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19 The American University of Paris Library in the Student Life and Learning Commons

Abstract: The American University of Paris (AUP) is a private liberal arts institution with an urban campus in the 7th arrondissement of Paris. AUP had been searching for some time for an appropriate building to house its library and expanded student services. The AUP Library commenced in the 1960s in the basement of the American Church in Paris, located on the Quai d’Orsay. In 2017, the University purchased a generic 10-storey office building on the Quai d’Orsay, directly in front of another AUP building and a few metres from the American Church. The renovation and extension of the building focused on linking all student services including the library. The combined Student Life and Learning Commons incorporating the library opened in March 2019. The design of the new spaces entailed three main elements: restructuring the office building, including updates for fire codes and accessibility; constructing a link to the existing AUP building behind it; and an interior fit-out that would spatially express the identity of an institution evolving to meet the challenges of 21st century higher education. The story of the transformation of a 1950s office building into a dynamic, student-centred library and learning commons is the subject of this chapter.

Keywords: Academic libraries – France; Library buildings – Design and construction; Office buildings – Remodelling for other use

Introduction

The American University of Paris (AUP) is a private liberal arts institution with an urban campus in the 7th arrondissement of Paris. The American College of Paris, as it was first called, was established in 1962. The library and classrooms were located at the time in the basement of the neo-Gothic American Church in Paris on the Quai d’Orsay, a major thoroughfare along the left bank of the Seine River lined with prominent French institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Musée d’Orsay/Orsay Museum. The basement looked out onto an attractive compact courtyard, giving the space the feel of a convent library. The library served the small anglophone population in a location just two doors down from its new location at number 69 Quai d’Orsay.

In addition to the small library, students and faculty of the American College of Paris had access to the American Library in Paris, an independent lending



Fig. 1: View of AUP Learning Commons from the Quai d'Orsay. © Mauro Davoli.

Facts and Figures

Name: The American University of Paris (AUP) Library in the Learning Commons

Address: 69 Quai d'Orsay, 75007 Paris, France

Website: <http://library.aup.edu/>; <https://www.aup.edu/academics/learning-commons>

Opening: February 2019

Builder: AEQUO Construction <http://www.aequo-construction.fr>

Architects: Baillon-Henrion Architectes <http://www.baillon-henrion.fr/> and Lia Kiladis <http://www.liakiladis.com>

Gross floor area: 2,050 m² for entire learning commons

Library floor space: 580 m² (excluding hallways, corridors, stairs, elevator space)

Collection size: 42,000 books, 500,000 e-books

Staff: 9.5

Workstations: 142

Building costs: €28,000,000, incl. property purchase €18,000,000 and renovation €8,000,000

library several blocks away. In the early 1970s, the AUP Library moved into a larger space within The American Library in Paris, in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower, which provided a strong visual marker for the two institutions. The American Library in Paris had purchased and combined the ground floors and basements of two buildings located back-to-back. For three decades, the AUP Library expanded within the walls of the host library. An independent entrance was created and the AUP Library evolved over the years to meet changing priorities.

By the early 2000s it was evident that more appropriate space was needed, closer to the rest of the campus. The collection had reached more than 76,000 items, which occupied a significant amount of floor area, reducing the space dedicated to study. For more than a decade, 19,000 books were kept in a remote depot in a far-off suburb, generating additional costs for storage and delivery services. To recover floor area for activities rather than storage, books that no longer matched the curriculum were removed, while the budget for online resources was increased dramatically.

The ten-member library team understood that on a deeper level it was not a simple question of floor area; real change would occur only when the Library was integrated with other university services. In the meantime, incremental changes were introduced into the existing space: two large group study rooms, a snack area, a small exhibit area and lounge seating were created. Wireless connections, computers and printing services were provided in abundance. The efforts to improve the services and ultimately the frequency of visits were well-received but ultimately had limited effect. It was time to rethink the organisation of the Library, renew its focus, optimise the use of technology and bring it back to the heart of the campus.

