



Minerva University Granted Accreditation by WSCUC

- *Minerva Schools at KGI, incubated at the Keck Graduate Institute, gains accreditation to become Minerva University*
- *Minerva is the most selective university in the US, yet charges an affordable tuition and attracts a highly global and socio-economically diverse student body*
- *Minerva is transforming higher education through its innovative academic and experiential learning methodologies that drive superior outcomes*

San Francisco, Calif. — July 22, 2021 — The Minerva Institute for Research and Scholarship has been granted accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges/Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC.) Having met WSCUC’s high quality assurance standards, Minerva Institute, the non-profit entity that operates Minerva Schools at Keck Graduate Institute has now transitioned to become Minerva University—a freestanding, independent, accredited educational institution. This accreditation is the culmination of an eight-year process where WSCUC has carefully examined every aspect of the programs and operation: its curriculum, pedagogy, planning, faculty and staff, governance, finances, and student outcomes. Established in 2013 at the accredited Keck Graduate Institute by Minerva Project, the Minerva Schools at KGI has now graduated three undergraduate classes and three graduate classes totaling over 400 alumni.

Minerva University was envisioned and created by founder Ben Nelson with the objective of radically reforming higher education in every respect: what, how, where, and whom it teaches. Its pathbreaking curriculum enables students to effectively apply cognitive skills to solve complex challenges and make effective decisions. It teaches concepts that transcend academic fields and nurtures the ability to transfer them into new and unfamiliar contexts and environments—an unprecedented achievement in global education. Its Fully Active Learning pedagogy is based on decades of research in the science of learning, where classes are used for applying knowledge rather than for information transmission. Educational research has demonstrated significant loss of learning during typical undergraduate studies. In contrast, Minerva students show impressive learning gains year over year, demonstrated by internal assessment of learning outcomes over four years as well as the CLA+ assessments. Classes take place virtually, in a proprietary learning environment called Forum™, and undergraduate coursework is complemented by fully immersive experiential learning as students rotate in seven global cities (Berlin, Buenos Aires, Hyderabad, London, San Francisco, Seoul, and Taipei) where they participate in civic projects that are impactful to the communities they are living in.

Minerva University is the most academically selective yet financially accessible education for high-achieving students from around the world. Admission is completely merit-based

and designed to reduce systemic biases in selectivity. While its admission rate hovers around 1%, its tuition is a third that of other elite American universities and 78% of Minerva's undergraduate students, many international students among them, benefit from financial support, making Minerva the most socio-economically diverse highly selective university in the United States. Nearly 60% of students come from families with annual household income below \$50,000 and receive needs-based financial aid covering up to 95% of the program costs across their full four years. Minerva's current student population consists of more than 600 students representing over 80 countries, with no country (including the United States) representing more than 15% of the student body.

“Over 10 years ago, we began building the world's greatest university that reimagined and intentionally redesigned every aspect of the university experience to achieve unprecedented student outcomes. Today we have realized the dream of becoming Minerva University,” said [Ben Nelson](#), Minerva University's Founder and Chancellor. “This accreditation by WSCUC is a validation of the groundbreaking innovations we have delivered over the past decade. By reimagining everything we know about higher education, Minerva succeeded in transforming curriculum, pedagogy, admission processes and financial models, thus achieving the status of being the most selective yet most accessible university in the United States. Nothing speaks louder for its success than the outcomes our students have achieved. In spite of the global pandemic, 88% of Minerva undergraduate alumni are in coveted full-time professional roles or highly selective graduate programs 6 months after graduation.”

“We are grateful to WSCUC for supporting our new and innovative model and to KGI for partnering with us for the last seven years. We would not be here but for our four founding donors, who have given generous philanthropic support,” said [Teri Cannon](#), President of Minerva University. “Their contributions enable us to pursue our mission of nurturing critical wisdom for the sake of the world by providing access to our education for high-achieving students from all over the world, regardless of their socio-economic status. As a leading voice in innovation in higher education, we will continue to build awareness of the efficacy of our model and to educate our students to solve the world's most complex problems.”

Philanthropic gifts and pledges, totaling well over \$100 million, have positioned Minerva University to live its mission now and for the future. This total includes gifts of more than \$10 million each from Minerva University's four founding donors who include Zhang Yiming, Kevin Harvey, and Ben Nelson. It also includes Minerva Project's donation of \$56 million of Minerva Project stock to seed Minerva University's quasi-endowment and over \$10 million of additional gifts and pledges—including an annual seven-figure donation by Reed Hastings. Consistent with Minerva University's mission and values, these gifts overwhelmingly support its commitment to needs-based financial aid and need-blind admissions.

Minerva University's Board of Trustees is chaired by Senator Bob Kerrey and includes nine other prominent leaders in education and business. As Minerva University's founder, benefactor, visionary, and leader, Ben Nelson continues to share his guidance as Minerva University's Chancellor and a member of the Board of Trustees.

For media enquiries, contact:

Junko Green

Minerva University

pr@minerva.kgi.edu

About Minerva University

Minerva University, formerly [Minerva Schools at KGI](#), offers a reinvented university experience for the brightest, most motivated students from around the world. Minerva's undergraduate offering combines a pathbreaking cross-contextual interdisciplinary curriculum, the highest academic standards, an accomplished faculty versed in the science of learning, a global, urban residential experience that traverses seven countries, and a cutting-edge digital learning environment that produces deep and long lasting learning. Minerva was envisioned and founded by Ben Nelson in 2011 and established through funds from the Minerva Project and generous donors who are passionate about reforming global higher education and providing access to that education for the most deserving students in the world. The groundbreaking creation of Minerva is detailed in the book [Building the Intentional University: Minerva and the Future of Higher Education](#) (MIT Press.)

About The Minerva Institute

[The Minerva Institute for Research and Scholarship](#) is a private, non-profit, tax-exempt entity that operates Minerva University, formerly the Minerva Schools at KGI. Minerva Institute is governed by a Board of Trustees, chaired by former Senator Bob Kerrey. The board is composed of a group of diverse, accomplished, and highly recognized leaders in their fields. It is responsible for ensuring that Minerva University thrives and fulfills its mission of "Nurturing Critical Wisdom for the Sake of the World."