

## 1 – Mission

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The institution’s mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution’s operations.

### 1.A - Core Component 1.A

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The institution’s mission is articulated publicly and operationalized throughout the institution.

1. The mission was developed through a process suited to the context of the institution.
2. The mission and related statements are current and reference the institution’s emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.
3. The mission and related statements identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education offerings and services the institution provides.
4. The institution’s academic offerings, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.
5. The institution clearly articulates its mission through public information, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.

## Argument

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**1.A.1.** In AY2021-2022, under the leadership of NAU’s 17th president, NAU engaged in a comprehensive process to update its’ vision, mission, and strategic plan. The process was directed by the Strategic Roadmap Steering Committee, a group of university leaders and seven working groups composed of a lead facilitator, a student, a staff member, a faculty member, and a subject matter expert. Consistent with a commitment to nurture a collaborative approach based on trust and transparency, NAU engaged internal and external constituents through three engagement phases. The process involved three iterative publicly available drafts of successively reduced and refined objectives based on constituent input. The **University Advisory Board** endorsed the Strategic Roadmap prior to President José Luis Cruz Rivera’s formal presentation at the June 2022 Arizona Board of Regents meeting.

The Strategic Roadmap process officially launched in early Fall 2021 and is documented via university-wide emails and a centralized **Strategic Roadmap** portal.

August 31, 2021: **NAU’s strategic roadmap: Advancing equity in and delivering value from higher education**

September 9, 2021: **How NAU will structure the Strategic Roadmap process**

September 23, 2021: **The facilitators of the Strategic Roadmap**

October 14, 2021: **Help Shape NAU’s Strategic Roadmap**

October 18, 2021: **Encouraging your continued feedback on the Strategic Roadmap**

October 29, 2021: **Reflecting on Draft #1 of the Strategic Roadmap**

December 16, 2021: **Status of Draft #3**

March 9, 2022: **Sharing Draft #3 of NAU’s Strategic Roadmap**

May 2, 2022: **NAU 2025-Elevating Excellence**

Institutional strategic planning is now coordinated by the vice president for university strategy and the newly restructured Office for Strategic Planning, Institutional Research, and Analytics (efforts underway). In Fall 2022, the **University Strategic Planning Advisory Board** will replace the **Strategic Planning and Budget Council** as the representative body to guide institutional strategic planning processes, including implementation efforts, assessment processes, and future evolutions of the plan itself. Divisions, units, and programs will use the Strategic Roadmap as a framework for their planning and budgeting efforts. (See **previous NAU strategic plan.**)

NAU engages in thoughtful planning processes to fulfill its social contract with the Arizona public and to allocate state funds and tuition revenue efficiently and with transparency. Details of the processes that ensure alignment are provided in Criterion 5.C.1. ABOR's strategic plan informs NAU's strategic plan, and annual university progress reports on the strategic plans are posted on **ABOR's website.**

**1.A.2. and 1.A.3. NAU's strategic plan is on the **June, 2022 ABOR meeting** agenda.**

The New NAU Charter, seven strategic priorities and 29 associated objectives clearly communicate NAU's priorities and identify the nature, scope and intended constituents and services that NAU provides.

## **The New NAU Charter**

### **Vision**

NAU aims to be the nation's preeminent engine of opportunity, vehicle of economic mobility, and driver of social impact by delivering equitable postsecondary value in Arizona and beyond.

### **Mission**

NAU transforms lives and enriches communities through high-quality academics and impactful scholarship, creative endeavors, and public service.

### **Commitment**

NAU will educate, support, and empower students from all backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences to reach their full potential and contribute to a more just, equitable, inclusive, prosperous, and sustainable future.

## **Strategic Priorities**

**Academic Excellence** - NAU's high-quality academic programs, general studies curriculum, and the teaching excellence of our faculty will foster students' knowledge and competencies necessary for professional success, informed civic engagement, global citizenship, lifelong learning, and the promotion of a more just and sustainable future.

**Student Success** - Grounded in a student-centered institutional culture of care, NAU will provide accessible and affordable educational opportunities, with tailored support services that enable students to complete their academic credentials and realize transformative outcomes from their collegiate experience.

**Commitment to Indigenous Peoples** - In recognition of the unique sovereign status of Native Nations and the sacred land on which the university was built, NAU will continue its intentional support for Indigenous students, faculty, and staff; develop university-wide culturally responsive educational opportunities and programming; and build mutually beneficial partnerships with Indigenous communities that will position NAU as the nation's leading university serving Indigenous Peoples.

**Impactful Scholarship** - NAU's teacher-scholars will engage in impactful research, scholarship, and creative activities to provide transformative learning opportunities, engage our diverse students and communities, advance disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge, and contribute to solving problems of regional, national, and global relevance.

**Mission-Driven and Diverse Faculty and Staff** - NAU will implement employment practices to support the recruitment, retention, development, and promotion of a highly qualified, mission-driven, diverse workforce. NAU's commitment to individuals from all racial, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds, national origins, disabilities, age, veteran status, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientations, gender identities and expression, and lived experiences strengthens our institutional workforce culture that incorporates diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in the pursuit of excellence and the promotion of student success.

**Community Engagement** - NAU will engage locally, regionally, and globally with public and private partners to foster mutually beneficial relationships that enhance our students' educational experiences, contribute to broad social impact, and increase individual, communal, cultural, and economic vitality.

**Sustainable Stewardship of Resources** - NAU will effectively utilize our physical, technological, and financial resources in support of our vision and mission, with a commitment to the responsible use of environmental resources, innovative use of technology, and mission-driven financial investments and philanthropic activity.

The NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence strategic roadmap is a three-year plan to accelerate our work in advancing **equitable postsecondary value**. The timeframe is structured such that the Roadmap can evolve iteratively in short cycles, with ongoing phases of visioning, implementation, assessment, and revisioning to keep our university on track, engaged, and energized to deliver upon our mission.

**1.A.4.** NAU's enrollment profile, academic programs, and student support services are consistent with the university mission to transform lives and enrich communities through high-quality academics and impactful scholarship, creative endeavors, and public service.

As a non-profit, public state institution, NAU's long-standing commitment to undergraduate student success is aligned with **ABOR's strategic priorities** and strong commitment to access, affordability, and serving the needs of Arizona and its citizens. While the university's reach goes well beyond the state's boundary, it prides itself in serving Arizona's expansive, rural geography and its diverse populations, including Native Americans.

Seventy-two and a half percent of the **student population is enrolled** on the Flagstaff campus. Of the remaining 27.5%, approximately 71% are enrolled in online programs or the self-paced, competency-based Personalized Learning program, 24% are enrolled at **statewide community campuses** and 5% are enrolled at NAU – Yuma, a branch campus. As articulated in our Strategic Roadmap, NAU aims to increase enrollment statewide and in online programs to better serve students wherever they live and learn.

While NAU has experienced overall enrollment declines since the 2017 HLC review (census data pulled in Fall 2016 due to timing of Assurance Argument lock date in early September of 2017), rebounding **first year incoming classes for Fall 2021** and Fall 2022 (anticipated based on enrollment deposits) will strengthen overall enrollment going forward. In **Fall 2021, total student enrollment** was 28,718, compared to 30,368 in Fall 2016 (a decline of 5%).

Graduate student enrollment increased by 3.1% in Fall 2021, compared to Fall 2016. These patterns reflect NAU's concentrated efforts to increase graduate enrollments. Undergraduate student enrollment, as a percentage of the total student population, declined slightly from 87% in Fall 2016 to 84% in Fall 2021.

As a public institution, NAU focuses on enriching the lives of all Arizonans and also provides a welcoming environment for non-resident students. Arizona residents continue to compose the largest residency group for the university, representing 65% of the total student population in Fall 2021. Enrollment of students outside of Arizona remains significant: non-resident student enrollment grew from **9,622 in Fall 2016 to 9,950 in Fall 2021** (a 3% increase). Reflecting national trends as a result of the global pandemic, international student enrollment was 626 in Fall 2021, down from 1,291 in Fall 2016 (a 51% decline). **Enrollment of international students** looks promising for Fall 2022, with the number of applications similar to Fall 2019.

The university prides itself on educating the underserved and rural populations of Arizona. The U.S. Department of Education designates NAU and NAU-Yuma as **Hispanic-serving institutions**. Growth in student diversity continues at NAU. In Fall 2021, **ethnic minority student enrollment reached** 11,005, up from 10,753 students in 2017. The university's incoming student profile approximates Arizona's **diversity profile with 39%** identifying as ethnic minorities. **Gender balance** continues to shift, with males constituting 36% of the student population, down from 40% in 2017.

For AY2020-2021, **32% of undergraduates received Pell Grants and 91%** of undergraduates received some financial aid. For AY15-16, **37% of undergraduates received Pell Grants** and 86% of undergraduates received some financial aid.

Compared to the Flagstaff campus, statewide/online and Yuma campuses serve a more diverse population for undergraduate and graduate students, **in 2021 and in 2017 (See student profiles associated with the Flagstaff campus and statewide/online campuses.)**.

## **Academic Programs**

To fulfill NAU's mission, a variety of degree programs are offered (**see academic catalog index**), including 133 baccalaureate programs, 82 master's degree programs, and 20 doctoral programs. Rigorous programs and pioneering research with substantial community impact provide the foundation for transformational student opportunities that prepare graduates to excel in creating a sustainable future, nationally and globally.

NAU strategically adjusts its' academic profile and programs to support institutional and workforce needs. In 2018, NAU created a College of Engineering, Informatics, and Applied Sciences to provide students and faculty with more focused study and research opportunities, and a Department of Applied Physics and Materials Science to house established physics programs and new programs in materials science. Since the last review, NAU has created a number of new degree programs, including a bachelor of data science, master's of international education leadership, an Indian Country criminal justice bachelor's degree, and a master's degree in building science, to name a few.

NAU is addressing the significant workforce needs of the state, with a focus on health care. Programs in Flagstaff and the Phoenix Bioscience Core have more than 400 graduate students in physician assistant studies, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and athletic training. NAU is an established leader in allied health profession education, and is well positioned to expand to address growing health care needs in Arizona and beyond. In Spring 2022, NAU submitted **additional allied health and nursing expansion plans to ABOR**.

NAU is using Arizona **New Economy Initiative** (NEI) funding in FY2022 and anticipated FY 2023 funding to expand healthcare-related programs with the aim to become the number one producer of high-quality diverse allied professionals in the state. A March 2021 analysis of NAU's proposed use of the FY2022 NEI funds stated the investment will support 6,839 jobs by year 10 and 18,937 jobs by year 20. Over a 20-year time frame, NAU expects to generate \$60 billion in labor income for its supported jobs and \$129.4 billion in economic output.

NAU is approved by HLC to offer distance education courses and programs and is committed to supporting students in their educational pursuits best suited to their circumstances, across 20 additional AZ locations and online modalities. NAU offers **undergraduate and graduate distance-delivered programs**, including those in the general areas of health professions, environment and sustainability, education and counseling, business, administration and management, engineering and technology, math and data analysis, science, social sciences and criminal justice and the arts and humanities.

Initiated in 2018, the **Arizona Teachers Academy** provides future teachers a tuition-free education in exchange for their commitment to serve in an Arizona classroom for each year they receive assistance.

The management and execution of distance programs and courses is a collaborative effort between the academic units and central administration. Online and Innovative Educational Initiatives provides high level coordination and infrastructure to support online programming. Staff and academic leaders work proactively with academic units in the planning and delivery of distance programming to ensure that the units provide an appropriate selection of courses, adequate course capacity, and have sufficient highly-qualified faculty. NAU reports regularly to ABOR a set of online program metrics, with targets, intended to advance quality and performance of online programs systemwide. As documented by the **Peer Review Report**, in AY2020-2021, NAU successfully completed the HLC required multi-location review process.

In AY2021-2022, NAU launched a comprehensive assessment process for our statewide and online operations to guide an institution-wide improvement process that included an evaluation and consultation with ASU Online and UPCEA. NAU recently conducted a market analysis to guide the strategic growth of our distance-delivered programs.

Student support services are delivered through Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, the colleges (including the Graduate College), academic departments, Cline Library, the Office of the Vice President for Research, and Information Technology Services. (See Criteria 3.D.1. and 3.D.2. for student support services information.)

**1.A.5.** As presented in 1.A.1., NAU's new strategic plan identifies the intended constituents and articulates the focus and scope of institutional endeavors, such as academic excellence, student success, and impactful scholarship, along with institutional commitments to Indigenous Peoples and supporting mutually beneficial community engagement and a mission-driven workforce.

NAU clearly articulates its mission on the **NAU webpage** and through institutional communications for internal and external constituents, such as President Cruz Rivera's testimony for the **US Congress**. In onboarding all new employees, NAU provides an orientation which includes an overview of the university's mission.

## Sources

- IV.A.1.1.00 May 2, 2022 University Advisory Board
- IV.1.A.1.01 Strategic Roadmap portal
- IV.1.A.1.02 August 31\_NAUs strategic roadmap\_Advancing equity
- IV.1.A.1.03 September 9\_How NAU will structure the Strategic Roadmap process
- IV.1.A.1.04 September 23\_The facilitators of the Strategic Roadmap
- IV.1.A.1.05 October 14\_Help Shape NAUs Strategic Roadmap
- IV.1.A.1.06 October 18\_Encouraging your continued feedback on the Strategic Roadmap
- IV.1.A.1.07 October 29\_Reflecting on Draft #1 of the Strategic Roadmap
- IV.1.A.1.08 December 16\_Status of Draft 3
- IV.1.A.1.09 March 9\_Sharing Draft 3 of NAUs Strategic Roadmap
- IV.1.A.1.10 May 2, NAU 2025-Elevating Excellence
- IV.1.A.1.11 University Strategic Planning Advisory Board
- IV.1.A.1.12 Strategic Planning and Budget Council
- IV.1.A.1.13 Previous strategic plan 2018-2025
- IV.1.A.1.14 ABORs website
- IV.1.A.2.3.01 Strategic Plan
- IV.1.A.2.3.02 On the June 2022 ABOR meeting agenda
- IV.1.A.2.3.03 Equitable Postsecondary Value
- IV.1.A.4.01 ABORs strategic priorities
- IV.1.A.4.02 Flagstaff campus student population
- IV.1.A.4.03 Statewide community campuses
- IV.1.A.4.04 Fall 2021 Census and Fall 2021 total student enrollment
- IV.1.A.4.05 Fall 2016 Non-Resident Enrollment
- IV.1.A.4.06 Fall 2021 Non-Resident Enrollment
- IV.1.A.4.07 Enrollment of International Students
- IV.1.A.4.08 NAU and NAU-Yuma as Hispanic Serving institutions
- IV.1.A.4.09 Fall 2021 Ethnic Minority Student Enrollment
- IV.1.A.4.10 Fall 2021 Diversity Profile
- IV.1.A.4.11 Fall 2021 Gender Profile
- IV.1.A.4.12 AY20-21 IPEDS Financial Aid Report
- IV.1.A.4.13 ABOR Financial Aid Report AY15-16 Percentage of Pell Grants and some financial aid
- IV.1.A.4.14 2021 2021 Statewide.online. and Yuma Campuses
- IV.1.A.4.15 2017 See student profiles associated with the Flagstaff campus and statewide/online campuses
- IV.1.A.4.16 Academic Catalog Index
- IV.1.A.4.17 Additional expansion plans to ABOR.
- IV.1.A.4.18 New Economy Initiative (NEI)
- IV.1.A.4.19 Undergraduate and graduate distance-delivered programs
- IV.1.A.4.20 Arizona Teachers Academy
- IV.1.A.4.21 Peer Review Report
- IV.1.A.5.01 NAU webpage need mission statement once revised
- IV.1.A.5.02 US Congress

## 1.B - Core Component 1.B

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The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.

1. The institution's actions and decisions demonstrate that its educational role is to serve the public, not solely the institution or any superordinate entity.
2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or supporting external interests.
3. The institution engages with its external constituencies and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.

### Argument

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**1.B.1.** Access to academic excellence, impactful scholarship, and community engagement, including public service, are critical components of the ABOR Strategic Plan and the NAU Strategic Roadmap. As a public institution of higher education, NAU contributes to public good by preparing students to contribute meaningfully to society through rigorous academic programs, disseminating the university's scholarly and creative activities, and extending the benefits of its activities to Arizona's citizens outside the university.

In FY21, the university's research and discovery efforts totaled **\$69 million in awards**. NAU's research results in real world impact, with a **number of centers and institutes** through which faculty and students perform boundary-crossing studies that lead to sustainable solutions. These include the Center for Ecosystem Science and Society, the Pathogen and Microbiome Institute, the Center for Materials Interfaces in Research and Applications, the Colorado Plateau Biodiversity Center, the Colorado Plateau Research Station, the Ecology Restoration Institute, the Landscape Conservation Initiative, and the Merriam-Powell Center for Environmental Research.

NAU's 3-Year **Technology and Research Initiative Funding** plan, approved by ABOR, allocates in three primary areas: Access and workforce development, targeted areas of research excellence, and a competitive process for research funding. These investments are intended to improve the health and well-being of Arizonans, help solve regional problems of global relevance, increase regional and statewide economic opportunities, as well as serve as an essential enabler of workforce development.

In addition to focusing on educational and research excellence and student success, NAU also serves the greater public, especially in Arizona. In FY 21, NAU was **awarded \$22 million** in external funds to conduct public service activities.

Below are examples of community involvement and the work of NAU institutes/centers:

- The **Native American Cultural Center**, designed in consultation with the region's tribes, serves as a gathering place for tribal representatives and elders, advocacy groups, and cultural events. The center houses the Office of Indigenous Student Success and is home to many clubs and organizations focused on advancing professional interests of the Native American and Indigenous student population and protecting Indigenous cultural heritage.
- NAU's **Institute for Human Development (IHD)** has worked for several decades to provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Beyond providing educational opportunities for

individuals, IHD recently received a grant to help Native American veterans with disabilities find employment.

- NAU's **Health Research Initiatives** supports research efforts targeted at biomedical, translational, and community health research in northern Arizona and across the state. For example, THRIVE, a partnership with the regional hospital, aims to reduce repeat hospital visits following release from the facility after a medical emergency.
- The **Center for Health Equity Research** is focused on finding solutions to end health disparities regionally, nationally, and globally.

NAU supports media dedicated to serving the public as their primary mission: KNAU, a local NPR station, and student media operations K-Jack radio and NAZ Today, a student-produced newscast.

**Cline Library** on the Flagstaff campus is open to the public and Arizona citizens can borrow library materials. The library is a selective federal depository library; any member of the public can visit it for free access to government materials distributed by the Government Printing Office both in print and online. The **Cline Library Maker Space** offers 3-D printing training and devices to the campus community and the general public. Further, **Special Collections and Archives** at the Cline Library offers feature exhibits and online digital archives available to the public, particularly focusing on the northern Arizona region.

**1.B.2.** The institution's commitment to the core of its mission—transforming lives and creating opportunities through education—is steadfast. The **university budget structure** reflects that commitment, with 72% of budgeted state expenditures devoted to instruction, academic support, and student services directly.