It became clear that the new AUP Library would need to metamorphose into a learning commons maintaining core library functions and integrating other support services to create a more holistic approach to studying and learning, while at the same time providing informal spaces for spontaneous activities. A new location was acquired. In developing the concept of a refreshed library in a new space and reflecting the centrality of the student to life at AUP, the new AUP Library would be accommodated in a Learning Commons with other student-centred services and linked to other related student services (The American University of Paris 2019b). The Student Life and Learning Commons is an ensemble of three buildings, united to centralize the services delivered to students at AUP. In this greater structure there is the generic Learning Commons, which is also known as the Quai Learning Commons because of its location on the Quai d'Orsay.

A Brief History of the Quai d'Orsay

The south bank of the Seine River between what is now the Eiffel Tower and the *Invalides* Esplanade was for centuries a marshy land on the outskirts of town. Starting in the mid-19th century, it served as the site for the successive Paris World Fairs. In the early 20th century, the land mass was consolidated, divided up into smaller lots, and sold on the private market. A prestigious *hôtel particulier*/large town house was erected on the parcel of land now occupied by the Learning Commons. The lavish stone edifice was demolished after the Second World War and replaced by an austere ten-storey government office building. It is this ordinary building at a prestigious address that has been renovated to become the AUP Learning Commons (Figure 1) which incorporates the Library and a variety of other student services including Academic, Career and Experiential Advising, Academic Resource Center, IT Services, Multimedia Office, Student Media Center and the Teaching and Learning Center.

The Quai neighbourhood today is a harmonious urban ensemble of limestone buildings from different centuries that all feature common elements and construction materials, including massing and façade alignment. Even the Russian Orthodox Church, completed in 2016, follows the same template. The few exceptions include the neo-Gothic American Church of Paris, dating from 1931 and the Brutalist South African Embassy from 1974. The building at number 69, as with many post-war buildings, was constructed efficiently and economically, with no decorative flourishes. Its basement kept the same stone walls from the former *hôtel particulier*. A column and beam construction was employed for speed, creating open floor plates for maximum flexibility of use. Although at first glance the office building does not offer rich architectural qualities that make it feel particularly Parisian, on closer inspection one realises that its stone façade and large windows in black metal render it fully contextual with its surroundings. The building's neutral nature with generous strip fenestration could be easily adapted to a contemporary facility. The building's potential, coupled with the fact that it was adjacent to the AUP Student Life Center, made its purchase by the University an opportunity not to be missed.

Negotiation and Purchase of the Property

The sale of 69 Quai d'Orsay by the French government was part of a long-term strategy of selling off state properties with little historical or heritage importance. The University had been on a constant lookout for a larger and more convenient

space into which to move its library and additional services, a nearly impossible task as the property market for larger, non-residential buildings is extremely limited in central Paris. The fact that the property is located back-to-back with AUP's Combes building housing the AUP Student Life Center and classrooms, student services, the University Art Gallery and the beloved Amex Café, made it imperative that the University obtain the property from the French government. That it was firmly sited on the prestigious Quai d'Orsay facing the Seine and next to a luxurious Art Deco apartment building with a curved façade, only added to its value.

AUP President Celeste Schenck and Vice-President of Finance Valérie Fodé worked together with Baillon-Henrion Architects to present the university's plans to government authorities who, until this point, had wanted to convert the building into social housing. That the building would serve a non-profit institution, with collective interests, and included the presence of the University Library, made an important difference when presenting the project to the government. Together with the Combes building, the complex would create a significant educational and cultural landmark in the neighbourhood and increase its appeal to the city of Paris. The city threw its backing behind AUP as the preferred buyer. Selling to a university was an attractive option because it would be purchased by a non-profit, privately financed institution that would not seek funding from the French government.

On the AUP side, if the opportunity were lost, AUP would not be able to consolidate its campus in the seventh *arrondissement* and would have to consider moving outside Paris. AUP thrives on its central urban location and has long resisted any suggestions of relocation. According to President Schenck, the fact that AUP, a truly international institution, had been anchored in the seventh *arrondissement* for fifty-eight years helped in the decision of the French government to select the university as purchaser. Additional impetus to the proposal was the desire to keep the student population of Paris as large as possible.

