

Fifth Draft – almost ready for prime time

Strategic Plan for Webster/Geneva: 2007-2012

The Mission of Webster University in Geneva

The mission of Webster University in Geneva reflects the objectives and values of Webster University Worldwide. The campus's presence in the world hub of international organizations endows Webster University in Geneva with a special asset: the ability to enrich the lives of global citizens by offering a flexible, student-centered, scholarly, and practical education in a culturally diverse setting. Webster University in Geneva is the most international campus in the Webster network where students from more than 90 countries and faculty from 30 countries come together to learn. The Geneva campus is committed to maintaining its international leadership within the larger Webster network.

The Core Values of the Geneva Campus

- **Accessible** – Webster University is self-consciously non-elitist and believes in making its programs accessible to the broadest possible range of motivated and qualified students. While Webster aims not to exclude, the University has established admissions criteria based upon documented academic achievement. Within the context of these criteria, individual assessment of a student's reasonable chance of academic success is a key factor.
- **Diverse** – Webster believes that a university education is enhanced by bringing together a community of learners from as broad a range of countries, cultures, and economic backgrounds as possible. With no national representation exceeding 13%, everyone on the Geneva campus is a minority. No one culture is dominant. The interactive teaching method practiced at Webster University in Geneva ensures that this diversity is well integrated into the learning process. Economic diversity is valued through a commitment to financial aid for a significant number of students unable to afford tuition costs.
- **American** – While Webster is diverse and international, we are also self-consciously American in our approach to higher education. The liberal arts curriculum is multi-disciplinary in character with students expected to complete a major in tandem with general education and elective courses in a variety of subjects. We also believe in the value of residential life, the development of leadership skills, and attention to the whole person. As a consequence, we provide a campus setting that addresses not just academic needs but also recreational and social needs.

- **Flexible** – Webster University understands that students often need time and support to find the direction that suits them best. Our program structure facilitates a tailor-made education, guided by skilled advisors, that meets individual interests and needs.
- **Student-centered** – With an average class size of 16, Webster students receive the individual attention and support they need to thrive academically, personally, and professionally. In small classes students are able -- indeed expected -- to ask questions and share and discuss their work with other students. Professors are available not only during class but also outside classes to respond to students' questions and concerns, giving feedback and assessment. Well-qualified academic advisors help students choose majors, minors and individual courses that not only meet University requirements but also meet personal objectives.
- **Scholarly** – Webster believes in a solid preparation for students in the theoretical aspects of a subject matter. Faculty members are chosen on the basis of their backgrounds in the fields they teach, and learning resources are relevant, up-to-date, and systematically reviewed and revised. The library, though small, occupies a place of importance and is greatly reinforced by the larger University's commitment to excellent on-line journal, reference, and research services. Research is encouraged among both students and faculty so that knowledge is not just transmitted but also created. There is rigor in the environment.
- **Practical** – While Webster is scholarly and theoretical, we also believe in bringing practice to bear in the learning process wherever possible. That means retaining faculty members who actually do the thing they teach and bringing high-level outside speakers into the classroom to discuss relevant issues. It also means securing internships for students and organizing study trips, workshops, and conferences. As a result, Webster students have a reputation for knowing how to do things upon graduation.

The Vision for the Geneva Campus

Having completed the campus development plan in 2005, the Geneva Campus of Webster University now finds itself with facilities encompassing the full range of campus activities typical of an American University, namely, educational, residential, and recreational. With nearly 30 years experience in this international setting and a complete campus, Webster University in Geneva in 2007 now aims to:

- Grow the student body by 25% over the next 5 years;
- Increase financial support for needy students in order to broaden economic diversity within the student body;

- Increase the output of scholarly activity among faculty and students through incremental funding in support of mission-based research;
- Expand library facilities and resources to meet the academic and research needs of a growing student body;
- Strengthen extra-curricular services for students especially in the area of career counseling;
- Build alumni affiliation to the Geneva campus as a means of supporting key elements of this plan; and
- Achieve OAQ accreditation in order to broaden the recognition of Webster University degrees within Europe and around the world.