ABOR monitors NAU's use of state and other financial resources and ensures accountability to Arizona and its citizens. (See Criterion 5.C.) The state's investment per FTE student has improved somewhat since the last review, but recent increases in state funding are earmarked for specific initiatives. As documented in the **FY22 State and Local Operating Budget**, NAU balances state resource streams with the necessity to seek revenue sources through philanthropy, grants, and economic development.

**1.B.3.** NAU engages external constituents locally, regionally, and globally in collaborative partnerships through community engagement, civic engagement, and economic development. NAU's educational mission is connected to making a meaningful and lasting impact in communities with unmet needs, both in rural Arizona regions and globally.

NAU has a rich tradition of sustainability through its academic programs and living laboratory on campus. In partnership with the City of Flagstaff, NAU's **draft Climate Action Plan** was previewed by the president in 2021, with a final draft scheduled for release in 2022.

**Community engagement** is a hallmark of NAU's culture across academic and administrative departments. To further our commitment, effective January 2022, NAU implemented a new **Staff Community Engagement Time policy** that provides paid time off for administrators, classified staff, and service professionals for volunteer work - Up to 16 hours of paid leave per calendar.

Numerous departments, clubs, organizations, and institutes respond to the needs of external constituents. For example, NAU's **Dental Hygiene Program** provides basic dental care to local children and needy individuals and travels throughout the region and to developing countries to provide basic dental care to people who don't have access to a dentist.

The **Center for Service and Volunteerism's** multiple initiatives improve the quality of life for residents of northern Arizona. The institute coordinates volunteers, many of them students, to serve in groups throughout the region. The institute also houses AmeriCorps, which places 60 volunteers in more than 30 area agencies where critical social needs have been identified, and the Vista project, which focuses on increasing academic performance of low-income youth in STEM fields and their interest in pursuing careers in STEM, to name a few.

The **Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP)**, which is primarily grant funded, strengthens tribal capacity and sovereignty in environmental and natural resource management through culturally relevant education, research, partnerships, and policy-based services. This year, ITEP celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> year by serving over 95% of all 574 Tribal nations. It is the premier Tribal environmental training institute in the nation.

The **Center for American Indian Resilience** is a collaborative effort between NAU's College of Health and Human Services and the Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health at the University of Arizona to examine community assets, such as the role of traditional knowledge and collective memory and cultural strategies in teaching health behaviors and supporting positive health outcomes. The center is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities as an Exploratory Center of Excellence (P-20) and offers research resources, education, and training to support resiliency-building education, programs, and activities.

NAU's Economic Policy Institute in the W.A. Franke College of Business offers numerous services to external constituencies. Faculty and students serve the community through management development programs, consulting activities, and professional participation in community and volunteer organizations. **The Center for American Indian Economic Development**, established in 1985 by the Arizona Legislature, offers training, technical assistance and consulting, grant evaluations, student outreach, tribal leadership summits and conferences, and business outreach for the Johnson Scholarship Foundation.

Locally, NAU partners with the **Northern Arizona Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology**, assisting in management of its business accelerator; Coconino Community College, developing a strong regional economy and economic mobility for students, **Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen)**, collaborating on critical research endeavors and community projects; Mountain Line transportation, enhancing a sustainable alternative transportation system that extends through campus and also into the community; and **Economic Collaborative of Northern Arizona**; promoting economic development in the region, to name a few. NAU is also a member of and meets regularly as part of The Alliance. This group brings together leadership from NAU, the City of Flagstaff, Coconino County, Flagstaff Unified School District, and Coconino Community College to strengthen partnerships, address issues, and enhance opportunities. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities awarded NAU the **2015 Excellence in Innovation Award** for leadership and innovative economic partnerships.

## Sources

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- IV.1.B.1.01 \$69 million in awards
- IV.1.B.1.02 Number of centers and institutes
- IV.1.B.1.03 Technology and Research Initiative Funding (TRIF)
- IV.1.B.1.04 22 million external funds to conduct public service activities
- IV.1.B.1.05 Native American Cultural Center
- IV.1.B.1.06 Institute for Human Development
- IV.1.B.1.07 Health Research Initiatives

- IV.1.B.1.08 Center for Health Equity Research
- IV.1.B.1.09 Cline Library
- IV.1.B.1.10 Cline Library MarkerLab
- IV.1.B.1.11 Special Collections and Archives
- IV.1.B.2.01 See pages 11-12 FY22 State and Local Operating Budget
- IV.1.B.2.02 FY22 State and Local Operating Budget
- IV.1.B.3.01 Draft Climate Action Plan 2021
- IV.1.B.3.02 Community Engagement
- IV.1.B.3.03 Staff Community Engagement Time Policy (2.12)
- IV.1.B.3.04 Dental Hygiene Program
- IV.1.B.3.05 Center for Service and Volunteerism
- IV.1.B.3.06 Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals
- IV.1.B.3.07 Center for American Indian Resilience
- IV.1.B.3.08 Center for American Indian Economic Development
- IV.1.B.3.09 Northern Arizona Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology
- IV.1.B.3.10 Economic Collaborative of Northern Arizona (ECoNA)
- IV.1.B.3.11 2015 AASCU Excellence in Innovation Award

## 1.C - Core Component 1.C

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The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

1. The institution encourages curricular or cocurricular activities that prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success.
2. The institution's processes and activities demonstrate inclusive and equitable treatment of diverse populations.
3. The institution fosters a climate of respect among all students, faculty, staff and administrators from a range of diverse backgrounds, ideas and perspectives.

### Argument

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#### 1.C.1.

NAU provides for curricular and cocurricular activities through which students are prepared to be productive citizens and employees. As described in Criterion 3.B.1., 3.B.2., and 3.B.3., NAU's current general education requirements and the recently approved General Studies program embeds global and multicultural diversity perspectives. In addition, the new program has a three credit American Institutions course requirement and has civil discourse embedded throughout to more intentionally develop students' knowledge and skills associated with informed citizenship and workplace success.

Student opportunities are available through formal instruction as well as extra-curricular activities. For example, student government opportunities provide students with tremendous opportunities to develop citizenry skills as well as essential skills for workplace success. **ASNAU** offers undergraduate students a voice in student government, while **Graduate Student Government** offers similar opportunities for graduate students. Representatives of these student government groups also serve on various university governance and advisory groups.

Service opportunities are available through various forums, in part through the **Center for Service and Volunteerism**. This recently renamed center supports a network of individuals and partner agencies through direct service, capacity building, professional development, and innovation, including AmeriCorps opportunities for students.

Global engagement advances the internationalization of the university and prepares students for global citizenship. The **Global Learning Initiative** engages faculty and academic departments in an intentional and strategic process of preparing students to become globally competent graduates. NAU continues to create partnerships (more than a hundred active agreements) with international higher education institutions through the Center for International Education.

**NAU Career Development** coordinates internships and offers career advising for students, along with job fairs. Additional, targeted opportunities for experiential learning and professional and career assistance are offered within colleges, including the **W. A. Franke College of Business** and College of Engineering, Informatics and Applied Sciences. NAU uses "Handshake" to help students find part-time, on-campus, off-campus, and seasonal employment as well as connecting students to internships, or volunteer opportunities.

**1.C.2. and 1.C.3.** Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice are an integral part of NAU’s mission, vision, and strategic roadmap. Four of the university’s seven strategic goals directly exemplify the university’s efforts to embrace diversity and a multicultural society—academic excellence; student success; and commitment to Indigenous Peoples; and mission-driven, diverse faculty and staff.

In March 2021, reflecting the diversity of Arizona and the university’s commitment to access and attainment for under-represented students, NAU was designated as meeting the criteria of a **Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)** by the U. S. Department of Education. Hispanic enrollment grew from 16 percent in 2011 to 25 percent in 2020. NAU-Yuma, which has a student body that is 79 percent Hispanic, has been an HSI since 2007.

Given the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion for future student success, training and awareness are available to students through the **Office of Inclusion, Multicultural and LGBTQIA Student Services**. **For example**, an Inclusion and Diversity Scholar Peer Mentoring Program is available for one-on-one support and guidance.

As articulated in our **land acknowledgment** and our Strategic Roadmap, NAU promotes engagement with and appreciation and understanding of Native American cultures and tribal nations within the university and in the broader community. NAU ranks in the top one percent of all four-year public universities with the highest Native American enrollment and is highly ranked for awarding degrees to Indigenous students.

To focus NAU’s commitment to Indigenous Peoples, the Vice President of Native American Initiatives is charged to enhance strategies to support recruitment, retention and educational attainment of Native American students, strengthen coordination across the institution, and collaborate with tribal communities. Native American students represent 96 **tribes**, and NAU is proud to be among the select few institutions to have a stand-alone cultural center for the Native American community.

NAU’s diversity, civic engagement, and community building emphasis has far-reaching effects and promotes issues of diversity, civility, democracy, citizenship, and community engagement and collaboration by fostering a community of inclusion and preparing students to engage in and understand the complexities of human experiences.

In **2021, 23% of faculty and 32% of staff** identified as ethnic minority, compared to **15% of all faculty and 25% of staff** identified as ethnic minority in Fall 2016 (data pulled in Fall 2016 for 2017 Assurance Argument due to timing of lock date). A diverse university community leads to increased cultural awareness and competency—skills that facilitate success in today’s multicultural professional world—and to a welcoming campus climate that contributes to student academic persistence all the way to graduation. Diverse faculty and staff interact with students to foster in- and out-of-classroom engagement in diversity, equity, and social justice conversations that help students explore complex societal issues in a supportive and safe environment.

A focused initiative to increase diversity among faculty was initiated in AY2021-22. All tenure track faculty searches sought candidates that were positioned to contribute to teaching, research, and DEI efforts, especially in relation to teaching. Three cluster hires focused on Latino/a and Indigenous themes in teaching and scholarship were included. The first cohort of Inclusive Academic Excellence post-doctoral scholars will join NAU in Fall 2022.

As reported in **Diverse Issues in Higher Education**, NAU ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in the nation for awarding bachelor’s degrees to **Native Americans** in all disciplines in 2019-2020, up from 11<sup>th</sup> nationally in 2016. For Native American students, NAU ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for awarding Master’s degrees in all disciplines and 6<sup>th</sup> in

the nation for awarding doctoral degrees in all disciplines in 2019-2020. NAU ranked 47<sup>th</sup> in the nation for graduating **Hispanic** students with a Bachelor's degree in all disciplines. In 2019-2020, NAU ranked 40<sup>th</sup> nationally in bachelor's degrees awarded in all disciplines combined for students of two or more races. In 2019-2020, NAU ranked 72<sup>nd</sup> for **total minority** bachelor's degrees awarded in all disciplines.

Faculty and staff demonstrate a commitment to diversity and inclusion through a variety of professional development opportunities and long-standing, diversity-oriented commissions and committees. NAU's organizational structure fosters inclusion and recognizes that diversity takes many forms. The **Center for University Access and Inclusion** is the hub for coordinating diversity and inclusion efforts across the institution through housing **Diversity Commissions and the offices of Equity and Access and Disability Resources**. The new Commission on Commissions provides **coordination across the five diversity commissions** and serves as liaison to the president. NAU will launch a **national search for a Vice President for Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer** in Fall 2022.

**Title IX** of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended protects individuals from sex or gender discrimination. The **Title IX coordinator** at NAU focuses on ensuring NAU provides an inclusive and welcoming environment for students, staff, and faculty, free from harassment and discrimination based on sex. Further, NAU has implemented a **nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policy and a sexual misconduct policy**.

In addition to these offices and commissions, NAU further demonstrates an institutional commitment to creating and supporting an inclusive university community through the development and implementation of a diversity strategic plan. The **NAU 2020 Diversity Strategic Plan** calls for a "True Diversity University," for which the university environment exhibits "true diversity and inclusion" where there is a wealth of individuals whose unique experiences of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual and gender identities, disability, and other perspectives are valued and woven into the fabric of the institution." **The plan provides for five priorities**, with specific objectives for each priority. The **Diversity Fellows** serve in an advisory capacity to the president for the implementation of the Diversity Strategic Plan as well as for the evaluation and refinement of the efforts.

Since 2007, the Faculty Professional Development Program has regularly hosted diversity oriented programming, including a **diversity symposium** series to engage faculty and staff in an interdisciplinary forum that influences the teaching and scholarly work faculty pursue. Learning communities focused on teaching about diversity and related topics are a regular part of the Faculty Development Program offerings.

NAU's **New Employee Orientation** includes diversity training. All new NAU employees must complete required training within 30 days of starting employment at the university. These **training sessions** address the university's mission, vision, and values. All employees are required to complete training in Preventing Harassment and Discrimination, Building Supportive Communities: Clery Act and Title IX, and Accommodating Disabilities to help create a safe working environment and to prevent workplace harassment and discrimination. Additional **optional training** is also available in diversity and managing bias. Zone Training and Awareness is also offered through the Office of Inclusion.

NAU offers a broad array of programs and services to support NAU's diverse population, such as:

- First-Generation Programs
- Office of Inclusion: Multicultural & LGBTQIA Student Services
- Indigenous Student Services
- College Access and Mentoring Programs

NAU prepares students to thrive in a global society by incorporating educational experiences and learning outcomes related to the global nature of society, culture, and economy in academic degree programs. (See Criterion 3.B.4. and 3.D.1. for details of diversity in the curriculum and programs that serve NAU's diverse student population.)

In addition to modeling an effective organization in a multicultural society, NAU, through its public service and research, improves lives of historically marginalized and economically disadvantaged populations. For examples the **Partnership for Native American Cancer Prevention** aims to alleviate the unequal burden of cancer among Native Americans of the Southwest and as well as to pursue other research and public service aimed at real world problems.

Student Affairs' **Student Success** unit directs **College Bound Outreach**, which manages numerous federal-grant-funded and university-sponsored programs designed to encourage and support the achievement of higher education among low-income, first-generation, disabled, and Native American students in northern Arizona.

NAU's College of Education houses several state and local initiatives that support low-income students in Arizona, including **Arizona GEAR-UP**, a state and local collaboration. The **Middle Grade Initiative**, a partnership between NAU GEAR UP and nine Arizona school districts in low-income, rural communities, aims to increase the percentage of eighth-grade students who attend college in the future.

In Summer 2022, with the support of ABOR, NAU will launch an enhanced outreach program - **Family Access, Communication, Transition and Support (FACTS)**. FACTS aims to provide equitable and unobstructed pathways for student access through meaningful engagement with middle and high school students and their families, with a particular focus on first-generation students.

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## **1.S - Criterion 1 - Summary**

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The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

### **Summary**

NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence clearly and publicly articulates NAU's vision, mission, and seven strategic priorities. NAU's newly developed strategic plan communicates our values, commitment to serving the public good, and the seven strategic priorities that will guide our operations and path to becoming a national leader in delivering equitable postsecondary value. These elements are broadly communicated and drive NAU's planning and budgeting efforts. At the core of NAU's mission are students and their success, no matter what academic pathway they take. NAU's academic offerings and student support services prepare students for informed citizenship and workplace success. NAU fosters community engagement and service across all academic and non-academic areas and values the positive impacts it has on communities in the region and far away.

### **Sources**

*There are no sources.*

## 2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

### 2.A - Core Component

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The institution establishes and follows policies and processes to ensure fair and ethical behavior on the part of its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.

1. The institution develops and the governing board adopts the mission.
2. The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, human resources and auxiliary functions.

### Argument

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#### 2.A.1.

The Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) is set to adopt NAU's revised mission, vision, and strategic roadmap on **June 9, 2022** (see Criterion 1.A.). NAU's previous mission and vision were **adopted by ABOR in September 2018, as part of the NAU Operational and Financial Review (pages 12-13).**

#### 2.A.2.

To faithfully fulfill the university mission, administrators, faculty, and staff follow ethical processes to comply with local, state, and federal laws and regulations and respond to the needs of students, faculty, staff, and other constituents. The policy manuals of the university and its governing board support institutional integrity and ethical practices.

In Fall 2017 NAU launched the **University Policy Library**, an online repository for all policy documents and related materials to ensure consistency, accuracy, and currency of NAU policies. **Student-facing academic policies are housed in the Academic Catalog.**

### Academic Functions

NAU's academic policies are guided by ABOR's **academic policies**. The **Academic Standards Committee (ASC)**, a Faculty Senate-charged committee, has representation from each college, as well as service offices involved in the review and enforcement of academic policy. The ASC creates new academic policies as needed and reviews proposed policy changes to maintain the academic standards of the university. The **University Graduate Committee** provides these same processes and procedures for graduate programming.

To protect students' right to privacy of their non-directory information, the university requires faculty and staff in contact with student information to complete **FERPA training**. Only individuals who complete an online FERPA tutorial have access to institutional information stored in the Data Warehouse.

### Ethical Conduct

**Arizona Revised Statutes** (ARS) provide the overarching provisions that guide ABOR's policies. **Title 15** of the **ABOR policies** as adopted on March 12, 1983, constitutes the complete and official body of policies for the governance and operation of NAU. Expectations of ethical conduct are presented in the **Faculty Handbook** (Section 3.1), **Student Handbook**, **Academic Integrity Policy**, **Research Misconduct Policy**, and ABOR policies **1-102** and **6-905** on lobbying and political activity respectively. At the time of hire, employees are required to complete the **State of Arizona Loyalty Oath**. **Students, staff and faculty engaged in research activities are required to participate in training per the NAU Responsible Conduct of Research Policy.**

ABOR's conflict of interest policies and prohibited acts are governed by **ARS 38-503**, **ARS 38-504**, and by **ABOR's Policy 3-901**, which states that "*all regents and board and university employees must comply with Arizona conflict of interests laws. Civil and criminal penalties under applicable laws may result to an individual who fails to comply with the laws.*"

NAU seeks to ensure its faculty, staff, administrators, and student employees carry out their responsibilities with integrity and demonstrate the ethical behavior expected of public employees. Completion of the **Conduct, Ethics, Reporting, and Transparency (CERT) annual process** for employees discloses activities and public service, relationships, and membership in organizations that might create a conflict of interest and outlines **Standards and Expectations of Conduct**. Compliance is regularly monitored by each employee's supervisor.

NAU is dedicated to managing sponsored projects in a manner that guarantees the integrity of the process and maintains public trust in the integrity and credibility of its faculty, staff, and programs. The Office of the Vice President of Research oversees conflict-of-interest compliance in accordance with federal guidelines and the NAU **Sponsored Projects Conflict of Interest** policy.

NAU is committed to the dissemination of knowledge while also ensuring compliance with export control and other regulations and addressing national concerns on the influence of foreign governments in US research. NAU has a comprehensive **Export Compliance Manual**, and associated training program to aid staff, students, and faculty in understanding their responsibilities when engaging in foreign collaborations in research.

In September 2021, NAU updated the institution's **policy** addressing discrimination and harassment based on protected category status to align with the revised federal policy. The **Equity and Access Office** oversees the implementation of the policy and addresses related **formal and informal complaints**. Students are informed of the Non-discrimination and Anti-harassment Policy on all course syllabi.

