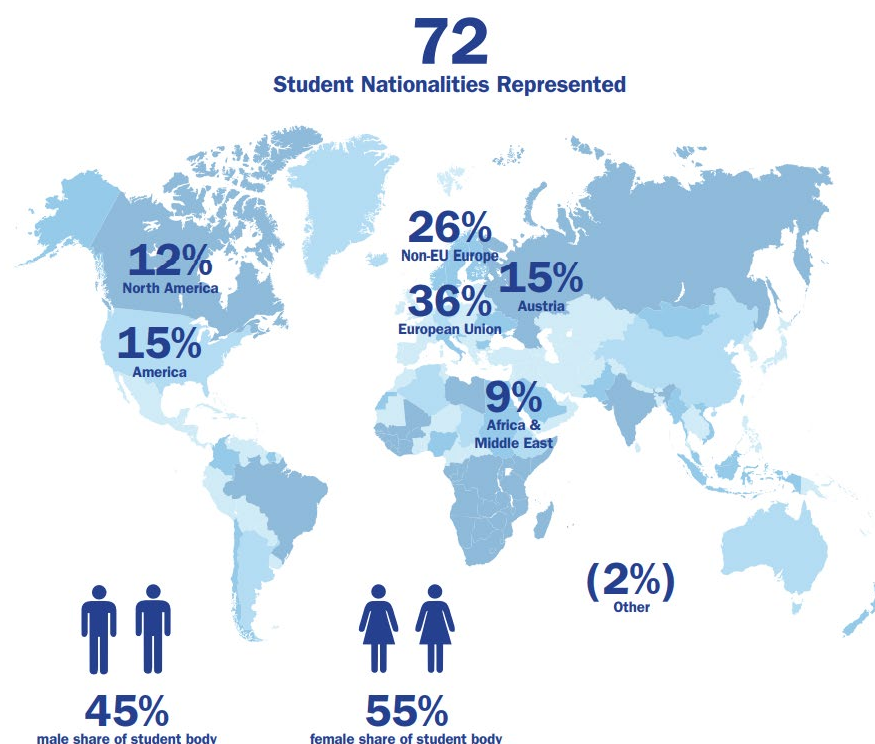
In addition to our residential student body, WVPU continues to be a highly attractive destination for student mobility. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic related restrictions, only four WVPU students spent a year studying abroad in 2019-2020, approximately a third of the previous year's total. Yet despite the global reduction in travel, WVPU welcomed more than 60 students from around the world symbolizing the university's important role in the international mobility of Webster University students.

Figure 3: Distribution of Credit Hours

Distribution of Credit Hours by Student Type		
Student Type	2019-2020	2018-2019
Residential Graduate	12%	13%
Residential Graduate Online	1%	1%
Study Abroad Graduate	0%	1%
Residential Undergraduate (Vienna)	76%	73%
Residential Undergraduate Online	5%	25%
Study Abroad Undergraduate	6%	7%

WVPU offers one of the most diverse student bodies that can be found at any university. The 2019-2020 student body brought together students from 72 countries around the world, speaking 52 mother tongues. Women constituted 55% of our student body.

Figure 4: Nationalities and gender distribution among students



The university attracted 150 new students into one of our 12 accredited degree programs (116 undergrads and 34 graduates) in 2019-2020 and produced a graduating class of 97, each of whom earned degrees accredited across the European Union and in the United States. As an unfortunate consequence of COVID-19, for the first time in its history, WVPU was unable to celebrate its students and their families with a commencement ceremony. The university hopes to welcome the class of 2020 together with the class of 2021 at Vienna's Imperial Hofburg Palace.

In 2019-2020 our various university activities, networking services, and public events not only helped our students to learn more about the job market and potential careers and connect with important players, but also lead them to get wonderful positions in highly successful companies and institutions around the world. Our graduates went on to jobs, traineeships or internships with e.g., Microsoft, OMV, Bloomberg in London, the Delegation of the European Union to the International Organizations in Vienna, the UN, the Irish Civil Service, and OSCE in Vienna.

3.1.2 Ratio of full-time scientific staff to students

The combined efforts of 22 permanent faculty members and 87 adjunct lecturers across 5 departments and 12 accredited degree programs educated 564 students on campus spread across 258 scheduled courses awarding more than 18,300 ECTS in the 2019-2020 period. In addition, 110 students took 46 independent or directed studies under the direct supervision of 26 faculty (including adjuncts) while 90 students (34 graduate and 56 undergraduate) undertook theses supervised by 18 faculty members.

With average class sizes of 16 for undergraduates and 9 for graduates, and a student to faculty ratio of 6, WVPU boasts one of the best environments for student success and makes it a highly attractive choice for current and prospective students alike.



Our students gain access to leading experts in their respective fields both from a scholarly and practical perspective. Outside lecturers from industry, research institutions, and leading universities combine their efforts to produce a vibrant and intellectually challenging experience for our students and play a crucial role in bringing real-life expertise, practical skills, and a network of opportunities to our students. Thanks to a generous endowment by the Chopin family, the university is able to host courses and workshops by scholars from around the world. This year, the university welcomed one of the world's leading experts on China, David Shambaugh, and a leading thinker in the understanding of the epistemology of open inquiry and innovation, Johannes Jaeger.

