
From: Laurie Dickson <Laurie.Dickson@nau.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, August 1, 2023 11:56 AM
To: Fred.Duval@azregents.edu
Cc: joseluis.cruz@nau.edu; Michelle Geneva Parker <Michelle.Parker@nau.edu>; Brian D. Register <Brian.Register@nau.edu>; Jennifer Pollock <Jennifer.Pollock@azregents.edu>
Subject: Confidential & Privileged: NAU Submission of ABOR Annual Reports and Multi-Year Updates

Chair DuVal,
I'm pleased to share the following on behalf of President Cruz Rivera.

Reach out if you have any questions, thanks,
Laurie

Regent DuVal,

I am pleased to submit the enclosed reports to the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) pursuant to action take during the November 16-18, 2022, meeting related to the item titled "Presidents' Contracts and Notice of Appointment for the Executive Director," as documented in Attachment B2, "President Cruz Rivera Propose Annual At-Risk Compensation Goals for 2022-2023," and Attachment B3, "President Cruz Rivera Multiple-Year At-Risk Compensation Goals for 2021-2024." Sections of these reports describe **confidential** personnel or proprietary information and are marked appropriately. These should be limited to executive session review by the Board.

A summary of enclosures is provided below:

- Summary of Annual Reports
- At-Risk Goal 1: The New NAU System
- At-Risk Goal 2: NAU Online
- At-Risk Goal 3: Academic Excellence and Student Success
- Multiple-Year Goal Progress Report
- ABOR Affiliation Disclosure Form

Together, the annual at-risk goals adopted for 2022-23 and the corresponding reports of achievement over the last year should be seen as closely interrelated and designed to build upon and complement one another to drive progress toward achieving the vision of *NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence*. The planning and initial implementation of these goals is further supported by a robust portfolio of initiatives that have been endorsed by the Board and launched by NAU, which include the following:

- Approval of a guiding framework for institutional action in the form of NAU’s strategic plan: *NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence*.
- The **Access2Excellence** tuition program that provides cost transparency and affordability for Arizonan’s seeking a quality education at NAU.
- The **Admissions Pilot** and **Admissions Pilot Amendment** policy revisions that make transparent NAU’s admissions practices and create the conditions for structural differentiation among institutions in the ABOR enterprise.
- The launch of the **Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++)**, which has amplified NAU’s impact by harnessing the potential and statewide footprint of the state’s ten community college districts and the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) to create an attainment-focused, Arizona-serving postsecondary ecosystem convened and led by NAU.
- Strategic recalibration of **Technology and Research Initiative Fund (TRIF)** investments at NAU to prioritize Access and Workforce Development (AWD) efforts aligned with the university’s vision.
- The allocation of strategic resources from the Board to **Broaden Participation, Improve Persistence, and Spur Transformational Post-College Outcomes** through a one-time allocation of \$20M to NAU, which has thus far been matched by more than \$20M in additional external investments and has contributed to energizing additional private investment in NAU resulting in back-to-back record fundraising years for the university.
- The approval of **Institutional and Enterprise Metrics and Metrics Targets** for NAU that are directly linked to performance measures specific to its mission of access, attainment, and upward mobility.

Taken together, these and other efforts represent a cohesive record of action that has rapidly repositioned and reprioritized NAU’s work to fill the crucial role of the access and attainment focused, state-serving institution within the ABOR enterprise—and thus create the conditions to build the New NAU.

With this strong foundation in place, I look forward to continuing this momentum through the goals to be developed and approved for the 2023-24 cycle.

As we pursue the hard and important work ahead of delivering equitable postsecondary value for the benefit of the people and communities of Arizona, I look forward to the in-depth discussions to take place around these goals during my annual review meeting on August 24, 2023.

Sincerely,
JL

Summary of 2022-23 Annual and Multiple-Year At-Risk Goals
José Luis Cruz Rivera | Northern Arizona University

Annual Goals

Goal #1: The New NAU System Achieved

NAU will develop a plan and begin implementation for a New NAU System that encompasses in-person, online, and hybrid learning modalities, branch campuses, community college partnerships, and engagement with the state's K-12 educational system. The plan will include 1) financial projections; 2) demographic and workforce analysis; and 3) enrollment, location, and staffing projections. NAU will begin implementing the plan by securing appropriate agreements with key educational partners by June 30, 2023.

Goal #2: NAU Online Achieved

NAU will develop a plan and begin implementation to transform NAU Online, based on a comprehensive evaluation. NAU will have focused external consultation regarding academic program offerings and operations in areas such as student outreach, recruitment and engagement, instructional design, and academic support. NAU will begin implementing efforts to deliver a differentiated suite of online program offerings that directly contribute to the university's enrollment goals, financial health, value proposition, and institutional identity.

Goal #3: Academic Excellence and Student Success Achieved

NAU will develop a plan and begin implementation focused on responsibly increasing enrollments and enhancing career preparation opportunities to support students' post-college success. The plan will outline 1) enrollment goals for 2024-2026 that are informed by early work related to the New NAU System to capture an enrollment mix of students that contributes to meeting Arizona's attainment needs and supports NAU's financial health, and 2) the launch of a phased 100% Career Ready initiative that will strengthen linkages and highlight pathways from NAU's exceptional academic programs to workforce outcomes. NAU will begin executing recruitment strategies and launch the 100% Career Ready initiative in AY22-23 with some enhancements in place by June 30, 2023, to immediately begin work toward meeting the goals of the plan.

Multiple Year Goals

Goal #1: Broadening Participation

In progress

Develop and implement a plan to expand the number of students from working class families enrolled by NAU, increase overall graduation rates, and narrow completion gaps for working class, first-generation, and minoritized groups, as a means to enhance NAU's contribution to equitable postsecondary value.

Goal #2: Allied Health Programs

In progress

Develop and submit a plan for implementation of statewide expansion of NAU's Allied Health Programs and traditional NAU programs to include programs in Maricopa County, Pima County, Yuma County and distributed learning centers outside these three counties.

Goal #3: Latinx Communities

In progress

Develop and implement a plan to increase the University's profile and visibility within the Phoenix, Statewide, and National Latinx communities.

Goal #4: Native American Communities

In progress

Develop and implement a plan to further enhance NAU's profile as a national leader in the service of Native American students and the communities they represent.

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To: Fred DuVal, Chair, Arizona Board of Regents
CC: Arizona Board of Regents
From: José Luis Cruz Rivera, President, Northern Arizona University
Date: August 1, 2023
Re: 2022-23 At-Risk Goal #1: The New NAU System



This memorandum presents a high-level statement of achievement describing how the incentive goal in reference was met and how the corresponding efforts will be maintained to ensure that NAU can continue to advance the mission of the enterprise strategic plan, as it pertains to ABOR's Strategic Goals. Sections of this memorandum that describe **confidential** personnel or proprietary information are marked appropriately and should be limited to executive session review by the Board.

Goal Statement

NAU will develop a plan and begin implementation for a New NAU System that encompasses in-person, online, and hybrid learning modalities, branch campuses, community college partnerships, and engagement with the state's K-12 educational system. The plan will include 1) financial projections; 2) demographic and workforce analysis; and 3) enrollment, location, and staffing projections. NAU will begin implementing the plan by securing appropriate agreements with key educational partners by June 30, 2023.

Executive Summary

Over the last year, with the support of the Arizona Board of Regents, NAU has developed an impactful plan and deployed several key early initiatives to reshape the public higher education landscape in Arizona through a new and differentiated model for access, success, and attainment.

This work is driven by a clear and present need for greater attainment in Arizona—a fact that is evident in multiple reports commissioned by the Board and other entities, is clear in workforce projections, and has been acknowledged by leaders of the state's universities, members of the Board of Regents, elected officials, the business community, and countless others time and again. In the interest of meeting this need head on with a tailored and differentiated approach, NAU is working both to strengthen the broader postsecondary ecosystem in the state through partnership and collaboration and create design specifications for proposed new networked campuses powered by NAU and located in areas of high-demand and unmet need for a differentiated postsecondary provider.

To that end, in September 2022, NAU launched the Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++), a partnership-based alliance convened and powered by NAU and comprised of the state's ten community college districts and the Arizona Commerce Authority. Leveraging the strengths of participant institutions, including their footprints in every county in the state, NAU orchestrated the design and implementation of several pilot

initiatives through this 280,000+ student ecosystem. With the common goal of optimizing the state's attainment-focused, career-connected postsecondary ecosystem, A++ stands poised to broaden and diversify access points for the people of Arizona and improve academic pathways, academic and career advising, and data infrastructure in support of student success in the next phase of its work.

In addition, NAU has conducted analysis around the potential and impact of new campus sites that complement the university's existing footprint and maximize the impact of a strengthened ecosystem being cultivated through A++. The results of this analysis, as well as distinctive design characteristics that will position new campuses for success through clarity of mission, a focus on low-cost, high-value opportunity, and operational efficiency are outlined in this report.

In pursuing these interrelated workstreams, NAU is working to build a networked system through partnerships and NAU-powered assets that is responsive to individual, community, and workforce needs in the state. Together, this approach represents the New NAU System, which is aligned with NAU's vision and existing work to be the state's dedicated institution of access, success, and upward mobility.

CONFIDENTIAL Overview of the New NAU System Report

Under the framework of this annual at-risk goal, NAU has 1) clarified the component parts that comprise the New NAU System; 2) implemented immediate, high-impact actions on a variety of fronts, with a particular focus on strengthening the broader postsecondary ecosystem through structured community college partnerships developed through the Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++), which are yielding rapid results; and 3) developed a planning framework and design specifications for further pursuit and implementation of the most complex and high-impact component of the New NAU System: the NAU powered State48 College System¹.

CONFIDENTIAL The New NAU System: Components

New NAU System – The New NAU System is a postsecondary ecosystem that has multiple components across the education to career pipeline, all of which contribute to the fulfillment of NAU's vision to deliver equitable postsecondary value to the people and communities of Arizona. The New NAU System's components include both directly governed entities (e.g., NAU-Flagstaff and State48) and coordinated entities/partnerships (e.g., the Arizona Attainment Alliance) that together contribute to the overall access and attainment ecosystem of the state and form an integral and complementary part of ABOR's strategic plan for the public university enterprise of Arizona.

NAU-Flagstaff – The core of NAU's current portfolio, characterized by a traditional residential, research-engaged university model, focused on student success and a broad range of academic/disciplinary offerings, including doctoral programs, whose immersive and excellent design fuel graduates' career and life success. NAU-Flagstaff is enhanced by a unique connection to and engagement with its local community and region.

State48 College System – A proposed multi-site college system in strategic locations with a differentiated price point. The State48 College System will be powered by NAU and focus on access, attainment, and workforce connections and leverages both four-year pathways to degree completion and fully-articulated pathways for transfer and non-traditional attainment that work in

¹ "State48" is a code name for discussion purposes only. The naming of the proposed State48 College System will be the result of significant and rigorous market research to best optimize the brand and its positioning relative to NAU and the rest of Arizona's higher education offerings.

concert with partnerships created through A++. Development and implementation of the State48 College System is a centerpiece of NAU's strategic priorities for the years ahead.

NAU Statewide (encompassing NAU-Yuma) – Existing sites and branch campuses with close linkages to State48 College System sites and/or NAU-Flagstaff that provide more specific program portfolios directly linked to their site emphasis/regional partners (e.g., Phoenix Bioscience Core, North Valley, NAU-Yuma). In general, Statewide sites already exist and form an important part of the supporting infrastructure for the State48 College System; however, as State48 College System implementation ramps up and the localized reach via A++ is enhanced and diversified, these sites will be closely evaluated on an ongoing basis for programmatic relevance, operating revenue/expenses, and the like, with keep/close/consolidate decisions being made on a rolling basis.

NAU Online – A centralized, system-wide service, NAU-Online will provide not only a unique and complementary set of degree programs—focusing on non-traditional learners and degree completion—but also provide recognized quality and oversight for online course offerings provided at all NAU locations. Reference the NAU Online at-risk goal report for complete component details.

Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++) – A coalition of distinct institutions and entities coordinated and powered by NAU to build partnerships, pathways, and opportunities that increase access, success, and attainment for Arizonans. A++ has distinct partnership arms that create more avenues for participation in NAU's directly governed components. These include the following:

Phase #1: Community Colleges – The focus of A++ since its launch last fall has been strengthening the state's postsecondary ecosystem in partnership with all ten community college districts and the Arizona Commerce Authority. Together, this represents a 280,000+ inter-institutional attainment ecosystem that is pursuing collective approaches to enrollment management, academic pathways, and academic and career advising. With well-articulated and strategic pathway development, A++ will streamline student pathways into NAU-Flagstaff and the NAU-powered State48 College System for degree completion and upward mobility.

Phase #2: K-12 – Launched in July 2023 through the Arizona Institute for Education and the Economy (AIEE), NAU is beginning intentional efforts to convene and coordinate across school districts and other partners to create more opportunity for high school graduates to pursue a postsecondary credential. This includes workstreams such as dual enrollment offerings and academies, FAFSA completion initiatives, and recruitment/enrollment. Through the diversification of locations offered by the State48 College System, NAU envisions a greater, more responsive local impact to statewide attainment by linking local school districts with the opportunity to pursue higher education efficiently and affordably in more regions of Arizona.

CONFIDENTIAL 2022-23 Implementation Priority: The Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++)

The foremost priority of the last year in early implementation steps associated with the New NAU System is the design, launch, and first phase of high-impact initiatives of the Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++). A++ represents an important effort designed to coordinate across distinct institutions and optimize the postsecondary ecosystem in ways that benefit students. With more than 280,000 students, A++ stands out as Arizona's largest postsecondary provider and is designed to connect talent with opportunity to create prosperity for all Arizonans. Work within A++ emphasizes equitably amplifying postsecondary value by

broadening access, facilitating success, increasing attainment, and boosting prosperity throughout the state, as illustrated in the following map.

The need to strengthen the postsecondary ecosystem is evidenced by data from the National Student Clearing House Research Center (2022) that indicates:

- While the six-year completion rate (61.7%) for the first-time, full-time 2016 cohort was higher than the national average (57.2%), nearly four in ten first-time full-time students who enrolled at an Arizona public four-year college did not complete at their original institution.
- Of first-time, full-time students who enrolled in 2016 at an Arizona public two-year college, only 20.1% completed within 6-years, which was 11.8 percentage points lower than the national completion rate (31.9%).
- There are an estimated 600,000 Arizonans who have some college but no degree.