More Students

Over the past decade the student body has grown by approximately 40% from 400 to 600 on an annualized basis. At 600, the original villa and the two classroom buildings built in the early 1990s approached full capacity. In the last planning cycle the conceptualization and construction of the new Living & Learning Center figured prominently. Now that it has been completed and integrated into the life of the campus, it is clear that it has increased our capacity to something on the order of 750 students annually.

It is critically important to note that in planning for the growth of the student body, we are not proposing growth for growth's sake. Rather, more students produces greater revenue that in turn allows us to offer a richer array of academic offerings, supports more scholarly activity enhancing the curriculum, provides more extracurricular services to students, and supports economic diversity through greater financial aid.

Over the last decade the growth of the student body has brought with it an increase in the national, ethnic and cultural diversity of the Geneva campus. At 400 students we had approximately 75 nationalities on campus. At 600 students that number jumped to 95. If we are successful in growing the student body to 750 in the next five years, that nationality figure may well climb to 110-115. We know from long experience that such a rich mix of cultures energizes our students both academically and socially. So bigger means better: more courses, more research, more financial aid, more student services, and more diversity.

While Webster University in Geneva has done very well over the years with word-of-mouth promotion, achieving 25% growth between now and 2012 will not come without additional investment in recruitment and marketing activities. Another recruiter in the Admissions office and increased funds for external relations will be required to supplement the natural flow of inquires and applications generated by satisfied customers who go out into the world singing our praises. Over a five-year period, an additional expenditure of CHF 150,000 in admissions staff and marketing expenditure is needed to reach our goal in increments of CHF 30,000 per year.

More Financial Aid

During the last decade the expenditure on financial aid to needy students has grown from virtually nothing (CHF 25,000) to CHF 250,000. Added to that, there is another CHF 250,000 allocated to students with on-campus “work/study” jobs most of whom have documented financial need. So about CHF 500,000 supports students who would not otherwise be able to attend Webster because of insufficient resources. This sum represents 5% of tuition revenue in 2006-07 and supports about 40 students or 7% of the student body. These are low figures by American higher education standards and need to be increased in the five years ahead. (At the Saint Louis campus, two-thirds of the student body receive some form of financial aid.) The principle justification for this proposed increase lies in Webster’s commitment to access and diversity. It may very well be impressive to bring together 600 students from 95 countries on one campus; but 600 well-off students from 95 countries does not make for as diverse a campus as a combination of 600 well-off and needy students from 95 countries. Webster Geneva has had an image problem in the past of being regarded as “a rich kid’s school.” That reputation has changed dramatically over the past decade and needs to disappear altogether. Our goal is to increase financial aid support by 50% in the next five years to CHF 375,000. Some of these funds will be generated from contributions from alumni, friends, and corporations and some by incremental budget increases.

More Research

Webster University in Geneva is a small university where diversity in the faculty is achieved by employing a significant number of part time professors. Were we to have concentrated the faculty salary pool in full time faculty members, we may very well have generated more research from those employed but that would have resulted in too few people teaching too many courses and compromising the breadth of exposure to different faculty experiences, practical applications, and points of view. As we are currently organized, the diversity and breadth of the faculty injects dynamism and rigor into the campus environment. As we grow the Geneva campus, we create the opportunity to fund a wealth of scholarly activity that will enrich the learning of our students building on the dynamism and rigor that is already here.

Such activities might include increased funding for Webster-sponsored conferences where new intellectual ground is broken. We have grown our conferencing activities significantly in recent years across disciplines. We are proud of this achievement. We attract top-level speakers and significant audiences from the surrounding community; and we are able to accommodate more activity of this sort.

Webster-funded research grants are offered to members of the part-time faculty allowing them to engage in research projects they would not otherwise undertake. Faculty development grants allow members of the faculty to attend academic conferences where the latest research in their fields is transmitted and shared. Core

faculty are able to be relieved of heavy teaching loads in order to undertake research of their own and/or to engage in research-oriented tasks such as following and evaluating theses, supporting research projects and fundraising efforts, or organizing academic conferences. Where appropriate, research activity can be built into the contracts of faculty members whose contribution to the classroom will be significantly enhanced by supporting the generation of new knowledge.

The objective is to grow scholarly activity while remaining flexible to the range of opportunities for faculty members and students to generate new knowledge. This corresponds to the Webster philosophy and organization worldwide, reinforces our strengths, and raises the level and expectation of scholarly activity among students and faculty alike.