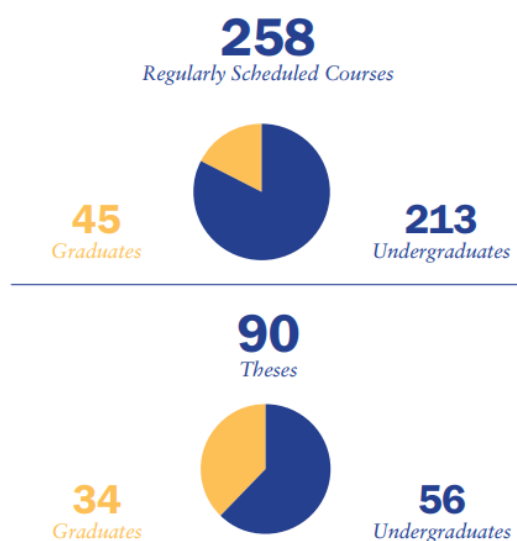
Professor David Shambaugh (Gaston Sigur Professor of Asian Studies, Political Science & International Affairs and founding Director of the China Policy Program at the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University) presented his ongoing research to faculty and students and discussed his forthcoming book *Where Great Powers Meet: America & China in Southeast Asia and China & the World*. Professor Shambaugh, who is a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations and has led a distinguished career including serving in the U.S. Department of State and National Security Council also provided a public lecture on “Future Challenges for China’s Foreign Policy” organized in conjunction with Vienna’s Diplomatic Academy.

Dr. Johannes Jaeger (Associate Faculty at the Complexity Science Hub (CSH) Vienna and formerly Scientific Director, Konrad Lorenz Institute for Evolution & Cognition Research, KLI Klosterneuburg, Austria and Fellow at the Centre de Recherches Interdisciplinaires (CRI) in Paris, France) provided a series of lectures and workshops on creativity and his transdisciplinary research between the natural and human sciences. To students and faculty he presented his ongoing research on innovation and education and the challenges of 21st-century pedagogy and higher education and delivered a public lecture on how innovative learning strategies lie at the heart of great scientific discoveries.

WVPU's students also learn from the best the industry has to offer. Our adjunct faculty include leading entrepreneurs, executives, and researchers. Their expertise in finance, marketing, and manufacturing as well public service keep our students up to date with latest in industry standards and practices. Among them are leading journalists such as Eric Frey (managing editor at the Austrian daily Der Standard in Vienna, Correspondent for The Financial Times, London), executives such as Alan Noble (Associate Director, Masters in Mind, formerly CEO, Deputy CEO, or Director of various Citibank-owned businesses over a distinguished 22-year international banking career), and entrepreneurs such as Harald Trautsch (Co-Founder & CEO, Dolphin Telematics Holding) and Andrea Gaal (former CEO and Global Head of Retail for Sony Mobile & Sony Ericsson in the DACH-Region, Central Europe and Canada, now the owner of the start-up DATAFLAG, a LegalTech and Artificial Intelligence company).

Appendix 1 shows the teaching load of our permanent and adjunct faculty for the academic year 2019-2020. 22 employed faculty members (including full, associate, and assistant professors as well as lectures) with an employment level of at least 50% [27 in the previous year] and 87 adjunct faculty members taught 258 regularly scheduled courses (213 undergraduate and 45 graduate courses). Permanent faculty supervised 90 theses (56 undergraduate and 34 graduate theses). In total they taught more than 2,600 ECTS.

Figure 5: Distribution of courses / theses (UG and GRAD)



7

Out of this total undergraduate and graduate teaching volume (in ECTS) 62 % was taught by our permanent faculty. In the International Relations, Media Communications and Psychology departments permanent faculty taught almost 70% of the total course volume. WVPU successfully increased the percentage of all courses taught by permanent faculty also in the Business and Management Department, up from 47% in 2017-18 to 56% in 2019-2020 due to the increased number of permanent faculty teaching key courses and the significantly increasing number of theses all of which were supervised by permanent faculty.

However, three very specific features of WVPU's education still require the employment of specialized adjunct faculty:

- (i) Practitioners and leaders from various industries bring a strong real-world orientation into the classrooms.
- (ii) The large number of diverse liberal arts subjects (such as history, sociology and philosophy) which are not comparable to requirements in Austrian university studies cannot be bundled into an entire teaching commitment and have to be taught by adjunct faculty members.
- (iii) WVPU is committed to offer students a wide range of choices so that they can design their own schedule based on their personal interests and preferences.

3.1.3 Average study period

During the academic year 2019-2020, undergraduate students successfully completed their studies in 46 months on average (in previous reporting period 42). Graduate students finished their programs in 31 months on average (previous year: 28 months). The slight increase in study duration resulted from the introduction of theses requirements in 2016, related delays in lab availability and facilities as well as reduced or postponed course loads due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Especially undergraduate students often succeed to expedite their studies as they get credited for so-called advance credits for university level courses at high schools, transfer credits for courses completed at other universities, or intensive courses during the summer term.

Graduate students often exceed the typical duration of studies by 3 or 4 semesters as many of them pursue their career besides studying and might even need to take a term off due to extensive job commitments. Furthermore, writing the Master's thesis requires an intensive research of the chosen topic.

3.1.4 Drop-out-rate

Central to the success of the university is its ability to retain its youngest students. WVPU performed well in this area with 76% of freshmen who entered in 2018 returning for classes in 2019.

During the academic year 2019-2020 the number of students who left our university on their own initiative or who were dismissed due to insufficient performance was 6,2% for undergraduates and 9,7% for graduates. Compared to the previous year, the absolute number of drop-outs decreased for both undergraduates and graduates students due to increased awareness of university policies and improved supporting services for students, such as special offerings from the Language Center and the Quant center and additional efforts of the university to focus on student retention including increased contacts by advisors and course load limitations for weaker students.