The substantial number of non-completers suggests several opportunities to improve how NAU can positively impact the State of Arizona by strengthening first the postsecondary ecosystem and then sequentially moving to efforts in collaboration with K-12 school districts and employers. In recognition of the imperative to increase attainment, NAU asked—and invested in—the state’s community colleges to engage in a collaborative effort to better serve the growing demand for postsecondary attainment. After issuing a request for participation and offering more than \$700,000 in NAU investments, all ten districts signed memorandums of understanding (MOU) to codify the work, and the Arizona Commerce Authority agreed to join the coalition. These MOUs are covering a yearlong discovery phase that is designed to pursue the following workstreams:

- Develop a multi-directional transfer, enrollment, and degree-granting ecosystem.
- Identify high-demand, high-skill, high-wage (H3) academic pathway areas that lead to disproportionate gains in upward economic mobility and social impact.
- Establish minimum standards and adopt common approaches to academic and career advising.
- Design the specifications for a cutting-edge data and technical infrastructure to improve student outcomes and enhance advisement.
- Create the inter-governmental agreements to codify the work.

A group of A++ liaisons from each partner organization has met every two weeks since November 2022 and organized into subcommittees to focus on each respective area. Since forming, each subcommittee worked with the A++ planning framework to create a bold vision; identify clear end states and evidence; unpack the biggest challenges and identify their root causes; chart out key strategies and actions; and the points of convergence to prioritize the work.

The planning led to a series of early wins generating national attention, including the following initiatives that together create a strong foundation across the critical areas of A++ development:

- **Universal Admissions (Strategic Enrollment Management):** A scale out of NAU’s partnership with Coconino Community College (CCC) to seamlessly admit students to the CCC2NAU program who did not meet NAU admission requirements is underway. The work represents a fundamental shift in how colleges practice admissions from exclusivity to access whereby NAU will not deny any student admission and instead broker opportunity back to community colleges. Under universal admissions, a student will not need to reapply to NAU and can instead seamlessly transfer when they are academically ready to continue their studies. The pilot program has yielded exceptional results at CCC (over 500 admitted students, with more than 100 slated to room in an NAU residence hall) and its second phase is underway in anticipation of the Fall 2024 recruitment cycle/entering class. At the time of this writing, the following community colleges have confirmed

their participation in the second phase: Arizona Western College, Central Arizona College, Cochise College, Mohave Community College, and Pima Community College.

- **Stop out Reengagement and Reverse Transfer (Strategic Enrollment Management & Common Approaches to Academic Advisement):** Planning for a scale out of NAU's Jacks on Track program, which began in August 2022 by targeting 2,500 stop-out students with 60 or more credits, has launched across A++. Through the first year of Jacks on Track, NAU identified 800 stop-out students who had community college credits. Leveraging A++ infrastructure, NAU is working with community colleges to complete reverse transfer and award associate degrees. Scaling this high-touch program across the state as an A++ initiative, targeting near completers, will allow institutions to create a collaborative approach to enroll stop-out students at the community colleges with a focus on credential completion. This effort will also allow NAU to determine best practices when working with prospective students with some college but no degree for a longer-term plan to target the 600,000 prospective students who fall into this category in Arizona. This program is a priority for fall 2023 development and scaled implementation.
- **The Georgetown Data Labs Program (Data and Technical Infrastructure):** As part of its efforts to strengthen Arizona's cradle to career data infrastructure, and with the support of the Office of the Governor, NAU and A++ were accepted into the highly competitive Georgetown Data Labs program. Data Labs is a collaboration between the Beeck Center for Social Impact + Innovation at Georgetown University and the National Governors Association (NGA). The program, which helps states launch cross-agency data infrastructure projects, convenes cross-functional state teams, offers in-depth technical assistance, and leverages insights from subject matter experts. NAU and A++ hope to leverage participation in Data Labs to strengthen the state's data ecosystem in support of analyses that optimize the impact higher education has on Arizonans. The program runs between March 2023 and October 2023.
- **Generous Philanthropic Support:** A++ efforts have also generated more than \$8M in private philanthropic support. Most recently, A++ received \$3.8M from the Helios Foundation for the Arizona College Excellence (ACE) Initiative. ACE is designed to replicate the successful Yuma Educational Success (YES) program model with a focus on shared resources and strategic and incentivized partnerships with regional community colleges. College partners are slated to include Arizona Western College, Northland Pioneer College, Coconino Community College, Mohave Community College, Yavapai Community College, and Diné College, which will be the first Tribal College to engage in New NAU System efforts. This is the second grant received to build out key programs related to the New NAU System, which has also received support from the NAU Foundation, the Lumina Foundation, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to kickstart early initiatives.

Together, these early wins represent the first steps towards the implementation of key areas of the New NAU System and the A++ partnership.

At the same time, a series of longer-term priorities have been identified, which were the focus of a late-July 2023 convening of all A++ partners. The retreat yielded results in data and technical infrastructure-focused endeavors, as well as the approval of workstreams that will form the basis of A++ 5-year intergovernmental agreements which will be signed later this summer with the conclusion of the first-year discovery work.

A centerpiece of the next phase of A++ work is the **creation and full articulation of a series of H3 academic pathways to be adopted and implemented across institutions**. This will make explicit the college-to-career pathway for upward economic mobility and social impact. Additionally, A++ partners were equally focused on the adoption of data and technology that enhances learning, teaching, and advising.

In support of the academic pathway priority area, NAU’s Office of Economic Mobility and Social Impact (EMSI) conducted an analysis in consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs to identify programmatic areas that stood out for their postgraduate potential based on occupational demand forecasts conducted by the Arizona Commerce Authority and Bureau of Labor Statistics and a program demand analysis conducted by Hanover Research. Data from the Community College Research Center were used to identify academic pathway areas that led to disproportionate gains when a student earned a bachelor’s degree on top of an associate degree. To promote programmatic sustainability, internal and national data from the Delaware Cost Study were used. This led to the identification of the following academic pathway/program areas for the consideration of NAU and A++.

- **Nursing:** An H3 area with many concurrent programs and clear community college connections, nursing also has a high degree of alignment with NAU’s mission and Arizona’s New Economy Initiative. Higher programmatic costs for delivery will need to be closely monitored.
- **Management:** H3-aligned and with some of the most significant gains to be made in postgraduate earnings from an associate’s to a bachelor’s degree, management is a strong pathway area. In addition, it is also a sector agnostic degree area where NAU can lead the development of specific concentrations, such as accounting and financial management; management science; construction management; logistics and supply chain management; healthcare administration/management; industrial/organizational management; and hospitality management. Management has the additional benefit of lower programmatic costs.
- **Computer and Information Sciences:** Another sector agnostic pathway area that could yield programs with specializations in computer and information system management, software development, and data and analytics management, computer and information sciences is also noteworthy for its high-wage outcomes across the H3 rubric.
- **Education:** This is a moderate demand field that is highly aligned with the missions of many community colleges and it’s a core area of excellence at NAU. While wages are suppressed relative to other areas, teaching, school administration, and school counseling are high social impact fields and pathway articulation is a clear value-added opportunity.
- **Social Work and Mental Health Counseling:** Like education, this is an area that is highly aligned with the desire of NAU and A++ partners to boost social impact. While demand and earnings are moderate, this is an acute need for providers in many areas of the state and NAU’s assets in behavioral healthcare education are best positioned among four-year institutions in Arizona to meet this need.

Moving forward, A++ will inform the design of the State48 College System and represents a significant opportunity to build the supporting infrastructure of a healthy postsecondary ecosystem that will fuel and sustain the success of the State48 College System as it is developed and implemented.

CONFIDENTIAL State48 College System Planning Framework

Planning for the State48 College System architecture is informed by the previously described workstreams as NAU seeks to intentionally design and launch a plan for implementation. Critically, this new entity must be differentiated in the public higher education marketplace, have a clear value proposition, serve students who are currently not being served (or are under/inadequately served) by existing institutions, and work in harmony with the rest of the public higher education enterprise to promote a comprehensive attainment and success ecosystem that also has financial viability to deliver long-term success.

Through extensive deliberative processes and consultations—including a two-day design summit conducted with ABOR staff in June 2023 to coalesce design considerations—NAU has developed a broad

framework for the State48 College System’s design that will inform the next phase of work. Below is a summary of design considerations that have crystalized and will serve as the bedrock for the State48 College System:

- **Students:** The State48 College System will primarily serve Arizona residents — recent high school graduates as well as adult learners — with out-of-state and international students more actively recruited by NAU-Flagstaff.
- **Pricing:** The State48 College System will serve as a distinct low-cost postsecondary option for Arizonans. With a market-informed tuition setting, NAU would aim for a flat, transparent rate for in-state students (e.g., \$8,000/year tuition, with all academic fees bundled to maximize consumer transparency) that represents a clear value proposition that stands apart from the state’s existing college options.
- **Academic Programs:** Closely aligned with the A++ academic pathways and new NAU Online approach, the State48 College System will offer a clear college-to-career pathway with more limited programmatic options and an emphasis on credentials that lead to employment opportunities in H3 fields.
- **Degrees:** Initially, State48 Colleges will focus on short-term credentials and bachelor’s degrees, with the possibility of adding other milestone degrees over time that would complement or enhance the program offerings in the corresponding service regions. In addition, targeted graduate programs with high workforce demand are planned to round out programmatic offerings.
- **Faculty:** With a clear focus on attainment and success, State48 College System faculty will be focused on teaching excellence (potentially with industry experience, dependent on field) and class sizes and teaching loads will be optimized for resource management in service of student, pedagogical, and programmatic needs.
- **Campuses:** State48 College System campus sites will be targeted in areas with high opportunity for success and viability (see demographic analysis below); partnership potential would be a key factor in sequencing; campus design to emphasize learning assets (classrooms) first, with student housing and other amenities built out based on demand and financial feasibility over time. Related to student demographics and site selection, a point of emphasis will be commuter-friendly infrastructure in campus design to support the learning needs of time- and place-bound students.
- **Models:** Thanks to significant research undertaken by ABOR staff, NAU’s models for State48 College System sites will be informed by the operations of similarly positioned peers in terms of programs, pricing, expense ratios, revenues/aid strategies, and the like. The generalized comparator model is a 5,000+ student campus with a net price of <\$8,000—a parameter that yields 18 institutions in the U.S., primarily made up of CUNY and California State University institutions. Careful review of their operations, particularly in managing finances with low net tuition, will be foundational for NAU’s venture into this space.

In the sections that follow, a description of analysis and planning considerations that have informed development of the State48 College System thus far are articulated — financial projections, demographic and workforce analysis, and staffing projections are presented.

The State48 College System Blueprint

The State48 College System is a multi-site system that is envisioned as an entirely new educational entity that is powered by NAU—through governance, coherent and complimentary vision, and valuable shared services and economies of scale—but distinct from the university’s existing assets, such as its flagship center for excellence in NAU-Flagstaff. This design has multiple benefits, including allowing NAU to fully leverage and continue its excellence in Flagstaff and through other key assets unaffected by the new entity—which has a complimentary but differentiated market share—and at the same time providing a unifying

governance approach that will strengthen and integrate the state's public access and success-focused ecosystem.

Through a footprint to be determined for strategic locations, State48 College System sites will be designed and built to strengthen NAU's ability to serve the state as the access and attainment university. Their locations will be chosen based on a variety of dimensions, including population density and demographic characteristics, the potential to have disproportionately large social and economic impacts, the quality of local and regional partners, and the presence of existing infrastructure.

Site Selection Dimensions: County Analysis

Population Density and Demographic Characteristics: Using data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Arizona's population was examined at the county level and by specific age categories to determine where there was sufficient population density to sustain new campuses upon their creation. Some key characteristics are noted by county in Table 1.

As expected, a review of population indicates that Maricopa and Pima counties ranked first and second in terms of total population, the population 18 and over, the population under 18, the percentage of the overall under 18 population in the state, and population per square mile, respectively. Moreover, nearly 78% of Arizona's entire under 18 population is from either Maricopa or Pima. As a result, these two counties stand out as potential locations for impactful and sustainable branch campuses. Moreover, branch campuses in these locations would likely lead to disproportionate gains in upward economic mobility. Based on data from the 2021 American Community Survey, there were approximately 522,000 Arizonans aged 25 and above who earned a wage below the poverty status in 2021. Nearly three quarters (73.67%, N = 384,386) lived in Maricopa, Pima, and Yuma counties. Among them, more than four in five (83.05%, N = 319,247) had not earned a bachelor's degree.

Pinal County ranked third in each of the above categories and merits further investigation as a unique development corridor that could be sustained by Maricopa-based sites or standalone sites within Pinal County. Yuma County is noteworthy due to the university's existing presence. It is ranked sixth in total population and population 18 and over, fourth in population under 18 and the percent of all Arizonans under 18, and fifth in people per square mile. This demographic could be sufficient for future growth but the signals around the long-term viability of Yuma are mixedⁱ.

Educational Attainment, Income, and Poverty: Data on county levels of educational attainment, household income, and poverty also informed the identification of possible county-level campus locations. Using data from the University of Arizona's Map AZ Dashboard, a composite score was created based on how each county ranked in terms of its four-year college attainment rate, its poverty rate, and its median household income. A lower composite indicates a higher socio-economic status and suggests that the county may be more likely to sustain campuses given that the population should have a higher probability of college-going.

It should be noted that no Arizona county had a poverty rate below the current national rate of 11.6%ⁱⁱ, nor did the four-year college attainment rate of any county exceed 36.5%, which is the current percent of the national population with a bachelor's degree or higherⁱⁱⁱ. Given this reality, counties that have higher levels of population, population density, and key demographic characteristics, fall below national levels of educational attainment, and exceed the national poverty rate represent places where NAU can amplify equitable postsecondary value in sustainable ways. Table 2 reiterates that Maricopa County and Pima again stand out as potential locations for new branch campuses.

Table 1 Arizona Population by County and Age Category, 2020.

County	Total Population	Population 18 and Over		Population Under 18		Percent of Arizonans Under 18	People Per Square Mile
		N	PCT.	N	PCT.		
		Yavapai	236,209	199,136	84.31%		
Mohave	213,267	177,461	83.21%	35,806	16.79%	2.22%	16
La Paz	16,557	13,505	81.57%	3,052	18.43%	0.19%	3.7
Gila	53,272	43,006	80.73%	10,266	19.27%	0.64%	11.2
Pima	1,043,433	834,265	79.95%	209,168	20.05%	13.00%	113.6
Coconino	145,101	115,992	79.94%	29,109	20.06%	1.81%	7.8
Cochise	125,447	99,330	79.18%	26,117	20.82%	1.62%	20.2
Pinal	425,264	325,640	76.57%	99,624	23.43%	6.19%	79.3
Maricopa	4,420,568	3,382,386	76.51%	1,038,182	23.49%	64.50%	480.4
Yuma	203,881	153,169	75.13%	50,712	24.87%	3.15%	37
Apache	66,021	49,105	74.38%	16,916	25.62%	1.05%	5.9
Navajo	106,717	79,208	74.22%	27,509	25.78%	1.71%	10.7
Santa Cruz	47,669	35,215	73.87%	12,454	26.13%	0.77%	38.6
Graham	38,533	27,715	71.93%	10,818	28.07%	0.67%	8.3
Greenlee	9,563	6,843	71.56%	2,720	28.44%	0.17%	5.2
Total	7,151,502	5,541,976	77.49%	1,609,526	22.51%	100.00%	

Source: 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File.

