



Summary Overview

Minerva is a leading educational innovator and global provider of top-tier higher educational offerings, which draw upon the best traditions of a research-based university education, while incorporating prominent research in the science of learning and the most advanced information technology available. Its stated mission, *nurturing critical wisdom for the sake of the world*, guides a student-centric philosophy and an intentional approach to design, development, and implementation of all Minerva offerings. Minerva students are taught to devise innovative solutions to complex problems, use critical and analytical thinking to make informed decisions, work collaboratively, communicate effectively, and to be engaged, responsible, and ethical global citizens.

Pedagogy

Based on decades of cognitive and behavioral research into how people best learn, the Minerva pedagogy emphasizes active learning — techniques and activities that actively engage students in their learning — a methodology which has been repeatedly demonstrated to improve retention, understanding, and recall of new lessons.

Classes employ a “flipped” model, whereby students perform information acquisition — such as reading, watching video, conducting research — outside of class, with class time devoted to discussion, debate, collaborative work, and other means of engaging with course content.

Curriculum

To address preparation and leadership gaps in the rapidly changing, globalized world, the modular, scaffolded curriculum design focuses on developing practical knowledge — learned behaviors and transferable skills that can be applied broadly to nearly any field or professional context.

Four foundational Cornerstone courses incorporate key interdisciplinary topics, while introducing the broad set of Habits of Mind and Foundational Concepts (HCs) that underlie the curriculum and are the core measure by which students are assessed. Upper level

courses become increasingly specialized, while enabling student-directed project work and individualized study.

Technology

The proprietary Active Learning Forum™ (ALF) technology is central to the Minerva academic experience, enabling both a full implementation of the active learning methodology and other powerful features for students and instructors. Based on multiple, live video streams, the ALF platform is expressly designed to emphasize undivided participation in each class session.

With every session recorded, the ALF also facilitates the easy retrieval and review of key moments in class discussions, breakout groups, and other activities that make up any given session. Moreover, these recordings can be used to evaluate class participation and be shared among instructors to provide insights across courses, disciplines, and semesters.

The Organization

Minerva comprises three distinct entities: Minerva Schools at KGI, a non-profit alliance with Keck Graduate Institute (KGI), which offers the flagship undergraduate and graduate programs; Minerva Project, the corporation that developed, owns, and maintains the intellectual property and technology used in all Minerva educational offerings; and The Minerva Institute for Research and Scholarship, a 501c3 devoted to making a Minerva education accessible to all qualified students, facilitating the administration of grant-funded research, and advocating for broad reform in higher education.

Minerva Project

Incorporated in 2011, Minerva Project provides products and services to the Minerva Schools at KGI, as well as other educational partners. The active learning pedagogy, scaffolded curriculum design, and Active Learning Forum (ALF) seminar technology were developed by Minerva Project teams led by a group of five executive officers: Chief Executive Officer Ben Nelson, Chief Learning Officer Stephen M. Kosslyn, Ph.D., Chief Experience Officer Robin Goldberg, Chief Product Officer Jonathan Katzman, and Chief Student Officer Terese Cannon.

While some members of this founding team have departed, Minerva Project continues to develop educational innovation with the focused intention of improving student learning outcomes.

Since 2012 Minerva Project has raised US\$120 million of funding across three rounds from investors that include Benchmark Capital, TAL, Zhen Fund, and Bytedance. Minerva's Board of Directors includes Kevin Harvey, Founder and General Partner at Benchmark Capital; Philip Lader, former Chairman of WPP; Ben Nelson, Founder, Chairman, and CEO of Minerva Project; Gwynne Shotwell, President and COO of SpaceX; Bangxin Zhang, Founder and Chairman of TAL Education Group and Yiming Zhang, Founder and CEO of Bytedance.

Minerva Schools at KGI

The Minerva Schools were established in 2012 to provide an extraordinary liberal arts and sciences education to the top students in the world, utilizing the active learning pedagogy, scaffolded curriculum design, and Active Learning Forum (ALF) seminar technology developed by Minerva Project.

Both the four-year undergraduate program and a 21-month graduate program are structured to teach students the skills needed to solve complex challenges, make effective decisions, and contribute meaningfully to organizations of all types, and society at large. The Minerva Schools at KGI were established in 2013 through an alliance between Minerva Project and KGI (Keck Graduate Institute). Its five colleges and core majors, as well as the Master of Science in Decision Analysis (MDA) program are accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

The groundbreaking creation of this new university program is detailed in the book *“Building the Intentional University: Minerva and the Future of Higher Education”* (MIT Press).

Undergraduate Program

Minerva’s four-year immersive undergraduate program combines rigorous, interdisciplinary academics with a global residential experience during which students live and learn in a variety of world cities. Through the liberal arts and sciences curriculum, seminar-style classes, and a breadth of experiential learning programs, students learn and practice the skills needed for success in a rapidly changing global context.

Global Rotation

The undergraduate program includes a multi-city residential rotation that affords numerous opportunities for experiential learning in a variety of cultural contexts. Residential cities are selected to provide a sequence of historical, geographic, and cultural settings, distinct from each other. In 2018–2019, Minerva is operating with students in six global locations: San Francisco, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Seoul, Hyderabad, and London.

Master of Science in Decision Analysis

The Master of Science in Decision Analysis (MDA) is designed for working professionals who seek to accelerate their careers. The first-of-its-kind, 21-month program imparts critical professional skills, emphasizing research, analysis, and practical decision-making. Taking courses part-time, students learn to interpret complex data, find rational conclusions, devise potential solutions, and evaluate the implications of their choices — skills necessary to prepare twenty-first-century leaders to make consequential decisions.

The Minerva Institute for Research and Scholarship

The Minerva Institute for Research and Scholarship, led by Executive Chairman Bob Kerrey, is committed to making a Minerva education accessible to all qualified students, facilitating the administration of grant-funded research, and advocating for broad reform in higher education. Supporting our students financially, providing a more effective administration mechanism for research grants, and recognizing thought leadership in higher education, the Minerva Institute works on solutions that will improve higher education on a global scale.

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