NAU requires all faculty, staff, and student employees to complete the Preventing Harassment & Discrimination, Building Supportive Communities: Clery Act and Title IX, and Accommodating Disabilities **trainings** to help create safe environments and to prevent workplace harassment and discrimination.

In 2020, the Title IX Coordinator began reporting to the Office of General Counsel, continuing to serve as a campus official invested with independent authority to address and correct discrimination, harassment, and behaviors that constitute sexual misconduct, and is responsible for NAU's institutional compliance efforts for Title IX.

## **Finance and Administration**

The Senior Vice President of University Operations and Chief Financial Officer oversees policies and practices that maintain the ethics and integrity of office operations and the university as a whole, through Comptroller, Internal Audit, University Budget, and Contracting, Purchasing and Risk Management. Enterprise PeopleSoft systems include a system of internal controls with continuous monitoring through the **Financial Controls Analysis and Reporting department and the Budget Office monitoring of financial results to budget**. These activities are guided by ABOR policy 6-711 and by **guidelines for implementation**.

The Arizona Department of Administration – General Accounting Office publishes a **Code of Conduct for Employees Engaged in Accounting, Financial and Budgeting Activities**. Annual audits of NAU’s financial statements along with audits of full-time equivalency reports are conducted by the Arizona Auditor General’s Office. Further, the Comptroller’s Office sends annual reminders regarding the responsibility to report ethical violations, fraud, waste, or abuse of university resources. NAU’s Internal Audit department also maintains an anonymous reporting mechanism where internal controls or ethical concerns may be reported.

The Comptroller’s Office **policies and procedures**, which apply to all university departments, guide all accounting-related transactions. The Comptroller’s Office maintains an effective and efficient financial management system in compliance with applicable regulations and professional standards.

In 2018, NAU implemented a comprehensive **enterprise-wide risk assessment and management** (ERM) process, led by an independent and objective Internal Audit department that functionally reports to ABOR. The ERM linkage of strategies and actions to risk management complements the improvements to policy, procedures, and processes, that result from the university’s Internal Audit Review Board where senior management throughout the year reviews Internal Audit reports and progress to resolve previously identified improvement opportunities. For example, in January 2019, NAU centralized student employment administration to ensure that all practices are consistent with policy and reflect best practices for managing student employees. In January 2022, NAU employed approximately 3,116 student workers (classified as non-exempt) with 379 of those on Federal Work Study.

### **Personnel Functions**

The Equity and Access Office (EAO) ensures the university meets its obligations regarding affirmative action in employment, equal opportunity, non-discrimination and harassment, accessibility and reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, related to pregnancy, and for religious observation. EAO personnel serve as the university compliance officers for civil rights, including an ADA Coordinator and 504 Compliance Officer, and an Associate Vice President for Equity Compliance who serves as the compliance officer for affirmative action, Title VI and VII.

NAU’s processes for recruiting, hiring, orienting, and evaluating employees are overseen by **Human Resources** (HR). EAO also provides training and monitors the **search processes** for hiring faculty, academic professionals, and administrators.

In 2020, NAU enhanced orientations for new faculty and new academic leaders to include presentations and workshops on policy compliance, sex-based discrimination/sexual violence response (Title IX), conflict communication, equity and access, and disability resources.

The Faculty Ombuds Program is organized to provide members of the faculty with voluntary, informal, neutral, confidential, third-party assistance in resolving university-related issues, concerns, or conflicts. The program assists people with interpersonal misunderstandings or disputes as well as those with concerns about academic or administrative issues. The Faculty Ombuds Program operates independently as a

supplement to existing administrative or formal grievance procedures and has no formal decision-making authority. **Annual activity reports** are available.

Academic personnel policies are accessible on the Office of the Provost **website** and include policies and guidelines for annual review, promotion and tenure, sabbatical, and hiring procedures. Faculty professional records and documents are housed and presented for evaluation in the online Faculty Activity and Achievement Reporting system (FAAR), which ensures a consistent, centrally managed format and process for all faculty evaluations. The Council on Academic Professionals (librarians) has established **guidelines** to ensure consistency in performance evaluations for that group. HR oversees a **standardized annual performance appraisal process** for classified staff and service professionals and ensures a transparent, predictable, and fair evaluation of employees; the **process** is articulated on HR's website. A similar process is **required for all administrators**, per **ABOR policy 6-101 and 6-108**.

### **Auxiliary Functions**

NAU is a Hybrid Entity (designated Health Care Components in accordance with 45 CFR § 164.105) under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). The NAU **HIPAA Privacy Program** ensures HIPAA compliance and provides **online training tutorial** to employees and students.

NAU Athletics operates with integrity, establishing and following policies and processes for fair and ethical behavior. Reporting directly to the president, **the Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics** is a member of the President's Cabinet, allowing open and frequent access to NAU's leadership team. The **Faculty Athletics Representative** also reports directly to the president and is highly involved in all eligibility, academic, and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) issues. The Faculty Senate-charged **Intercollegiate Athletic Committee (IAC)** acts in both oversight and advisory capacities for the Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics. IAC also serves as a liaison between the department and other academic, administrative, and service components of the university.

### **Reporting Violations**

University employees are responsible for reporting suspected violations of policies, laws, regulations, or contractual requirements. Whistleblowing activity is protected under **ABOR Policy 6-914**. Members of the university community can file complaints of discrimination and harassment with EAO. Additional reporting and grievance procedures are available to employees based on their employee classification. The Faculty Senate oversees the Faculty Grievance Process. Employee Relations within Human Resources oversees the Staff grievance, performance, and other non-discriminatory workplace complaint process(es). An annual **reminder** of the available resources for resolving workplace issues is sent to university employees.

The Office of Student Life is responsible for upholding standards of conduct for the university community by supporting students who need assistance with the conduct process. Incidents can be **reported online**. Students can also file **formal complaints**, which are **tracked and reviewed** by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs to identify trends or issues that warrant further investigation, revision to existing policies, etc.

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## 2.B - Core Component 2.B

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The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public.

1. The institution ensures the accuracy of any representations it makes regarding academic offerings, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, governance structure and accreditation relationships.
2. The institution ensures evidence is available to support any claims it makes regarding its contributions to the educational experience through research, community engagement, experiential learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.

### Argument

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**2.B.1.** From its website, NAU offers links to an extensive collection of resources and information for future students and parents, current students, alumni, faculty, staff, and other constituents. The university's **homepage** highlights information related to **Degrees & Programs**, Paying for College, the NAU Experience, Our Impact, About NAU, Research, Athletics, Alumni, Giving, Locations and provides search functions and Quick Links for the entire university website. In addition to the Key Facts provided on the About NAU – Overview page, the NAU **Fact Book**, located on the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis **website**, provides access to current and historical data about the university, including fast facts, student characteristics, enrollment data by campus and online, finances, faculty and staff data, facility services, and a glossary of terms. Web design efforts that prioritize prospective and current student needs are currently underway.

Faculty and staff contact and other information, such as academic accomplishments and courses taught, is provided in a searchable directory on departmental websites. A **list** of all faculty with their academic credentials is available from the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs website.

The academic **catalog** provides curriculum requirements for all NAU degree programs, regardless of location or delivery modality, and academic policies.

Admission requirements for all types of prospective undergraduate students, such as future freshmen, transfer, and returning students, are posted on the Admission **website**. If a degree program has additional admissions requirements, they are listed in the academic catalog (e.g., **Nursing**). Since 2008, NAU has operated joint admission programs (**2NAU programs**) in collaboration with Arizona community colleges. Recently, NAU expanded the 2NAU program to select California community colleges.

The Graduate College **website** provides additional information for graduate programs.

Our tuition-setting procedures are transparent, with input from students, faculty, staff, and external constituencies, including parents. University leadership consults with undergraduate and graduate student governments when setting **new tuition rates and fees**, with their feedback incorporated into the documentation that is submitted to ABOR with tuition and fee materials. The process culminates in a public **ABOR meeting in April**, when ABOR votes on tuition and fees in addition to housing and dining rates for the upcoming academic year. As applicable, fees are noted in the academic catalog, class schedule, and on NAU's website. Required textbooks also are noted in the class schedule.

NAU costs are also transparent to students and the public. Information on tuition and registration fees is available under the “Paying for College” tab on the NAU homepage and through the search function. The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid **website** provides tuition and expenses for each tuition rate group, net price calculators, and budgeting tools. Tuition and fees vary by campus, term, academic career (undergraduate or graduate), and residency and are clearly presented **online** on the Student Departmental and Accounting Services webpage. In addition, students receive an **individualized letter** outlining their tuition and fees and, if applicable, financial aid.

NAU participates in the **Western Undergraduate Exchange Program**, allowing savings on out-of-state tuition rates for students from 14 states and two territories. Reduced tuition is also available for 21 Native American tribes. The **Western Regional Graduate Program** allows out-of-state students, in specific programs that meet criteria of distinctiveness and quality, to earn their degrees at the cost of in-state tuition.

ABOR approved NAU’s proposal to eliminate undergraduate course and program fees and institute **college fees** to increase cost transparency and predictability for students and families starting in AY2022-2023. Work is in progress to address graduate-level fees.

As required by Title IV, NAU makes information available publicly on a broad range of topics of interest to consumers (from graduation rates to information on campus crime), providing links to the required information from **Student Consumer Information** at the foot of the university home page under Policies and on other web pages under Student Services.

Institutional accreditation information is available on the NAU homepage (About NAU tab) and through the search function. Additionally, information about NAU’s Higher Learning Commission accreditation status, specialized accredited programs, and academic associations can be found on the Institutional Accreditation **website**.

The State constitution establishes that the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) governs public higher education in Arizona. (See notation at the **bottom of NAU webpages**.)

**2.B.2.** NAU ensures evidence is available to support claims regarding our contributions to the educational experience through academic programs, experiential learning, research, and community engagement.

Student learning outcome assessment required of all academic programs is the cornerstone of our evidence regarding the educational experience of our students. (See Criterion 4.B.)

In the **2018 NSSE** survey, 79% of freshman and 86% of seniors rated their entire educational experience at NAU as “excellent” or “good.” From the **2020 Graduating Senior Survey**, 88% of seniors evaluated their entire education experience at NAU as “good” or “excellent.” Eighty-three percent of seniors reported their NAU experiences met or exceeded their expectations.

In 2020, NAU utilized nationally recognized and well-researched LEAP High Impact Practices as the performance measure for Student Academic Engagement for Goal 1 - Objective 2: Enhance student learning through high-quality student-centered educational experiences. Overall, as evidenced by **transcript analyses**, more than 87% of students by the time they graduated had participated in more than 4 High Impact Practices.

NAU enriches its academic environment through co-curricular activities delivered in a variety of ways, some of which are highlighted in 3.D.1. and 3.D.2. The **AY2020-2021 Program Plan Presentation** provides details that support the breadth of offerings, student participation, and impacts of these programs.

The Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity coordinates two programs (**Interns-to-Scholars** and **Hooper Undergraduate Research Award**) where students work one-on-one with faculty mentors which provides valuable, transferrable skills and networking opportunities. Undergraduate research at NAU **demonstrates student growth in institutional learning goals**, such that students:

- can use critical thinking skills and information analysis in their decision-making processes
- understand the nature of research, investigation, and original work
- are prepared to utilize their disciplinary inquiry skills in their communities and workplaces
- can successfully attend graduate and professional degree programs or establish careers in their disciplines
- feel more connected to NAU, are more committed to their major, and are more likely to graduate
- have improved study and communication skills and self-confidence.

Community engagement at NAU is multi-faceted with embedded opportunities within academic programs and the work of the **Center for Service and Volunteerism (CSV)** and the **Economic Policy Institute (EPI)**. CSV supports a vibrant and diverse network of individuals and partner agencies who are making an exceptional impact throughout Arizona supporting direct service, capacity building, professional development, and innovation. EPI assists Arizona's rural, tribal, and business communities in their economic development endeavors by delivering training, assessments, technical assistance, and business support services.

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## 2.C - Core Component 2.C

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The governing board of the institution is autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution in compliance with board policies and to ensure the institution's integrity.

1. The governing board is trained and knowledgeable so that it makes informed decisions with respect to the institution's financial and academic policies and practices; the board meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
2. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.
3. The governing board reviews the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.
4. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties.
5. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the institution's administration and expects the institution's faculty to oversee academic matters.

### Argument

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**2.C.1.** ABOR serves as a governing body to oversee public higher education in Arizona, and comprises eight citizen volunteers and two students appointed by the state governor; the governor and the Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction serve as ex-officio members. ABOR's mission is to ensure qualified residents have access to undergraduate and graduate degree programs, and to promote the discovery, application, and dissemination of new knowledge, extending the benefits of university activities to all state residents.

ABOR creates policy and provides guidance on academic and student affairs, strategic plans, legal affairs, and public outreach; regulates financial management and capital development; and sets tuition and fees. Regents are onboarded and supported throughout their tenure by a stable, knowledgeable **staff**. Established **standing committees** meet regularly to focus on key ABOR responsibilities. The governing board also meets at least **five times annually**.

**ABOR's Strategic Plan** outlines the path for the state universities to achieve goals based on each institution's differentiated mission to offer more opportunities to Arizona residents, maximize existing resources, and create efficiencies through partnerships.

In November 2015, ABOR presented the **2025 Enterprise and University Metric Targets**, organized around the plan's four key goals. In **May 2020**, **ABOR** established a new framework for the universities, designed to reflect each university's unique mission and strategic priorities. NAU is scheduled to propose Enterprise and Institutional metrics at the November 2022 board meeting that align with the soon-to-be developed metrics for the 2022-2025 NAU Strategic Roadmap.

### 2.C.2. and 2.C.3.

All ABOR meetings comply with Arizona's open meeting law. The board responds formally and informally to input from external and internal constituents and considers such input as part of their decision-making deliberations. Agenda items are **publicly available** on the ABOR website a week in advance of regularly scheduled meetings, which are live-streamed. At each board meeting—except executive sessions—ABOR

schedules a call to the public as part of its regularly scheduled agenda, and public comments inform board decisions.

Internal NAU constituents are represented officially at board meetings via the university president. Senior leadership also regularly participates at both ABOR committee meetings and board meetings. Faculty representation is formalized through the Arizona Faculties Council with a standing item on each regularly scheduled board meeting agenda. The regents meet annually with a representative group of NAU faculty to discuss relevant issues. The two student regents also meet regularly with various student groups and representatives.

The regents, in collaboration with the president identify **annual and multi-year at-risk performance goals** that reflect institutional priorities and help preserve and enhance the institution. These goals are publicly available on the ABOR website.

**2.C.4.** As referenced in 2.A., to ensure independence from undue influence, ABOR’s policies and processes address concerns with conflicts of interest (**ABOR 3-901**) per **ARS 38-503** and **ARS 38-504**. In addition, as documented in board bylaws, “*except with the approval of three-fourths of the voting members in attendance at a meeting, and if permitted by law, no action shall be taken by the Board on any matter where material is not timely submitted in accordance with this section.*” Public meetings allow for accountability and documented abstention in cases of potential conflict of interest. The appointment process, which includes both the governor and the Arizona Senate, helps ensure the board is both objective and representative.

**2.C.5.** As specified in **ARS 15-1625**, **ARS 15-1626**, ABOR is granted the powers necessary for the effective governance and administration of the universities under its control, including the power to adopt (and authorize each university to adopt) such regulations, policies, rules, or measures as are deemed necessary, including the power to appoint and employ the university presidents. The board maintains oversight responsibilities via a schedule of **regular reports** from the university.

In 2021, guided by the revised **ABOR policy 2-223** and updated HLC substantive change processes, NAU documented the Provost Office’s **multi-step review and approval process** for the development of academic programs and partnerships.

As stated in the **NAU Faculty Constitution**, *The Arizona Board of Regents has affirmed that faculty have the right “to address matters of institutional policy or governance;” in fact, ABOR deems this right an essential component of academic freedom and also necessary to ensure “the well-functioning of academic institutions, and their ability to create and disseminate knowledge. (See ABOR policy 6-202.) The Faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curricula, assessment, pedagogy, course design, research, academic standards, ABOR- and University-level Faculty personnel processes, and other aspects of university life that relate to the educational process, subject to the authority of the Arizona Board of Regents, the administrative authority of the University President, and the limitations imposed by the Constitution of the Faculty.*

#### Sources

- IV.2.C.1.01 ABOR staff
- IV.2.C.1.02 ABOR standing committees
- IV.2.C.1.03 Five time annually
- IV.2.C.1.04 ABOR’s Strategic Plan
- IV.2.C.1.05 2025 Enterprise and University Metric Targets

- IV.2.C.1.06 In May 2020, ABOR
- IV.2.C.2.3.01 agenda publicly available
- IV.2.C.2.3.02 annual and multi-year at risk performance goals
- IV.2.C.4.01 ABOR policy 3-901
- IV.2.C.4.02 ARS 38-503
- IV.2.C.4.03 ARS 38-504
- IV.2.C.5.01 ARS 15-1625
- IV.2.C.5.02 ARS 15-1626
- IV.2.C.5.03 Regular reports
- IV.2.C.5.04 ABOR policy 2-223
- IV.2.C.5.05 Multi-step review and approval process
- IV.2.C.5.06 NAU Faculty Constitution May 2022

## 2.D - Core Component 2.D

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The institution is committed to academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

### Argument

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Academic freedom is a cornerstone of higher education. NAU addresses the issues of academic freedom and the pursuit of truth within faculty policy and student policy. Sections 1.5.1. and 3.1.2. of the **Faculty Handbook** include the following statements:

*As the most durable and stable of the constituencies immediately involved with the operation of the institution, the Faculty is the primary trustee of academic freedom and other traditional values of the University.*

*As teachers, professors encourage the free pursuit of learning in their students. They hold before them the best scholarly and ethical standards of their discipline.*

To protect freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning, governance responsibilities are vested in the Faculty Senate to approve new policies, changes, amendments, or additions to university governance structures or committees described in Section 1.5.2. of the Faculty Handbook.

In 2018, ABOR, in collaboration with faculty at the state's public universities, revised **ABOR policy 6-202**, noting that *academic freedom is essential for the well-functioning of academic institutions, and their ability to create and disseminate knowledge.*

The ABOR Student Code of Conduct (**Policy 5-308 B.1**, February 2020) states, *The aim of education is the intellectual, personal, social, and ethical development of the individual. The educational process is ideally conducted in an environment that encourages reasoned discourse, intellectual honesty, openness to constructive change, and the respect for the rights of all individuals.*

The right to freedom of expression is protected by the First Amendment and is upheld by NAU as stated in the **Student Handbook**. The exchange of ideas is encouraged and expected to be conducted in a manner that does not disrupt the educational environment for others. (See NAU's policy regarding **classroom disruptions**.)

In May 2022, NAU, with the Faculty Senate's support, endorsed the **Chicago Principles**.

NAU's commitment to freedom of speech, was confirmed by the **Green Light Speech Code Rating** it has received from the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (F.I.R.E.).