Table 2 Select Characteristics of Arizona Counties

County	Four Year College Attainment Rate		Poverty Rate		Median Household Income		Composite	Rank
	Rate	Rank	Rate	Rank	Income	Rank		
Maricopa	32.7%	2	13.8%	4	\$ 64,468	2	8	1
Yavapai	25.9%	4	13.0%	1	\$ 52,451	6	11	2
Coconino	36.2%	1	17.6%	8	\$ 59,460	3	12	3
Pinal	19.5%	7	13.2%	2	\$ 58,174	4	13	4
Pima	32.4%	3	16.8%	7	\$ 53,379	5	15	5
Greenlee	13.5%	12	13.3%	3	\$ 64,473	1	16	6
Cochise	23.1%	5	16.6%	6	\$ 49,260	8	19	7
Mohave	12.9%	13	16.4%	5	\$ 45,587	9	27	8
Graham	15.2%	10	22.6%	12	\$ 51,353	7	29	9
Gila	18.7%	8	21.6%	10	\$ 43,524	11	29	10
Yuma	15.0%	11	19.4%	9	\$ 45,243	10	30	11
Santa Cruz	20.4%	6	23.3%	13	\$ 41,259	12	31	12
Navajo	15.3%	9	27.9%	14	\$ 40,067	13	36	13
La Paz	12.0%	15	22.4%	11	\$ 34,643	14	40	14
Apache	12.3%	14	35.5%	15	\$ 32,508	15	44	15

The Composite is the sum of all ranks. Lower composites reflect ideal economic conditions.

Source: <https://mapazdashboard.arizona.edu>

Partnerships of Quality and Geography: In addition to the data affirming Maricopa as an ideal location for a branch campus, strong relationships with Arizona State University—particularly if buttressed by structural mission differentiation established through policy by ABOR—substantially reduce the political capital required to locate there. Pima stands apart from Yavapai due to the comparative strength of NAU’s complementary relationships with its local partners, including the University of Arizona and Pima Community College. While Pinal County also exhibits promise, the geographic reality of being wedged between Maricopa and Pima Counties makes it a focus of further investigation rather than an inarguable site with high need and sustainable impact.

Presence of Current Infrastructure: Present infrastructure is also an important consideration. For example, while Yuma County did not stand out for its potential as a campus site in comparison to other counties—it already has one. NAU’s Yuma campus, a symbol of a positive, decades long partnership with Arizona Western College, is firmly embedded into the community. While enrollment declined in recent years, there may be an opportunity to reverse those trends if investments are made in enhancing and transforming the location. The same cannot be said for all NAU’s statewide locations, which play an important role in ensuring broad access to a quality education for all Arizonans. Moving forward, NAU will continue to seek opportunities for streamlining and improving efficiency. For instance, one significant value-add of A++ is the invisible presence NAU gains in every county throughout the state. With minimal investment and leveraging partnership with community colleges, NAU has a highly efficient infrastructure without having to maintain physical spaces. Continued maturation of this ecosystem in conjunction with the launch of State48 sites would allow for responsible sunseting of several existing NAU Statewide sites and a redirection of those resources to higher impact endeavors.

Location Priorities: The above analysis validates early discussions regarding the need to prioritize the establishment of a new, differentiated higher education option to serve the people of Maricopa County and Pima County. In Maricopa, more than one site would be feasible and sustainable, with exact location based on an opportunity analysis of public and private partnerships that would create the conditions for build out and scaling. Importantly, State48 College System sites would have the same general characteristics and branding but be designed to be tailored to local conditions in terms of size, specific program arrays, and the like, creating a more responsive postsecondary asset to local needs.

New campuses and locations would be dedicated to access, success, attainment, and prosperity, as well as innovative teaching. These sites will be housed under NAU’s Higher Learning Commission accreditation rather than having their own, which will create efficiencies in timeline to launch and assurances of quality for the public and higher education community. While some additional statewide satellites may remain, such as NAU’s presence at the Phoenix Bioscience Core and Mesa Skybridge, a comprehensive review of more than 20 sites will be conducted to facilitate organizational transformation.

State48 College System Enrollment and Revenue Modeling:

A critical piece necessary for continued advancement in State48 College System planning and implementation are viable models for enrollment and revenue. NAU has created two scenarios to assess the viability in terms of student population, need for higher education in the state, competitive landscape, and the nature of the intervention.

The **first** is a robust simulation of a moderate approach—optimization of existing assets in the NAU portfolio, success through the A++ network in spurring more college participation and broadening of direct transfer pathways to NAU, and a modest enhancement to statewide infrastructure representative of a smaller single site State48 College System.

The **second** is a future-state model for a fully realized State48 College System. Assuming that sufficient funding could be secured for startup costs, this aspirational model suggests the full scope of impact the State48 College System could have on Arizona. While ambitious, it is achievable due to the clear unmet need for a low-cost, differentiated, access and workforce development oriented postsecondary option in the state.

The simulations considered the full impact of the New NAU System through increases in the immediate college going rate of public high school graduates in Arizona, the number of transfers from community colleges to NAU due to the Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++), and adult Arizonans enrolling in college spurred by a new option in the marketplace.

Enrollment and Revenue Model #1: optimized assets and modest State48 College System deployment:

Enrollment Projections: Simulations projected increases in the immediate-college going rate of public high school graduates from 46.3% in 2020 to a baseline of 53% (10-year weighted average), 55% (average over the last 10 years), or 60% (aspirational goal informed by the previously adopted Achieve60AZ framework) by 2035. In addition, these scenarios also phase in, incrementally, an increase in the proportion of the college-going rate who attend NAU from 9.12% in 2022 to 11.5% by 2035. These scenarios lead to conservative estimated enrollment gains (including modest increases in transfer and returning adults) for NAU between 4,706 to 6,839 students by 2035, as noted in Table 3.1 below:

Table 3.1 Scenarios for Estimated Enrollment			
YEAR	College Going Rate Goal: 53%	College Going Rate Goal: 55%	College Going Rate Goal: 60%
2022-23	122	142	167
2023-24	363	405	480
2024-25	749	839	870
2025-26	1,289	1,428	1,674
2026-27	1,881	2,090	2,454
2027-28	2,409	2,682	3,175
2028-29	2,775	3,110	3,729
2029-30	3,140	3,527	4,275
2030-31	3,483	3,933	4,815
2031-32	3,693	4,200	5,210
2032-33	4,015	4,583	5,732
2033-34	4,340	4,969	6,257
2034-35	4,706	5,405	6,839

Of the new students, the proportion allocated to optimized statewide infrastructure would ramp up over time, from 30% in the early years to 70%+ in later years of the model going to these sites, while the remainder were added to NAU Flagstaff enrollments. The 2035 estimates are noted in Table 3.2.

Financial Projections: With an estimated increase in the college going rate, returning adults, and a likely increased statewide footprint, enrollment and revenue growth are estimated to increase from 2023-2035. Using FY24 statewide tuition and financial aid strategy as a baseline estimator. Increasing tuition, college

fees, and mandatory fees by a conservative 1% per year, an enrollment growth scenario based on a college going rate of 55%, net tuition revenue increases to \$14.1 million by FY 35. There is also an estimated increase in fee revenue of \$5.9 million by 2035. This is summarized in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 College Going Rate Scenario, Enrollment, Tuition, and Expense Summary				Optimized Statewide Infrastructure changed from FY23 to FY35 (\$M)		
Change in Undergrad Enrollment Growth from FY23 to FY35				Net Tuition	Expense	Tuition Less Expense
College Going Rate	NAU Overall	Optimized Statewide Infrastructure	Flagstaff			
Goal at 53%	4,584	3,258	1,326	\$23.6	\$11.7	\$11.9
Goal at 55%	5,263	3,741	1,522	\$26.5	\$13.8	\$12.7
Goal at 60%	6,672	4,737	1,935	\$35.8	\$18.7	\$17.0

Enrollment and Revenue Model #2: aspirational State48 College System at maturity:

The previous estimates are predicated on NAU optimizing Arizona’s current postsecondary ecosystem by continuing to build out A++ and its associated initiatives and strategically optimizing its statewide infrastructure through a modest version of a single site State48 College System. However, given the reality that fewer than half of Arizona’s public high school graduates immediately enroll in college, more than 600,000 adult Arizonans have some college and no degree, a substantial population of Arizonans lack a viable postsecondary option due to cost and location, and industry in the state will increasingly need a more credentialed, high-skill workforce to participate in the booming knowledge economy, there also exists an unprecedented opportunity to fundamentally remake the state’s college landscape through the creation of the State48 College System. With intentional design characteristics as noted in preceding sections, such an option offers a competitive opportunity and advantage in the higher education marketplace—meeting time and place bound students in population centers, offering a low-cost/high-value option for students who may not otherwise attend college, differentiated and workforce aligned programs with an emphasis on career outcomes that appeal to all demographics, and more.

This addition to NAU’s current Flagstaff and Yuma campuses through the State48 College System would be comprised of four distinct new campuses powered by NAU. Separate review and optimization of NAU’s Yuma campus and select statewide sites would complement this work—including potential sunseting of sites to consolidate efforts and create efficiencies—but are not accounted for in this model, which focuses solely on new campuses.

Based on NAU’s analysis of population density and demographic characteristics, the potential to have disproportionately large social and economic impacts, the quality of local and regional partners, and the presence of existing infrastructure, three new sites would be strategically placed in Maricopa County, with another located in Pima County.

NAU estimates that the creation of these campus would effectively double its ability to increase postsecondary attainment and drive the social and economic impact by serving up to an additional 21,000-29,000 students through an approach that allows NAU to:

- Increase the number of public high school graduates who immediately go to college and choose NAU because of newly created campuses.

- Become Arizona’s primary access point for public high school graduates by increasing its share to a level higher than the Arizona State University (note: structural mission differentiation would be key to realizing this goal).
- Develop A++ transfer pathways that allow for students to be seamlessly exchanged between partner institutions and NAU.
- Offer a competitive market advantage based on a plurality of models that promote affordable access to H3 academic programs that redirect students from competitors (e.g., the State48 College System would aim to take market share from a direct competitor like Grand Canyon University).
- Invests strategically in the improvement of select NAU statewide sites, including the Yuma campus.

NAU estimates that each Maricopa campus would be capable of serving between 5,000-6,000 undergraduate students and 1,000-2,000 graduate students once fully operational, representing a range of approximately 18,000-24,000 students in the Valley. NAU also projects that, once fully operational, the Pima campus could serve between 3,500-5,000 students. Strategic investments in select statewide locations such as the Yuma campus are expected to grow enrollments by an additional 1,000 students, largely through strengthened transfer architecture enabled by A++. Cost and revenue projections for the four new campus sites—excluding one-time development costs—are included in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 State 48 System Aspirational Campuses		Net Tuition	Total Expense	Tuition less Expense
Location	Total Enrollment			
Pima	3,500 – 5,000	\$34.2 - \$46.4	\$19.8 - \$26.9	\$14.4 - \$19.6
Maricopa 1	6,000 -8,000	\$54.6 - \$70.9	\$31.5 - \$40.8	\$23.1 - \$30.1
Maricopa 2	6,000 -8,000	\$54.6 - \$70.9	\$31.5 - \$40.8	\$23.1 - \$30.1
Maricopa 3	6,000 -8,000	\$54.6 - \$70.9	\$31.5 - \$40.8	\$23.1 - \$30.1
Total	21,500 – 29,000	\$198 - \$259.1	\$114.3 - \$149.3	\$83.7 – \$109.9

CONFIDENTIAL Looking Ahead: An Intentional Approach to Implementation

The successful design and implementation of the New NAU System now has a strong foundation in place but requires an intentional and sequential approach to further implementation, as well as an ongoing commitment to adoption, scaling, and sustaining from NAU’s leadership, ABOR, and other partners. Looking ahead, NAU forecasts the following areas of priority to advance this critical work:

- **ABOR Goal:** Maintaining continuity of planning and implementation through the approval of a structured Presidential at-risk goal for 2023-24 that builds upon the work conducted this year.
- **Engagement with Strategic Committee and Mission Differentiation:** A related priority is working with ABOR’s new Strategic Committee and identifying and appropriately codifying areas of mission differentiation that will provide the State48 College System with guardrails to operate as a complimentary component of the state’s public university enterprise.
- **Continue and Expand A++ Efforts:** Even as the State48 College System vision comes into sharper focus, a strong attainment-focused ecosystem is crucial for success. Thus, continued emphasis on community college partnerships, as well as a robust expansion of partnership efforts

into the K-12 realm, led by NAU's new Arizona Institute for Education and the Economy (AIEE) that will accelerate progress on gains to be made in the immediate college going rate. Importantly, a structured approach to State48 College System deployment will be critical to ensure that NAU's strengthened relationships with partner institutions are maintained to reap the full benefits of a more optimized attainment-focused postsecondary ecosystem.

- **Prioritize Funding:** The State48 College System and A++ will, if successful, yield significant financial returns for NAU while advancing attainment in the state. However, during the implementation phase, startup resources will be essential. Leveraging TRIF Access and Workforce Development funds on both a one-time and recurring basis provides an opportunity to continue the pace of developments; pursuing state funding will be crucial for sustained success; and leveraging the innovative opportunity of this work to secure private support will be a priority for NAU, while avoiding any drain on resources or support to NAU's mature core assets.

With continued work on design, planning, and implementation on the horizon, NAU looks forward to continuing to build a new postsecondary system that will meet Arizona's critical need for increased college access, affordability, and attainment.

