



Geneva

STRATEGIC PLAN
2021-2024

MISSION, VISION, VALUES

Webster University Geneva was the first international campus established by Webster University in 1978. For 43 years, Webster University Geneva, a tuition-driven institution, has been a Swiss nonprofit educational foundation (the “Fondation Webster”), established by Webster University, a private, nonprofit, student-focused university founded in the USA in 1915. Rooted in both the American and Swiss cultures, we have a dual perspective that is a source of academic inspiration. Webster's roots lie in a commitment to providing quality instruction via a holistic liberal arts approach, utilizing research to inform and enhance the classroom.

Webster University Mission

Webster University, a worldwide institution, ensures high quality learning experiences that transform students for global citizenship and individual excellence.

Webster University Vision

Our vision is to be a premier international university, setting a distinct standard for global education opportunities. This vision is built on a foundation of excellence in the classroom, enhanced by international perspectives and travel that fosters dialogue, respect, and understanding across boundaries and between peoples.

Webster University Values

Students

By sustaining a personalized approach to a global, student-centered education through small classes, close relationships with faculty and staff, and attention to student life. At Webster University Geneva, we support each student in their aspiration to excel. This includes various academic resources, from a Scholars’ Program designed to inspire, mentor motivate the school's highest academic performers to programs and services that enhance academic achievement of students at every level. Excellence is also encouraged in character development through participation in co-curricular activities, including an optional Webster LEADS program, which earns a Leadership Certificate upon successful completion.

We broadly define post-graduation success as each individual student’s capacity to integrate their learning experiences and newly earned qualification into their chosen path (i.e., the next professional or academic endeavor), to make informed decisions based on analytical and critical thinking skills acquired, and to define their own goals and expectations as they advance toward professional satisfaction.

Our aspiration is to develop well-rounded, knowledgeable, confident, and responsible members of the world community; to promote the love of life-long learning (formal and informal); and to encourage our students to contribute to global society.

Learning

By developing educational programs that join theory and practice, provide an international perspective, encourage creativity and scholarship, and foster a lifelong desire to learn and actively serve communities and the world.

Webster is a welcoming, inclusive global learning community. At Webster University Geneva, across about 400 students per year we have students representing up to 90 distinct nationalities and a faculty whose citizenship (and/or origins) span about 25 countries.

At Webster University Geneva, liberal arts are represented both by a specific program required of all bachelor students – the Global Citizenship Program – and a general ethos that permeates our activities as a community of inquiry. The overarching aim of the Global Citizenship Program and our orientation to learning in a global environment is to prepare students to become engaged and responsible citizens who are able to thrive in VUCA environments (volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous), ready to change the world for the better. It achieves this aim by fostering interdisciplinary forms of knowledge and awareness, as well as an array of essential skills – such as creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking – which students will be able to apply to whichever profession they end up choosing.

Students studying at Webster in Switzerland benefit from a worldwide network of Webster campuses that allow for exciting study abroad opportunities, while offering a unified academic experience, firmly grounded in Webster’s educational philosophy.

Diversity and Inclusion

By creating an environment accessible to individuals of diverse cultures, ages, and socioeconomic backgrounds and instilling in students a respect for diversity and an understanding of their own and others’ values.

Webster University Geneva is a learning environment that welcomes individuals from diverse cultures, ages, and socioeconomic backgrounds. As a diverse, gender-inclusive campus, we support critical conversations about how a spirit of inclusion is embedded in the concept of global citizenship. We aim to instill in students a respect for diversity and an understanding of their own and others' values, where:

Diversity embraces all human differences while building on the commonalities. It serves to eliminate discrimination and exclusion based on race, color, creed, national origin, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, disability, religion or military status.

Inclusion affords faculty, staff, students and community partners the opportunity to participate, regardless of differences. It is being included in activities and the chance to participate using one's abilities in day-to-day activities as a member of the community.

We prioritize the diversity and inclusion of all members of the Webster University Geneva community by creating a fertile environment where all students, staff and faculty can thrive (regardless of our human differences).

Global Citizenship

By educating a diverse population locally, nationally, and internationally, acting responsibly toward the environment to foster a sustainable future, and strengthening the communities we serve.

At Webster University Geneva, we provide the skills and knowledge students need to act responsibly in a globally interconnected world.