To support faculty and academic administrators, NAU's general counsel regularly offers a **First Amendment seminar** to address free speech basics, relevant policies and laws, and review best practices regarding a variety of First Amendment issues. Additionally, NAU has added training for Chairs & Associate Deans to better support faculty with classroom management and the handling of controversial topics.

**Sources**

- IV.2.D.01 Faculty Handbook Sections 1.5.1 and 3.1.2.
- IV.2.D.02 ABOR policy -6-202
- IV.2.D.03 ABOR policy 5-308 B.1
- IV.2.D.04 Student Handbook (page 10)
- IV.2.D.05 Policy on classroom disruptions
- IV.2.D.06 Chicago Principles
- IV.2.D.07 Green Light Speech Code Rating
- IV.2.D.08 First Amendment Seminar

## 2.E - Core Component 2.E

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The institution's policies and procedures call for responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge by its faculty, staff and students.

1. Institutions supporting basic and applied research maintain professional standards and provide oversight ensuring regulatory compliance, ethical behavior and fiscal accountability.
2. The institution provides effective support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.
3. The institution provides students guidance in the ethics of research and use of information resources.
4. The institution enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.

### Argument

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**2.E.1. and 2.E.2.** The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) and the Office of the Provost provide oversight and services that support the research and scholarly activities of faculty, staff, and students. The OVPR provides overall leadership and support for NAU's research enterprise.

The OVPR coordinates NAU's research safety and compliance programs, including Environmental Health and Safety, Animal Care, Human Subjects Protection, Conflict of Interest, and Research Integrity. Environmental Health and Safety **programs** oversee ethical standards and enforce government standards for waste disposal of chemicals and research agents. The **Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee** oversees and ensures compliance with federal regulations regarding use of animals in research or education. To comply with the Code of Federal Regulation (45 CFR 46), the **Institutional Review Board** oversees compliance regarding human subject research. Prior to submitting an application for approval of a research project, involved personnel must complete the **Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative program**.

NAU commits to the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and accountability in all aspects of research and recognizes that research integrity is critical for excellence and public trust. The **Misconduct in Research policy** is based on a misconduct policy from the Office for Research Integrity in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Research Integrity Officer ensures compliance with the policy. The university's **responsible conduct in research training policy** is intended to ensure that all NAU personnel and students (undergraduate and graduate) engaged in research, scholarly, or creative activities are adequately trained in the basic principles of research ethics.

The university's **Office of Sponsored Projects** acts as a central administrative office providing pre- and post-award support that includes finding funding opportunities, preparing, and submitting proposals, managing awards, and providing resources and training for sponsored research and scholarly activities.

NAU's commitment to safety in academic research, scholarship, and teaching is stewarded by the **Campus Safety Steering Committee**.

**2.E.3. and 2.E.4.** NAU students are offered guidance and opportunities to learn about academic integrity and ethical use of information through several sources:

- Freshman orientation and faculty in classrooms address plagiarism, and NAU's **Academic Standards Committee** has developed an online workshop to help students understand academic integrity with quizzes, definitions, videos, and exercises.
- All **course syllabi** are required to list applicable university policies such as, academic and research integrity policies.
- Cline Library provides services and support related to plagiarism, scholarly communication, open access, fair use, and other **research-related topics**.
- Information Technology Services' policies for faculty, staff, and students include **Network Acceptable Use and Information Security** and address the ethical use of information resources.

In addition to the educational resources offered to students, the university provides technology that allows students and faculty to proactively identify potential plagiarism. Available to students and faculty through Blackboard Learn, Safe Assign can be used to prevent plagiarism and to help students properly attribute sources.

In 2019, NAU revised the institutional **Academic Integrity Policy** which is posted in the academic catalog, referenced in the Student Handbook, and noted on all syllabi. Any policy breach is reported by faculty through a **standardized form**.

When a violation of academic integrity is both an academic issue and a student-conduct issue, the academic college and the Office of Student Life independently review the matter and make independent determinations concerning violations and appropriate sanctions. While the Office of the Dean of Students does not adjudicate academic integrity cases, they are available to assist in the investigation if requested. Students may be penalized academically (e.g., receiving no credit for assignment) and sanctioned through the **Student Disciplinary Regulations process**.

For graduate and undergraduate students involved in research, overlapping violations might occur among the Academic Integrity, Responsible Conduct of Research, and Research Misconduct policies. The student's college and the OVPR review violations and make sanctions determinations independently.

#### Sources

- IV.2.E.1.2.01 OVPR programs <https://nau.edu/nau-research/research-safety-and-compliance/>
- IV.2.E.1.2.02 Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee
- IV.2.E.1.2.03 Institutional Review Board
- IV.2.E.1.2.04 Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Program
- IV.2.E.1.2.05 Misconduct in Research policy
- IV.2.E.1.2.06 Responsible conduct in research training policy
- IV.2.E.1.2.07 Office of Sponsored Projects <https://in.nau.edu/osp/>
- IV.2.E.1.2.08 Campus Safety Steering Committee
- IV.2.E.3.4.01 Academic Standards Committee
- IV.2.E.3.4.02 Course syllabi
- IV.2.E.3.4.03 Cline Library research-related topics
- IV.2.E.3.4.04 Network Acceptable Use and Information Security
- IV.2.E.3.4.05 Academic Integrity Policy
- IV.2.E.3.4.06 Standardized form
- IV.2.E.3.4.07 Student Disciplinary Regulations process

## **2.S - Criterion 2 - Summary**

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The institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

### **Summary**

NAU's integrity begins with the Arizona Board of Regents, which governs the state's public higher education programs. Integrity is highly valued at Northern Arizona University and ABOR, among both people and programs, in keeping with the mission of a public state university. Institutional integrity, as evidenced through ethical and responsible conduct, is the result of clear policies, protocols, and practices; communication of these obligations to students, faculty, and staff; and transparency both inside and outside the university. NAU is committed to, and actively supports, academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.

### **Sources**

**There are no sources**

### 3 - Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

#### 3.A - Core Component

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The rigor of the institution's academic offerings is appropriate to higher education.

1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of student performance appropriate to the credential awarded.
2. The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.
3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

#### Argument

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3.A.1., 3.A.2., and 3.A.3

As stewards of curriculum and assessment, faculty lead the review and approval of curriculum and assessment policies and practices. **The Faculty Senate Bylaws** state that the Curriculum & Assessment Coordinating Committee (CACC), University Undergraduate Committee (UUC), and University Graduate Committee (UGC) recommend to the provost specific policies and procedures that ensure quality in the university-wide curricula for all NAU courses and programs. (See annual reports for **CACC**, **UUC**, **UGC**, Academic Standards Committee (**ASC**), Liberal Studies Committee (**LSC**), Diversity Curriculum Committee (**DCC**)).

In May 2014, NAU faculty affirmed, through Faculty Senate approval of the **Degree Program Expectations** (DPEs), that intentional design at the program and course level and systematic assessment of learning outcomes should drive curriculum development and inform Academic Program Reviews. The DPEs ensure that faculty intentionally design all degree programs with well-articulated learning goals/outcomes. According to the DPEs, all NAU degree programs (undergraduate and graduate, regardless of location or delivery modality) must adhere to and document how their program(s) achieve and maintain high-quality curriculum and assessment standards and practices, including:

1. Degree Program Purpose Statement
2. Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes
3. Coherent Curriculum Design reflected in a Degree Program Curriculum Matrix
4. Systematic Assessment of Intended Student Learning Outcomes
5. Continual Improvement
6. Strategic Course Design

By engaging faculty in the creation of a Program Purpose, Program Learning Outcomes, and a Curriculum Map, NAU established expectations wherein all programs must articulate and differentiate learning for varying degree levels with distinct curricular requirements. Consistent with institutional values, all degrees and courses are held to the same high standards as articulated in the DPEs and are reviewed through two complementary processes (below). These processes ensure NAU courses and programs are current, relevant to the field, and apply performance expectations that are appropriate to the degree or certificate.

1. **Curriculum review process:** Faculty on college curriculum and assessment committees review course and degree plan proposals (reviewers' forms - **courses** and **plans**) to ensure quality of all new NAU courses and programs, regardless of delivery mode or location, prior to recommending curricula to the provost for inclusion in the academic catalog.
  - Each course proposal must meet the criteria for Strategic Course Design, including alignment of the course purpose, course learning outcomes, assessment measures to determine mastery of outcomes, and clear articulation of the relationship to other courses.
  - Each degree plan proposal must clearly articulate the relationship to other degree programs and must meet criteria for intentional design, including alignment of the degree purpose statement, degree program learning outcomes, and assessment measures to determine mastery of outcomes.
  - In AY2021-2022, NAU implemented a new Essential Course Design Requirements document that is submitted as an instructor guide along with a syllabus for courses proposing to be part of the revised Liberal Studies Program. The document clarifies to faculty teaching the course the outcomes and assignments that must be incorporated each time the course is taught, and provides an opportunity for faculty to explain to their peers how the course fulfills the purpose of the revised Liberal Studies Program. (See Criterion 3.B.)
  
2. **Academic Program Review /Specialized Accreditation process:** Faculty on university-level curriculum and assessment committees review courses and degree programs to ensure quality of existing courses and programs as part of the periodic review process. External reviewers provide key input regarding whether curricula are up-to-date and expectations are appropriate for the academic level. (See Criterion 4.A.1.)

In this manner, NAU ensures the quality of its educational programs in Flagstaff, throughout the state, and online, including the Personalized Learning program. The processes also ensure student learning outcomes are articulated and differentiated for NAU's undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs. Student learning outcomes are shared with students and external audiences through their publication in the academic catalog (e.g., **Spanish, BA** and **Anthropology, MA**) and in a searchable **NAU learning outcome repository**.

Since the implementation of the Degree Program Expectations in AY 2014-2015, NAU has experienced a profound cultural shift: learning outcomes are more deliberately used to design assignments, courses, and programs and guide assessment efforts, which facilitates faculty's use of assessment findings to alter or redesign the curriculum for continual improvement and to identify and build on students' learning strengths.

Degree requirements for all NAU degrees are included in the **academic catalog**. The catalog is updated annually to reflect approved changes, as described above. The catalog also includes academic policies related to course numbering, credit and contact hour, prerequisite, etc. Class offerings, whether face-to-face or online, align with the course description in the academic catalog. NAU is in the process of updating the academic catalog to refresh the overall aesthetic.

The **University Policy Regarding Syllabi** ensures that a course's purpose and learning outcomes are consistent across class sections, modes of delivery, and physical locations. Efforts are underway to establish Syllabi of Records for all courses. Every four years, at a minimum, and during the Academic Program Review processes, the academic unit reviews course syllabi to ensure alignment with the Syllabus of Record.

#### **Sources**

- IV.3.A.1.2.3.01 Faculty Senate Bylaws
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.02 CACC

- IV.3.A.1.2.3.03 UUC
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.04 UGC
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.05 ASC
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.06 LSC
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.07 DCC
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.08 Degree Program Expectations
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.09 Curriculum review process
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.10 Updated course form
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.11 Updated plan form
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.12 Academic Program Review
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.13 Spanish BA
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.14 Anthropology MA
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.15 NAU Learning outcome repository
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.16 Academic Catalog
- IV.3.A.1.2.3.17 University Policy Regarding Syllabi

### 3.B - Core Component 3.B

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The institution offers programs that engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements.
2. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity and provides students with growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world.
4. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their offerings and the institution's mission.

### Argument

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**3.B.1., 3.B.2., and 3.B.3.** Consistent with NAU's vision to provide rigorous learning opportunities that prepare graduates to excel in creating a sustainable future, NAU's general education program, titled **Liberal Studies**, complements the learning goals of the undergraduate degree programs. The mission of the Liberal Studies Program is to cultivate informed, responsible, productive, engaged, and self-reflective citizens of the world. Students develop knowledge in sciences, social and political worlds, arts and humanities, and various cultures to complement the work in their major.

University-wide requirements, including Liberal Studies (**Policy 100216**) and U.S. Ethnic Diversity and Global Diversity requirements (**Policy 100215**) are centralized: NAU requires undergraduate students, regardless of modality or location, to fulfill the same requirements. Students can transfer a block of courses from a community college to fulfill Liberal Studies requirements. (See the **Arizona General Education Curriculum** (AGEC) program in Criterion 4.A.2. and 4.A.3.).

The Liberal Studies Program is intentionally designed to ensure students acquire broad knowledge, intellectual concepts, and skills that align with NAU's mission as a public institution. **Foundation requirements** in English and mathematics provide an introduction to college-level composition and quantitative reasoning. These skills are required for success in discipline-specific and university-wide requirements and are necessary for lifelong learning.

NAU's Liberal Studies Program incorporates a breadth of learning to ensure students obtain a wide variety of perspectives and means of expanding knowledge through its Distribution Blocks requirement (Cultural Understanding, Science, Aesthetic and Humanistic Inquiry, Social and Political Worlds). Each Distribution Block has a well-articulated **purpose statement and learning outcomes**, which guide the development of Distribution Block-designated courses. Overlaid on the Distribution Block requirement are the **Liberal Studies Essential Skills** that align with outcomes employers seek in college graduates. All Liberal Studies courses integrate at least one Liberal Studies Essential Skill, so that students have multiple opportunities to develop their critical thinking, oral communication, writing, quantitative reasoning, scientific inquiry, and aesthetic and creative thinking skills.

Faculty members who serve on the Liberal Studies Committee ensure strategic course design through the review of courses seeking Liberal Studies designations, evaluating whether courses achieve the purpose and learning outcomes of the Distribution Block and ensuring assignments assess the learning outcomes of the course.

In addition, as academic units engage in Academic Program Review/Specialized Accreditation, the Liberal Studies Committee reviews the unit's courses with Liberal Studies designations to ensure that courses continue to align with the intended learning outcomes.

NAU is in the process of transitioning from the current Liberal Studies program to a newly designed NAU General Studies Program with full implementation planned for AY2023-2024. In August 2019, a **taskforce was charged** to address ABOR General Education Requirements, address recommendations from the **2018 Liberal Studies Self-Study and External Reviewers' Report**, and ensure the resulting program is easily described and effortless to understand.

The collaborative, iterative process to design general education at NAU was an exemplar of shared governance. Following an extensive feedback and revision cycle (two full cycles of review and feedback by all academic committees and colleges, and student government), the proposal was recommended by the Liberal Studies Committee, Diversity Curriculum Committee, and the University Undergraduate Committee to the Faculty Senate for their consideration and approval. The plan was approved by the **Faculty Senate in April 2021** and by **ABOR in September 2021**. Academic Affairs leaders are collaborating closely with faculty curriculum leaders and the Faculty Senate in planning and design of the implementation of the new program in AY2023-2024.

Both the existing Liberal Studies Program and the forthcoming General Studies Program are ground in components of the AAC&U framework for general education, including High Impact Practices such as writing intensive coursework, capstone projects, diversity perspectives, and the best practice of structuring educational opportunities for breadth and depth of disciplinary knowledge and intellectual concepts in conjunction with skill development. NAU's General Studies Program more explicitly incorporates an overarching set of values called "Habits of Mind" (Curiosity, Intellectual Integrity, Persistence, Self-Awareness) that will be integrated throughout the Program.

The General Studies Program will continue to integrate two requirements within a student's major. The Junior-Level Writing Requirement focuses students in practicing the art of writing in the approaches of their major discipline. The Senior Capstone requires specific skills of application appropriate to each discipline to ensure students are prepared to fully integrate their knowledge and skills into real-world experiences aligned with their major.

Commitment to diversity is a strategic priority at NAU and is evident in curricular and co-curricular offerings. NAU has course requirements, diversity-related curricula, and initiatives devoted to human and cultural diversity.

All undergraduate students currently complete 6 credits of Cultural Understanding coursework as part of Liberal Studies and 6 credits related to **U.S. Ethnic Diversity and Global Diversity**.

The Cultural Understanding coursework enhances students' understanding of different cultures of the world through the study of language, literature, religion, and artistic creation. The U.S. Ethnic and Global Diversity coursework increases their awareness of the historical, political, economic, environmental, and cultural traditions and experiences that have been overlooked or excluded by majority cultures in the United

States or the world. Viewing societies from overlooked perspectives helps students develop a deeper respect for and understanding of current social interactions among communities and nations.

One highlight of the new General Studies Program is the expanded Diversity Perspectives requirement, including coursework related to Global Diversity, US Ethnic Diversity, Indigenous Peoples, and Intersectional Identities. These courses ensure that students develop a range of intercultural competencies that will serve them in the workforce and as active and engaged citizens of their local, national, and global communities.

Through a variety of **diversity-related curricular offerings**, students can take courses or obtain degrees, minors, or certificates in a range of areas related to diversity, global engagement, underrepresented populations, and social justice.

NAU recognizing the important role that international initiatives and programs provide students relative to personal and educational growth opportunities and lifelong skills to live and work in a multicultural world. The **Center for International Education (CIE)** is tasked with providing leadership and support in the development and execution of the university's efforts to internationalize the institution and its curriculum. CIE supports faculty development opportunities through international teaching and research, develops and nurtures relationships with partner universities and organizations overseas, provides a variety of services in support to international students and visiting scholars, promotes and manages the recruitment and admission of international students, and offers extensive support to NAU students seeking study abroad opportunities. In recognition of the accomplishments supported by CIE on behalf of the university, NAU received the 2012 **Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization**.

To prepare students for global competence upon graduation, NAU implemented the **Global Learning Initiative (GLI)**. The GLI was designed to ensure that students have multiple, substantive, and intentional encounters with global perspectives, diversity issues, and environmental impacts in their academic disciplines. (See **example plan**).

NAU's Education Abroad pre-pandemic enrollments grew at an average pace of 12% for five years, and while the pandemic placed a pause in physical study abroad, it also brought the opportunity for students to participate in virtual study abroad over the last three terms. The post-pandemic recovery is looking promising, with more than 1,000 students seeking or currently participating in study abroad experiences (734 students participated in AY2015-2016).

Several **exemplary study abroad programs** were recognized with a **2017 Heiskell Award**. The Global Business, Global Affairs, and Global Science programs and International Engineering Certificate prepare future international leaders to effectively communicate across borders and cultures. Through fieldwork experiences, conducting research, and/or internships within international organizations, these partnerships broaden students' opportunities to contribute to professions and communities; open connections to a professional, interdisciplinary global network; and give students skills to creatively address challenges worldwide.

The **Interdisciplinary Global Programs (IGP)** is a long-term international academic program designed to prepare undergraduate students with the language skills and global competencies important for their career success and to contribute to a positive global future. IGP students earn a BS degree in STEM or business and a BA degree in a language and spend an immersion year abroad completing both coursework and an internship. This program received the **NAU Commission on Ethnic Diversity Organization Award** that recognizes the work of people and organizations who support and further diversity, equity and inclusion at the university.

To facilitate non-native English-speaking student success, NAU's **Program for Intensive English** helps international students improve their English in preparation for admission to the university and assists in their transition and engagement at the university.