ⁱ recent enrollment declines may suggest otherwise, and at the very least indicate a need to deeply examine Yuma operations.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/poverty-awareness-month.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.luminafoundation.org/stronger-nation/report/#/progress>

To: Fred DuVal, Chair, Arizona Board of Regents
CC: Arizona Board of Regents
From: José Luis Cruz Rivera, President, Northern Arizona University
Date: August 1, 2023
Re: 2022-23 At-Risk Goal #2: NAU Online



This memorandum presents a high-level statement of achievement describing how the incentive goal in reference was met and how the corresponding efforts will be maintained to ensure that NAU can continue to advance the mission of the enterprise strategic plan, as it pertains to ABOR's Strategic Goals. Sections of this memorandum that describe **confidential** personnel or proprietary information are marked appropriately and should be limited to executive session review by the Board.

Goal Statement

NAU will develop a plan and begin implementation to transform NAU Online, based on a comprehensive evaluation. NAU will have focused external consultation regarding academic program offerings and operations in areas such as student outreach, recruitment and engagement, instructional design, and academic support. NAU will begin implementing efforts to deliver a differentiated suite of online program offerings that directly contribute to the university's enrollment goals, financial health, value proposition, and institutional identity.

Executive Summary

Over the last year, NAU has mobilized institutional leaders, faculty, and staff in efforts to plan and make substantial progress toward comprehensively evaluating and transforming NAU Online, with the related goals of expanding access to high-quality online postsecondary learning opportunities that advance NAU's mission and ensuring the long-term financial sustainability—and institutional benefits—of NAU Online within the university's broader programmatic portfolio. Importantly, this effort was undertaken with an eye toward complementarity with other strategic endeavors underway, including the RAISE enrollment plan—which prioritizes Online enrollment growth to meet ABOR metric targets for 2026—the launch of the Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++), and planning related to the New NAU System. As such, the re-envisioned future trajectory of NAU Online is a fundamental and complementary component of NAU's ongoing institutional development that is centered in a clear and differentiated identity and value proposition to the people of Arizona.

Highlights of NAU Online efforts that formed the core of planning and early implementation over the last year include expert consultation with external partners including the University Professional and Continuing Education Association (UPCEA) and Arizona State University's EdPlus; action planning rooted in three key pillars for success (academic portfolio, quality of academic and student experience, and integration of support services); and, strategic operational and organizational changes.

From this foundation, NAU has contractually engaged with ASU EdPlus to bolster external consultation resources and provide specialized services—including industry-leading instructional design training and integrated success coaching services—to maintain momentum on this important workstream.

CONFIDENTIAL Comprehensive Evaluation of NAU Online

NAU has engaged in focused external consultations related to NAU Online across several dimensions. The University Professional and Continuing Education Association (UPCEA) was engaged for an assessment of NAU's online readiness and more detailed review of the existing portfolio of programs. In addition, NAU initiated ongoing work with Arizona State University's EdPlus division to assess readiness for expanding and growing enrollments in online programs. In both engagements, NAU's emphasis was on sharpening the focus of its online program identity to both advance the university's mission to drive access and success and strengthen the university's overall financial position through a healthy and sustainable online enterprise.

UPCEA online readiness recommendations

Through UPCEA efforts, NAU sought recommendations for growing online enrollment, strengthening our organizational structure and business model, creating the infrastructure to upscale online, blended, and hybrid offerings, and assessing investment needs for rapid change in a manner responsive to market dynamics. This resulted in several key recommendations specific to NAU's online enterprise, which include the following:

- Building an academically decentralized and administratively centralized organizational structure, with programs and faculty being managed collaboratively with academic departments while administrative and operational leadership for online programs is centralized within NAU Online.
- Developing a reimagined budget model for online programs that centers on sharing tuition revenue directly with academic departments and the Provost's Office that can be used to develop, support, and grow online programs and operations.
- Optimizing the academic program portfolio to focus on labor market needs, aligning similar programs across modalities, and eliminating duplicative offerings.
- Creating a marketing campaign that emphasizes a distinct mission and strengths for NAU Online and allows the university to stand out in a competitive marketplace, an effort that should be accompanied by increased internal marketing capacity within NAU Online and an alignment of marketing investments with areas of opportunity.
- Expanding pathways by adding non-degree credentials that respond to labor market needs, robust prior learning assessment policies and procedures, and structures that allow non-credit to credit transitions.

- Focusing the purpose of our personalized learning programs toward a single goal, such as an emphasis on creating flexible subscription-based pathways or a sole aim of supporting partnerships and improving communications to both external and internal stakeholders about the advantages of competency-based education.
- Coordinating enrollment management and marketing activities through focused NAU Online capacity to ensure consistent and impactful messaging and prospective student processing.
- Focusing the work of the NAU Online instructional design team solely toward online programs, enabling capacity to ensure standardized design for online courses that support these programs, minimizing course design drift, and engaging in ongoing quality assurance.

UPCEA also offered recommendations about broader aspects of the institution's operations and policies, including recommendations to improve compensation for faculty and staff, expand remote and out-of-state work, grow business analyst and information technology resources, and leverage statewide and community college partner sites to offer on-ground services to online learners.

ASU EdPlus online readiness recommendations

Collaborative efforts with ASU's EdPlus division culminated in the identification of several areas for improvement across domains of importance in online learning, the most central of which are summarized below:

- Developing a newly articulated vision for online learning at NAU alongside a consistent business model that shares revenue with academic units and incentivizes robust academic unit and faculty participation in supporting online programs.
- Renewing efforts to effectively market and grow NAU's online programs, with strategic consideration of relative marketing lead generation costs.
- Leveraging market research to shape our program portfolio and ensure alignment with labor market demands.
- Accelerating admission and enrollment processes, particularly for highly competitive academic programs, and enhance supports to improve the transfer student experience.
- Ensuring that online program students have access to scholarship opportunities, accelerating financial aid packaging, and improving communication frequency with online prospects and admitted students.
- Expanding available student retention coaching and support services, including mental health supports, to create a true wraparound online student experience.
- Ensuring that programs undergo regular quality assurance reviews and provide a high-quality student experience.

An analysis of the recommendations put forth by UPCEA and EdPlus show clear areas of convergence around program offerings, market differentiation, revenue model, and organization. Equipped with this expertise and sharpened focus, NAU also evaluated the role of online learning relative to its other strategic workstreams, including NAU Flagstaff, the Arizona Attainment Alliance's (A++) nascent transfer optimization infrastructure, and NAU Statewide's distributed learning sites to determine a mission-aligned action plan to effectively set NAU Online on a course

for transformation that would meaningfully contribute to the university's strategic enrollment and financial goals.

CONFIDENTIAL Mission-Aligned Action Planning and NAU Investments

Guided by recommendations from external partners and informed through extensive consultation with NAU faculty and staff, NAU has defined its core vision for NAU Online, which itself is closely aligned to the university's overall mission and vision. The twofold priorities are defined as student focused—**access and success**—and organizationally focused—**growth and sustainability**. NAU allocated \$5 million in seed funding to support the outlined mission-aligned priorities over the next three years, which will focus on operationalizing dimensions of the EdPlus partnership, building the relevant organizational capacity for NAU to sustain the transformation of NAU Online, optimizing the university's online program portfolio, including the creation of joint programs with ASU, and marketing and growing NAU's online brand as the leader in in-state online education for accessibility, value, quality, and outcomes.

Through the lens of **access and success**, NAU will provide and expand access to high-quality online postsecondary learning opportunities. This includes enhancing student learning through academic experiences driven by evidence-based pedagogical practices and continuous improvement; supporting student persistence and attainment through robust student-centered care and success coaching processes; and strengthening and expanding partnerships with businesses to ensure NAU Online remains aligned with state labor market needs and prepares learners for career advancement.

Through the lens of **growth and sustainability**, NAU will seek long-term sustainability and viability of NAU Online academic programs and their operations in this competitive marketplace by increasing online access to postsecondary education, particularly for Arizona's non-traditional and place bound learners, growing enrollments, and increasing retention and graduation rates. This will be underwritten by supporting affordability, efficiency, and stability in the online programs offered by identifying and implementing a mission-aligned, financially sound portfolio (with continuous evaluation and optimization measures in place) and optimizing the operational effectiveness of the unit.

This framework provided an overarching vision from which NAU concentrated efforts into three action areas where robust, longer-term plans have been developed, as well as early implementation steps to ensure progress toward the overall goal of transformation for NAU Online.

- **H3 Program Portfolio:** Offering a distinctive and optimized portfolio of academic programs that center on labor market needs and focus on high-demand, high-skill, and high-wage/high-opportunity (H3) professional outcomes. As with NAU's pathway array for A++, the goal is to create a distinctive H3 program portfolio that has brand recognition and real-world impact to drive valuable outcomes complemented by programs central to our mission.
- **Quality of Academic and Student Experience:** Supporting a high-quality academic experience for online learners through consistent and scalable course and curricular designs and pedagogical best-practices.

- **Integration of Support Services:** Committing to integrated and accessible online student support that promotes student success and attainment.

H3 Program Portfolio: Overview of Action Plan

Offering a distinctive portfolio of academic programs that align with labor market needs requires an assessment and optimization of our current program portfolio alongside strategic expansion. The guiding principle for this is ensuring that NAU has a clearly defined, marketable set of programs that deliver value for learners because they are intentionally designed as high-demand, high-skill, high-wage/opportunity (H3). Creating a cohesive, H3-driven approach to programmatic review also connects NAU Online closely to the specific H3 pathway areas being developed through A++, with online transfer becoming a viable and impactful arm of NAU's strengthened relationship with all the state's community colleges.

Planning efforts for each H3 Program Portfolio action area include aligning all new program development and existing program assessment with projected Arizona and regional labor force needs to ensure H3 impact. For NAU Online, this includes focusing attention on fully online programs that can offer standalone option for students as well as supporting transfer and degree completion needs.

In addition, due to the diversity of programs currently offered, efforts are underway to assess and consolidate related programs to maximize the effectiveness of our marketing and enrollment management efforts. For instance, multiple iterations of a highly similar degree pathway add potential confusion for students looking for a credential, whereas folding together multiple related programs with H3 characteristics enables more direct and cohesive marketing—creating efficiencies in marketing spend for the university and greater traction with the public in recognizing the value proposition. This work will be supplemented by a prioritization of marketing resource investments into core H3 programs with distinctive excellence and the greatest potential to succeed in the context of NAU's unique institutional context. Finally, as part of programmatic consolidation efforts, NAU Online will be leveraged in key scenarios where low-enrolled statewide programs can be folded into online offerings for minimal cost—and potentially allow a distributed learning site to be closed for greater operational efficiency.

Given the connections to NAU's statewide sites and A++ efforts, NAU Online programs will emphasize expansive entry pathways into programs through comprehensive transfer articulations, flexible program designs that accommodate broad partnerships, development of stackable for-credit and not-for-credit microcredentials that support degree program entry and completion, and maximal acceptance of prior learning.

Meriting distinct consideration in this effort is an optimization of NAU's personalized learning portfolio to shape it toward programs that are strongly aligned with workforce demands and offer opportunities to develop partnerships with employers that are committed to supporting their employees' professional development and offering funding through tuition reimbursement programs. Moving forward, the primary focus of personalized learning will be as a business-to-business partnership division, which will vastly increase its potential for revenue that can support other dimensions of NAU Online.

H3 Program Portfolio: Progress and Planned Efforts

Below is a summary of strategies currently being implemented and of near-term implementation priorities on this front:

- During spring 2023, the Office of the Provost launched a taskforce to articulate criteria for shaping the university's online program portfolio. Composed of academic leaders and faculty, the taskforce conducted initial development of criteria and characteristics to be used in this work. Based on this work, the Office of the Provost is further refining portfolio shaping criteria, including considerations related to:
 - **Enrollment:** One- and three-year enrollment trends; degree productivity; one- and three-year degree productivity trends; with proposed enrollment minima aligned with Provost's Office guidelines.
 - **Financial sustainability:** Generated tuition and fees, disaggregated by student campus; instructional expenditures for online course delivery.
 - **Market demand:** Projected positions in Arizona, by industry associated with degree programs, and short- and long-term projected employment trends; median annual wage by occupation.
 - **Student success:** Alumni earnings and debt by degree program.
 - **Mission centrality:** providing service or impact valued by regional communities or strategic stakeholders.

- Starting in summer 2023, NAU will engage with academic deans in applying these refined criteria to their respective college online portfolios and disciplinary areas to assess the need for program changes and potential new program development related to emerging opportunities.

- During academic year 2022-2023, NAU's Academic Affairs division engaged in new program development with strong labor market alignment—highlights of this work include the following:
 - Spring 2023: launch of two new programs (MS in Nursing and a graduate certificate in Strategic Systems Leadership) in partnership with Dignity Health.

 - Fall 2023, staged launches for additional standalone certificates (Accounting and Finance, Logistics and Supply Chain Management, Project Management, Physician Assistant Operations and Leadership, Physician Assistant Health Equity) and degree programs (MBA Business Administration, MBA Healthcare, MS Information Technology) in partnership with Abundance International Education Institute and Dignity Health. In addition, the College of Engineering, Informatics, and Applied Sciences is launching a new personalized learning MS in Computer Science program as part of our Beacon Education partnership.

 - Ongoing efforts that we anticipate will lead to additional online program launches during academic year 2023-2024, include the Doctor of Medical Science program, certificates in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner and Physical Education, Career and Technical Education in partnership with Bloomboard, and Fire Science Professional.

- In spring 2023, NAU Online engaged in an initial assessment of the personalized learning portfolio which resulted in a commitment to discontinue enrollment in three bachelor of arts programs with low enrollment and degree productivity. In summer 2023, NAU Online will explore a reimagining of the Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts program, with the goal of identifying adaptations of the curriculum and branding or replacement of the program to better align with labor market needs and position the program as personalized learning's degree completion pathway.
- In spring 2023, NAU Online and the Office of Curriculum and Assessment initiated coordinated efforts to develop robust prior learning assessment (PLA) policies for undergraduate programs and personalized learning, which are planned to go into effect in fall 2023. During summer 2023, these offices will expand their efforts, in collaboration with the Graduate College, to support the development of PLA policies for graduate programs. Based on the work of a cross-divisional working group during spring 2023 aimed at developing necessary business processes, in fall 2023 we will expand our ability to offer both for-credit and not-for-credit microcredentials.
- In summer 2023 NAU will begin assessment of potential new programs with strong labor market demand to add to the personalized learning portfolio (e.g., software development, healthcare, and other areas of management), stackable credential pathways in personalized learning, and potential joint programs with EdPlus and Arizona State University in traditional areas of NAU strengths (e.g., forestry, healthcare, sustainability).