Drop out rate 2019-2020 [comparative figures from the previous year in brackets]

Drop outs	UG	GRAD	ALL
Stopped	20 [27]	8 [5]	28 [32]
Dismissed	4 [7]	4 [5]	8 [12]
Total Students	385 [381]	124 [137]	509 [518]
Drop-Out-Rate in %	6,2 [8,9]	9,7 [7,3]	7,07 [8,5]

3.1.5 Participation in mobility programmes for students

WVPU holds student mobility in high esteem and strives to make as many opportunities for our students to experience other cultures as possible to achieve the goal of developing our students into global citizens. Webster University worldwide boasts an extensive study abroad program which allows students to study abroad through three-week faculty led experiential courses, two-month terms, four-month semesters or for a full academic year consisting of two consecutive semesters (fall and spring). The Webster University study abroad network consists of Webster University campuses or partner institutions in Asia, North America, Europe and Africa. To encourage students to study abroad, Webster University offers the Webster World Traveler Program (WWTP) in which the institution sponsors the students travel costs up to 1,000 EUR to reach their study abroad destination outside of Europe. WVPU is also an Erasmus+ partner institution since 2018, through which our students can study at six partner institutions within the European Higher Education Area. Likewise, the university hosts students from other Webster University campuses or key partners, US-based institutions party to its Webster International Network of Schools (WINS) or through WVPU's Erasmus+ student mobility partnerships.

In 2019-2020, 59 undergraduate and 4 graduate students took advantage of the university's student mobility programs to study at WVPU [last year 75 and 8 respectively], including one student with the ERASMUS+ mobility program. Furthermore four undergraduate WVPU students participated in our mobility programs studying at a location outside Austria [last year 9 undergraduate and 1 graduate]. Unfortunately, due to the global pandemic, 2020 mobility programs ended earlier and students returned to their home countries already in March 2020. They were all able to finish their courses remotely. As the pandemic continued throughout the summer, WVPU was also not able to invite and host any additional student groups from abroad during the summer.

3.1.6 Scholarships granted or arranged by WVPU

WVPU students have several options available to finance their studies, such as scholarships, student loans, sponsorships, U.S. Federal Aid, and others. WVPU provides comprehensive information about the university's finance processes to its students including information about the individual registration and payment options, educational expense and tax reimbursement as well as financial aid and scholarship programs.

In 2019-2020, 105 students benefitted from the extensive scholarship program. In total, 19% of WVPU's entire student body was supported financially with scholarships [last year, 111 students; 20% respectively].

SCHOLARSHIPS 2019 -2020	NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS	AMOUNT in EUR
WVPU Training scholarships	33	130.048,50
WVPU Partial scholarships	60	267.662,37
Sponsored scholarships	12	150.404,00
TOTAL	105	548.114,87

These scholarship opportunities play an important role in the recruitment of new students to WVPU. All scholarships are awarded based on exceptional academic achievement and financial need. Scholarship students have to prove continuous academic success to continue in the scholarship program until they complete their studies.

Types of WVPU scholarships:

- Webster Vienna Training Scholarships (awarded on a term basis): aims to give all students the opportunity to gain valuable skills outside of the classroom. These training opportunities are available to all students, and recipients are chosen through a transparent process. Students support a faculty member with his / her research or assist in relevant departments, e.g. in the library, computer lab, in an academic department within a range of 80 to 160 hours across 8 weeks. The scholarship is offset against the tuition fees according to the number of hours worked: For undergraduates, the discount is EUR 967,50 for 10 hours per week, i.e. a total of 80 hours, and double this amount for 20 hours per week. For graduate student, the discount is EUR 1.147,50 for 10 hours per week, and twice this amount for 20 hours per week.
- WVPU Partial Scholarships (awarded annually): Students receive a reduction in course fees from 10% to 50%. The requirement is a total GPA of 3.0 to 3.5 depending on the type of scholarship. A committee of representatives from relevant departments selects the recipients of these scholarships.
- Scholarships from external sponsors (awarded annually): The prerequisite is an overall GPA of 3.0 to 4.0 depending on the sponsor's specifications. In 2019 / 20 Borealis and the City of Vienna covered 40% to 100% of the tuition fee for 12 students. A committee of representatives from relevant departments selects the recipients of these scholarships.
- In addition, the university also supports Webster alumni with a Webster Vienna Second Degree Grant for their second degree at the university by waiving the tuition for the last class of this degree. The Webster Vienna Legacy Tuition Grant is a program that provides a 10% reduction in tuition for new incoming students whose sibling or parent (core family) currently attends WVPU or graduated from any of the Webster University networks of campuses. A 5% reduction in tuition applies to extended family members (aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, grandchildren, etc.).

In 2019-2020 WVPU credited the Second Degree Tuition Grant to six students. 30 students received the Legacy Grant (5% or 10% of the tuition fee).

On top of the 105 students receiving scholarships, in 2019-2020 33 [last year 39] students (6% of the total student body) financed their tuition fees with US annual state loans in the total amount of EUR 553.836,73.

3.1.7 Tuition fees

The total amount of tuition fees depends on the number of courses taken per term and semester, the sequence in which the courses are taken and the course availability. One course usually corresponds to 3 credits but can vary from 1 and 4 credits. The textbooks are included in the tuition fees.

Bachelor Degree:

- During the academic year 2019-2020, full-time students taking between 12 and 18 credits per semester were charged a "flat fee" of EUR 10,080.00 per semester. Any additional credits beyond that equalled EUR 630 per credit.
- Part-time students (up to 11 credits per semester) as well as students during the optional summer term paid EUR 1,890 per course in tuition.
- The total tuition fee for a 128-credit Bachelor's degree course ranged between EUR 71,820 and EUR 80,640, for full-time and part-time students respectively.