Research Innovation and Impact

Research is an essential activity at Webster University Geneva for faculty and students, which reflects and builds on our cultural diversity and the disciplines represented by our academic departments. Our scholarly work contributes to building knowledge, enhances our understanding of the world and the human experience, and increases the institutional visibility and academic reputation of Webster University Geneva. We target scientific excellence, rigor, and coherence in various ontological, epistemological, and methodological perspectives. Our research and creative projects are published in books or recognized peer-reviewed journals, presented at academic conferences, and submitted to juried competitions. Our research and creative works are disseminated locally, nationally, and internationally, for example through articles, opinions and interviews in newspapers, trade magazines, audiovisual media, and radio programs, as well as seminars, webinars, and exhibitions. Researchers add to knowledge both with formal, theoretical research (conception of theoretical models) and descriptive analysis, and practical empirical research, such as hypothesis validation through usage of observational databases, population studies, laboratory and field studies, and comparative policy analysis.

As an institution, we invest in innovative projects that advance the intellectual and social impact of basic and applied research or creative works, including the scholarship of discovery (original research and creativity that advances knowledge); the scholarship of integration (that synthesizes information across disciplines, topics within a discipline, or topics across time); the scholarship of application or engagement (that applies academic knowledge and expertise responsibly to solve consequential problems); and the scholarship of teaching and learning (the systematic and scientific study of teaching and learning processes).

As a private, non-profit university, Webster University Geneva focuses its efforts on each of these aspects, and excels at connecting them, making the whole University learning experience greater than the sum of the parts.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Three institutional priorities flowing from the mission and values of Webster University Geneva have been identified for the upcoming 3 years:

- Student recruitment and matriculation
- Academic infrastructure
- Swiss accreditation

1. Student recruitment and matriculation

We strive to recruit high quality new local and international students and, once admitted, focus on student success and progression through the curriculum

Recruitment

As a private non-profit institution without government financial support, Webster University Geneva is highly dependent on revenue raised through student enrollment for its on-going financial health. We are working assiduously to recruit students both locally and internationally, and we recently restructured the Student Affairs division to further

support student engagement to support student success and retention.

Strategic recruitment initiatives:

- Direct outreach and collaboration with private, international secondary school counselors across Switzerland (Traditionally, our largest student population, which equates to over half of the annual first-year freshman intake.) and continued recruitment in our primary international markets, including the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, while expanding efforts in new localities;
- Enhance marketing (mobile-friendly website, increasing social media presence) and use of new admissions CRM system; providing increasingly more detailed and specific academic promotions.
- Expand our network of institutional partners;
- Leverage scholarship and financial aid awards to convert offers of admission into enrollments.

Matriculation

As a student-centered institution, student engagement and matriculation is an integral part of our strategy and core values; we support students through their educational journey.

Strategic student support initiatives:

- Restructure the administrative division to further integrate Student Affairs, Career Services and Campus Events;
- Provide streams of activities for co-curricular learning, professional development and social activities; support the health and emotional well-being of students, especially during their orientation and transition to the University;
- Identify a data-driven approach to identify, monitor and assess students 'at risk' (for failure or dropout); enhance programming and services for early intervention and to support student outcomes;
- Create systems for monitoring student progress that take a holistic approach to student engagement and professional integration.

2. Academic infrastructure

Webster University Geneva has always placed the highest priority on the quality of the education it provides to students. We will continue to support faculty research and teaching across the disciplines, streamline and develop our programs, and enhance the cross-cultural, interdisciplinary and liberal arts learning environment at the heart of the institution.

Strategic academic infrastructure initiatives:

- Develop the Academic Affairs office to centrally support student registration, academic advising, and student support (including services like the registrar, library, and tutoring center);

- Review the portfolio of programs to add, subtract, and align programs with the demands of students, graduate schools, and professional industries;
- Reinforce the research profile of the university by enhancing the opportunities for departmental field specific areas of excellence and external research funding;
- In a co-curricular fashion, actively engage with the local community in Geneva and, more broadly, in Switzerland.

3. Pursue Swiss accreditation

Webster University Geneva has deep roots in the Canton of Geneva and Swiss accreditation is key to reinforcing our growth and sustainability. This recognition will enhance our profile for the local and international market and facilitate student transitions and diploma recognition for foreign higher education qualification.

Strategic initiatives to pursue Swiss accreditation:

- Strengthen and consolidate our quality assurance mechanisms to support the values and mission of Webster University Geneva.