**3.B.4.** Engagement in scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge is a key aspect of NAU's mission and is evidenced by faculty, graduate student, and undergraduate student engagement. NAU is home to faculty who are world renowned scientists, scholars, artists, and professionals. Several faculty members have been recognized as fellows within the most prominent professional societies, such as the **Association for the Academy of the Advancement of Science**. These investigators, along with their graduate students, undergraduate researchers, and postdoctoral associates, are defining and expanding the knowledge base of many critical disciplines such as:

- **The Pathogen & Microbiome Institute**
- **Center for Ecosystem Science and Society**
- **Graduate Student Association of Applied Linguistics**
- **Arizona Teachers Academy at NAU**

NAU ensures faculty members contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge through its strong presence in the annual review process and promotion/tenure processes. NAU's **Conditions for Faculty Service (COFS)** articulates the processes for documenting and evaluating faculty members' expectations and engagement in research, scholarship, and creative works. Annually, each faculty member, with their academic unit leader, completes a Statement of Expectations (SOE) outlining 1) teaching 2) scholarship, research, and/or creative activities; and 3) service that meet the needs of the academic unit and the faculty member's professional development. The SOE serves as the basis for the faculty member's evaluation. The Faculty Activity and Achievement Reporting (**FAAR**) system facilitates the evaluation process and allows NAU to report accomplishments for departments, colleges, and the university. **Reports from FAAR** document the allocation of student-related responsibilities; scholarship, research, and/or creative activities; and service by faculty member and across academic units and colleges.

Classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a high research doctoral university, NAU is committed to expanding the boundaries of knowledge through research. NAU's previous focus on becoming a top 200 research university in the United States was realized in **2019**. Strategic hires, new centers, and collaborations with external partners were strategies that NAU undertook to enhance its research agenda.

In 2021, President Cruz Rivera charged the Interim Executive Vice President and University Provost and Vice President for Research to re-invigorate the teacher-scholar model at NAU. Institutionalizing strong scholarship, research, and creative activities across disciplines broadly and profoundly benefits students and faculty and advances disciplinary boundaries. One concrete manifestation of this charge was the re-instating of workload allocation for scholarly pursuits for interested teaching-focused (non-tenure-track) faculty.

As evidenced by NAU's **2021 3-year proposal to ABOR**, under President Cruz Rivera's leadership, NAU's utilization of these funds focuses on educational attainment while continuing to support core and emerging areas of research excellence. Investing directly in opportunities for students to participate in research and to enroll in research-training programs will increase participation for first-generation and students from historically underserved groups.

Additionally, the College of Arts and Letters engages **faculty** and **students** in impactful and innovative scholarship and creative works including, but not limited to: music recitals, concerts, opera, plays, poetry,

literature, art exhibitions, and public history projects. The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) hosts a **Summer Seminar Series** open to the community. The SBS School of Communication houses the **VisualDESIGNLab**, a collaborative, experiential space for faculty, students and community. These events actively engage the campus and local community, and the impact of these original scholarly and creative activities also advances the humanities and arts disciplines in meaningful ways.

As documented in the academic catalog, students can earn academic credit for participating in undergraduate research, creative activities, and/or independent study courses, regardless of their academic major, using **pre-established university course lines** at the lower-division and upper-division levels. NAU's **undergraduate research and creative activities office** also coordinates a series of scholarship and grant programs across colleges in research and creative endeavors.

The annual **Undergraduate Symposium** highlights and celebrates students work in collecting and analyzing data, engaging in scholarly and creative work, and developing transferable skills. Each year, students from across colleges come together to share creative discoveries and present in-depth research and scholarly work to peers, professors, alumni, high school and middle school students, and the university and Flagstaff communities. In 2020, 1,461 students showcased more than 600 posters and 42 presentations. In the 2021 virtual event, 426 students showcased 271 posters and 59 presentations.

NAU graduate programs educate advanced students, across many disciplines and several modalities of instruction, to prepare them for impactful and fulfilling professional careers. All graduate degrees require a rigorous curriculum encompassing several elements including, but not limited to: advanced coursework; practical application experiences (e.g., clinical work, internships, experimental research, creative works); and a capstone or culminating project (e.g., thesis or dissertation, final project, clinical or internship capstone). Students present their work to the public and within their academic units to demonstrate graduate-level mastery.

**Graduate programming** is carefully planned to offer relevant and impactful credentials that translate into professional pathways where there is demonstrated demand. NAU conducts market and labor analyses prior to proposing new degree programs or certificates. Several recently established graduate programs include doctoral programs in Astronomy and Planetary Sciences, Interdisciplinary Health, Informatics and Computer Sciences, and Clinical Psychology. New master's programs in Public Health, Public Administration, and Social Work are examples of targeted program development to meet the needs of the state and the region.

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- IV.3.B.4.18 Graduate Programming

### 3.C - Core Component 3.C

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The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

1. The institution strives to ensure that the overall composition of its faculty and staff reflects human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.
2. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance, assessment of student learning, and establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff.
3. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial offerings.
4. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.
5. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.
6. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.
7. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and cocurricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.

#### Argument

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##### 3.C.1. and 3.C.2.

In efforts to ensure that the composition of our workforce reflects human diversity, in 2020, NAU released its first **Diversity Strategic Plan**. The third of five Strategic Priorities is to “Increase, support, retain and advance underrepresented faculty, staff and administrators.” The two objectives related to this priority are (1) Recruit underrepresented faculty, staff, and administrators and (2) Support, retain and advance underrepresented faculty, staff, and administrators.

With the implementation of the 2022-2025 Strategic Roadmap, NAU will engage in concerted efforts to increase representation of NAU’s workforce to more closely reflect our student population. For example, the **faculty demographic profile in Fall 2021, relative to student population remained similar to Fall 2017, with a slight increase in the 2021 Hispanic student population.**

NAU employs sufficient high-quality faculty members to meet classroom (teaching) and non-classroom (research and service) obligations and to fulfill its mission. Annually, faculty document workload distributions across the teaching, research, and service categories, which typically includes 10-20% time allocated to non-classroom tasks, such as curriculum and assessment oversight and faculty evaluation and search responsibilities.

Since our re-affirmation review, the number of **full-time faculty members** decreased by 9% from 1,094 in Fall 2016 to 1,001 in Fall 2021, which is higher than our 5% enrollment declines (data pulled in Fall 2016 for 2017 Assurance Argument due to timing of lock date). (See Criterion 1.A.4.) Rebounding from the global pandemic, in AY2021-2022, NAU hired 109 faculty and has hired or is searching for 175 faculty for AY 2022-2023, including 65 tenure-track positions.

In both 2016 and 2021, tenured and tenure-track faculty made up 49% of the full-time instructional faculty. The **ratio of FTE students to full-time faculty** is 21, with a range from 19-22 since 2016.

Defining faculty continuity as the percentage of faculty who returned the following year, the **average continuity** of tenure-stream faculty was 95% and 85% for non-tenure eligible faculty for the period of 2011 through 2017, compared to 92% and 84%, respectively, for 2017-2022.

Multi-year appointments are an important asset for the recruitment and retention of highly qualified non-tenure eligible faculty. In Fall 2021, NAU sought and received **approval from ABOR** to award more multi-year appointments. Academic Affairs is finalizing a policy establishing criteria and consistent protocols for award of multi-year appointments to ensure equity and transparency.

In Spring 2022, NAU's president and provost supported the **Teaching Track proposal**. Building on the recommendations of the Teaching Track Taskforce, this proposal establishes a new title ladder for teaching-focused faculty, timelines to ensure the feasibility of making conversions to positions (and associated reappointments of incumbent faculty) into the teaching track for AY 2022-2023 and provides guidelines that balance broad applicability with promoting equity and consistency. The university has transferred 191 faculty to the teaching professor track for AY2022-2023.

**3.C.3.** NAU's well-articulated search and hiring processes ensure that all instructors are appropriately qualified, including faculty in distance-delivered programs. The **Conditions of Faculty Service (COFS, Section C)** document defines competitive search and hiring procedures for faculty and instructors that meet the Equity and Access Office's **faculty search guidelines and processes**. Faculty hiring follows a standardized competitive search process that includes specifications for required qualifications, academic credentials, etc. The approval process for hiring all faculty routes approval through the academic dean and the Office of the Provost. In AY2021-2022, a Task Force on Faculty Searches created a set of **guiding principles** for faculty hiring.

The Faculty Senate approved the **Required Qualifications for Instructional Faculty policy**, which is applicable across all modalities, locations, and partnerships. In April 2017, 75.7% of full-time faculty members were credentialed with doctoral or terminal master's degrees. In **Fall 2021**, this increased to 79.7%. As articulated in the HLC-approved **contractual arrangement** with Abundance International Education Institute Co., Ltd., instructors are appropriately qualified to teach courses for our Master of Public Administration. Faculty from the **Texas Tech University** and the **University of Massachusetts Amherst** who teach as part of our **consortium** related to Wind Energy and are reviewed against our faculty-qualification policy.

NAU does not offer dual-enrollment courses in high schools.

**3.C.4. and 3.C.5.** Through the annual review, promotion and tenure review, and post-tenure processes, NAU ensures that all faculty members are current in their disciplines, proficient in teaching responsibilities, and engaged in ongoing professional development. Faculty members (tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure-eligible) are evaluated annually for performance appraisal and development using the established institutional policies and procedures found in COFS (**Section 1.4**). Part-time faculty are evaluated according to procedures established within the academic unit.

Aligned with the institution-level policies and processes, each academic unit is required to have workload documents, guidelines for Statement of Expectations (SOE), annual evaluation criteria, and promotion and tenure criteria. Before implementation, the dean and the provost approve criteria in writing.

NAU ensures faculty members are current in their disciplines, typically by providing faculty with opportunities to engage in research, scholarship, or creative works; participation in appropriate professional

organizations; and publication/presentation of scholarly work. (See Criterion 3.B.4.) **Reports from FAAR** document faculty scholarly engagement.

Consistent with **ABOR policy 6-221**, student opinions of faculty in teaching roles are incorporated into the annual review process. With support from the Faculty Senate and the Office of the Provost, **the Student Feedback Survey Working Group** reaffirmed that student opinion feedback (survey scores and comments) should be only one of multiple measures of teaching effectiveness. In Spring 2022, the **Faculty Senate Council on Learning** is revisiting the student opinion survey and considering **additional measures of teaching effectiveness**.

NAU values and recognizes faculty excellence as demonstrated by the following awards: **President's Distinguished Teaching Fellows, NAU Teaching Academy, and Faculty Exemplars**.

Professional development and support for faculty are provided by the **Faculty Professional Development Program (FPDP)** and the **Office of Curriculum and Assessment**. For example, FPDP organizes and presents offerings (new faculty orientation, learning communities, faculty-to-faculty mentoring) to engage faculty in focused conversations about designing teaching and learning experiences. In AY2015-2016, 51% of faculty attended at least one FPDP event/activity (**Faculty Professional Development Reports**). More than 70% of faculty engaged in one or more professional learning sessions between March and August, 2020. NAU hosts an annual institution-wide **Teaching Day**, a hybrid event for faculty from across the state to come together to learn about **best practices for teaching and learning**.

From Fall 2017 to Spring 2020, NAU supported 105 instructors' work toward a national **Certificate in Effective College Instruction**. An additional 40 faculty participated in the **ACUE micro credential course in Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning**. Since Fall 2019, the Interdisciplinary Writing Program has offered a **Certificate in Effective Writing Instruction**.

During AY2021-2022, the First Year Learning Initiative, Interdisciplinary Writing Program and a small team of instructional designers were reorganized under the FPDP. To recognize and elevate the important role of teaching excellence in student success at NAU, in Fall 2022, the FPDP will relaunch as a Center for Teaching and Learning.

**3.C.6.** NAU has two approaches to ensure instructors are accessible for student inquiry. As indicated in NAU's Faculty Handbook (**Section 4.1**), faculty must post and maintain specific office hours that afford students opportunities to acquire assistance and counsel. In addition, the **University Policy Regarding Syllabi** requires that all class syllabi indicate methods for students to contact and engage with faculty, regardless of mode of instruction-

**3.C.7.** NAU's Human Resources office provides **standards and guidelines** to help ensure that student support staff members are appropriately qualified in alignment with published responsibilities and defined job categories. Student support offices offer professional development training to ensure staff are well trained, supported, and engaged in ongoing training, conferences, and professional organizations.

With support from the AASCU, NAU designed and offered an **Academic Advisor Fellowship** program to advance advisor professional development beyond the transactional elements of advising. The Fellowship addressed topics such as equity mindedness, communication and relationship building skills, and meeting the needs of today's students. This initiative had two primary objectives: 1) influence the skill level and abilities of the professional advising community in order to improve student success, persistence, and retention and 2) invest in advisors through development to improve job satisfaction and ultimately influence advisor retention.

In addition to area-specific training, Human Resources offers professional development and training opportunities to help staff members enhance and expand skills, develop professionally, and engage in developing a positive organizational culture at the university. **Example training opportunities** include the **Supervisors Academy** and the **University Leadership Program**.

All Classified Staff and Service Professionals go through an **annual performance appraisal process**, through which supervisors evaluate their progress and work over the previous year and establish goals for the coming year. Each year, President's Achievement Awards are given to select classified staff and service professionals to recognize **outstanding performance**.

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- IV.3.C.7.07 Outstanding performance

### 3.D - Core Component 3.D

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The institution provides support for student learning and resources for effective teaching.

1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.
2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.
3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its offerings and the needs of its students.
4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning (technological infrastructure, scientific laboratories, libraries, performance spaces, clinical practice sites and museum collections, as appropriate to the institution's offerings).

### Argument

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**3.D.1.** NAU provides a wide range of student support services to meet students' needs. Students in online and statewide campuses are able to access these services remotely. In 2022, NAU launched a transfer/transition center at NAU's location in Phoenix, Arizona, with a focus on providing support outreach, retention, and graduation for adult learners. This section discusses general student support services provided at NAU. (See Criterion 3.D.3. for advising services and 4.C.3. for retention-related services.)

The NSSE 2018 Campus Environment Engagement Indicators for **first-year students' and seniors'** show that NAU engages and supports students comparably to ABOR and Carnegie peers for every indicator of supportive environment for first-year students, including the provision of learning support services, social involvement, recreation, health care, and counseling.

**NAU Career Development** helps students to prepare for their future careers by providing skill-building opportunities and career-related services.

**Office of the Dean of Students** offers students help in understanding academic policies and provides student organization registration support, childcare support, LOUIE's Cupboard, and Parent and Family Services. More than 375 student clubs and organizations help develop leadership skills and engage students in meaningful activities with their peers.

**Office of Inclusion: Multicultural and LGBTQIA Student Services (IMQ)** creates and fosters an all-inclusive university community that cultivates a safe and welcoming environment for underrepresented student populations. IMQ promotes academic and personal growth through mentoring, multicultural and LGBTQIA programs, and university-wide initiatives.

**First Generation Programs and Services** offers a variety of resources for first generation students including summer "bridge" programs; peer mentoring, First Scholars, Lumberjack Leaders Institute, and Tri Alpha Honor Society.

**Counseling Services (CS)** enhances the psychological growth, emotional well-being, and learning potential of NAU students by offering individual and group counseling, outreach, and crisis/triage services

in multiple modalities (in-person, telehealth, and “walk and talk”). In AY2020-2021, 1,328 unique students visited in-person and 8,235 via telehealth.

In AY2021-2022, the Mental Health Task Force completed a **Mental Health SWOT Analysis** to guide NAU’s coordinated, comprehensive, evidence-based approach to addressing campus mental health.

**Medical Services (MS)** promotes wellness and provides health services through same-day urgent services, chronic care, psychiatric mental health, nutrition, nursing services, allergy clinic, immunizations, and physical therapy, via in-person and telehealth, as applicable. In AY2020-2021, 5,713 unique students were served, with 15,536 total visits.

Health Promotion (HP) applies a public health approach to supporting student wellness, with a **Live Well framework** that promotes eight dimensions of well-being. Through educational programs, prevention services, COVID-19 Case Investigation and cross-campus collaboration, HP creates an environment that promotes health and prevents unwanted health outcomes. In AY2020-2021, there were 4,459 in-person student contacts.

**Veteran and Military Services** provides all student veterans and military-connected members with academic and financial resources and a place to relax, interact, and study. In 2016, The **W. A. Franke College of Business ranked 10th in the nation** for veteran students according to Military Times.

**Office of Student Support Services (SSS)** supports approximately 200 new freshmen annually with services tailored for students from low-income and first-generation backgrounds, and/or students who have a documented disability(s). (SSS also serves non-freshmen; however, those students were not included in the analysis.). In Fall 2020, SSS participants' retention to the second semester was 9.3 percentage points higher than matched non-participants' calculated retention to the second semester (statistically different,  $p = 0.002$ ,  $OR = 3.32$ ), and participants' retention to the second year was 15.5 percentage points higher than the matched non-participants' calculated retention to the second year (statistically different,  $p = 0.001$ ,  $OR = 1.97$ ). See Criterion 4.C.3 for full report.

The **First Year Learning Initiative (FYLI)** is a unique, locally developed, and faculty-driven program for building academic success. Courses can be FYLI-certified if course coordinators collaboratively reshape their courses to focus on socializing students for excellence, active pedagogy, and intentional coordination. FYLI is based on the fact that students need – and want – high standards in their lower-division coursework. To be successful, students need support, guidance, highly engaging pedagogy, and clear, frequent feedback. There are currently over 75 FYLI-designated courses, including many of the highest-enrollment, highest-impact gateway courses at NAU. Typically, over 97% of first year students are enrolled in at least one FYLI course.

In Fall 2020, FYLI and the FPDP launched a cohort based **professional learning program** to advance equity of outcomes for low-income, first-generation, and students of color. The Equitable & Inclusive Teaching Seminar is a recursive process of professional development, data-driven inquiries, pedagogy and course design evolution, and assessment of those evolutions all with a clear, intentional focus on advancing equity.

The **Graduate College** provides numerous opportunities for **professional development**, some in conjunction with the FPDP.

A signature professional development event is the Graduate College’s annual **3 Minute Research Presentation Competition**, in which graduate students have three minutes to present their thesis, dissertation, scholarship, creative work, or capstone project to an intelligent, non-specialist audience. The

winners of the 3MRP also participate in regional and national 3-Minute Thesis Competitions, including those sponsored by the **Western Association of Graduate Schools** and the national **Council of Graduate Schools**. In conjunction with the 3MRP, the Graduate Student Government (GSG) hosts an annual **Poster Symposium** to showcase research and scholarship from all disciplines across the institution. The GSG also distributes over \$30K per year in research and professional development travel grants.

**Career preparation** is also an essential component of NAU graduate education. Special events, training sessions and **online resources** are focused on a wide range of topics, including networking, interviewing, resume preparation, postdoctoral opportunities, personal mental health, finances for new professionals, writing, public speaking, etc. Career information is listed on many **program pages**. In March 2022, the Graduate College hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual *March is Career Month* series, which brings in faculty, staff, and industry experts to share their own experiences and perspectives.