Master Degree

- Most course fees at the master degree level are for 3 US credit hour courses including text books.
- The tuition fee for one course equalled EUR 2,235 (EUR 775 for one credit hour)
- The estimated total program fee for the Master in Finance, Marketing, International Relations and the MBA (excluding prerequisites) equalled EUR 27,900 for 36 US credits.
- The estimated total program fee for the MA in Psychology equalled EUR 35,760 for 48 US credits.

3.2 Staff and Faculty

3.2.1 Scientific staff¹

During the academic year 2019-2020, WVPU employed 22 [previous year 27] permanent faculty, all with an employment level of at least 50%. They are listed in Appendix 1 with their characterizations and classifications. WVPU also finished the recruitment process for one permanent faculty member, but due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, the hiring date was moved to August 2021. In addition to the faculty, WVPU employed 2 scientific staff on a part time basis and time limited contract.

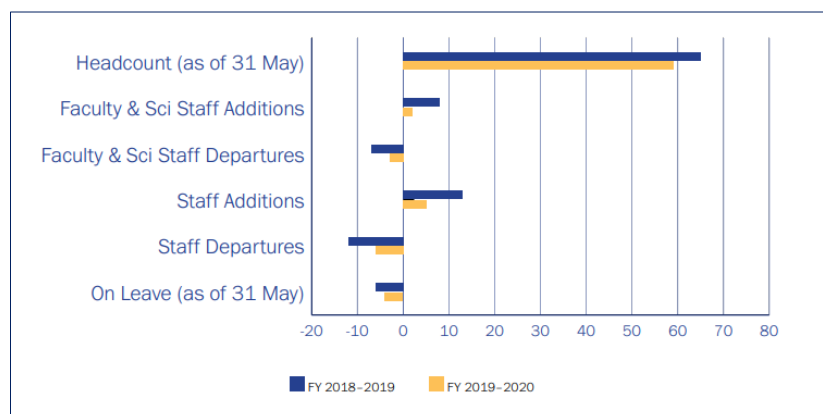
3.2.2 External scientific staff

During the academic year 2019-2020, WVPU employed 86 [previous year 69] adjunct faculty members. They are listed in Appendix 1 with their characterizations and classifications.

3.2.3 Headcount in 2019-2020

WVPU is squarely focused on providing our students with a world class education supported by a highly professional roster of faculty and staff. At the close of the 2019-2020 period, WVPU employed 59 individuals (FTE 51.2) plus three employees on maternity leave and 1 on garden leave. This compares to 65 individuals (FTE 57.4) plus four employees on maternity leave and two on educational leave at the close of the previous year. With an eye on building its team for future growth, the university hired 7 new employees in the fiscal year from June 1, 2019 to May 31, 2020 adding two scientific support staff (1 female and 1 male) and five administrative staff (5 females, 0 male). In keeping to our commitment to deliver the state-of-the-art in our classrooms, we also contracted 87 qualified experts from across the public and private sectors to teach courses throughout the year. As with any thriving environment, we also had to bid farewell to 15 of our employees who took on opportunities elsewhere, among which included twelve administrative (8 females and 4 males) and three faculty (2 females and 1 male).

Figure 6: Comparison of employment (fiscal years 2018-2019 and 2019-2020)



¹ WVPU changed the classification of scientific staff in 2020.

Overview of all entries and exits at WVPU during the academic year 2019-2020:

ENTRIES	
Scientific Staff	
Research Assistant	November 1, 2019
Student Assistant	November 5, 2019
Administrative Staff	
Junior Student Resource Center Officer	August 19, 2019
Junior Admissions Officer	October 14, 2019
Admissions Officer	November 4, 2019
Front Desk Officer	November 4, 2019
Front Desk Officer	January 27, 2020

EXITS	
Faculty	
Assistant Professor of International Relations	August 31, 2019
Scientific Staff	
Student Assistant	November 30, 2019
Research Assistant	January 15, 2020
Staff	
Student Resource Officer	June 15, 2019
Senior Finance Office	June 30, 2019
Operations Assistant	June 30, 2019
Trainee	August 31, 2019
Program Manager	September 9, 2019
Admissions Officer	September 13, 2019
Head of Facility Management	September 13, 2019
Admissions Officer	September 25, 2019
Department Coordinator	October 31, 2019
Front Desk Officer	January 29, 2020
Library Officer	January 31, 2020
Alumni Officer	April 30, 2020

3.2.4 Documentation of appointment procedures of professors in the reporting period

During the academic year 2019-2020, WVPU conducted a recruitment process for an Assistant Professor in the following area:

1. Assistant Professor of International Relations

The appeal procedure was initiated in September 2019. The recruitment process was completed in 2019-2020, but due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic the starting date was shifted to August 2021.

Appendix 2 contains a copy of the job announcements which was distributed electronically in relevant media, the list of members of the appointment committee, the names of the short-listed candidates and the CV of the appointed professor.

3.2.5 Measures taken to support young academics and staff development

WVPU introduced important measures to support young academics and to foster staff development in recent years. During the academic year 2019-2020 these measures were continued and improved:

The New Faculty Orientation, which was mandatory for all newly hired adjunct faculty members, was offered until August 2019. In order to be able to inform new faculty members more flexibly and efficiently, we developed detailed guidelines and an online faculty handbook listing all policies and procedures.