Planning and Design

Once the new building was found, preliminary design overlapped with the purchase of the property to establish the feasibility of the building to adapt to its new purpose. As the dust settled around the purchase, the design of the Learning Commons started to take shape, incorporating the following elements:

- Restructuring of the rigid office floor plates into fluid, multipurpose spaces while maintaining fire code and accessibility compliance

- Construction of a physical link between the Library and other student services in the Learning Commons on the Quai d’Orsay with other student services in the Student Life Center in the Combes building just behind it, to create a larger and more robust complex called the AUP Student Life and Learning Commons. A glass bridge would be created and the new courtyard façade aligning with it would be a green wall, creating a vertical garden for users and visitors to enjoy
- Interior spaces would spatially reinforce the learning commons concept to meet the challenges of 21st century higher education in a global context, where collaboration and lateral learning are encouraged, and interdisciplinary study is both structured and informal, open to serendipitous exchanges. A key element would be the combined location of staff and students on each floor
- Optimisation of library collection spaces and study areas, with open access compact shelving in the basement and formal and informal study areas on four floors surrounded by open access shelving housing the different library collections in subject order



Fig. 2: Demolition of the old courtyard.
© AUP.

David Horn, Director of Campus Planning and Facilities at AUP described the project in the following:

Our idea of a learning commons is broader than what you see at other institutions. Our dream was to create a site where we would have all student services – life services, learning support – all in the same place. The Quai d’Orsay building gave us that opportunity. We had already created the Combes Student Life Center, which combined the AMEX Café, student services, clubs, student government and the graduate student lounge. Now we have created a full suite of learning support services that directly connects to that. (The American University of Paris 2020)

Architectural work would be a two-stage process: rehabilitation of the building envelope and creation of interior spaces through the evolving definition of the Library and Learning Commons. Rehabilitation began with the shoring up of existing foundations and preparation for the glass enclosed atrium and three-storey extension at the back of the property. The entire basement originally had different levels which were renovated and rationalised to create publicly accessible rooms, mechanical plant and storage. Internal walls and the courtyard were demolished so that the new construction could begin (Figures 2 and 3).



Fig. 3: All interior partitions, finishes, stairs and elevator were removed, and the structure stripped away to its core. © Lia Kiladis architecture.

As the building is close to the riverbank, the basement level is considered a floodable area. Flooding of the Seine has been a potential threat for libraries that line its banks such as the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) or the École du Louvre library, as well as museums such as the Louvre and the Musée d'Orsay. The city suffered greatly in the historic flood of 1910 and Paris expects to be heavily flooded again in the 21st century. The rising waters of February 2016 put the population on alert. The situation has become more complicated in recent years because of new, seemingly absurd regulations that do not allow libraries to protect their own storage areas from floods in ways that would divert floodwaters to neighbouring basements.

Architect Sylvain Baillon considered several building features made it attractive to be used as a library and learning commons. Some of the most interesting buildings in Paris are located on the southern banks of the Seine, facing north, which affords them an unobstructed view over the river but avoids exposure to the southern sun, which can be harsh and unusually hot. On the southern bank, one has a pleasant view without being bothered by the sun, constituting ideal conditions to establish a library. Libraries welcome natural light for user comfort, but books risk being damaged if they are subjected to the direct rays of the sun. In addition, the large strip windows, typical of office buildings, provide greater flexibility when creating interior spaces than if they had been individual openings such as those of neighbouring apartment buildings. No space would be without daylight or without a view. The rest of the AUP campus buildings behind the quay are intermingled in a village-like atmosphere with streets and shops; having an AUP building on the Quai d'Orsay gives the university more visibility as an institution.

Until 2017 the generic office building had been divided between several French state administrative bodies and a forerunner of the international Organisation for Economic Coordination and Development (OECD). Spaces were distributed haphazardly and with little benefit to the building's north-south orientation. The building had one set of stairs and one elevator. The new project necessitated creating a second stair and a second elevator to meet fire evacuation requirements, which would substantially reduce usable floor space on each level. A small two-storey annex in the back was dismantled and replaced with a new three-storey structure to house the IT Services and to connect the Learning Commons to the Student Life Center in the adjacent Combes building on the ground floor, creating a single access point to the entire complex (Figure 4).