Quality of Academic and Student Experience: Overview of Action Plan

Supporting a high-quality academic experience for online students demands attention to curricular practices as well as improved instructional design and faculty development. This was a clear point of convergence in both UPCEA and EdPlus assessments and will be an area of emphasis to create a higher standard of quality and brand recognition across all offerings NAU provides. To fully integrate a consistent level of quality into all NAU Online experiences, the following areas have been identified, and NAU is working with internal units on implementation plans as well as continuing consultation with UPCEA and EdPlus to perform quality review and seek guidance on implementation efforts tailored for NAU's operating environment.

- **Ensuring effective course design:** Instituting consistent and rigorously implemented assurance processes (e.g., Quality Matters, Competency-Based Education Network) that ensure a high level of quality for all NAU Online programs and the courses that support them. These efforts will emphasize the use of consistent course designs, adoption of evidence-based pedagogies that support student learning and equitable success and outcomes, the use of policies that promote flexibility for non-traditional learners, and deployment of online learning in a contemporary Learning Management System that is consistently deployed across the entire institution.
- **Optimizing general studies offerings and curricular designs:** Identifying a limited number of courses that support general studies needs for online programs with a particular focus on quality, consistency, student interest, and efficient capacity up-scaling.

Optimizing curricula through this measure will begin correcting overly complex design characteristics and critical path obstacles to student completion.

- **Supporting high-quality online instruction:** Investing in faculty development efforts that specifically support online teaching needs and the use of evidence-based, student success-oriented pedagogies. This includes working with academic leaders to augment unit-level review criteria to strengthen assessment processes associated with online teaching excellence, as well as assessing how part-time faculty are balanced in supporting online programs and pursuing increases in the use of full-time faculty wherever feasible for highest quality and impact.
- **Ensuring high-quality subject matter content:** Placing academic programs and personnel in discipline-appropriate academic units to strengthen collective curricular oversight and better support faculty supporting online and personalized learning programs.
- **Promoting student-centered learning environments:** Reviewing and revising institutional academic policies to provide, where necessary, additional flexibility and agency to students, which is particularly necessary for non-traditional learners.

Quality of Academic and Student Experience: Progress and Planned Efforts

Below is a summary of strategies currently being implemented and near-term implementation priorities on this front:

- Starting in fall 2021, the Office of the Provost and Information Technology Services initiated a comprehensive review of contemporary Learning Management System (LMS) options in close collaboration with the institutional community and faculty governance bodies. These efforts resulted in the selection of Canvas as the institution's next LMS, slated for initial use in delivering instruction to students in the summer 2023 term. These efforts are accompanied by an updated master course template for use in Canvas that is aimed to increase the consistency of the student experience across courses. NAU Online staff and instructional designers are continuing to refine the comprehensive guide to online teaching best practices, originally published in spring 2021.
- In spring 2023, the Office of the Provost initiated efforts led through University Advising to identify candidates as part of an optimized core of courses that fulfills general studies requirements for online students. The initial set of courses identified through this effort combine popularity with students and a proven track record of success in scalable online offerings and will continue to be refined throughout academic year 2023-2024 as it is staged for a structured deployment of this core for all online programs. In fall 2022, NAU's Curriculum and Assessment team engaged in an initial deployment of curricular complexity analyses as part of overall program review processes to pilot quantitative analysis of degree plans and identify opportunities to reduce curricular complexity and structural obstacles to student progression—this foundational work will allow NAU to expand this analytical approach to online programs and benefit from improved curricular designs.

- During spring 2023, the Office of the Provost and NAU Online continued work with ASU EdPlus in refining and finalizing the terms of an agreement that will enable NAU to benefit from instructional design best practices (e.g., course design templates, design guidelines), training for the NAU Online instructional design team, and potential direct provisioning of instructional design services by EdPlus for NAU courses. Leveraging the expertise of an industry leader for tailored solutions for NAU's academic and student experience will accelerate overall transformation of NAU Online and with the agreement now in place these efforts will be deployed over the 2023-2024 academic year.
- Initial efforts in NAU Online toward this goal in spring 2023 consisted of an analysis of part-time faculty expenditures in our personalized learning programs, particularly in general studies courses, and the tentative identification of opportunities to modify our curriculum in a way that enables considering a consolidation of part-time investments in full-time faculty to reduce our reliance on part-time faculty.
- Throughout academic year 2022-2023 and based on an analysis of student retention during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of the Registrar and the Faculty Senate's Academic Standards Committee engaged collaboratively to assess and revise key academic policies that may have posed structural obstacles to student progression. Efforts to date have led to modifications to our single course withdrawal, academic continuation, and institutional excuse policies.

Integration of Support Services: Overview of Action Plan

Offering robust support for online learners demands providing dedicated services that are customized to their distinct needs, technological innovation, and careful articulation of institution-wide efforts. The anchor areas across which to bolster support services are noted below.

- **Dedicated comprehensive student support services:** Providing academic advising and student success support explicitly focused on and designed around the needs of non-traditional learners. Minimizing student care hand-offs by adopting a proactive, case-management approach supported by staff with a comprehensive knowledge base of multiple areas of policy and process.
- **Student support technologies:** Integrating additional and more robust technologies that support student success across various areas (e.g., degree progression, course planning, early-warning), including the potential adoption of tools developed by Arizona State University (e.g., me3, MACS Accelerator).
- **Integrated into a hybrid NAU System:** Sustain and expand statewide offerings by allowing the consolidation of enrollments across statewide sites into online offerings while preserving the ability to offer in-person portions when necessary. Coordinating the delivery of instruction and student services for online and in-person learners across NAU's statewide sites and emerging regional hubs to efficiently provide a combination of remote and accessible in-person services to online learners.

Integration of Support Services: Progress and Planned Efforts

Below is a summary of strategies currently being implemented and of near-term implementation priorities on this front:

- During summer 2023, the Office of the Provost secured an agreement with Arizona State University's EdPlus that will enable NAU to benefit from their experiences in building the Success Coaching model, which is anticipated to be supported by staff that are dedicated to online learners and organizationally placed in NAU Online.
- Initiated in fall 2022 and continuing through academic year 2022-2023 and led by Information Technology Services in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, NAU initiated a comprehensive effort to assess available contemporary tools (e.g., degree planning, early-warning systems) for supporting student success, with consequent adoption or tool development efforts to begin fall 2023. Efforts in spring 2023 included an initial assessment of EdPlus' me3 career and major exploration tool. This work will broadly benefit all students, including those in immersion programs, but is particularly important for NAU Online given the centrality of technology to the online learner experience.
- In spring 2023, the Office of the Provost engaged in an initial assessment of how to best integrate program offerings across NAU Online and statewide locations, particularly when enrollments in those statewide locations have fallen below expected thresholds. These efforts have led to adding the online modality to several programs and certificates offered through the College of Education and expect to be expanded to provide efficiencies for the online and statewide enterprises.

CONFIDENTIAL Operational and Organizational Changes

Enabling success in shaping a distinctive academic program portfolio, offering a high-quality academic experience, and providing robust online student support must be founded on operational improvements to NAU Online and other areas of the institution. Thus, in concert with action planning, a multi-phased organizational redesign has taken place over the last year.

Key to all organizational changes has been reorienting NAU Online as an operational unit that expands its support of online programs. In this reimagined structure, academic units lead decisions related to curricular subject matter and faculty oversight—using clear guiding principles related to financial, enrollment, and programmatic targets—and NAU Online coordinates operational efforts in marketing, program management, operations and analysis, enrollment management, instructional design, academic advising, and student success, in coordination with other divisions and offices across the institution, and with an entrepreneurial ethos focused on student needs, efficiency, and agile change. This approach brings higher quality, greater standardization, and a concentration of resources, particularly in marketing, to enhance highly impactful efforts. Several highlights in the operational and organizational changes stemming from this structure are highlighted below:

- **Dedicated marketing and media strategy:** Developing a distinct and dedicated marketing and media campaign for NAU Online that builds on institutional brands strengths but is focused on how those strengths align with the values and needs of non-traditional learners.

Refocusing marketing spend to emphasize supporting the NAU Online brand with limited and strategically focused program-level marketing in areas of high growth potential.

- **Improved enrollment management support:** Improving enrollment management processes to focus on the demands of online and non-traditional learners and expedite response times for admissions and financial aid for these learners.
- **Focused online instructional design:** Creating an instructional design team within NAU Online that is exclusively focused on supporting online programs and in asserting course design best practices across all NAU Online courses.
- **Focused business analyst and developer support:** Creating dedicated and integrated business analysis and software development capacity that is dedicated on technical and business process needs for online and personalized learning programs, enabling agile and rapid development and the reduction of technical debt associated with legacy solutions.
- **Revenue sharing:** Developing and deploying a concrete revenue-sharing model that directs a portion of online tuition and fees revenue to academic units to support participation in online programs. Instituting structures that compensate faculty for developing online courses and offers academic units initial support in developing online programs.

Operational and Organizational Changes: Progress and Planned Efforts

Below is a summary of strategies currently being implemented and of near-term implementation priorities on this front:

- Starting in fall 2023, NAU will leverage its agreement with Arizona State University's EdPlus to engage in further information, resource, and best-practice sharing in leadership consulting, program and course onboarding processes, enrollment and marketing, open scale development overview, online course quality assurance, instructional design processes, faculty professional development and training, accessibility, learning Technologies, IP and copyright, student success, and microcredentials and badging. In addition, NAU will explore supporting new program development instructional and course design services provided by EdPlus.
- In spring 2023, the Office of the Provost initiated the reorganization of the previously designated division of Online and Innovative Educational Initiatives (OIEI) unit to provide a focused NAU Online unit under the Office of the Provost and the Senior Vice Provost for Academic Operations, separating other OIEI areas under the Vice Provost for Alliances, Academic Programs, and Workforce Development. Since then, NAU Online's primary focus as an operational unit has been to reimagine its work and rapidly shift to a more agile, efficient, and entrepreneurial unit that advances the university's mission and generates sustainable revenue.
- During summer 2023, key personnel in NAU Online are being repositioned to match evolving organizational needs and structures and a series of searches for leadership roles,

including Associate Vice Provost for NAU Online and Director for Instructional Design, are poised to launch.

- During spring 2023, University Marketing in collaboration with the Office of the Provost and Enrollment Management, initiated planning for a new NAU Online and adult learner marketing campaign with The James Agency (TJA). After conducting market research and user focus groups, TJA is engaging in creative development for a new marketing campaign slated to launch in spring 2024. The campaign's thematic focus is student care, offering a distinction with other online education providers rooted in NAU's deep-seated commitment to student attainment and success in the state of Arizona. In addition to continuing efforts to launch new programs with strong potential for enrollment growth, which will have an outsized impact in helping NAU achieve its RAISE enrollment goals for 2024-2026, much of the success for NAU Online will be dependent on effective marketing and differentiated marketing campaigns. Beginning in fall 2023, NAU plans to make a significant investment in additional marketing for online programs, which include the following:
 - Launching a new NAU Online marketing campaign in spring 2024, aimed toward place-bound and adult learners and with a new thematic focus and distinct NAU Online branding.
 - Seeking to make limited yet high-impact program-specific marketing investments where the return-on-investment in lead and enrollment generation for marketing spend is highest.
- Throughout fall 2022 and spring 2023, Enrollment Management engaged in making significant improvements to processes with the aim of better serving online students, including efforts to phase out affiliate partners for engagement with admissions prospects and rather supporting that work internally, expanding staff levels to enable elevated attention for online applications and admissions processing, and building closer connections with faculty to better infuse program knowledge in enrollment management work. This was supported through associated improvements to technical infrastructure for enrollment management work (e.g., expanding and refining use of Salesforce, developing specific Marketing Cloud communication flows and journeys for online students, building more efficient transcript processing flows). Work in fall 2023 will continue with improvements to the Enrollment Management call center, while financial aid improvements identified through internal and external consultations will be staged after NAU responds to needs associated with the FAFSA Simplification Act.
- During spring 2023, the Office of the Provost initiated a structured analysis of NAU Online expenditures and tuition and fees revenue to enable the data-informed development of a revenue-sharing model for online programs that ensures financial sustainability and supports instructional, staff, and operational needs for academic units that support online programs. Through collaboration with University Budget and the Chief Financial Officer, NAU will develop a multi-year transition toward this new model.

Looking Ahead

Through this extensive planning effort, NAU has established a clear vision and criteria for a successful revitalization of NAU Online as a complimentary asset in the university's portfolio. Moving forward, accountability to implementation, progress, and impact will be crucial across all action planning dimensions. For instance, while some limited program reviews have taken place, a robust sequenced review of all online program offerings will be a priority under the new organizational structure to ensure efficiency in operations, return on investment for marketing spend, achievement of enrollment and student success targets, and financial viability of programs and support services. The newly established and formalized relationship with EdPlus will be fundamental to moving quickly, as NAU can now leverage outside expertise to target interventions in key action areas. Through institutional metrics, RAISE enrollment goals, and linkages with A++ and statewide offerings, NAU looks forward to ongoing development, impact, and accountability for its new NAU Online operation in the years ahead.

To: Fred DuVal, Chair, Arizona Board of Regents
CC: Arizona Board of Regents
From: José Luis Cruz Rivera, President, Northern Arizona University
Date: August 1, 2023
Re: 2022-23 At-Risk Goal #3: Academic Excellence and Student Success



This memorandum presents a high-level statement of achievement describing how the incentive goal in reference was met and how the corresponding efforts will be maintained to ensure that NAU can continue to advance the mission of the enterprise strategic plan, as it pertains to ABOR's Strategic Goals. Sections of this memorandum that describe **confidential** personnel or proprietary information are marked appropriately and should be limited to executive session review by the Board.

Goal Statement

NAU will develop a plan and begin implementation focused on responsibly increasing enrollments and enhancing career preparation opportunities to support students' post-college success. The plan will outline 1) enrollment goals for 2024-2026 that are informed by early work related to the New NAU System to capture an enrollment mix of students that contributes to meeting Arizona's attainment needs and supports NAU's financial health, and 2) the launch of a phased 100% Career Ready initiative that will strengthen linkages and highlight pathways from NAU's exceptional academic programs to workforce outcomes. NAU will begin executing recruitment strategies and launch the 100% Career Ready initiative in AY22-23 with some enhancements in place by June 30, 2023, to immediately begin work toward meeting the goals of the plan.

Executive Summary

With a clear vision in place for NAU to serve as Arizona's preeminent engine of opportunity, vehicle of upward mobility, and driver of social impact through the delivery of equitable postsecondary value, NAU has dedicated itself over the last year to undertaking two workstreams associated with this goal. First, to meet ABOR enrollment goals in a manner that sustains institutional financial health and advances NAU's access mission. Second, to enhance curricula and support services in a manner that more clearly enables NAU graduates to be truly career ready—a valuable addition to the institution's core academic excellence and a distinguishing feature that will allow graduates to realize upward economic mobility.