WVPU monitors its faculty performance in the classroom through an online student course evaluation. The digital, thorough, and anonymous course evaluation system provides instructors, department heads and management with critical student input to assure the quality of the courses and create a solid basis for future enhancement in the programs. Students complete the evaluations online at the end of each course. The results of the evaluations are available to every faculty member. These reviews are monitored regularly by academic department heads and used both for purposes of assessment as well as course assignments and re-hiring of external faculty. The evaluations are used for the curricular planning process, instructor assignment and assessment, and faculty performance agreements, forming part of the body of knowledge for short term and long-term course and program development. In addition to the regular course evaluation system, WVPU conducts an additional new instructor course evaluation. This evaluation takes place in week 3 of the first course taught and provides lecturers with tangible and specific indicators as well as comments that they can use to change the content and/or form of teaching for the rest of the term or semester.

Every academic department receives funds for professional development of its faculty members. In addition, research trips to conferences or workshops are funded.

WVPU recognizes both faculty and adjunct faculty members who demonstrate teaching at its finest. Various teaching awards are presented to the faculty at the WVPU commencement ceremony. Each year, students vote for the Teacher of the Year. In 2019, this distinction was awarded to Dr. Nikolaos Antonakakis, who heads the Department of Business and Management, and adjunct faculty member Alfred Dolecek, MSc MSc, who teaches courses in the Department of Business and Management. The Senate selects a colleague on the basis of the course evaluations and with regard to creativity and effectiveness in teaching. This year, the Excellence in Teaching award was presented to Dr. Julia Ruck, Assistant Professor of Second Language Studies.

4. Funding and Resources

4.1 Presentation of current financial management

WVPU's financial turnaround since 2016 continues. The senior management has built a sustainable operation for years to come. The university's fiscal year, which began on June 1, 2019 and ended on May 31, 2020 was again a financial success. Improved surpluses added to the previous year's positive results and illustrate the benefits of close cooperation between WVPU and its parent Webster University.

Based on current and projected student figures and financial plans, WVPU's will continue to generate positive results for years to come.

Webster Vienna Private University (WVPU) operates as a not-for-profit association under the Austrian Code of Associations. Formally known as the Bildungsverein für die Freunde der Webster University (St. Louis, USA), the Association is the university's legal entity with its registered seat in Vienna.

The Association holds a 100% share in the Webster BV Bildung GmbH, a not-for-profit limited liability company with its seat in Vienna which is intended to host the university operations after the change of legal form. The Association also holds a 100% share in a commercial LLC, the WEBSTER Seminarbetriebs- und Handelsgesellschaft m.b.H. which formerly operated the student dormitory.

The declaration of Patronage issued by Webster University, St. Louis, USA, on May 31, 2020 (Appendix 3) ensures that WVPU will be provided with sufficient financial resources to meet its payment obligations if required. This commitment is valid at least until 2022, so there is no legal basis for over-indebtedness under insolvency law.

The balance sheet and income statement for 2019-2020 are attached as Appendix 4.

5. Research

5.1 Research of the institution

The integration of research and teaching plays a vital role in the success of WVPU. It also was observable in our faculty's scholarly achievements. For the academic year 2019-2020, our faculty submitted 11 grant applications for more than €1.7 million, delivered 28 full papers at renowned academic conferences, and published 46 scholarly works including 31 peer-reviewed articles, 12 scholarly book chapters and 3 monographs.

22	46	28
Professors & Lecturers	Scholarly Publications	Conference Papers

WVPU faculty continued to be recognized for their scholarly work. Highlighting just a few of their many publications and achievements:

- Dr. Nikolaos Antonakakis, head of the Business and Management Department, was named 5th best economist based on the quality of publications over the last 10 years at IDEAS-RePec and was awarded the 2019 Tom Fetherstone Prize for his co-authorship of a 2017 paper published in the journal International Review of Financial Analysis.

- Dr. Eva Zedlacher, assistant professor in Business and Management won a grant from the Lower Austrian Chamber of Labour to work on mobbing in the workplace. She developed an interactive training video on the effects of unethical digital behavior and cyberbullying in the workplace. The interactive video presents interrelated scenarios of a fictitious case of cyberbullying at work and allows viewers to react as third parties to unethical digital actions such as violating postings, e-mails, and text messages while controlling for gender of the alleged perpetrators and victims. The video was made widely available to Chamber of Labour employees, via its social networks including Facebook and YouTube as well as for use in related workshops.
- Prof. Johannes Pollak, rector, collaborated with Michael Kaeding (University of Duisburg-Essen) and Paul Schmidt (Austrian Society for European Politics) to edit a work on Euroscepticism.
- Prof. Jozef Bátora published an edited volume, *Towards a Segmented European Political Order: The EU's Post-crises Conundrum*, with Routledge.

WVPU faculty served as members of the editorial boards of the *International Journal of Financial Studies* (Dr. Nikolaos Antonakakis), *European Political Science Review*, and *Czech Journal of International Relations* (Prof. Jozef Bátora); and as senior or guest editors for *The International Journal on Networked Business* (Prof. Maria Madlberger), *Critical Multilingualism Studies Special Issue* (Dr. Julia Ruck), and the journal *Sustainability* (Prof. Nikolaos Antonakakis).

Individual faculty members published articles in renowned academic journals, such as the *International Journal of Finance and Economics*, *Energy Economics*, *Journal of Risk & Financial Management*, *Journal of Geographical Systems*, *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, *Journal of Economics and Business*, *Energy Policy*, *Personnel Review*, *Integration*, *Journal of Health Psychology*, *Health Communication*, *Communication Theory* – to mention just a few.