Student-Centred Focus

It is important to note that, beyond spatial concerns, the development of the Library and Learning Commons project was strongly linked to the particularities of AUP as an American institution of higher education solely based on foreign soil, in the cosmopolitan environment of Paris. AUP is the only foreign-accredited comprehensive university in France. It is a liberal arts institution, one of the very few in the context of French higher education, with an extremely diverse student body and faculty drawn from over 100 different nationalities. Integration in Paris and displacement of students from their home country go hand in hand when considering the design of AUP's learning spaces. The liberal arts curriculum is structured for multidisciplinary, intellectual exploration rather than a concentrated curriculum focused on a single discipline, as is found in many European and American universities. In a liberal arts programme, an open mind is a prerequisite and creativity, critical skills, and collaboration are actively pursued. Mentoring and lateral learning are utilised along with the traditional top-down teacher-student method. Spatial organisation must reflect these values and foster their development.

In the words of AUP president Celeste Schenck: "We put students at the centre of our educational experience, our pedagogies, and now our architecture" (The American University of Paris 2019a, 34). The student is the reason for the existence of the institution and students' needs were given priority in the layout of the space. It was decided that the Academic Resource Center, the Writing Lab, the Center for Academic, Career and Experiential Advising, the Civic Media Lab, the Teaching and Learning Center, Information Technology Services and donor-funded research centres would all go under the same roof as the Library. The library requirements for the new project were spaces where students would feel inspired and comfortable, whether in groups or individually; seamless connectivity; flexible furniture; and clear orientation to provoke curiosity and easy movement from one student-centred service to another. Staff would be scattered throughout the building rather than segregated in private offices.

The entire campus was being subjected to a long-term renovation plan with the specific aim of delivering academic services to the community. Four consecutive provosts, each with considerable experience in universities, entered into discussions with staff and students, and redefined work and study spaces for the new setting in the Learning Commons. Space planning proposals went through dozens of iterations to get the right mix of spaces and services on each floor and appropriate flow from one floor to the next, all the while complying with building and fire safety codes. When difficult decisions arose, the first priority, the student, was the decisive factor in choosing one solution over others.

A New Space, a New Library

The new space was created to host an academic library and the academic library had to change to fit into its new home in a Learning Commons. Moving from a traditional institution to an evolving, state-of-the-art facility was not done in one year. The University's delay in finding the appropriate building gave the Library the opportunity to implement changes progressively. The Library went through an entire reformulation of its service model with the help of a consultant from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Books that did not fit within a clear curriculum need, or had no long-term value, were donated to charity organisations and other libraries. To compensate, the Library developed a more robust online resource collection with an emphasis on e-books, that currently exceeds 500,000 titles.



Fig. 4: The ground floor atrium is a reading room, meeting spot, nature pause, bridge to the Student Life Center and the geographical and psychological heart of the AUP campus.

© Mauro Davoli.

The library would occupy a portion of the renovated building with collections and study spaces spread throughout four floors. The sequencing of the collection in the new building, distributed over four levels, was less visually evident for the user who was used to the old library, where everything was on two levels. The four library levels were carefully measured to fit the collections in the new location; every centimetre was taken into consideration in the choice of the bookshelf system. Currently the basement level has open access electronic compact shelving and a quiet study room. The basement level houses the collections of social sciences, languages, the arts, literature, geography and history. The ground floor atrium, a central meeting point on campus, is a reading room lined with the collections of religion, science and technology, together with oversize materials, textbooks, music CDs and a small periodical collection (Figures 4 and 5). Its fish-bowl appearance, with glass walls and roof, are not normally associated with a traditional quiet reading room but more in keeping with a contemporary co-working space, where users are not particularly bothered by the low hum of conversation. The building was envisioned as a cruise ship at docks and the Uni-

versity named its central help desk the Navigation Desk. The Navigation Desk is located strategically in the connecting area of the Quai and the Combes buildings. The Navigation Desk provides help concerning the Library and all the other units hosted in the building.