These efforts have resulted in an internal university action plan—Realizing Attainment Impact through Strategic Enrollment (RAISE)—to be carried out between 2024-2026, which will result in an enrollment increase of 11% by the plan’s end-date using existing assets within NAU’s portfolio. This plan is buttressed by key policy and practice refinements that advance NAU’s mission in a process initiated last year through the Access2Excellence and Admissions Pilot programs, and more fully realized through the Admissions Pilot Amendment approved by the Board in June 2023. In addition, with the strengthening of partnerships through the Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++), NAU will be able to leverage a broader transfer pipeline that is integrated across community colleges and NAU to foster student success. Finally, thanks to the multi-year tuition setting and maximum growth rate policy adopted by the Board, the RAISE plan will work in parallel with internal tuition-setting efforts, with the target enrollment increases matched by increases in net revenue, ranging from 23% (at 3% annual increase in tuition rates) to 25% (at maximum annual growth rate increase in tuition rates).

In support of career ready academic excellence, NAU launched the 100% Career Ready initiative that is designed to prepare all NAU students to successfully launch into meaningful careers upon graduation and serves as a critical linkage to the university’s value proposition as an engine of opportunity and vehicle of upward social and economic mobility. Over the course of FY2022-23, NAU began assessing its academic programs and support infrastructure associated with career readiness for all students. 100% Career Ready includes enhancements to all dimensions of the student experience, including coursework, advising, on- and off-campus student employment, job placement, and internship opportunities. Ultimately, this comprehensive plan will provide a universal level of career preparedness among all NAU graduates, ensuring academic excellence and workforce preparation are infused into all student experiences, creating a clear added value to NAU’s academic programs, and providing unparalleled opportunity to students the university serves. With rapid adoption across the university, a robust plan has been made to deploy 100% Career Ready, substantial progress on phased implementation has taken place, and ongoing toward meeting the initiative’s objectives has been embedded thanks to its approval by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) as NAU’s Quality Initiative project, a required component for institutional accreditation.

CONFIDENTIAL Statement of Achievement: Enrollment Plan

This year, NAU developed an internal enrollment plan for 2024-2026 — “Realizing Attainment Impact through Strategic Enrollment (RAISE)” — and began executing several of the related recruitment (access) and attainment and success operational priorities identified in the plan.

To develop the plan, NAU engaged and mobilized a broad set of university stakeholders (the RAISE Team) led by a core team of facilitators. The stakeholders were organized into three teams focused on the areas of 1) Access; 2) Attainment and Success; and 3) Impact. The teams engaged several internal content-matter experts who served as consultants.

To organize and pace the implementation work, the RAISE Core Team adopted a multi-phase, multi-annual project timeline, as shown in **Table 1** — understanding that the strategic and corresponding operational plans represent living, guiding documents that must be assessed and updated on at least an annual basis.

Table 1 High-Level Planning Timeline

Phase	Description	Academic Year			
		22-23	23-24	24-25	25-26
1	Discovery and Ideation				
2	Development of Strategic Plan (RAISE 1.0)				
3	Development of Operational (Op) Plans				
4	Implementation of Strategic & Op Priorities				
5	A++, Online, Statewide, State48 (RAISE 2.0+)				

In Phase 1, the RAISE Team took stock of several enrollment-related institutional plans and worked to articulate a bold grand challenge to guide the work and develop a coherent framework for advancing and assessing the work. Additionally, the Team crowdsourced ideas from a variety of institutional units to identify areas to be prioritized to set a strong foundation for the work and gain traction toward meeting and exceeding the enrollment forecasts currently approved by ABOR for NAU.

Furthermore, the RAISE Team sharpened its focus on developing an enrollment plan that would help increase post-secondary access and success while maintaining the financial sustainability of the institution. The plan builds upon years of innovating work and recent equitable postsecondary value initiatives, such as Access2Excellence, Admissions Pilot, and Universal Admissions, created in alignment with the guiding vision, mission, and commitment set forth in NAU 2025: Elevating Excellence.

Driven by the desire to have more people benefit from the transformational social impact and economic mobility of a post-secondary credential, the RAISE Team engaged in several discussions informed by enrollment models and projections to craft a Grand Challenge statement that would help organize the work, identify priorities, and inform action plans during the next three years. The resulting Grand Challenge states that “By 2035, NAU will award high value credentials to over 100,000 people.” A graphical representation of this statement is presented in **Figure 1**.

As illustrated in the figure and contemplated in the at-risk goal statement, the RAISE Team focused on developing a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan that if well-executed during the years 2023-2026 would put NAU on the right growth trajectory (projected enrollment increase: 11%) to meet the articulated grand challenge for the year 2035, through a combination of recruitment and retention policies and practices designed to broaden access and increase attainment.

Because A++, NAU Online, NAU Statewide, and State48, are still in the planning and early implementation stages, the RAISE 1.0 plan focuses on what can be accomplished using existing NAU assets and builds upon key admissions-related policy and practice refinements implemented in the past two years.

RAISE Grand Challenge

By 2035, NAU will award high value credentials to over 100,000 people.

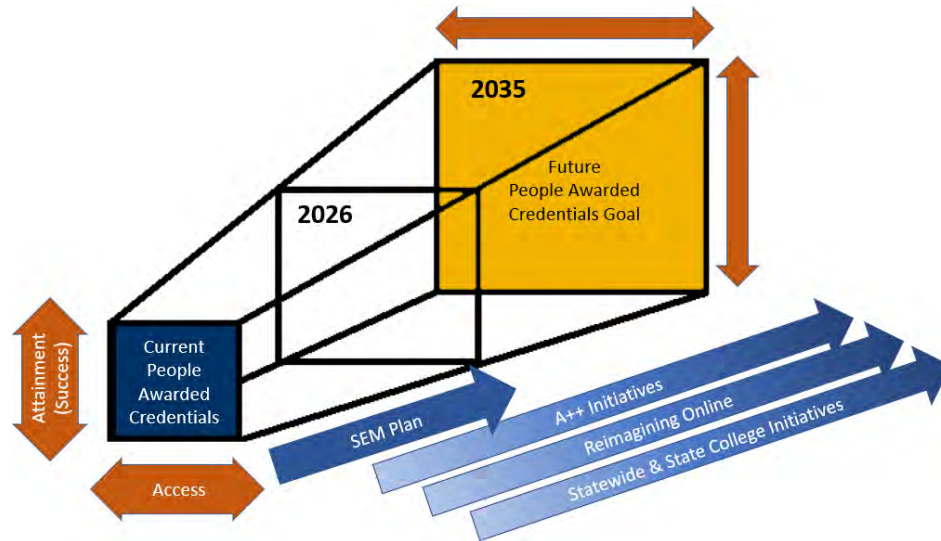


Figure 1 RAISE Grand Challenge

As robust plans for the cited complementary initiatives are fully developed and advanced toward implementation, the university will ensure that those plans do not negatively impact or burden the existing excellence of NAU Flagstaff and other associated assets and sites—including NAU Online and NAU Statewide—and that all these initiatives work in a cohesive, complementary, optimized, and sustainable manner. From this position of strength, NAU will then be able to build outward into new markets via the assets of what we refer to as the New NAU System. Future versions of the RAISE plan (RAISE 2.0+) will reflect the contributions of the New NAU System components in our drive toward meeting the 2035 Grand Challenge.

Specifically, the RAISE 1.0 plan describes priorities in three strategic focus areas. The first area is broadening equitable access by adapting our structures and processes to increase college going rates and engage more students in the pursuit of a high-value postsecondary credential at NAU. The second area is increasing attainment and success by improving program delivery to optimize the student experience so that more students who entrust NAU with their education complete their credential and derive value from their academic experience. The third area—the interconnected area—refers to efforts related to both access and success areas.

Successful implementation of the RAISE 1.0 plan will have a profound impact on students, communities, and the state of Arizona through attainment, prosperity, and social good. In fact, if RAISE goals are achieved by 2026 and the trajectory set during that time continues until 2035—without the addition of any new NAU assets, such as those described in the New NAU System at-risk report—the impacts would include the following: more than 100,000 people will receive an NAU credential resulting in at least \$12B in lifetime social benefits; the number of under-represented and first-generation students earning college degrees and workforce credentials from

NAU will double; Arizona’s economic growth will be fueled by at least two-thirds of NAU graduates living and working in the state five years after graduation; the median wages for NAU graduates will increase by 66% relative to students with a high school diploma; more than 10,000 low-income students will be propelled to the middle class and beyond; at least \$34M in additional tax revenue will be generated for the benefit of the state of Arizona. A high-level overview of RAISE 1.0 is presented in **Figure 2**.

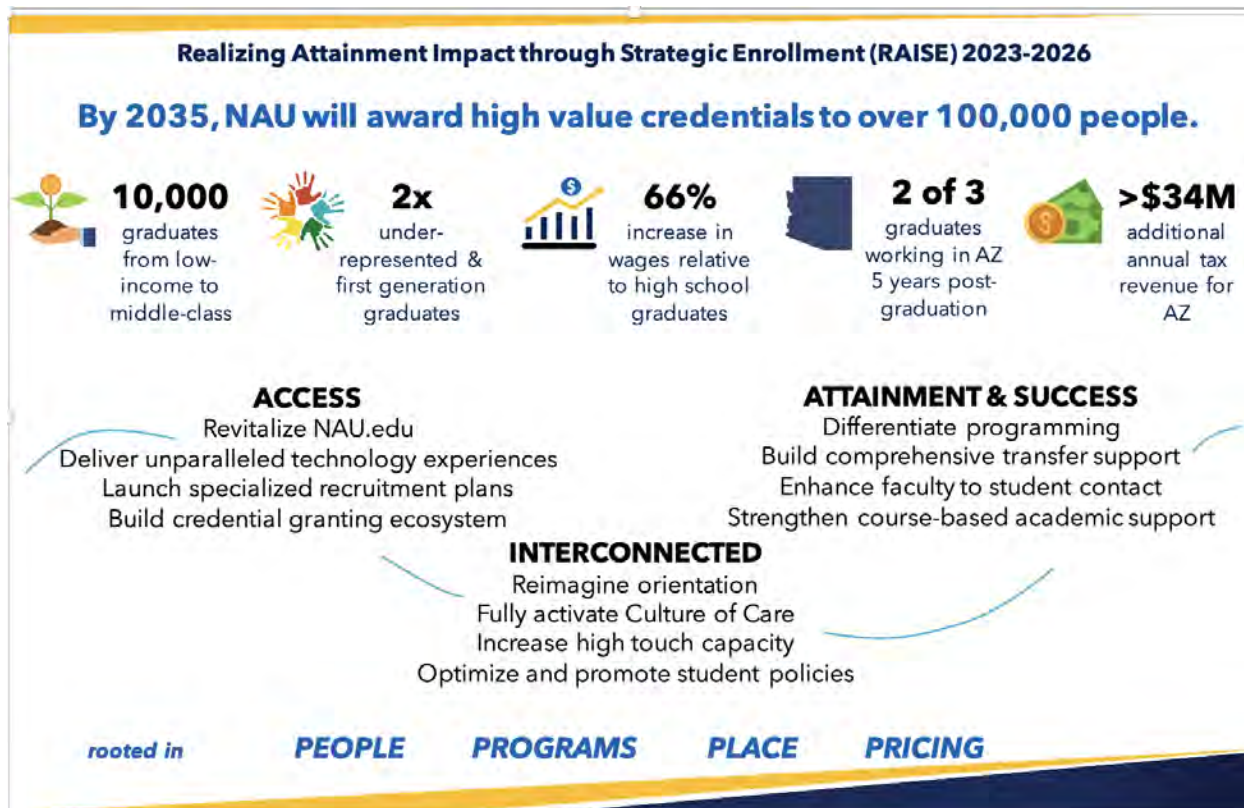


Figure 2 Overview of RAISE 1.0, NAU's 2023-26 Enrollment Plan

As shown in **Figure 2**, RAISE 1.0 is rooted in people, programs, place, and pricing. A brief description of these four foundational pillars is presented below.

- **People:** Strong support for faculty and staff as they seek to better support students. Recognizing that our people are our most important asset, ensuring that we are adequately staffed and have the resources to support world-class pedagogical practices and support services.
- **Programs:** Accessible and student-centered academic programs and pathways. Continual evaluation of the academic program portfolio to provide accessible and high-demand programs that build students’ skills and lead to purposeful, prosperous careers. Developing optimized pathways, stackable credentials, responsive and student-centered curricula, accessible delivery modalities, and fluid cross-modality pathways are fundamental to the recruitment and success of all students.

- **Place:** Technical and physical infrastructure to support student success. Creation of environments, where student will thrive, by meeting place-based student needs, including access to curricular and co-curricular support and appropriate technology, and diversification of entry points into high-value postsecondary pathways.
- **Pricing:** Price and positioning for equitable postsecondary access, persistence, and value. Advancing transparent and predictable pricing policies while maintaining financial health for the institution are paramount and serve as guiding principles for all institutional actions. Equitable and intentional pricing and financial aid strategies will help prospective students realize that college is financially possible and ensure they persist through to the completion of their credential.

A granular description of the RAISE 1.0 strategic priorities guiding the work from 2023-26 illustrated in **Figure 2** follows.

- **Access Priorities:** 1) Cultivate the NAU.edu domain and webpages to deliver an unparalleled user experience that drives engagement and connection with the NAU brand; 2) Create highly accessible, personalized, mobile-first, and multi-lingual technology experiences to serve NAU students from prospect to graduate; 3) Implement specialized recruitment plans for distinct student populations, such as Indigenous Peoples, Hispanic/Latino, first-generation, out-of-state, transfer, international, and adult learners—leveraging the assets and value that NAU offers to best recruit across all populations that contribute to the university’s enrollment mix; 4) Broaden the impact of statewide partnerships by strengthening the Arizona postsecondary ecosystem through multi-directional transfer, enrollment, and credentialing efforts that amplify opportunities for NAU to serve as an attainment hub (see New NAU System at-risk report for details related to these initiatives through the Arizona Attainment Alliance).
- **Attainment and Success Priorities:** 1) Coordinate differentiated programs and services and deliver them across the student lifecycle to student populations at the right time and place to maximize persistence, impact, and outcomes; 2) Review the transfer experience, including common courses, career coaching, and non-traditional support offerings, to design a robust and coordinated support for transfers; 3) Implement an early and ongoing alert system for students that delivers timely faculty feedback and campus support for strong academic outcomes; 4) Expand utilization of course-aligned academic support by maximizing proximity to related classes and faculty-staff partnership on content development and delivery.
- **Interconnected Priorities** (spans both Access and Attainment and Success): 1) Implement a redesigned and extended New Student Orientation for students of all backgrounds, with a particular focus on navigating university processes and expectations, cultivating a sense of belonging, and identifying academic and career purpose. This serves as a powerful recruitment tool and sets the foundation for persistence and success from day one; 2) Foster a student-centered culture of care by enhancing training and development opportunities to maximize NAU employees’ ability to be student success experts. Broadening the ability of staff at every level to center an excellent student experience will result in robust gains in

overall student satisfaction, retention, and success; 3) Expand efforts and reallocate resources to institutional efforts that have the greatest student-centered impact. This includes interventions and engagements that will provide disproportionate attainment gains among student groups such as stop out, lower GPA, statewide, transfer, upper division, and financially insecure students; 4) Improve the student-centered policy, process, program, and practice ecosystem through intentional review and streamlining. For instance, the Admissions Pilot removes ambiguity from admission standards to clarify messaging and understanding for prospective students.