**3.D.2.** Orientation and academic advising provide learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of NAU's students and assist their transition to NAU, whether as a first-year, transfer, distance, international, or graduate student. Tailored orientation sessions and personalized advising sessions direct entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared and provide students with tools for success. Examples of tools include **four-year progression plans, Jacks Path, Jacks Planner**, degree requirements in the **academic catalog**, and academic advising **yearly to-do lists**.

More than 90% of incoming first-year students and 66% of transfer students participate in **Student Orientation**. New, incoming students complete a **Priority Enrollment profile**, which guides academic advisors to enroll them in an efficient manner in classes the students want and need for degree progress. Students in distance-delivered programs attend online orientation and are assigned an academic advisor trained to support online students.

Student meetings with advisors are guided by the **First Year Academic Advising Learning Outcomes** to ensure that the advisor meets student needs at current and future appointments.

The Center for International Education requires international students to attend **international orientation sessions** beginning one week before the start of every semester.

Graduate students participate in **university-level orientation sessions** and department-level orientation sessions in the Fall semester and have access to monthly webinars and resources.

All students are eligible to enroll in English 105, which satisfies NAU's undergraduate English Foundation requirement. The University Writing Commons (UWC) offers in-person and online individual writing support to students. The UWC offers weekly writing appointments with the same Writing Assistant through our ENG 100 and ENG 405 courses. From Fall 2018 through Spring 2020, ENG 107 was offered as an optional co-enrollment with ENG 105, and had a positive impact for students who entered NAU with a core high school GPA in the 2.50 – 2.99 range.

In order to enroll in any mathematics or statistics course at NAU, students must have the appropriate **mathematics placement**, either prior mathematics coursework or the NAU Mathematics Placement Test. Academic advisors match students to a specific mathematics course, and potential academic support programs, as appropriate.

Incoming freshmen whose mathematics placement is lower than the expected starting point for their selected major are guided to engage in the **Peak Performance Mathematics Summer Bridge program**,

a free online, award-winning math program. The Peak Performance Math Summer Bridge Program is a collaborative and student-centered program with the goal of helping incoming students improve their math placement before they enroll in NAU mathematics courses.

In **2018**, the Peak Math program had a 56.0% remediation completion rate and a 60.8% success rate where participants increased their math placement score. 44.3% of participants who completed the program met the minimum math placement requirements of their declared major. Peak participants who improved their math placement score increased their score by an average of 27 points. Successful participants who met the minimum math requirements and passed their first term math course, avoided up to \$712,569 in tuition costs.

Additionally, to facilitate student success, the Department of Mathematics and Statistics continues to offer four of its first-year mathematics courses in the **Lumberjack Mathematics Center (LMC)**, an emporium-style environment. These courses combine in-class instruction with lab time in the LMC, where students have access to valuable resources, including real-time support from instructors and math tutors. Faculty discussion of the **assessment analyses** guide revisions to the operations and design of the four LMC math courses.

Advisors also direct students to a variety of other learning resources tailored to address student needs. Highlighted below are a few such programs:

**First Year Experience** offers comprehensive first-year programming developed to connect students with academic and campus resources to cultivate study strategies; test-taking strategies; and time-management, career exploration, and help-seeking behaviors. In Fall 2022, the First Year Experience program and the First Year Seminar program will merge to provide a comprehensive portfolio of first-year student-serving academic courses.

The **Supplemental Instruction (SI)** program provides a series of peer facilitated weekly review sessions for students taking historically challenging courses. **Assessment** reveals that at the discipline level, SI participants had statistically higher course grade averages and statistically lower DFW rates compared to matched non-participants across disciplines.

**Academic Success Centers** provide personalized peer support and resources to build academic confidence and cultivate independent learning. One-on-one, drop-in, and online tutoring is offered for over 100 courses at centers on north and south campus. These services also support students in our distance-delivered courses and programs. The Math Achievement Program provides drop-in tutoring for upper-level math courses and serves as a place to build community around math and statistics. Consultations also support the development of academic success skills such as time management, test-taking/anxiety, and strategies for reading, writing, and note-taking.

### 3.D.3.

Since 2018, NAU has worked diligently to centralize and redesign academic advising services and with strategic investments the following improvements have been made:

- Equitable allocation of resources balanced reasonable student loads to support holistic advising and meaningful relationships with students
- Enhanced systems, data, and technology support efficient operations and maximize advisor time spent directly with students
- Teams organized by academic program have built expertise and depth while identifying and reinforcing standard operating procedures and best practices

- Professional learning opportunities designed to motivate and inspire staff to ensure that student services are offered by experienced/skilled professionals.

As the institution reinforces a commitment to student success, equity, access and outcomes, the advising infrastructure continues to build upon existing resources to adequately support students. Refining best practices to meet the needs of various student demographics (first-generation, adult, online, etc.) results in customized services based on student need. Advising services provided to statewide and online students are tailored to student needs, as many adult students have life and employment situations that necessitate distinct enrollment patterns (part-time), pace of completion, and service availability.

Analysis of ‘no-show/cancellation’ rates for online appointments compared to pre-pandemic in-person appointments resulted in NAU diversifying access points for students. University Advising increased capacity for students to meet with advisors through in-person or remote sessions, workshops, 1:1 appointments, drop-in services, online chat etc.

Graduate students get individualized attention and a program of study that is focused on the student’s research agenda, area of scholarly inquiry, creative activity, or professional career aspirations. The Graduate College and full-time program advisors provide advising for most programs that are delivered online and at statewide campuses, ensuring that students register for courses needed to successfully complete their degrees. For thesis and dissertation students, graduate academic advising is often provided by faculty advisors who serve as mentors.

In Spring 2022, Graduate Student Government designed a comprehensive survey to assess the experience of current and recent graduate students regarding their mentors to guide the design of a resource for faculty who supervise graduate students. Efforts to bolster mentoring are a collaborative endeavor of the Graduate College, Graduate Student Government, University Graduate Committee, FPD, and local expert mentors.

**3.D.4.** Annually, NAU reviews the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning through the **Capital Improvement Plan** that is submitted to ABOR. In Spring 2022, NAU launched a new Sustainable Smart Campus Master Planning Process. (See Criterion 5.B.1). Academic units’ infrastructure and resources are also evaluated as part of the Academic Program Review/Specialized Accreditation process. Based on these processes, NAU ensures that technological infrastructure, libraries, collections and archives, performance arts facilities, scientific laboratories, and clinical practice sites are provided to support NAU’s teaching, research, and scholarly and creative goals.

A Blackboard Learn course shell is provided for all courses, including face-to-face, blended, and online courses. Training and support for faculty on Blackboard Learn is available to enhance students' learning. In AY 2021-22, engaged in an inclusive consultative **selection process** to identify a new learning management system, another example of improved shared governance.

Supported by NAU’s centralized Information Technology Services (ITS), general assignment classrooms are equipped with technology to support teaching needs. To meet specialized learning opportunity needs, additional facilities include computer labs, student collaborative spaces, conference rooms, labs, seminar spaces, recording classrooms/studios with presentation equipment, multimedia production studios, and an assistive technology studio.

Since 2017, ITS has refreshed and upgraded standardization in 217 general use classrooms and added video conferencing components to over 400 classrooms to enable NAUFlex hybrid teaching modality, which includes 50 “NAUFlex Plus” implementations with high-quality video conferencing components for

synchronous hybrid teaching. The new eSports and Advanced Media Lab, an interdisciplinary collaboration between ITS, eSports, and the School of Communication, creates programming surrounding eSports and Virtual Reality. The New Media Lab, a technology-enhanced space in the School of Art, expanded learning opportunities to include modern digital art forms. ITS also supports NAU-owned classrooms around the state and has standardized that classroom technology.

Cline Library is an academic administrative unit that serves the entire institution with a \$4.8 million budget and 45.5 FTE employees, plus approximately 24 student employees during the academic year. Library staff provide research assistance 24/5 via chat, phone, email or in person. Librarians provide research consultations online, by phone and in person. Equipment for loan includes laptops, digital cameras, and multimedia and STEM-related technology. A document delivery (interlibrary loan) service is free for NAU users including statewide and online students. The library offers group and individual study rooms and innovative creation spaces including a MakerLab, Virtual Reality Learning Studio, and Extended Reality Creation Studio. The library provides access to 134 databases and more than 287,000 e-books, 78,000 e-journals, 176,000 streaming videos, and 163,000 streamed sound recordings. Physical collections include 1.4 million volumes, with more than 460,000 book titles. Special Collections and Archives houses 20 million items focused on the Colorado Plateau and northern Arizona; more than 115,000 are accessible online.

Fine and Performing Arts facilities, research labs and services, and clinical/health professions sites are used broadly for student learning and classes. NAU's commitment to providing the university community and the northern Arizona region with fine and performing arts is realized in a variety of venues, including Ardrey Memorial Auditorium, Ashurst Hall, Prochnow Auditorium, Clifford White Theatre, NAU Clara M. Lovett Art Museum, Kitt Recital Hall, and the Beasley Gallery. **Research labs and collections, archives, and museums** support NAU's research mission. Clinical students in Nursing and other health programs use well-equipped, cutting-edge training facilities for their practical training. Dental Hygiene students have access to training facilities in the campus clinic. Additionally, the Phoenix Bioscience Core has facilities for Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant, Occupational Therapy, and Athletic Training students to practice their skills prior to placement at professional clinical sites.

NAU has several Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified buildings on the **Flagstaff campus**, including the **award-winning International Pavilion**, an events center and home for NAU's International House, as well as the **Science and Health Building** that provides teaching and learning spaces.

## Sources

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- IV.3.D.1.04 Office of Inclusion
- IV.3.D.1.05 First Generation Programs and Services
- IV.3.D.1.06 Counseling Services
- IV.3.D.1.07 Mental Health SWOT Analysis
- IV.3.D.1.08 Medical Services
- IV.3.D.1.09 Live Well Framework
- IV.3.D.1.10 Veteran and Military Services
- IV.3.D.1.11 WAF CB ranked 10th in nation
- IV.3.D.1.12 Office of Student Support Services (SSS)
- IV.3.D.1.13 First Year Learning Initiative
- IV.3.D.1.14 Professional learning program
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- IV.3.D.2.01 Four year progression plans
- IV.3.D.2.02 Jacks Path
- IV.3.D.2.03 Jacks Planner
- IV.3.D.2.04 Academic catalog
- IV.3.D.2.05 Yearly-to-do list
- IV.3.D.2.06 Student Orientation
- IV.3.D.2.07 Priority Enrollment profile
- IV.3.D.2.08 First year academic advising learning outcomes
- IV.3.D.2.09 International orientation sessions
- IV.3.D.2.10 University-level orientation sessions
- IV.3.D.2.11 Mathematics placement
- IV.3.D.2.12 Peak performance math summer bridge program
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- IV.3.D.2.18 Assessment
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- IV.3.D.4.03 Research labs
- IV.3.D.4.04 Collections, Archives, and Museums

- IV.3.D.4.05 Flagstaff campus
- IV.3.D.4.06 Award winning International Pavilion
- IV.3.D.4.07 Science and health building

### **3.S - Criterion 3 - Summary**

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The institution provides quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

#### **Summary**

Northern Arizona University provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered. NAU prides itself on providing outstanding education that prepares graduates for successful careers and lives. The university achieves this by hiring and supporting high-quality faculty and staff, establishing consistent quality standards for all academic programs as expressed through the Degree Program Expectations, providing relevant general education courses, and offering faculty development programming. Utilizing strong shared governance, NAU is in the process of implementing a new General Studies Program that reflects our institutional mission and commitment to prepare students for today's workforce and to be active and engaged citizens of their local, national, and global communities. NAU provides a rich community of services and educational support to its students. Through holistic advising and a range of integrated curricular and co-curricular activities, students have opportunities to incorporate a range of experiences into their academic goals, such as research, internships, and study abroad.

#### **Sources**

*There are no sources.*

## 4 - Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

### 4.A - Core Component

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The institution ensures the quality of its educational offerings.

1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews and acts upon the findings.
2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning, or relies on the evaluation of responsible third parties.
3. The institution has policies that ensure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.
4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources, and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It ensures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.
5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.
6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution ensures that the credentials it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission.

### Argument

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**4.A.1. and 4.A.5. ABOR policy 2.225** requires NAU to maintain a practice of Academic Program Review (APR) every seven years to ensure programs are relevant and maintain their high quality. **Specialized accreditation** processes can be used to satisfy this requirement if the review meets all of the criteria established by ABOR and NAU.

Academic Program Reviews provide information the university uses to strengthen and improve academic programs, ensure effective use of state resources, and develop university and system-wide planning. These reviews are closely connected to strategic planning, resource allocation, and decision-making. Distance-delivered programs follow the same procedures and are held to the same standards to ensure that the curricula are cohesive and academically rigorous, and that student learning is comparable to programs offered in traditional formats.

In 2021, NAU hired an Associate Vice Provost for Curriculum and Assessment to coordinate and guide these processes to ensure that reviews are conducted as expected by policy and in a timely manner (see posted **schedule of reviews by college**). The APR process has a structured set of **guidelines**, including focused questions for faculty discussion, uniform data reports, and an APR **template**. Faculty peer review increases transparency of individual programs' strengths and areas for improvement, which serves to "raise the bar" for all programs. Using the provided template, academic units document how well they have achieved and maintained the Degree Program Expectations (DPEs; See Criterion 3.A.) related to curriculum design and assessment; trends in student enrollment, persistence, and degrees awarded; resources used to support the departmental mission, including faculty and staff; research, scholarship, and/or creative

activities; evaluation of the unit's future plans; and adequacy of physical and fiscal resources. (See the **Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice self-study**).

Feedback, insights, and observations from the external reviewers (selected by the academic unit and approved by the provost), faculty on Senate-charged curriculum and assessment committees, and NAU administration (Provost's Office and dean(s)) are provided to the academic unit. The feedback informs the **unit-level action plan** that addresses all aspects of the APR and **degree program-level action plans that focus on curriculum and assessment activities**.

Academic Program Review, action planning, and annual reporting processes are interconnected. Each Spring semester, academic units document their annual curriculum and assessment efforts, identify actions to take the following year, and designate responsible parties and timelines for completing those actions. Curriculum and assessment reports are stored in a shared drive SharePoint Archive accessible to all faculty and administrators. At the midpoint of each seven-year review cycle, programs submit to the Provost's Office an internal report plan that outlines progress on all items included in the academic unit-level action plan and their curriculum and assessment action plans, and any major changes within the academic unit. (See **Psychology's Mid-Point Report**.) In 2020, the Department of Psychological Sciences exemplified a data-informed curriculum design approach through centering student learning, progression, post-graduation outcomes along with resource considerations.

NAU documents **specialized accreditations**, and, generally, encourages academic programs to pursue accreditation if an appropriate accrediting agency exists. In August 2020, NAU became an accredited institutional member of the **National Association of Schools of Theatre**. In Spring 2022, the Master of Public Administration hosted a site visit as part of the initial accreditation process with the **Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration**.

**4.A.2. and 4.A.3.** NAU's transfer policies and procedures assure the quality of transfer credit, including what is awarded for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning. NAU ensures that all transfer credit posted to a student's academic record has been properly evaluated. In 2020, NAU revised the undergraduate transfer policy (**Policy 100224**) to highlight that credits submitted by students may be considered for acceptance if the institution was accredited, and the accrediting body was recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), at the time of the student's enrollment. The Transfer Credit and Credit by Exam Policy also specifies the types of transfer credit that NAU accepts, including ACE Alternative Course Credit, Prior Learning Assessment, Military, and Credit by Exam.

Transcripts are reviewed to determine the number of units accepted and how they apply toward satisfying Liberal Studies, diversity, major, minor, and/or certificate requirements. Trained professional staff in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and Orientation provide initial evaluation of transfer credits, using guidelines established by academic units. Course equivalencies are based on the alignment of learning outcomes. Courses that do not have a direct equivalency with a NAU course are coded as transfer courses at the appropriate level (e.g., 100 level, 200 level), and are then submitted for in-depth review by specific academic units to determine transferability.

NAU participates in **AZTransfer**, a statewide collective of Arizona's public and tribal community colleges and universities established to ensure a seamless transition to Arizona public universities without loss of credit. University and community college faculty members serving on discipline-specific Articulation Task Forces evaluate courses to ensure that expectations of content and rigor are equivalent. Equivalencies are published in the **Course Equivalency Guide** and provide the foundation for **JacksPath**, a web application that assists prospective Arizona community college transfer students with a seamless transition to earn their bachelor degree from NAU. There are ongoing efforts to improve transfer credit evaluation, with particular

attention to decreasing time to informing students and maximizing applicability of credit to degree programs.

NAU documents ABOR-approved **transfer articulation agreements for specific degree programs that accept more than 64 units** from two-year colleges and transfer pathways with international institutions. In 2021, the Department of Biological Sciences developed an **articulated transfer pathway** allowing students to apply up to 75 community college credits toward their undergraduate degree at NAU.

In 2022, NAU launched the University Advising Access Connected Care Team to provide tailored student services and support for adult learners and transfer students. Efforts are underway to provide additional support for Prior Learning Assessment.

In addition to course-level transfer, NAU has block transfer articulation agreements, such as the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC), a 35 – 37 semester-credit general education certificate that fulfills NAU's Liberal Studies Program requirements.

Per the Graduate College Transfer Credit policy (**100336**), graduate transfer credits are evaluated by trained graduate college staff and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies in collaboration with faculty and department chairs.

**4.A.4.** As documented in the **Faculty Senate Bylaws**, faculty members have the primary responsibility for determining and assuring the quality of courses and programs at NAU, as evidenced through the faculty-generated Degree Program Expectations. Faculty review is the centerpiece of NAU's curriculum review process and is guided by specific indicators of quality defined by NAU faculty. Through the review of curriculum (See Criterion 3.A.1.), faculty members actively exercise authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, and expectations for student learning.

Consistent with NAU's **Required Qualifications for Instructional Faculty policy**, academic unit leaders ensure that faculty are qualified to teach assigned courses. Academic units ensure that courses are taught in a manner that aligns with the learning outcomes and course purposes developed and implemented by the faculty members in the academic unit. The **University Policy Regarding Syllabi** requires academic units to maintain syllabi for all courses and that all syllabi contain the elements of the syllabus template, the purpose, and a set of learning outcomes that are consistent whenever and however the course is taught.

NAU provides support for faculty to design courses and degree programs that achieve the curriculum design requirements and incorporate strong assessment at the course and program level. Staff in the **Office of Curriculum and Assessment** consult with faculty and academic unit leaders to design degree programs and ensure alignment of learning outcomes to course design. Course design and pedagogical support, regardless of modality, is provided through consultation with instructional designers and programming through the FPDP.

NAU does not offer dual-credit courses within high schools.

**4.A.6.** NAU engages in multiple approaches to evaluate the success of graduates, including surveys, **College Scorecard**, licensure rates, and employment data, to name a few. In 2021, NAU Career Development began offering **free career coaching to all alumni**.