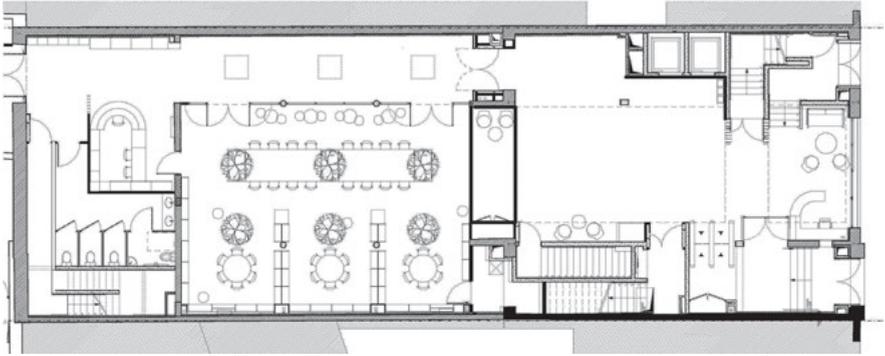


Fig. 5: AUP Library ground level. © Lia Kiladis architecture.

The first floor houses the philosophy and psychology collections, as well as librarians' offices and a help desk. The second floor has a truly quiet reading room lined with reference and general works. Throughout the four library floors, as with the rest of the building, good signage has been developed to help orient the user at all times. The architects tried to make the stairwells inviting by keeping fire doors

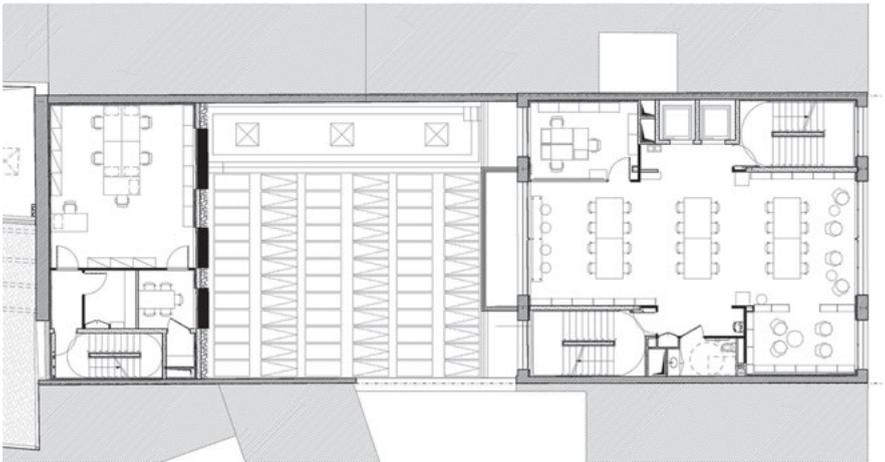


Fig. 6: AUP Library second level. © Lia Kiladis architecture.

always open, except in case of emergency, and adding bright colours and essential information on stair landings. Although all building levels are served by two elevators, users are actively encouraged to use the stairs.

Several digital technologies have been adopted to assure smoother day-to-day operations:

- Replacement of 3M magnetic security and technology by RFID technology the year before the move
- Self-service check-out, although the Navigation Desk remains important for human interaction
- New ExLibris library management system with its Alma and Primo products
- Subscription to more than 40,000 periodicals online with fewer than 30 titles on paper
- Online room reservation system for classrooms and group study rooms with students, faculty and staff required to reserve spaces every day.

In general, the University has decided to implement change gradually and allow the students, faculty and staff to take possession fully of spaces over several months before determining rules such as pre-defined areas for silent study and food and drink.

A Glass Roof and Vertical Garden

The project was developed with two main architects: Sylvain Baillon of Bailion-Henrion Architectes, principal architect responsible for the rehabilitation of the existing building including construction, fire safety and accessibility code compliance, the addition of the three-story courtyard building with its green wall façade and the glass-roofed reading room, and architect Lia Kiladis, responsible for the interior architecture, finishes and furnishings.

As noted previously, the building had great interest for Baillon because of its prime location on the Seine River, directly in front of the AUP Combes Building, and because his firm had previously renovated the Combes Building. Many parts of the old office building could be demolished without compromising structural integrity, making way for more contemporary spaces and the addition of several ecologically responsible construction elements to distinguish the new architecture from the old (Figures 3 and 4).