The work described above is being pursued through enhanced brand recognition, transparent pricing, strong financial aid practices—including Access2Excellence and Arizona Promise—streamlined and transparent admissions policies, and a complimentary portfolio of distinctive, high-value academic programs. Within this framework of support, students and their families can realize direct return on their investment of time and energy in their NAU education.

NAU has designed, implemented, and appropriately amended and refined a set of university initiatives and recruitment strategies to broaden access and boost attainment, and these will serve as key strategic levers to help realize the RAISE goals. Through these initiatives, NAU's value proposition in the Arizona higher education marketplace has been strengthened and differentiated. A sampling of these initiatives is noted below:

- **Access2Excellence:** With this fall's entering class, NAU will provide a tuition-free college education for every undergraduate Arizona resident with a household income of \$65,000/year or below.
- **Access2Excellence Native American Expansion:** NAU expanded the eligibility criteria for Access2Excellence to include all members of Arizona's 22 federally recognized Native American tribes, consistent with the university's commitment to Indigenous Peoples.
- **Admissions Pilot:** With this fall's entering class, NAU will remove a longstanding barrier to admissions by aligning university admissions standards with Arizona high school graduation requirements.
- **Admissions Pilot Amendment:** With the fall 2024 entering class, NAU will align its assured admissions criteria with institutional practice, clearly messaging that all qualified students with a 2.75 high school GPA or higher can be admitted into the university.
- **Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++) Universal Admissions Program:** Beginning on a pilot basis with Coconino Community College in fall 2023 and expanding across A++ members in the year ahead, the Universal Admissions Program will strengthen pathways to NAU by redirecting students who do not yet meet university NAU admissions requirements to their local community college, with an assured no-application pathway to NAU available when they are ready.
- **A++ Pathways and Transfer Infrastructure Optimization:** Future priorities for A++ include deploying seamless academic pathways across community colleges and NAU,

launching integrated academic and career advising platforms that work across partner institutions, and relevant data sharing agreements to facilitate this work. Together, these initiatives will clarify routes to high-value degree completion and broaden the transfer pipeline. NAU anticipates that this work, coupled with a close review and appropriate enhancements to statewide programs and sites, as well as NAU Online, will yield significant increases in Arizona resident transfer students who will choose NAU as their preferred option for degree completion.

- **NAU Online:** As articulated in the NAU Online at-risk goal report, a redesigned and optimized NAU Online will offer more competitive options in the marketplace through distinctive programs and high-quality; this will power online enrollment goals.
- **100% Career Ready:** As described later in this report, the 100% Career Ready initiative will amplify the value of an NAU degree by strengthening the college-to-career journey for all students. When fully deployed, this will be an integral component of NAU's recruitment strategy for prospective students seeking to meet their full potential.

Now, NAU's bold ambitions to deliver equitable postsecondary value must deliver on access, attainment, and academic excellence propositions and be financially sustainable. Thus, as tactical teams throughout the university use the RAISE priorities to leverage assets and allocate resources to power access, attainment, and success, the plan also outlines a set of responsible and fiscally sustainable enrollment targets. NAU will organize efforts and continually assess and optimize resource allocation to best meet these goals over the years ahead. The core targets and their corresponding financial impacts are summarized below and illustrated in **Figure 3** and **Figure 4**.

- By Fall 2025, university enrollment is planned to surpass its historic high of 31,066 (achieved in Fall 2018), with a strategic mix of students, including significant enrollment growth focused outside of Flagstaff and in graduate international enrollment.
- Overall net tuition and fee revenue growth rate will outpace the overall enrollment level growth rate because of changing student mix and estimated modest tuition increases that leverage ABOR's new tuition setting policies. This is facilitated by NAU's new scholarship and financial aid strategy, highlighted by the sunset of the Pledge fixed tuition rate and recalibration of Lumberjack scholarship award criteria, as well as the implementation of Access2Excellence. Net tuition and fee revenue increases will be 23-25%, compared with an 11% increase in total enrollment during the period in question. Average net tuition and fee revenue will surpass NAU's historic high of \$7,837 in FY17, reversing the downward trend from FY17-FY22.

	Fall 22 Census	Fall 25 (FY26) Metric	Change Fall 22 to Fall 25	% Change
Graduate	4,882	5,887	1,005	21%
Flagstaff	1,838	2,362	524	29%
<i>Resident (incl WRGP)</i>	1,254	1,479	225	18%
<i>Non-Resident</i>	218	273	55	25%
<i>International</i>	366	610	244	67%
Immersion - Non-Flagstaff	568	792	224	39%
Online	1,580	1,536	(44)	-3%
PL	450	659	209	46%
Phoenix Biomedical	446	538	92	21%
Undergraduate	23,204	25,180	1,976	9%
Flagstaff	19,123	20,000	877	5%
<i>Resident</i>	13,294	14,365	1,071	8%
<i>WUE</i>	4,655	4,395	(260)	-6%
<i>Non-Resident</i>	795	849	54	7%
<i>International</i>	379	391	12	3%
Immersion - Non-Flagstaff	1,178	1,688	510	43%
Online	2,579	3,142	563	22%
PL	324	350	26	8%
Total	28,086	31,067	2,981	11%

Figure 3 RAISE Plan Enrollment and Mix Projections

Change from Fall 2022 (FY 2023) Baseline	Fall 2025 (FY26) w/ 3% Annual Increase*	Fall 2025 (FY26) w/ Max Annual Increase
Total Tuition & Fees	\$75.3M	\$82.0M
Scholarship Allowance	\$30.1M	\$32.0M
Net Tuition and Fees	\$45.2M	\$50.0M
Increase in Net Revenue	23%	25%
Average Revenue/Student	\$7,892	\$8,049

Figure 4 RAISE Plan Financial Targets (*based on 3% increases in tuition and fees, rather than the max rates approved by ABOR)

While ambitious, the RAISE targets are essential and achievable thanks to the university’s programmatic and location-based assets, it’s clear vision and value proposition that are supported by complimentary strategic initiatives, and the goal-oriented priorities articulated in the RAISE plan that are applicable to every unit throughout the institution. The plan is currently being deployed and local tactics will be implemented and continuously monitored to ensure ongoing progress toward achieving these targets.

Importantly, RAISE is designed to provide a resource allocation prioritization and decision-making framework that can be adjusted in real-time based on university needs. For instance, NAU

will allocate significant resources to rapidly scale up international student recruitment to specific graduate programs and prioritize revising New Student Orientation, as both are projected to have substantial early impacts toward reaching access, attainment, success, and financial goals. Once refreshed and optimized, attention will move to other priority areas in sequence over the coming semesters.

Statement of Achievement: 100% Career Ready Initiative

This year, NAU launched the 100% Career Ready Initiative and has made significant progress in advancing the major components of the work, positioning the initiative well for the future.

Over the course of the current fiscal year, NAU mobilized and engaged a broad set of stakeholders (faculty, staff, and academic leaders) to assess the university's undergraduate and masters level degree programs and support infrastructure as it relates to career readiness for all students. A signature initiative—100% Career Ready—was developed to organize an across-the-board refresh and optimization effort.

NAU's 100% Career Ready initiative is designed to prepare all NAU students to successfully launch into meaningful careers upon graduation and serves as a critical linkage to the university's value proposition as an engine of opportunity and vehicle of upward social and economic mobility.

Overall, 100% Career Ready is designed to encompass all students' academic journeys. While some colleges have more highly specific career preparation efforts already in place—such as the College of Engineering, Informatics, and Applied Sciences or the W.A. Franke College of Business—100% Career Ready is intended to serve as a universal baseline for students, regardless of college or major.

Furthermore, the initiative embeds career preparation experiences organically into every step of a student's journey. This includes coursework, advising, on- and off-campus student employment, job placement, and internship opportunities. This comprehensive plan provides a universal level of preparedness among all NAU graduates, ensuring academic excellence and workforce preparation are infused into all student experiences, creating a clear added value to NAU's academic programs (regardless of location or modality), and providing unparalleled opportunity to students the university serves.

Given this vast scope, leadership for the initiative is housed in Academic Affairs, which oversees all academic programs throughout the university. To effectively orchestrate the multiple facets of the initiative, the Academic Affairs leadership team and their reporting units have been restructured, with the initiative falling under the portfolio of the newly reconceptualized role of Vice Provost for Academic Programming and Graduate Studies, which has reporting units that include the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies and the Office of Internships and Placements. Further, linkages will be tightened between these teams and college-based advising staff, and NAU's central Office of Career Development, which liaises with employers, advises students, and leads the university's student employment program.

The initiative contains several key workstreams that complement one another to create the holistic 100% Career Ready ecosystem that will be embedded into all students' academic journeys. An area of emphasis throughout the initiative and its component areas is addressing a frequent challenge facing institutions of higher education. While professional track degree programs have highly structured career-oriented milestones—such as engineering, nursing, dental hygiene, and similar programs—most students do not experience career preparation as a cornerstone of the curriculum. Through the 100% Career Ready architecture, NAU seeks to proactively address the

often-asked questions of what a student can do in the modern workforce with a degree in the sciences, social sciences, humanities, and more. Now, from day one, NAU students will have a toolkit to support informed career exploration, meaningful experiences, and competitive post-college applications. Even if they change their major, these skills and competencies will serve them every step of the way.

Within this framework, 100% Career Ready has been designed with the following component workstreams:

Develop a 100% Career Ready Curriculum

- **Overview:** Faculty and academic leaders will a.) examine and revise program learning outcomes and progression plans, infusing career information appropriate for each step in a student's career from entering freshmen to graduating seniors and master's students, b.) incorporate career competencies based on National Association of Colleges and Employers' (NACE) work, which are specific for each phase from exploration to placement, c.) pay attention to general competencies, which are necessary for most careers and workplaces, as well as discipline-specific professional skills that vary by degree program, d.) integrate high impact practices, such as internships, e-portfolio development, international experiences, independent research experiences, and integration of resources relevant to the development of professional competencies and skills, and e.) review and modify the portfolio of academic programs to ensure alignment with workforce needs, based on data provided by NAU-specific Hanover workforce reports, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports, and appropriate software platform(s).
- **Current Status:** Academic deans have identified faculty teams within each college, and their critical summer work has begun, with the expectation that curricular review will be completed during the fall 2023 semester. Work focuses on linking curricular learning outcomes with professional skills and career competencies. This framework will be clearly communicated to students through enhancement of course syllabi. Career development workshops engaging instructional faculty will continue into the fall 2023 semester. The focus will be on the curriculum at the course and degree plan levels and will also embed value-added co-curricular opportunities, such as internships, e-portfolio development, and professional social media profile development. The goal is to complete review and revision of curriculum for at least 100 bachelor's and master's degree programs by the end of fall 2023 (62% of all programs), and 150-degree programs prior to the end of spring 2024 (93% of all programs), before concluding this work in fall 2024. Moving forward, all new courses and degree plans will embed 100% Career Ready curricular design from day-one of development.

Develop a 100% Career Ready Organizational Support Structure

- **Overview:** Strong centralized and college-specific co-curricular programming and career advisement will provide students with focused out-of-classroom activities and guidance that prepares them with key career preparedness, awareness, and competencies. Career advising will involve a team approach, which includes career advising professionals

embedded into each academic college, who will collaborate with the Office of Career Development.

- **Current Status:** Through an *Elevating Excellence* grant, funding has been secured to hire a team of career advisement professionals, so that each college can provide tailored services based on the 100% Career Ready support structure model. Building college-level capacity will be crucial to sustaining support as students proceed into more specific major-based coursework. The advising teams are expected to be fully on board in fall 2023. This work is supported by the existing infrastructure of the Office of Career Development, which provides centralized career advising and support opportunities for all students, regardless of their area of study.

Develop a 100% Career Ready University Infrastructure

- **Overview:** In conjunction with the programming and advisement noted above, NAU will develop a university-wide infrastructure to support and sustain the success of this program. This will include technological platforms and data integration to support and scale out all dimensions of the 100% Career Ready initiative, as well as industry partnerships that will create a more tangibly connected college-to-career ecosystem for NAU students. These resources will afford faculty, students, and staff access to academic, career, and employer information to bring career insights and planning into every experience, including curricular, co-curricular, and experiential learning.
- **Current Status:** Internship and placement opportunities are important for connecting students with potential careers and developing strong professional skills and are an emphasis of the first phase of infrastructure building. As a result, NAU has launched an Office of Internships and Placements that will lead and orchestrate these efforts across the university. Creating a central office to coordinate relationships with employers for internships and placements will help streamline this critical student experience. In addition, a focus for fall 2023 will be to develop complementary tracks to traditional internships and placements through the development of a robust virtual internship program. An overhaul and enhancement of student employment opportunities within NAU will provide more internship-like experiences that afford students valuable professional growth and resume development experiences. Importantly, with both virtual and student employment-oriented opportunities, NAU will enhance the repertoire of options available to students who are place bound and might not be able to participate in traditional internships in different locations.

To accelerate implementation of the initiative to stay on target for completion in fall 2024, NAU has committed considerable resources to the rapid development and deployment of the 100% Career Ready initiative. This includes the following:

- Support for faculty time dedicated to 100% Career Ready work involving curricular audit and revisions.
- Funding, hiring and placing career professionals in each college.
- Launching an Office of Internships and Placements, including hiring founding staff to lead

this critical effort.

- Resourcing a comprehensive software platform to provide critical job information, interactive dashboards, and guidance for students in the exploration phase of career preparation.