Faculty members presented their academic papers at national conferences in Vienna and international conferences in Belgrade (Serbia), Hamburg and Berlin (Germany), Sofia (Bulgaria), Madrid (Spain), Vaasa (Finland), Shenzhen and Shanghai (China), Paris and Nice (France), Lisbon (Portugal), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Krakow (Poland), Zurich (Switzerland), Dubai (UAE) and Vancouver (Canada). Unfortunately, due to the pandemic a lot of conferences got cancelled during spring 2020.

Appendix 5 (Faculty Research Activities and Publications for 2019-2020) lists the research output of all our permanent faculty during the academic year 2019-2020.

5.2 Research grants and external research funding

In the academic year 2019-2020, research faculty at WVPU have submitted 12 grant applications for more than €1.9 million. Two projects were granted within the Faculty Research Grant of the Webster University in St. Louis, with the total amount of approx. EUR 6,800. The Austrian Chamber of Labor for Lower Austria granted a larger project within the Programme: "Projektfonds Arbeit 4.0". The project "Schau nicht zu! Ein interaktives Trainingstool gegen Cybermobbing am Arbeitsplatz" led by Dr. Eva Zedlacher received a funding in the amount of EUR 145,203.27

In addition, EUR 2,810 were granted by the Erasmus+ programme for the promotion of mobility of our academic staff for teaching and training purposes.

6. National and International Cooperation

6.1 Introduction

Beyond its collaborations in research, WVPU is committed to maintaining and deepening its cooperation with both national and international partners in higher education, industry, government, and society and promoting student and staff mobility. WVPU cooperates regularly with national and international academic institutions, businesses and organizations, established through its faculty, Advisory Board, and Alumni Association. We also collaborate with national and international partners to provide mobility and internship opportunities, bring in expert practitioners teaching hands-on skills into the classroom, host seminars and conferences, participate in projects, in addition to other enriching activities.

6.2 Formal national and international cooperation

WVPU affiliates or partners with a variety of national and international academic and non-academic institutions. These partnerships take the form of research partnerships, affiliations based on course content, sponsorships (as in WVPU's Partner in Education Program) and through memberships in associations.

WVPU's most important international cooperation network is that of Webster University, comprised of campuses, extended sites, partners, and almost 200.000 alumni worldwide. WVPU cooperates with Webster University in a range of university administration activities, events, faculty exchange, and most importantly, in supporting student mobility.

In addition to its own Webster mobility programs, WVPU expanded mobility opportunities, not only for the students but also for the faculty and staff by joining the Erasmus+ network in 2017. During the academic year 2019-2020 WVPU continued to expand its European cooperation through the Erasmus+ program sending one professor to the Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain under the auspices of the Erasmus+ Staff Mobility Programme and signing new Inter-Institutional Agreements for student and staff exchanges with 6 European universities including the University of New York in Prague (UNYP), Metropolitan University Prague, the University of Tartu, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Vilnius Gediminas Technical University in Hungary and the Academy of Public Administration in Kazakhstan.

As part of its commitment to knowledge transfer and increasing our scholarly footprint, WVPU pursues and is committed to increasing its partnerships in research.

Johannes Pollak's (Director) and Samuel Schubert's (Associate Director) continued work in the "Jean Monnet VIADUCT Network, Enhancing Visibility of the Academic Dialogue on EU-Turkey Cooperation", a project funded by the Erasmus+ programme, Jean Monnet Networks, European Commission, which together with 40 partner institutions and one extended network partner from 36 member countries aims to enhance the visibility of the academic dialogue on EU-Turkey relations and is coordinated by CETEUS at the University of Cologne. The project started in September 2017 and ended in December 2020.

As another example, WVPU is a partner in the SIDICE project in collaboration with the French National Center for Scientific Research. The project, jointly funded by the French National Research Agency (ANR) and the Austrian Science Fund, investigates nonverbal indicators of implicit prejudice and discrimination in inter-group relations.

Through its Partner in Education Program, WVPU cooperates with companies, governments, and institutions to fund the studies of highly qualified and/or financially less privileged students. Borealis AG is currently our largest donor to the program.

In November 2019, Borealis' Executive Board extended its commitment to endowing the social scholarship fund at WVPU until 2026. The Borealis Scholarships endowment, originally established in 2016 and made possible by the Borealis Social Fund, provides financial support by way of merit and social scholarships to academically gifted students. By easing the burden of tuition for those with financial need, its aim is to motivate and reward WVPU's top academic achievers while at the same time enabling them to concentrate fully on their studies. As Philippe Roodhooft, Borealis Executive Vice President Middle East and Growth Projects noted, "these scholarships are the ideal vehicle to ensure that high potential students from all walks of life can benefit from a top-notch university education."

Three social scholarships awarded to three incoming freshmen provide almost full tuition coverage over the four full years of undergraduate study. Five merit-based Borealis Excellence Awards awarded to undergraduate students having earned a high grade point average (GPA) of 3.8 to 4.0 in their freshman year cover half the cost of tuition fees for three years. WVPU is thrilled to offer such an extraordinary opportunity to our very deserving students.

Participating for 29 years, the City of Vienna is WVPU's longest Partner in Education. The Partner in Education Program is one of the cornerstones of our fundraising activities. In 2019-2020 WVPU managed to secure TEUR 1,597 in donations and gift in kinds.

WVPU is a member of Austrian Association of Private Universities (ÖPUK), the umbrella organization which links together the nationally-recognized Austrian private universities and represents the interests of the private higher education sector in Austria. WVPU is also a member of the American Chamber of Commerce in Austria (AmCham). In 2018, it initiated with AmCham to have regular information exchanges, such as faculty presenting research at meetings and having regular special lectures and events on campus for AmCham members.