Generating more research activity requires considerable financial investment. Webster University seeded the 2007-08 Geneva budget with CHF 50,000 specifically to generate scholarly activity that would not otherwise have occurred without it. We reckon that annual increments of CHF 50,000 to boost the annual expenditure to CHF 300,000 by 2012 will be required in order to reach a level where research activity becomes organic to the campus. Generating outside contributions in support of research is a viable funding option in this context.

More Library

As the student body grows and the level of scholarly activity increases, library resources will need to grow apace. The current library is small but well stocked and well used. It is significantly enhanced by the larger University's major investment in the "Passports" on-line library service providing students with over 6,000 full-text journals as well as reference and research assistance. Nevertheless, the current space is stretched to capacity. There is no more room to add shelving for more books and journals; and there are too few computer terminals for students to have on-site training and assistance with "Passports."

The librarian has developed a proposal to expand the library upwards to encompass new space for an expanded collection and where an appropriate number of computer terminals will be installed to allow students access to on-line services in a setting where they can be assisted by library staff.

The project calls for renovation of existing facilities to link physically the new space with the current facility, shelving to accommodate additions to the collection, the additions themselves, and ten computer workstations. The project can be realized over three budget years with renovation, shelving, and computer hardware falling in fiscal year 2008-09, and acquisitions to the collection falling in 2009-10 and 2010-2011. The estimated cost is CHF 250,000.

More Student Services

Extra-curricular student services are a typically American aspect of university life and something that Webster strongly supports given our commitment to a student-centered education. Over the past decade the University has taken seriously the need to

augment these services at the Geneva campus. What had been a very part time student services position (6 hours per week) in 1997 became full time in 2000. As enrollment grew, a second full time position was added in 2003 allowing one person to concentrate on residential and study abroad matters and the other person to concentrate on student activities and disciplinary matters. With the completion of the Living and Learning Center in 2005, a third position was added focused primarily on residential life. Over this same period the Geneva campus has developed a psychological counseling service for students experiencing emotional difficulties using as counselors graduate students from the Master of Arts in Counseling program doing their required 300 hours of supervised practica.

The gaping hole in student services during all of this period has been the lack of career services for undergraduate and graduate students. What was offered was largely random and consisted of individual faculty or staff members offering counsel and direction to students in an uncoordinated way. There has been a crying need for internships to enhance the practical side of a Webster education; and while we have always had them, they were again random and uncoordinated with students sometimes securing them by dint of their own initiative.

Finally in 2006 we launched a Career Services office with two highly qualified professionals sharing a scant 8 hours per week of office coverage. In spite of this minimal initial investment (CHF 20,000), the Career Services staff has succeeded in rationalizing and coordinating internships and already has achieved an impressive benchmark, namely, having more internships available than students to fill them. They have also counseled scores of students seeking guidance in clarifying career options or in actually securing first jobs or, in the case of graduate students, enhanced employment opportunities.

In the new 2007-08 fiscal year, we have doubled the investment to CHF 40,000 and doubled the hours of office coverage to 16 hours per week. Much remains to be done in the next five years to insure that Webster students in Geneva have access to a full range of quality career services including testing and assessment services to help them identify clear and appropriate professional goals for their futures, regular and numerous campus visits by corporate and international organization human resources people to recruit graduates to their organizations, further development of the internship program to provide varied and numerous pre-professional employment opportunities, and adequate office hours to provide every student with the opportunity to receive personal career advice. We need to build the staff position to full time, and we need to provide adequate support funds for the staff to offer a full range of testing and assessment services. The current CHF 40,000 needs to rise to 140,000 by 2012 in increments of CHF 25,000 beginning in 2008.

More Alumni Services

Webster University has been committed to building its alumni services in a centralized fashion from the Saint Louis campus for many years. It was only recently that funds were committed to employ an Alumni Development professional on European soil. Such a person was hired in Geneva in the autumn of 2006.