According to the **2018 NSSE survey**, NAU seniors reported participating in High Impact Practices (HIP) at a much higher rate than seniors at our ABOR peer institutions and Carnegie class institutions. For example, 84% report having participated in two or more HIPs (ABOR peers 55% and Carnegie Class peer, 60% respectively). Research has found that HIPs are positively associated with persistence and GPA (impact is larger for underserved students), deep approaches to learning, higher rates of student-faculty interaction, increases in critical thinking and writing skills, greater appreciation for diversity, and higher student engagement overall.

In 2018, the **Strada-Gallup survey results** of nearly 10,000 NAU graduates, with class years ranging from 1947-2017, were compared with a representative sample of more than 70,000 college graduates cross the country. NAU alumni are thriving in more well-being elements than alumni from comparison schools. For example, 66% of NAU alumni strongly agree or agree they are better-prepared and better-educated for the workforce (National peers: 61%). Almost all of the NAU alumni who responded to the survey have one thing in common: They are happy they chose to earn their degree at NAU.

From **the 2020 Graduating Senior Survey** (N=4,744),

- Eighty-eight percent (88%) of all respondents rated their overall educational experience as excellent or good.
- Eighty-four percent (84%) of respondents felt the university required them to “think critically and analytically” (rating of “quite a bit” or “very much”).
- Nearly 39% of graduates participated in an internship or professional practicum.
- Seventy-eight percent (78%) of respondents reported being “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the academic advising in their major field of study. (See Criterion 3.D.3. to review NAU’s continuous improvement initiatives related to advising.)
- Eighty-three percent (83%) of students reported their NAU experience met or exceeded their expectations.

**Licensure rates** from AY2020-2021 show NAU students’ strong performance on licensure exams. The employment rate for **Physical Therapy** graduates is 100% for 2018 and 2019. **Communication and Science Disorders** employment rates are reported as 94%, 80% and 91% for years 2018, 2019, and 2020 respectively.

Beginning in 2023, NAU will also assess post-graduate success through **indices of social and economic mobility**, as guided by the NAU Strategic Roadmap.

Below are some exemplar data regarding the success of NAU graduates in the job market. Per ABOR’s **2020 Annual Report on Wages Earned by Arizona University System Graduates data** for 2015 graduates, 80.9% of NAU resident undergraduates who earned bachelor’s degrees and 81.6% of resident graduate students were employed in Arizona in 2015.

NAU is participating in the **Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes project**, sponsored by the US Census Bureau. By June 2022, we will receive information regarding the employment and earnings of students earning a bachelors or graduate degree who have a job anywhere in the nation. College-level data will be available to inform continual improvement efforts. This national data will complement the Arizona-specific data we receive from the AZ Department of Economic Security.

## Sources

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- IV.4.A.1.5.05 APR template
- IV.4.A.1.5.06 Department of CCJ self-study
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- IV.4.A.2.3.04 JacksPath
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- IV.4.A.2.3.07 Graduate College Transfer Credit Policy (100336)
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- IV.4.A.4.03 University Policy Regarding syllabi
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- IV.4.A.6.02 2018 NSSE survey
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- IV.4.A.6.04 2020 Graduating Senior Survey
- IV.4.A.6.05 Licensure Rates
- IV.4.A.6.06 Employment rates for graduates in Physical Therapy (100%)
- IV.4.A.6.07 Communication Science Disorders (80% and above)
- IV.4.A.6.08 Indices of social and economic mobility
- IV.4.A.6.09 2020 Annual Report on Wages Earned by Arizona University System Graduates data
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## 4.B - Core Component 4.B

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The institution engages in ongoing assessment of student learning as part of its commitment to the educational outcomes of its students.

1. The institution has effective processes for assessment of student learning and for achievement of learning goals in academic and cocurricular offerings.
2. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.
3. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty, instructional and other relevant staff members.

### Argument

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**4.B.1. and 4.B.2.** NAU demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning in degree programs, the Liberal Studies Program, and cocurricular programs.

#### NAU Degree Programs' Commitment to Assessment and Continuous Improvement

In the years following NAU's receipt of the **2009 CHEA Award** for institutional efforts to gather information on student learning outcomes and use this information for institutional improvement and public accountability, the University Assessment Committee and Office of Academic Assessment recognized that changes were needed due to striking differences between programs with strong versus weak cultures of curriculum design and assessment (**Report on Assessment Reports**). The programs that consistently engaged in assessment and reporting demonstrated clear strengths in student learning and the ability to demonstrate program quality. Particularly, these programs engaged in intentional design, aligning the purpose and outcomes of the degree to the design of its courses; and meaningful assessment of students' achievement of program learning outcomes, allowing assessment results to be used to improve course and degree program design.

Subsequently, NAU faculty and academic staff explored how to obtain and document uniformly high-quality curriculum design and assessment practices across all degree programs. These efforts were realized in 2014 with a Faculty Senate-approved set of Degree Program Expectations (DPE). (See Criterion 3.A.) NAU's DPE articulate expectations for curriculum design and academic assessment for all academic programs at NAU, regardless of location or modality:

- Clearly stated goals for student learning, through:
  - Degree Program Purpose statement (summarizes the scope of the program, the content studied, the skills developed, the learning experiences provided, and the future opportunities for which it prepares students); and
  - Degree Program Student Learning Outcomes (explicit, learning-centered, align with the degree program purpose, and are appropriate to the level of the degree offered).
- Effective processes for achievement of learning goals, through:
  - intentionally designed curriculum and documented in a curriculum map/matrix, and
  - strategically designed courses that provide learning opportunities and assignments designed to achieve the course's purpose and learning outcomes.
- Effective processes for assessment of student learning, which are documented as part of academic unit's realistic curriculum and assessment action plans.

- Assessment of the achievement of the learning outcomes, by assessing all broad degree program learning outcomes toward or at the end of the student’s program of study at least once between Academic Program Reviews.
- Use of the information gained from assessment to improve student learning, through at least one of the following for each broad learning outcome:
  - Improvement of course and/or curriculum design,
  - Improvement of assessment methods,
  - Dissemination of student learning strengths.

Structuring the Academic Program Review process around the DPEs helps close the curriculum design and assessment practices gap between the programs that have specialized accreditation and non-accredited programs. An **annual dashboard report** documents programs’ achievement of the DPEs.

In 2018, NAU was named an *Excellence in Assessment* designee by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment. The Excellence in Assessment designation is the only national designation of its kind, spotlighting institutions that successfully integrate assessment practices across campus, providing evidence of student learning, and using assessment results to guide institutional decision-making and improve student performance.

Since 2017, the implementation of the annual reporting process to achieve and maintain the Degree Program Expectations has spurred graduate programs to: (a) Develop consistency in efforts (planning and tracking activities) related to curriculum design and assessment across leadership changes in academic units; (b) Engage faculty to develop agreed upon learning outcomes and a unified, scaffolded curriculum; and (c) Connect units to tailored consultation and guidance to support their curriculum design and assessment efforts. The redesign of the **MBA program** to better serve online students and the specific needs of health professionals who were part of an educational partnership exemplifies this approach.

While structured differently than other degree programs, NAU’s Personalized Learning competency-based degree programs also meet the DPEs. Grounded in the degree program purpose, the degree program student learning outcomes are the foundation for the competencies. Each competency is a broad learning objective that has a series of lessons with more specific objectives intended to target and support the learning of the competency (**Competency Mapping sample**). Each lesson begins with a clearly stated objective, and then all lesson materials support and address that outcome. Each lesson is divided into smaller topics. Each topic has a narrower objective that ties back to scaffold content to support the lesson’s overall objective. Students complete a range of formative assessments within the lesson to demonstrate their learning and to help faculty to identify the need for additional academic support. Personalized Learning faculty members interact with students extensively around assessments. Each submission receives personalized feedback and generates opportunities for one-on-one tutoring, as needed. Students’ performance on the lessons serves as a summative assessment of their learning across the degree program. In this manner, the Personalized Learning program has developed clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning.

Personalized Learning uses Learning Outcome Manager (LOM), an analytics repository, to house and track learning outcomes associated with each submission of student work (assignments, discussions, pretests, posttests, post-projects, journals, etc.). The LOM provides the opportunity for detailed analysis, including percentage range and statistical variance for gap analysis, summative and formative averages and composite comparisons against national averages, and competency-specific and topic-related analysis. Program assessment is comprehensive and integrated into the LOM management system, which guides continuous improvement efforts at the lesson and program level.

In Personalized Learning, programmatic competencies align directly to 3-credit hour NAU courses. The **dashboard** shows student progress using two different lenses: 1) the competency-based lessons and 2) the 3-credit hour NAU course. As students complete all of the learning modules associated with a single NAU course, the dashboard tracks their progress. When all lessons are completed, the 3-credit hour course is added to the student's transcripts. At graduation, students have an **official NAU transcript** showing their completion of 3-credit hour courses, as well as an **unofficial competency transcript** that shows the crosswalk between the courses and the associated competency-based lessons.

### **Liberal Studies Program Commitment to Assessment and Continuous Improvement**

NAU has a history of engaging in institution-wide assessment of Liberal Studies skills for continuous improvement.

In AY2011-2012, NAU administered the Educational Testing Services Proficiency Profile (ETS-PP) to measure college-level general education skills, specifically critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematics in the contexts of the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities. In AY2014-2015, NAU administered the ETS-PP, applying the benchmark methodology.

Since 2016, institution-wide assessment efforts for Liberal Studies have focused on using embedded, course-authentic assessments in Capstone courses to provide meaningful information to program faculty about student learning for continuous improvement efforts and to university administrators about the level of proficiency of NAU graduates. NAU's Assessment Coordinator, collaborating with the Director of Liberal Studies, incorporated best practices in student learning assessment design and implementation based on her experience as a Primary Mentor with the HLC Assessment Academy. In AY2016-2017, NAU piloted an assessment of the Liberal Studies Essential Skill of Effective Writing using modified-versions of the Association of American Colleges and Universities Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (AAC&U VALUE) rubrics in Capstone courses to obtain a measure of students' performance in writing skills toward the end of their undergraduate career.

Since 2017, NAU faculty have expanded this assessment-based continual improvement approach. The **Scientific Inquiry** and **Quantitative Reasoning** reports document the full systematic assessment process, including outcomes, assessment measures and design, results, analysis and interpretation, dissemination, and continual improvement efforts. The Assessment as a Conversation reports for **Effective Writing** and **Oral Communication** highlight NAU's approach to meaningful assessment with the purpose to reflect on, discuss, and use the information gathered for internal improvement and decision-making.

Consistent with a culture of continuous improvement efforts, NAU extended the concept of academic program reviews to the Liberal Studies Program. In AY2018-2019, NAU's Liberal Studies program engaged in a year of self-reflection as individuals from across the institution and from the Liberal Studies Committee conducted a self-study of the program. In Fall 2019, a Liberal Studies Task Force was formed to address recommendations from the 2018 Liberal Studies Self-Study, External Reviewers' feedback, and ABOR Policy 2-210 that was revised in 2019 and 2021.

As guided by ABOR policy 2-210, NAU, in collaboration with Arizona State University and the University of Arizona, began a multi-year assessment project. The universities are piloting assessment for Written Communication in AY2021-2022, with plans to assess Quantitative Reasoning, Civic Knowledge and Critical Thinking in subsequent years. Writing artifacts from courses across all disciplinary branches of the university at entry and exit points of the students' academic career (English Foundations and Capstone) will be evaluated by faculty trained in using the Tri-University Writing Rubric. In Summer 2022, NAU will

conduct an internal assessment aligned with NAU learning outcomes to incorporate findings for the assessment into NAU-focused continuous improvement initiatives.

### NAU Co-Curricular Programs

Student Affairs (SA) achieves, maintains, and evaluates its resources and goals through the application of assessment and continuous improvement metrics tailored to each area's and program's specific focus. SA departments collaborated to identify the **student learning and development outcomes** relevant to the student activities, services, and programs in the division. Each program collects and analyzes metrics of importance to the program as well as metrics related to how their programs affect institutional goals, such as impacting student learning or assisting in the recruitment and retention of undergraduate students through to graduation. SA's Strategic Initiatives Office guides programs by **providing strategic analytics and meaningful assessment** to support continuous improvement efforts. (See also Criterion 4.C.3.)

**4.B.3.** The Faculty Senate-charged **Curriculum & Assessment Coordinating Committee** coordinates and fosters faculty stewardship of curriculum and the assessment of student learning as articulated in the DPEs. NAU faculty engage in academic program assessment to measure, in an ongoing fashion, the extent to which NAU's academic programs achieve stated learning outcomes and to identify changes that will help students in degree programs better achieve those outcomes. Through identifying explicit expectations of curriculum design and assessment for degree programs, setting appropriate standards for learning quality, and systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence, faculty members identify how well students' performance matches expectations and standards. With that knowledge, degree programs can clearly document and explain program strengths and identify areas to improve performance.

The Office of Curriculum and Assessment (OCA) provides tailored support to faculty members and academic units for the continuous improvement of curriculum design and assessment processes. Through consultations, workshops and **online resources** based on best practices, OCA staff support faculty to assess student learning at the course, program, and institutional level and use of a wide variety of assessment strategies, such as formative, summative, direct, and indirect measures.

The **NAU Assessment Fair** is an annual event of poster presentations and roundtable conversations representing the assessment efforts carried out by faculty, staff, and students across the university. Posters reflect assessment projects, ranging from student learning to student needs and satisfaction, benchmarking studies, and student usage of services and programs. The 2018 Assessment Fair showcased 28 poster presentations staffed by 77 presenters and was well attended by 120 people from all across campus representing over 30 departments. In 2019, NAU re-branded the event (Showcase of Strategies for Student Success) to emphasize our commitment to student success and the role assessment and continual improvement plays in our efforts. Projects included 33 poster presentations staffed by 99 presenters and co-presenters representing over 41 departments and the event was attended by 104 people from across the university.

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  - IV.4.B.1.2.08 Official NAU transcript showing
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  - IV.4.B.1.2.10 Scientific Inquiry
  - IV.4.B.1.2.11 Quantitative Reasoning
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  - IV.4.B.1.2.16 Student Success Initiative Report Fall 2020
  - IV.4.B.3.01 Curriculum and Assessment Coordinating Committee
  - IV.4.B.3.02 Online resources
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## 4.C - Core Component 4.C

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The institution pursues educational improvement through goals and strategies that improve retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.

1. The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious, attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.
2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.
3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.
4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice. (Institutions are not required to use IPEDS definitions in their determination of persistence or completion rates. Institutions are encouraged to choose measures that are suitable to their student populations, but institutions are accountable for the validity of their measures.)

### Argument

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**4.C.1. and 4.C.2.** Student achievement and progress to graduation are among the most important indicators of performance; therefore, NAU has established ambitious, yet attainable, goals aligned with **ABOR's 2025 performance metrics**. Following the ABOR approval of NAU's Strategic Roadmap in June 2022, NAU will propose new **Enterprise and Institutional metrics** that align with the Strategic Roadmap's targeted outcomes.

NAU's **freshmen retention rate** was 75.5% for the 2015 cohort freshman retention rate and the 2020 cohort rate was 74.5%, which is similar to the pandemic-related, unprecedented one-year drop of 2% in retention rates nationally (National Student Clearinghouse, 2021). The **six-year graduation rate** continues an upward trend at 59% for the Fall 2015 FTFT cohort, 62.8% for Fall 2015 full-time **lower-division transfer cohort students**, and 75.6% for **full-time upper-division transfer cohort students**.

In 2020, NAU was acknowledged by Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) as a **Degree Completion Award** winner in recognition of our innovative and evidence-based efforts to use the power of data, analytics, and technology to leverage student success.

NAU's Office of Institutional Research and Analysis (**IRA**) analyzes student data and releases official university rates for student retention and completion of programs. Multiple reports are available on the IRA **website** and are highly customizable to meet the individualized needs. For example, **the Dynamic Undergraduate Cohort Graduation Analysis Report** can be customized by Cohort Type, Full-Time/Part-Time, Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Campus and Year.

In 2017, IRA, in consultation with an institution-wide advisory, launched Tableau dashboards that provide ever-current dynamic data in a user-friendly format to guide and monitor student success indicators. For example, **persistence** across multiple years by cohort allows us evaluate trends and identify gaps across student groups.

**4.C.3.** Based on student retention, persistence, and completion information, NAU has invested in innovative strategies to secure further gains in student success. Given the academic and social factors that

influence student retention, two types of initiatives have been developed: course-based success initiatives and community-based success initiatives, tailored to provide support to both general and specific student populations. The course-based success initiatives focus on the improvement of instructional design, first-year formal learning experiences, academic supports for student achievement, and critical skills to assist students in succeeding as learners. The community-based success initiatives provide strong and timely guidance to students to improve their navigation of the university; strengthen connections and their sense of community with peers, faculty, and staff; and cultivate stronger commitment to degree attainment through robust support of educational planning and advisement.

Assessment experts and cross-divisional research analysts collaborate to create annual **Student Success Initiative Reports**. For curricular and co-curricular programs, NAU asks whether each student success initiative has a positive effect on participants' academic performance, progress, or retention after controlling for relevant non-programmatic factors. Using entropy balancing, analyses provide information about the impact of a program on participants' outcomes while controlling for academic preparation and demographic characteristics. Post-hoc comparisons also provide an opportunity to explore whether there were differences in psychosocial variables as measured by the Student Strengths Inventory (e.g., Academic Engagement, Resiliency) for students who participated in these programs compared to students who did not participate.

To advance equity of outcomes for low-income, first-generation, and students of color, in AY2020-2021, NAU launched the **Equity Academy** a recursive process of professional development, data-driven inquiries, pedagogy and course design evolution, and assessment of those evolutions all with a clear, intentional focus.

See Criterion 5.A.1. for the revitalized College Success Program.

In December 2019, NAU launched Operation ReEngage to identify and re-recruit former NAU students who had not graduated. Efforts have resulted in 1,550 students re-enrolling at NAU and on the path completing their degree.

Spring 2022 marks the end of NAU's participation in the AASCU-supported and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation-funded **Frontier Set initiative** - a four-year national project focused on identifying and advancing campus practices that accelerate student credential attainment rates, especially for low-income, first generation, and students of color. NAU's efforts centered on redesigning advising (See Criterion 3.D.3.), bolstering adaptive **learning practices in gateway courses**, and supporting student success through teaching excellence (See Criterion 3.C.5.). A hallmark project was the **redesign of BIO181** which resulted in student GPAs 0.21 higher for Fall 2019 course redesign than Fall 2018 (2.87 v 2.66,  $p=0.04$ ), DFW rates that were 5.7 percentage points lower for Fall 2019 than Fall 2018 (13.3% v 19.0%,  $p=0.04$ ), and DF rates that were 4.4 percentage points lower for Fall 2019 than Fall 2018 (10.0% v 14.4%,  $p=0.08$ ).