6.3 Informal national and international cooperation

WVPU harnesses its relationships within education, research, and industry to provide a range of opportunities for its students and to promote knowledge transfer. WVPU leverages these relationships for its research conducted by faculty, its career services, to co-host public lectures and to bring both leading practitioners to the classroom and students to the field.

Career Services

In 2019-2020, our Career Services cooperated with a variety of institutions as part of its comprehensive career support for students and alumni. In addition to numerous individual consultations and coaching sessions to help students with individual career issues, the university also partners with international organizations in Vienna (such as IAEA, UN, etc.) and international companies to provide students with direct internship and job opportunities.

Our Career Services team visited several companies to offer cooperations – these included Wikifolio, Vienna Insurance Group, EY, OMV and the EU Delegation, all of which we invited to also participate in Jobteaser platform, our new online market place for jobs and internships, which went live in January 2020. With Job Teaser, which is now used by more than 3 million students worldwide, our students have the opportunity to apply to jobs and internships offered not only by our partner companies but also by thousands of other businesses in the network. Furthermore, they can gain valuable tips, learn about relevant events and book appointments with our Career Services team for career coaching and counseling.

The Career Services also offered several workshops and events for its students, including Career Lunches with the Delegation of the European Union to the International Organizations in Vienna and with Bloomberg, which again offered on-campus interviews for our students. We also accompanied our

students in the application process of the Delegation and are thrilled to say that 3 students succeeded in their endeavors.

Unfortunately several events, like for example the NGO Day as well as the annual “High Potential Day” by Profil which we also promote and attend to support our students, had to be cancelled due to the pandemic.

Events and public debates

Further, WVPU regularly partners with other organizations to co-host events.

The Foreign Policy and United Nations Association of Austria (ÖGAVN) supports WVPU’s efforts to engage the public and broaden discussion on topics of importance to the international community. The successful cooperation furthers the university’s efforts to expand opportunities for its students to interact with politicians, ambassadors and international experts and illustrates the important role of outreach. WVPU and ÖGAVN jointly hosted a series of events and discussions with leading personalities in the area of politics, diplomacy, economics, and other sciences. Although limited by the onset of COVID-19 restrictions, the cooperation was able to deliver two joint events in the fall:

- Mikuláš Dzurinda (president of the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies (WMCES) and former prime minister of Slovakia) spoke on Transatlantic Relations in the Era of Global Turbulence.
- Ambassador Prof. Maxime Lefebvre (ESCP Europe Business School and France’s former permanent representative to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)) spoke about the foreign policy of France.

WVPU offered a series of public lectures and symposia in the 2019-2020 period covering topics including BREXIT, China’s global strategy, franchising, and the future of work. David Spence (Visiting Fellow at the European Institute of the London School of Economics and Political Science and former Minister Counsellor with special responsibility for human security and disarmament at the European Union delegation to the United Nations in Geneva) gave a talk on “How will the European External Action Service survive Brexit?”. His presentation was followed by a panel discussion featuring Johannes Pollak (Director, WVPU), Ambassador Yvonne Tonic-Sorinj (Director General for European Matters, Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and Jozef Bátora (Professor of International Relations). WVPU’s Alumni Association partnered with the Bocconi Alumni Community (Università Bocconi) to host a panel discussion on the “Future of Work: Evolution of Workforce in a Digitalized World” featuring Andrea Gaal, Adjunct Faculty at WVPU, Petra Hauser, Country Manager Austria at Talent Garden, Francesca Pasini, Chief Financial Officer at Coca-Cola Hellenic Austria, and Annette Trawnicek, Managing Director of Hewlett Packard Enterprise.

The Business and Management department co-hosted a closed panel discussion and networking event with Börse Social Network, publishers of the BSN Magazine. This was the third time that BSN has held their regular Closed Circle event at WVPU. Local business leaders from Startup300’s, Net New Energy, Wiener Privatbank and Rosinger Group discussed the 21st century mega trends like digitization, the stock market climate, and energy.

WVPU also cooperated with institutions such as the Konfuzius Institute at the University of Vienna, hosting a workshop on EU-China Relations, with the International Society of Franchising, co-hosting the 33rd annual conference with more than 50 registered researchers and professors from all over the world, and with the Kuratorium für Journalistenausbildung (KfJ), co-hosting and co-organizing the 2019 Anifer

Journalismstage, an important event in the Austrian media scene that offers students and young professionals the chance to learn from leading experts in the field.

The WVPU International Relations Research Seminar Series

Since launching in 2018, the WVPU Research Seminar Series, Politics and International Relations, organized by the university's International Relations department has attracted top scholars to the university to present state-of-the-art research. The series provides one of the few platforms for open, inter-institutional discussion of frontier research in International Relations in Vienna. It offers a forum for invited academics to present their work and receive critical feedback from peers from the wider Vienna-based academic community including colleagues from the University of Vienna, the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, and the Vienna University of Economics. In true Humboldtian spirit, it offers to WVPU students the rare opportunity to observe and experience live peer review and scholarly work in progress. Despite having to postpone 4 lectures in the spring due COVID-19 related restrictions, the university was pleased to welcome distinguish scholars, Iver B. Neumann (Oslo Metropolitan University) - What does a state see as a crisis and how does it turn one to its advantage?, David Shambaugh (George Washington University) - Where Great Powers Meet: America & China in Southeast Asia, and Sylvia Kritzinger (University of Vienna) - National identity profiles and support for the European Union. WVPU's own Jozef Bátora also presented his latest work, The EU as a Segmented Political Order.