There are some 3,000 graduates of the Geneva campus. Finding them and cultivating them is a major undertaking as they are scattered around the world; but the advantages of building affiliation among alumni are multiple. Satisfied and connected former students are able to provide financial support for the scholarships, research projects, and capital improvements embodied in this strategic plan. One alumnus has already contributed CHF 500,000 payable over a five-year period to underwrite 8 to 10 new scholarships a year. Alumni can also be called upon to provide internships, career mentoring, and tutoring to current students. Through surveys, they can provide the University with valuable information and guidance on the efficacy of the curriculum to their subsequent career development. Some may see fit to return to Webster for a second degree.

A year into the establishment of a Geneva-based Alumni Development office about 20% of the Geneva alumni have been located. Planned social, cultural, and educational events have brought alumni back to the campus. A chapter of the University-wide Alumni Association has been created. There is forward momentum. Over the next 5 years, we need to “find” as many of the Geneva graduates as possible and create ways for them to contribute time, effort, information and money, as they are a vital source of support for the goals that the Geneva campus has set for itself. This goal does not involve heavy cost since the principal investment in staff has already been made. However, some modest additional funds for support activities will be required as the pace of alumni affiliation increases. Annual increments of CHF 10,000 should suffice.

OAQ Accreditation

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association has accredited Webster University since 1925. This is sufficient in the traditional world of higher education where most American universities occupy a single campus in a single location. But Webster chose 30 years ago to be international. In the international world of higher education, cross-border recognition is a far more complicated proposition. At one level our Higher Learning Commission accreditation is recognized by ministries of education and universities around the world; but within Europe in the wake of the Bologna Accords and the Europe-wide accreditation movement they spawned, an American university on European soil has reason to play by a dual set of rules.

Moreover, some governments and universities around the world recognize accreditation only when the accreditor shares the same national soil as the schools it validates. So as higher education equivalency and recognition has developed world wide in recent years, being an international university as Webster is means meeting multiple standards in multiple locations. The life of an international organization can be more complicated than that of single-location institution, but the rewards in terms of curricular richness and student interaction are substantial. Swiss accreditation presumably will provide better access by Webster graduates to Swiss and European universities. Moreover, it will provide more access to Webster University in Geneva from countries that require local accreditation. Expanded recruitment territory will contribute to greater diversity and the expanded students body that will enable the funding of all elements in this strategic plan.

Webster University in Geneva has been a Swiss foundation for 29 years. Thirteen percent of its students -- the largest single national group on campus -- are Swiss. A prominent Swiss educator said at the time of our 20th anniversary in 1998: "Webster has become a Geneva institution." On the eve of our 30th anniversary, we should become Swiss accredited and thereby better integrated into Swiss higher education community and better aligned with the Bologna process.

The cost in terms of faculty and staff time in undertaking a self-study process is significant. The financial costs of becoming Swiss-qualified are indicated above, especially in the substantial price of building the research component. But in the long run Webster will be the better for it and will strengthen its value proposition in the process.

STRATEGIC PLAN FINANCIAL MODEL								
TJ	18-Sep-2007							
Assumptions:								
ann. enr. increase	5.7%	(necessary to achieve 25% increase by 2011/12)						
ann. tuit. increase	3.0%							
ann. cost increase	5.0%							
(all monetary values expressed in S Fr.)								
		total	total					
FY	enrollments	revenue	costs	difference				
2007/08	4,065	11,403,201	11,402,362	839				
2008/09	4,298	12,364,156	12,111,757	252,399				
2009/10	4,545	13,407,962	12,870,684	537,278				
2010/11	4,805	14,541,862	13,683,023	858,840				
2011/12	5,081	15,773,736	14,552,980	1,220,756				
		increased	increased	increased	increased			
		student	increased	faculty	library	student	increased	
FY	available	recruitment	fin aid	research	expansion	services	alumni dev	remaining
2007/08	839	35,000	0	50,000	0	20,000	10,000	(114,161)
2008/09	252,399	35,973	20,000	58,448	100,000	24,738	10,000	13,241
2009/10	537,278	36,972	26,145	68,323	50,000	30,599	10,000	325,239
2010/11	858,840	38,000	34,177	79,867	50,000	37,848	10,000	618,947
2011/12	1,220,756	39,056	44,678	93,362	50,000	46,815	10,000	946,847
		150,000	125,000	300,000	250,000	140,000	40,000	