Fig. 7: Building connectivity. © Baillon-Henrion Architectes.

The idea of a glass bridge to connect the Quai and Combes buildings developed into a glass-roofed atrium that would be the heart of the new complex, housing the reading room and clearly visible upon entry (Figure 7). The bridge ensured the integration of the Combes Student Life Center with the Quai d'Orsay Learning Commons to form the AUP Student Life and Learning Commons complex. Working in a heavily urban context, Baillon proposed that a lush vertical garden be planted which would climb the new courtyard façade, provide fresh air and bring nature into the building at all levels. Baillon likened the route from the street through the entrance hall to the atrium and the vertical garden as a metaphor for a life-long journey. He insisted on green roofs for the main building and annex, providing thermal insulation, rainwater management and a more pleasing view from the upper floors.



Fig. 8: Entrance Hall. The large mosaic of a compass set into the floor hall reminds AUP students of their status as global explorers. © Mauro Davoli.

State-of-the art information technology and building management systems were incorporated into the project in addition to contemporary standards for fire safety, accessibility and energy efficiency. The construction project took eighteen months to complete, a tight schedule that required a certain amount of designing-while-building, with the architects in constant dialogue with university offi-

cials, staff, safety regulators and construction contractors, all of whom adopted a flexible attitude to enable delivery of the project on time, on budget, and faithful to its original ideas.

A Docked Ship for Global Explorers

AUP President Celeste Schenck emphasised to the architect Lia Kiladis that on the interior, she wanted to avoid what she called the cold, clinical look of much contemporary university architecture in Europe. Schenck sought a warm ambiance of the kind found in traditional American campus architecture. Coupled with this was the theme of an AUP liberal arts education in Paris, an international city, and a multicultural student body where students are considered global explorers in training. With these thoughts in mind, Kiladis latched onto a metaphorical concept to fuel design thinking about the Learning Commons (Figures 8 and 9) through three ideas:

- The Quai d’Orsay building, overlooking the Seine River, is a docked ship, with the Combes Building as its anchor, attached to the firm ground of the seventh arrondissement, and embodied by the planting of the green wall.
- Functional spaces and services are laid out efficiently on every floor as if on a ship.
- Top floor lounge is the bridge of the ship, with its extensive view of the Seine and beyond with the analogy continuing to the ship’s engine rooms at the bottom of the hull, loaded with fuel, in this case, books.

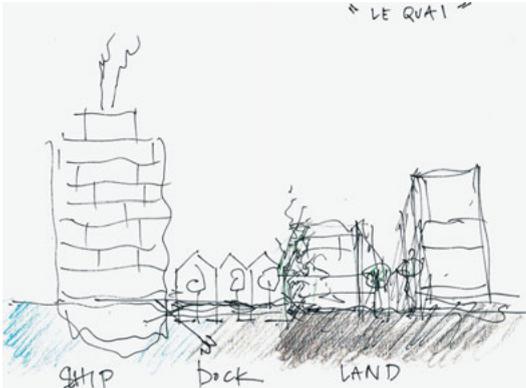


Fig. 9: Ideas sketch for interior architecture project. © Lia Kiladis architecture.

The interior design and furniture project drew inspiration from Art Deco, the stylistic movement that took its name from the 1925 Exposition des Arts Décoratifs in

Paris, and more specifically the *Style Paquebot/Streamlined Moderne* of 1930s Paris with clean lines and streamlined spaces evocative of a ship, shedding ornament and purifying volumes. Examples of streamlined modernism can be found in the neighbourhood of the Quai, notably the building next door at 67 Quai d'Orsay, designed by the architect André Leconte in 1935 (Figure 10). It is within the local context of streamlined modernism that the design project took shape.



Fig. 10: 67 Quai d'Orsay, by the architect André Leconte in 1935, inspired the project with its streamlined modernist style. © Mauro Davoli.