Webster Vienna Alumni Association

The connection of the alumni to the university is an essential key element of the alumni relations efforts at the university. To foster a community of alumni connected to their alma mater and each other is the main goal of the Webster Vienna alumni association. WVPU cooperates annually with the WVPU Alumni Association to bring notable Webster-affiliated speakers to campus. With more than 190.000 alumni worldwide including more than 3.400 alumni from the Vienna campus, the network is an important asset for the instiution. Regular events, guest lecture, newsletters, outreach on social media, the alumni bonus course program, special alumni grants, and extracurricular activities help to keep the ties of the alumni to the university. The event highlight of the academic year 2019-2020 was WEBTalks on January 23, featuring featuring author and Webster alumnus Nenad Pacek, one of the world's leading authorities on economic and business issues that concern multinational corporations seeking faster growth internationally.

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Research collaborations

All faculty members in the four academic departments Business and Management, International Relations, Media Communications and Psychology and in the Center of Liberal Arts cultivate their own personal relationships and cooperate with faculty from other national and international universities and research institutions. A detailed list of their new and ongoing projects, publications, memberships, editorial cooperation and any other types of collaboration is presented in Appendix 6 "National and International Cooperation".

WVPU faculty undertook formal and informal research collaboration with institutions such as the Zurich University of Applied Sciences, University of Essex, University of Sydney, the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research, and the European Commission. Among the highlights were:

- Ronald Hochreiter's (Associate Professor) multiple roles (Member of the project's Executive Board, co-leader of the work package RegTech Workshops, and Country Coordinator for Austria) in "FIN-TECH – Financial Supervision and Technology Compliance Training Program", a Horizon 2020 project consisting of 24 university partners, and his contributions to "EU COST CA19130 - Fintech and Artificial Intelligence in Finance - Towards a transparent financial industry".
- Pernille Eskerod's (Full Professor) work with the University of Sydney on "Harnessing Social Capital with Community Stakeholders in Infrastructure Projects" and her work with the University of Novi Sad on "Stakeholder Engagement in Rural Tourism" together with Eva Zedlacher (Assistant Professor).
- Marc Mehu's' continuing role as a co-investigator of the project Neuromuscular Electrical Stimulation (NMES) together with Sebastian Korb (Department of Psychology, University of Essex) and Arthur Elsenaar (Dutch Royal Academy of Arts, The Hague) that examines the influence of facial electric stimulation on social perception.
- Maria Teresa Punzi's (Assistant Professor) membership in the research team for the project "The Distributional Impact of Monetary Policy in SEACEN Economies" with the South East Asian Central Banks (SEACEN) Center that studied the distributional impact of monetary policies of the South Eastern Asian Central banks.

WVPU faculty members also collaborated on individual level with faculty from other universities, such as the Humboldt University Berlin, Universidad Pontificia Comillas (Spain), University of Southern Denmark, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, University of Oslo (Norway), University of San Paolo and Metropolitan University (Hungary) as well as companies and associations, such as Aldi South, Hilton Austria and ECR Austria.

Reviewers in accreditation proceedings

Faculty from WVPU have also participated as reviewers in accreditation proceedings. At the invitation of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA), WVPU's Media Communications department head reviewed two graduate degree programs at the Open University of Cyprus in Nicosia in December 2019. A member of the Business and Management department, also at the invitation of CYQAA, reviewed six programs at five colleges between 2019 and 2020.

7. Outlook

Despite the dampening effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the academic sector and the probable negative effect it will have on recruitment in the short term, the midterm future looks bright for WVPU as it prepares to apply for its fifth accreditation period. While the application is not without its challenges – the higher education landscape in Austria has become both far more competitive and more tightly regulated with regard to autonomy in the last 10 years – WVPU can look forward to continued growth in undergraduate student numbers, COVID-19 notwithstanding, and continued positive operating margins over the next years. Importantly, WVPU's reputation in Austria and the broader Central European region is on the rise. The quality of its student services ranging from community building efforts to academic advising and faculty mentorship remains some of the best available in the Austrian market. Faculty research output is strong; and our students regularly receive high praise from outside experts and employers with regard to their training, skills, and engagement.

As it seems evident that international travel restrictions will not return to pre-COVID conditions within the 2020-2021 academic year, WVPU will continue to build upon its tested expertise in delivering hybrid and remote courses, with an eye on returning faculty and students back to the classroom as soon as possible. However, as acute and difficult as the crisis is, it also presents an opportunity to gain key insights into distance learning, home office, and research practices as well as identify and implement vital innovations in WVPU's core business. Lessons learned from these experiences and insights will prove valuable to the university's efforts to innovate and grow.

Looking forward, the highest immediate priority is the completion and submission of the application for re-accreditation for the period 2022-2028 by the end of 2020. WVPU's bid for re-accreditation for another 6 years will require continued, close cooperation between WVPU and its parent, Webster University in St. Louis, in matters of academic self-administration, particularly with regard to the role of the University Senate, and program revision and development, as well as with policies surrounding admissions, financial management, and the transformation of university's legal structure from a non-profit association to a non-profit limited liability company (GmbH).

In the area of teaching, we will begin the process of shifting all courses from 8-week terms to semesters increasing the time for students to study and learn and more closely align with entry dates of the other universities in the market. The university will also further refine the online student course evaluation system with the aim of increasing participation. In the area of research, we will implement some of the recommendations made by the external reviewers of our academic department's research output and work with faculty to implement plans spelled out in the university's recently developed Research Concept. Finally, amidst all the challenges of COVID-19 and the intricacies of re-accreditation, WVPU foresees positive operating margins for years to come.