In addition to specific investments, due to the broad-based nature of the initiative, significant faculty and staff time and capacity has been redirected toward supporting this high-impact academic excellence and student success initiative. Importantly, as the program is fully deployed, NAU expects to see results in terms of academic success, persistence, and postgraduate outcomes fueled by 100% Career Ready, which in turn will further amplify the value of an NAU education for prospective students and engage alumni and external partners in student success.

To effectuate university-wide support for this endeavor, NAU has codified pursuit of the 100% Career Ready initiative into one of the Higher Learning Commission's (HLC) required accreditation milestones. Effective May 25, 2023, HLC reviewers approved 100% Career Ready as NAU's Quality Initiative Project. This designation was provided based on review of the initiative across the following dimensions:

- Sufficiency of initiative's scope and significance
- Clarity of initiative's purpose
- Evidence of commitment to and capacity for accomplishing the initiative
- Appropriateness of the timeline for the initiative

As NAU proceeds in deploying 100% Career Ready, there is embedded accountability beyond the Presidential at-risk goal cycle as a part of the university's ongoing accreditation process. This is a valuable means of ensuring continued momentum and delivery on the planning framework.

Finally, NAU is also pursuing platforms to better track and report postgraduation employment outcomes and career trajectories, which will provide enhanced reporting capability and data for future students to inform their major and career decisions.

To: Fred DuVal, Chair, Arizona Board of Regents
CC: Arizona Board of Regents
From: José Luis Cruz Rivera, President, Northern Arizona University
Date: August 1, 2023
Re: Year 2 Update on Multiple-Year At-Risk Goals (2021-2024)



This memorandum presents a high-level update on progress toward the multiple-year at-risk goals for the 2021-2024 cycle.

Multiple-Year Goal #1: Broadening Participation

Develop and implement a plan to expand the number of students from working class families enrolled by NAU, increase overall graduation rates, and narrow completion gaps for working class, first-generation, and minoritized groups, as a means to enhance NAU's contribution to equitable postsecondary value.

Update

NAU has made substantial progress over the last year to continue to sharpen its focus on student access and success, with an emphasis on serving the people of Arizona and providing them with an affordable, high-quality education. A sample of these efforts are noted below. Importantly, through the university's strategic plan, *NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence*, and the infusion of equitable postsecondary value into institutional decision making, student success—emphasizing access, success, and impactful outcomes for working class, first-generation, and historically minoritized students—with the goal of upward economic mobility and social impact is a priority for all units and guides decision-making and resource prioritization. While the efforts listed below are emblematic and demonstrate the range of work being undertaken, NAU is proud to have made significant progress over the past year to truly broaden participation and create the conditions for equitable student success and postgraduate outcomes across all dimensions of its enterprise.

- **Access2Excellence:** With this fall's entering class, NAU will provide a tuition-free college education for every undergraduate Arizona resident with a household income of \$65,000/year or below.
- **Access2Excellence Native American Expansion:** NAU expanded the eligibility criteria for Access2Excellence to include all members of Arizona's 22 federally recognized Native American tribes, consistent with the university's commitment to Indigenous Peoples.

- **Admissions Pilot:** With this fall’s entering class, NAU will remove a longstanding barrier to admissions by aligning university admissions standards with Arizona high school graduation requirements.
- **Admissions Pilot Amendment:** With the fall 2024 entering class, NAU will align its assured admissions criteria with institutional practice, clearly messaging that all qualified students with a 2.75 high school GPA or higher can be admitted into the university.
- **Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++):** Launched last fall, A++, which is convened and powered by NAU, brings together all ten of the state’s community college districts, as well as the Arizona Commerce Authority, to collaborate on strengthening the state’s attainment ecosystem, with a particular focus on equitable access and outcomes for the diverse people in every corner of Arizona. A++ has a footprint in every county, contributing to rural, urban, and Indigenous community attainment efforts, and early initiatives like Universal Admissions are already yielding results on a pilot basis to expand postsecondary participation and success.
- **100% Career Ready:** The 100% Career Ready initiative that is currently being implemented will amplify the value of an NAU degree by strengthening the college-to-career journey for all students. When fully deployed, this will be an integral component of NAU’s recruitment strategy for prospective students seeking to meet their full potential and ensuring equitable outcomes.
- **Elevating Student Success:** As part of the university’s efforts to advance its strategic plan, *NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence*, the NAU opened a competitive call for proposals to faculty and staff for projects that would elevate student success, with a focus on increasing undergraduate and graduate student success. In January 2023, 90 proposals were submitted, of which eight (listed below) received approximately \$1M in institutional funds. This effort builds on a previous round of Elevating Excellence projects, that are also underway through 2025, many of which are focused on equitable student access and success:
 - 100% Career Ready
 - Elevating Engagement: A Pathway to Student Success and Community Connection
 - Embedded Math Achievement Program
 - Embracing the Chem-Bio Connection
 - Expanding Student Affairs/CEFNS Academic Bootcamp Partnership
 - Partnership with Graduation Alliance: Re-Enrollment Campaigns
 - Pre-Health Professions Student Service Team
 - Lumberjack Lounge | Connect – Explore – Innovate
- **Lumberjack CARE Center:** Opened in Fall 2022, the Lumberjack Case Management, Advocacy, Resources, and Essential Needs (CARE) Center is a central hub on NAU’s Flagstaff campus focused on addressing concerns such as food insecurity, financial needs, and wellness to help power student persistence and success.

- **Jacks on Track:** Funded by the Lumina Foundation, this program supports former students who are within 60 credits of graduation, empowering them to reengage at NAU and complete their degree or credential. In the program’s first year, 192 students enrolled and 64 completed their degree.
- **Supplemental Instruction (SI) Program:** An evidence-based model for improved academic achievement and retention, SI expanded programming in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and the College of Arts and Letters. SI has historically resulted in higher grades for students participating in the program and contributes to retention and academic success.

Numerous other initiatives are underway or on the horizon for implementation over the next year, and NAU looks forward to a full cycle of recruitment beginning for the entering class of Fall 2024 with Access2Excellence and Admissions Pilot information widely available to all prospective Arizona high school graduates.

Multiple-Year Goal #2: Allied Health Programs

Develop and submit a plan for implementation of statewide expansion of NAU’s Allied Health Programs and traditional NAU programs to include programs in Maricopa County, Pima County, Yuma County, and distributed learning centers outside these three counties.

Update

NAU has continued to expand its reach, capacity, and offerings across nursing, physical health, and behavioral health programming throughout 2022-23. The focus of this work has been to develop a cohesive and transformative strategy for how NAU’s healthcare education offerings will contribute to the ABOR Healthy Tomorrow initiative, and NAU will be sharing these plans at the September ABOR meeting.

The framework NAU will share emphasizes bold goals for continued expansion of programs, optimization of existing healthcare education assets to best communicate the university’s value to students and employers in the state, differentiation from Arizona State University and the University of Arizona in terms of programmatic focus (e.g., NAU will prioritize meeting the primary healthcare needs present across Arizona’s urban, rural, and Indigenous communities), and new interventions to meet key short falls and areas of need in the healthcare education marketplace in Arizona.

NAU looks forward to sharing the full products of this planning effort in September.

Multiple-Year Goal #3: Latinx Communities

Develop and implement a plan to increase the University’s profile and visibility within the Phoenix, Statewide, and National Latinx communities.

Update

Many of the efforts noted in the Goal #1 Progress Update are closely linked to the university’s

profile within statewide Latinx communities, thanks to their emphasis on equitable access and student success. NAU continues to enhance its visibility and ability to recruit, enroll, and support Latinx students from Arizona and beyond. Key highlights on progress toward this goal are noted below:

- **Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI):** NAU’s status as a federally designated HSI was renewed this year. First granted in 2021 thanks to an enrollment of 25 percent Hispanic students, NAU has made concerted efforts to recruit and retain a diverse student population and has access to numerous federal opportunities, as well as a nationally recognized distinction for its work.
- **NAU en Español:** In Spring 2023, NAU launched a fully Spanish-language website thanks to a collaboration between the university’s HSI team, University Marketing, and other stakeholders throughout the university. The new site provides key information about enrollment, degree programs, tuition and financial aid, campus life, and more—and NAU is the first university in Arizona to have a full Spanish-language web presence built from the ground up specifically to welcome and engage Latinx communities.
- **Launch of the Family, Access, Communication, Transition, and Support (FACTS) Program:** An early-outreach program for middle and high school student families, FACTS aims to increase college-going and attainment rates by supporting students and families throughout their educational journey with culturally responsive approaches and services. FACTS focuses on first-generation students with programming tailored for Hispanic and Indigenous communities.
- **Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC) Scholarship Program:** Launched in Fall 2022 out of NAU-Yuma, whose student population is nearly 80 percent Latinx, CPLC has invested in a significant scholarship program that will remove barriers to higher education for Latinx students by covering tuition, fees, and other expenses for Yuma County residents pursuing a degree at NAU.
- **Partnership with TheDream.US:** NAU partnered with TheDream.US, the nation’s largest college and career success program for undocumented immigrant students. This collaboration builds on the passage of Proposition 308 in Arizona and will provide additional scholarship opportunities for Arizona Dreamer students seeking to meet their full potential at NAU beginning in Fall 2023.
- **College Track National Partnership:** In early Fall 2023, NAU will announce an innovative partnership with College Track that has been under development for the last year. College Track is a comprehensive college access and success nonprofit that makes a 10-year commitment to each student, beginning in high school and lasting through the launch of their careers. NAU’s collaboration will be unique among all partner universities and has a national impact on all students, many of Latinx background, that participate in the program.
- **Fulbright HSI Leader:** NAU was recognized by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau

of Educational and Cultural Affairs as one of only 43 universities with the Fulbright HSI Leader distinction, thanks to the university's comprehensive efforts to prepare students for global opportunities and engagement.

- **Engagement with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU):** Two NAU leaders have been accepted to highly competitive HACU leadership development programs that are designed to specifically enhance institutions' ability to promote success among Latinx students.
- **Greater Phoenix Leadership Latino Attainment Task Force:** President Cruz Rivera has been asked by GPL to lead and reimagine the group's Latino Attainment Task Force. Work will begin this fall and represents a significant opportunity to coordinate business sector engagement in Latinx attainment efforts, with NAU as a key driver for advocacy and outreach efforts.
- **Media Engagement:** President Cruz Rivera has engaged in numerous media interviews over the course of the year touting university initiatives that have a particular impact on the state's Latinx communities. A focus has been enhancing visibility in the Yuma region, Spanish-language media, and statewide recognitions that elevate the university's profile and allows for strong narratives associated with the value of NAU. Highlights this year include recognition by the Phoenix Business Journal (most admired leader) and a Spanish-language profile by Telemundo.
- **Public Engagements:** Among many public engagements in the Latinx community in Arizona and beyond by President Cruz Rivera, a few highlights from the past year include keynotes at the State of Arizona Latino Education, Power, and Influence convening; the annual conference of the Arizona Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents; and the SACNAS, Advancing Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science annual conference in Puerto Rico.

Multiple-Year Goal #4: Native American Communities

Develop and implement a plan to further enhance NAU's profile as a national leader in the service of Native American students and the communities they represent.

Update

The past year has seen significant progress and investment in NAU's strategic commitment to serving Indigenous Peoples. Impactful highlights are included below. These are supplemented by university-wide endeavors noted in the Goal #1 Progress Update that also have a significant positive impact on Indigenous student access and success:

- **Access2Excellence Native American Expansion:** NAU expanded the eligibility criteria for Access2Excellence to include all members of Arizona's 22 federally recognized Native American tribes, consistent with the university's commitment to Indigenous Peoples.
- **\$10 Million Seven Generations Signature Initiative (7GSI):** Co-funded by the Mellon

Foundation and the NAU Foundation, this transformative investment will advance a number of projects that NAU is engaged in to elevate its commitment to Indigenous Peoples. Projects in the 7GSI portfolio include a tribal college faculty exchange program, the creation of open educational resources materials from NAU's faculty experts that will be available nationally, a new center for Indigenous Knowledges, and expansion to the university's recently launched Indigenous Peoples Living and Learning Community.

- **Helios Foundation Arizona College Excellence (ACE) Grant:** Diné College will be a participant in the ACE program, which provides scholarships and advising resources for transfer students to complete their four-year degrees at NAU. With Diné College's engagement on this effort that emanates from the Arizona Attainment Alliance (A++), NAU will soon turn to enhancing partnerships with Diné and other tribal colleges who will further expand the reach of A++ to the communities NAU seeks to serve.
- **Launch of the Family, Access, Communication, Transition, and Support (FACTS) Program:** An early-outreach program for middle and high school student families, FACTS aims to increase college-going and attainment rates by supporting students and families throughout their educational journey with culturally responsive approaches and services.

FACTS focuses on first-generation students with programming tailored for Hispanic and Indigenous communities.

- **Strengthening the Native American Advisory Board (NAAB):** Comprised of tribal leaders and partners, the NAAB provides advisement to NAU leadership and outreach back to tribal communities. This year, a significant revision to the NAAB's bylaws was undertaken and the membership has expanded. Early benefits have included deeper engagement with both the Navajo Nation President and Hopi Tribal Chairman, as well as a strategic plan for fundraising to expand NAU's Native American Cultural Center.

**ANNUAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT OF AFFILIATIONS
AND
OUTSIDE COMPENSATION
FOR PRESIDENT**

Arizona Board of Regents Policy 6-1101 and the president’s employment require annual disclosure of all organizations with which the president is affiliated and all outside compensation received. Outside compensation includes any consideration related to outside board affiliation, consulting or other services, or provided by a university foundation or university-affiliated entity. However, the president is not required to report personal and passive investment income.

Please update this disclosure form throughout the applicable fiscal year as information changes.

Board appointments, including current and anticipated appointments and any related compensation, excluding payments for honoraria and speaking engagements: (*If no appointment or compensation, state “none.”*)

Name of Organization	Amount of Compensation (if any)
American Association of State Colleges & Universities; Board of Directors	None
Arizona Commerce Authority	None
Big Sky Presidents’ Council	None
Education Trust	None
Greater Phoenix Leadership	None
Presidents’ Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration	None
National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI)	None
Northern Arizona Leadership Alliance	None


Outside employment, consulting relationships and related compensation, excluding payments for honoraria and speaking engagements: (If no employment, consulting relationship or related compensation, state "none.")

Name of Outside Employer or Name of Entity Receiving Consulting Services	Amount of Compensation (if any)
None	

Other organizations with which the president is affiliated and any outside compensation not otherwise identified above:

Name of Organization	Amount of Compensation (if any)
None	

Signature of President



Printed Name of President

José Luis Cruz Rivera