After the Second World War, purified architectural forms shed decoration completely, emphasising rationalism and efficiency. The result was often generic architecture, void of distinguishing characteristics, such as the original office building being renovated for reuse. The rationalism of the building's layout made retrofitting it for new use a relatively easy process as has been previously mentioned. Another layer of meaning would be required to make it into a compelling, coherent experience. The intention was to envelope rational architecture in a rich ambiance evocative of streamlined modernism which would serve as a contemporary catalyst for knowledge acquisition and intellectual exchange. The interior design project reconfigured the building for contemporary use while winding back the clock for stylistic inspiration. Fluidity of spaces, strategic use of colour, and consistent design elements from one floor to the next help orient users and visitors over the ten levels of the building. Within each floor, spaces flow from large and open to intimate and closed, echoing the dynamics of learning in small and large groups as well as individually.

Several elements are employed to reinforce general themes. Persistent use of transparent walls on each floor creates a feeling of active exchange of knowledge and of working together and facilitates transversal views from front to back,

from the water and trees of the Quai d'Orsay to the living green wall and Combes building on the courtyard side (Figure 11). Visitors to each floor are immediately oriented in the space. Offices, meeting rooms and classrooms are separated from the common space on each floor by floor-to-ceiling glass walls, so that all activities, whether in open spaces or closed rooms, feel linked to a larger whole.



Fig. 11: Second level Reading Room, with group tables, individual seating, natural light and views of vegetation on both sides. © Mauro Davoli.

Paint colours, which give each floor an identity within an ensemble, are inspired by early modernist artists, particularly Ukrainian-French artist Sonia Delaunay, known for her bold, dynamic colour palettes and forms and Eileen Grey, an Irish-French architect who employed strict geometric shapes for architecture and furniture design. The streamlined modernism and harmonious colours of the interior decoration have been carried through into the signage project, done by graphic designer and AUP graduate André Lavergne. Graphic patterns on floor landings and interior glass partitions have a woven character, much like the nature of AUP, itself woven together from American and French cultures and intertwined with a myriad of cultures. A modern sans-serif typeface was adapted with an inline stripe to give it a distinctive, streamlined feel.

The large mosaic of a compass, set into the floor of the Quai entry hall (Figure 8), serves as a physical reminder to AUP students of their training as global explorers. Robert O Hill, who financed the compass mosaic, remarked that “The compass reflects in a single image AUP’s goal that each student finds his or her north star and leaves equipped for an international career and a lifetime of global citizenship” (The American University of Paris 2019a, 41).

The tree-lined ground floor atrium is a reading room, meeting spot, bridge to the Combes building and the geographical and psychological heart of the AUP campus (Figure 4). The large, glass enclosed room is hybrid by design, varying in ambiance at different times of the day from total calm to humming with conversa-

tion. Layout and furniture choices were developed in the spirit of a coworking environment rather than individual study carrels or a traditional, silent reading room.

The Capstone

Fifty-eight years after its founding, the AUP Library, which started in 1962 as a small reference shelf in the basement of the American Church of Paris at 65 Quai d'Orsay, has made it back to the Quai d'Orsay. The library and its services have changed through the decades and it is now a state-of-the-art library with a multi-service facility tailored to its size and situation and located as part of a Student Life and Learning Commons.

The return to the Quai d'Orsay was not intentional, but life is full of interesting coincidences. The first locale overlooked a church courtyard, while the new one overlooks a vertical garden, much like a French abbey library. As with every new space on campus there are things to be changed and things to remedy; it is perhaps too soon to pronounce success. On the first day of operation in the spring of 2019, every seat, nook and study room was immediately filled, and it has operated at full capacity since that time.

The project had two architects of different nationalities working with the campus planner, the university senior staff, the board of trustees, faculty, donors, local authorities and of course the team of librarians, all from a myriad of nationalities and cultural backgrounds. The mix was an enriching factor for everyone, but what was most important was the campus leadership with a strong philosophy of liberal arts and visionary ideas which placed the student at the centre when conceptualizing details of the facility.

The achievement of the Quai building and its unification with the Combes building as the AUP Student Life and Learning Commons is the capstone of the campus plan that had been implemented over many years. The new spaces of the AUP Student Life and Learning Commons promote the AUP model of higher education, taking one thousand students from over one hundred nationalities and shaping them to be the next generation of global explorers who will set off from the Seine out into the world in all directions.

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