Starting in 2022, Student Affairs is inventorying all major student success efforts into three major areas: Wellness, Community/inclusion, and Academic/Career Purpose, with target populations, intended learning and development outcomes, related institutional outcomes, and needs/opportunities of each major effort articulated. Coverage analyses to identify gaps in services, unmet needs, opportunities to scale, and other information will inform the Division's prioritization efforts. Complementing those efforts, the **AY2021-2022 steering committee's** comprehensive review of **Statewide and Online programs** and student support services will help NAU meet distant-students' needs.

**4.C.4.** Institutional Research and Analysis' (IRA) methods are grounded in federal and state reporting practices as required by IPEDS, ABOR, and the Arizona state legislature. Frozen data sets are developed to support longitudinal and other official reporting related to student success. Before data are frozen for

reporting, they are subjected to rigorous testing standards and data integrity checks to ensure the highest possible data quality. Terminology and methodology related to the official census and cohort reporting processes are documented on the IRA website: **Terminology and Methodology Changes for Fall 2006 Census, Undergraduate Cohort Definitions, Graduate Cohort Definitions**. The Arizona Office of the Auditor General annually audits FTE and SCH reports, a process that requires documenting official reporting and underlying business practices, and demonstrating that reported data reflect NAU's official systems of record and can be replicated by an independent third party.

To calculate retention and graduation rates, NAU establishes a cohort of first-time, full-time freshmen every Fall semester on census day. Cohorts are followed to the subsequent Fall semesters to determine the percentage of cohort students retained each year and the percentage who graduate. This same type of tracking is done for transfer students. Each cohort is tracked indefinitely. IRA generates reports on these metrics by ethnicity, gender, age, residency, college, department, high school GPA, and multiple combinations of those categories. Results are shared with the university community and public via the **NAU Fact Book**, posted on the IRA website.

### Sources

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- IV.4.C.1.2.03 Freshman Retention rate (2020)
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- IV.4.C.1.2.05 Lower division transfer
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- IV.4.C.1.2.10 Dynamic Undergraduate Cohort Graduation Analysis Report
- IV.4.C.1.2.11 Persistence
- IV.4.C.3.01 Student Success Initiative Report Fall 2020
- IV.4.C.3.02 Equity Academy
- IV.4.C.3.03 Frontier Set Initiative
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- IV.4.C.3.05 AY2021-2022 Steering committee and complementary working groups
- IV.4.C.3.06 Statewide and online programs
- IV.4.C.4.01 Terminology and Methodology Changes for Fall 2006 Census
- IV.4.C.4.02 Undergraduate Cohort Definitions
- IV.4.C.4.03 Graduate Cohort Definitions
- IV.4.C.4.04 NAU Fact Book

#### **4.S - Criterion 4 - Summary**

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The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness for student learning through processes designed to promote continuous improvement.

##### **Summary**

As evidenced by our Excellence in Assessment award in recognition of our curricular and co-curricular program design and assessment efforts, NAU has demonstrated responsibility for the quality of our academic programs, learning environments and support services through comprehensive evaluation processes and continuous improvement efforts. With respect to academic program quality, as articulated in the faculty governed Degree Program Expectations, and evidenced in the Academic Program Review/Specialized Accreditation processes, NAU assesses learning at the course, program, and institution level to inform continuous improvement efforts. Student success is a strategic priority, and NAU's academic and co-curricular support offices collaborate to retain students and continuously improving programs to provide the best possible support. Numerous data-informed processes are in place to measure continuous improvement efforts; academic quality; student performance; retention, persistence, and completion rates; and job-readiness and success of graduates.

##### **Sources**

*There are no sources.*

## 5 - Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

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The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

### 5.A - Core Component

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Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.
2. The institution's administration uses data to reach informed decisions in the best interests of the institution and its constituents.
3. The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

### Argument

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NAU presents expansive narrative and evidence in 5.A.1., in response to the **Interim Report peer reviewers' request** to provide 1) Evidence that the institution has developed additional, systemic approaches to improving communication on the NAU campus; 2) Evidence that these steps align with appropriate areas of the institution's most current strategic plan; 3) Evidence that communication efforts have resulted in a shared governance system in which areas of responsibility and authority are clearly delineated--and that all documents pertaining to shared governance are current.

**5.A.1.** Beginning with the announcement of José Luis Cruz Rivera's appointment as NAU's 17<sup>th</sup> president in Spring 2021, building trust and increasing transparency through consultative leadership, collaborative processes and substantive communication approaches has been paramount. As the President designate, Dr. Cruz Rivera set up a Presidential Transition Team and a Presidential Transition Commission to ensure open direct communication and created opportunities to learn from constituents with three comprehensive campus visits, as he transitioned into the position.

Starting with his first official meeting with the Faculty Senate in June 2021, President Cruz Rivera has stressed the importance of developing a collective understanding of shared governance and university governance and building administrative structures and collaborative processes based on shared principles. In October 2021, President Cruz Rivera and Interim Provost Karen Pugliesi joined the Faculty Senate President in hosting an all-faculty Townhall to discuss principles that would set the foundation for policies, processes, and practices.

In May 2022, NAU faculty approved a new Constitution, which was the result of productive and collegial discussions between senior leadership and the Senate leadership throughout the academic year. The revised **Constitution of the Faculty of Northern Arizona University** clearly delineates the areas of responsibility and authority for shared governance among faculty, administration, and ABOR, as part of University Governance. It articulates faculty predominance in policy decisions relating to curricula, assessment, pedagogy, course design, academic standards, and the faculty personnel process and notes that University Governance includes active faculty participation in many other areas of institutional policy and

operations, including strategic planning, budget, student services, facilities, and administration where these elements affect the academic enterprise. In Fall 2022, a similar approach will be used to revise the Faculty Senate By-laws, as approval of the Constitution is a necessary prerequisite.

Since June 2021, the provost has been meeting bi-monthly with the Faculty Senate President and attends monthly Faculty Senate Executive Committee meetings and Faculty Senate meetings. With the president's delegation of oversight of Academic Affairs to the Executive Vice President and University Provost, the Faculty Senate has embraced the provost's regular attendance and productive collaborations, knowing the president will attend when there are specific items that necessitate **his engagement**.

### **Deliberative Structures**

In January 2022, NAU reconfigured its **leadership and deliberative bodies** and identified the roles and responsibilities, composition, and linkages between NAU's various representative governance groups and the university leadership teams to ensure that voices and perspectives from across the institutions are heard and considered.

The President's Council consists of President Cruz Rivera's core strategic leadership team. The President's Cabinet is a university-wide leadership team, that covers the depth and breadth of university academic and administrative functions, composed of senior vice presidents, vice presidents, and select associate vice presidents. The **University Advisory Board (UAB)** is a broad representative consultative, deliberative, and advisory body for the president, composed of the Cabinet along with the presidents of the Faculty Senate, Staff Advisory Council, undergraduate and graduate student governments, diversity commissions, and representatives from the Deans' Council and Academic Leadership Collaborative. Meeting at least quarterly, the UAB aims to bring greater coherence and transparency to operations, decision frameworks, and actions at the university-wide level, with representatives bringing forth updates and sharing back with their constituents.

In addition to these core leadership groups, the representative framework includes new advisory groups. The **University Budget Advisory Board (UBAB)** with representatives from each stakeholder group is tasked with advising—in a public and transparent manner—the president and his team on budgetary priorities for the university. In addition to providing input and recommendations to the president on prioritizing and funding university initiatives and operational excellence through the budget process, the UBAB directly supports Strategic Priority – Sustainable Stewardship of Resources.

The **University Strategic Planning Advisory Board** will launch in Fall 2022 to support implementation of the Strategic Roadmap, facilitate its ongoing drive for transformative action and transparent accountability, and assist divisions, colleges, and units with the development of their aligned strategic plans.

The **Commission on Commissions**, in conjunction with the **five associated diversity commissions**, ensures that diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) are foregrounded in university advisory processes and decision-making. DEIJ is the bedrock of the Strategic Roadmap and is highlighted in three Strategic Priorities: Student Success, Commitment to Indigenous Peoples, and Mission-driven, Diverse Faculty and Staff.

President Cruz Rivera closely evaluated NAU's organizational structure and leadership team to ensure NAU is equipped and positioned to deliver on our mission. As a result, he identified areas where we needed to build capacity. NAU will conduct a search in AY2022-2023 for a **Vice President/Chief Diversity Officer position** to lead our institutional DEIJ efforts.

## Consultation and Transparency of Engagement with Represented Groups

As part of the newly imagined structures, the president has clearly communicated expectations around planned engagement with the university's representative stakeholder groups—the Faculty Senate, the Staff Advisory Council, the Associated Students of Northern Arizona University (undergraduate), and the Graduate Student Government. For each, the president will:

- Meet individually with each president/leader to discuss individual and shared priorities;
- Meet with the Executive/Leadership team of each group to review these priorities and set an action agenda that includes appropriate delegation and engagement with various Cabinet members;
- Hold an open forum with the full membership of each group—typically in the middle of the semester—for broad and transparent engagement and dialogue.

Setting clear baseline expectations for engagement for each semester affords close coordination and substantive engagement and will be supplemented with ad hoc convenings, as needed.

Over the last year, in addition to the inclusive and transparent structural changes and collaborative engagement processes, NAU implemented and enhanced institutional communication to help build a culture of trust and transparency between university leadership and the broader NAU community.

**Regular presidential messaging** (typically weekly) keeps university constituents apprised of strategic developments, as well as cyclical notifications around university events and happenings, heritage months and cultural celebrations, and the like. NAU's weekly news briefing has been reimagined and refined into a twice weekly newsletter - **NAU Review**, which includes "**Notes from the President**," a recap of the president's weekly activities on- and off-campus to ensure a steady stream of information on how he invests his time in advancement of the university mission.

In addition to the weekly communications, the President's Office has improved communication with regular, issue-based engagement with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Faculty Senate, Staff Advisory Council, and the student governments for undergraduate and graduate students. In AY2021-2022, interactive townhalls (i.e., COVID protocols or the Strategic Roadmap process) provided additional mechanisms for consultation and engagement.

In AY2021-2022, the provost launched a coordinated, systematic approach to sequenced meetings within Academic Affairs to facilitate communication and collaboration among academic and faculty leaders. The Academic Leadership Assembly is a series of deliberative convenings. The **Deans' Council**, and the **Academic Leadership Collaborative** each meet monthly. The Collaborative includes the provost, vice provosts, deans, one associate dean per college, one chair/school director per college, and the Faculty Senate elected officers. Action items flow through the Assembly to ad hoc task/work groups with the proposals/recommendations routed back through the Assembly to the stakeholder groups, chairs, Senate, student, etc. At least twice a year, all academic leaders are convened for an **Academic Leadership Summit** with structured and facilitated deliberations about more substantial issues, such as planning and prioritization. Academic Leadership Summits expand the Collaborative to include all associate deans and chairs/directors and an extended group of Faculty Senate leaders.

The **Provost Leadership Fellows** program invites participants to develop their leadership skills and gain administrative experience in the day-to-day working and decision-making processes within Academic Affairs. Starting in Fall 2022, Fellows will make impactful contributions in strategic areas, develop their knowledge of current and emerging challenges in higher education, assess their own interest in university administration, and become better prepared for administrative roles. In addition, the Provost's Office

conducted an internal search for an **Advisor to the Provost for HSI Initiatives** to help articulate how NAU can build mission-connected strength in serving the diverse Latino communities of our state and nation.

Under Provost Pugliesi's leadership, NAU has made significant progress on several important faculty-related initiatives and policies, including approval of **teaching track proposal**, increasing the number of **multi-year appointments** for teaching-focused faculty, developing a **workload policy framework**, creation of a standard protocol for internal selection of academic unit leaders, and launching a number of tenure-track faculty searches. These efforts and the collaborative processes that lead to these changes are helping to address many of the issues that have caused significant consternation and frustration on the part of the faculty in recent years. (See Criterion 3.C.2.)

These collaborative, consultative approaches not only apply systematically across our institutional practices, they are reflected in our strategic planning approach - from the first communication in August 2021 announcing the launch of the Strategic Roadmap process, through the regular updates regarding the who, why, what and how of the process and the regular invitations to shape NAU's future in three systematic engagement phases, to the endorsement of the Strategic Roadmap by the University Advisory Board. See Criterion 1.

In addition to the governance processes and practices articulated above, NAU engages with the Arizona Board of Regents, as specified by board policy. As described in **2.C.1.**, ABOR creates policy and provides guidance on academic and student affairs, strategic plans, legal affairs, and public outreach; regulates financial management and capital development; and sets tuition and fees. Established standing committees meet regularly to focus on key Board responsibilities. The governing board meets at least five times annually with proceedings streamed from the board's website.

#### 5.A.2.

NAU has a long history of utilizing data to inform institutional practices and operations. Select examples from across the university, including Enrollment Management, Academic Affairs, and Human Resources highlight recent data-informed decisions that were made in the best interests of the institution and constituents.

In Spring 2022, upon learning that approximately 18% of Arizona high schools do not offer all of the required coursework for assured admissions to the three public institutions, **ABOR approved** NAU's request to pilot revised admissions standards: if a student meets Arizona's high school requirements with a 3.0 GPA or higher, they will be assured admissions. NAU's pilot will ensure that the approximately 50,000 students in AZ high schools that do not offer all of the courses currently required by ABOR will not be denied the opportunity for assured admissions solely because of the school they happen to attend.

**Based on impact data**, NAU redesigned institutional support for students attending with a high school GPA of 2.5-2.85. The revitalized College Success Program for Fall 2022 will focus on providing academic skill-based programming, academic socialization support, and social engagement within credit-earning academic coursework.

In 2018 and 2019, **analysis of transfer student** pathways and success at the college and program level spurred curricular and advising changes (See **page 9** for Psychological Sciences' changes).

Starting in 2018, the Provost's Office in collaboration with each college identified college and degree-specific issues/concerns (See **SBS**). Data-informed action plans (see **CCJ**) guided systematic approaches to increase student outcomes.

Starting in 2020, based on **class completion gaps**, NAU launched The Equity Academy to advance equity of outcomes for low income, first generation, and students of color by connecting faculty with development opportunities that promote inclusive pedagogy and resources to make inquiries into course completion.

In Fall 2021, through a consultative process and thorough **review of analyses** that demonstrated that multi-term enrollment did not offer clear benefits to students (and had undue burden on academic units), the Provost's Office announced a **phase-out plan for multi-term enrollment** – a process that was implemented with insufficient consultation in 2016.

In Fall 2021, NAU implemented a new **University Closure Policy** between Christmas and the New Year's holiday, based on data from staff. This recognition of employees' hard work and contributions resulted in a tremendous morale boost.

Based on 2021 **employee survey data**, NAU implemented a **flexible workplace framework** that sets clear guidelines to meet increased demand for flexibility and optimization of our service while ensuring that we continue to deliver on our mission of educating students.

NAU's approach in AY2021-2022 to the Covid protocols provides an excellent example of consultative leadership, **data-informed decision-making, and systematic, transparent communication**.

In January 2022, President Cruz Rivera created an executive-level position, vice president for university strategy, to reinforce the institutional need for a culture of data-informed decision-making that is guided by our Strategic Roadmap. In support of these efforts, the re-structured and revitalized Office of Strategic Planning, Institutional Research, and Analytics provides accurate and timely institutional data to support NAU leadership's data-informed decisions to manage resources wisely, improve institutional effectiveness, and implement institutional strategic priorities.

NAU's **Data Governance model** sets clear expectations and supports the accuracy, consistency, and availability of quality data and information. **Data Governance Advisory Committees** provide meaningful guidance with the involvement of functional areas from across the university. Security, communication, and collaboration between teams are keys to ensuring all aspects of data management, technology, and web/digital strategy are being used to effectively advance strategic initiatives and institutional improvement.

**5.A.3.** The institution's administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective collaborative structures.

The Provost's Office together with faculty, staff, and students in seven discipline-based colleges, the Honors College, Graduate College, and NAU-Yuma collaboratively set academic requirements, policy, and processes. As articulated in the Constitution, in the vital areas of curriculum and other academic policy matters, faculty have the primary role in decision-making, subject to the approval of the provost, the president, and the Board of Regents. Faculty Senate must approve through the action of appropriate standing elected, representative university committees, all academic policy including but not limited to curriculum and assessment, mode and method of instructional delivery, research, scholarly, and creative and artistic activity, and other related areas.

As articulated in the Senate Bylaws, the processes to set academic requirements include review of curriculum proposals by **college committees, University Undergraduate Committee, University Graduate Committee, Liberal Studies Committee, or Diversity Committee**, as appropriate. Faculty

members, staff and students are included on Faculty Senate-charged committees. For example, in AY21-22 the **Liberal Studies Committee** includes faculty, students, and staff from Curriculum and Assessment, University Writing Program, Registrar, and Gateway Student Success Center, to name a few.

Academic policies identified for inclusion in the university's **University Policy Library** are drafted, reviewed, updated, and approved through key NAU stakeholder committees and ABOR, as applicable. For example, in 2020, the **Academic Standards Committee (ASC)**, a Faculty Senate-charged committee with representation of administrators, faculty, staff, and students, reviewed NAU's policy on administrative drops. As part of this process, the committee worked closely with the Registrar's Office to draft a new administrative drop policy. The proposed policy was then sent to faculty, academic staff/advisors, and student groups requesting feedback, support, or statements of concern about the proposed policy. All feedback was reviewed and, where appropriate, incorporated into the revised policy. Subsequently, the ASC voted to recommend the revised policy to the provost for approval.

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- IV.5.A.1.24 Workload Policy Framework
- IV.5.A.2.01 ABOR approved
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- IV.5.A.2.03 Analysis of Transfer Student
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- IV.5.A.2.14 Data Governance Model
- IV.5.A.2.15 Data Governance Advisory Committee
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- IV.5.A.3.02 University Undergraduate Committee
- IV.5.A.3.03 University Graduate Committee
- IV.5.A.3.04 Liberal Studies Committee
- IV.5.A.3.05 Diversity Committee
- IV.5.A.3.06 Liberal Studies Committee
- IV.5.A.3.07 University Policy Library <https://nau.edu/university-policy-library/>
- IV.5.A.3.08 Academic Standards Committee

## 5.B - Core Component

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5.B. The institution's resource base supports its educational offerings and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.

1. The institution has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.
2. The goals incorporated into the mission and any related statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.
3. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances.
4. The institution's fiscal allocations ensure that its educational purposes are achieved.

### Argument

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**5.B.1.** NAU has qualified and trained operational staff and infrastructure sufficient to support operations and programs across all locations and modalities. NAU's faculty and staff (See Criterion 3.C.2. and 3.C.6., respectively.) are appropriately qualified and trained. Recruitment, selection/hiring, and human resources management processes, with separate and detailed procedures for faculty and staff, ensure equity, retention, and development of highly qualified employees. These processes are documented in the **Human Resources Policy Manual, Conditions of Faculty Service**, and the **Faculty Handbook** which are available in the University Policy Library.

As part of the hiring process, faculty and staff position postings include required and preferred education and qualifications needed to fulfill the requirements of the position. In accordance with **Reference and Background Checks**, NAU conducts a confirmation of academic credentials of the selected candidate for any position for which a degree is required or preferred. For any position that requires or prefers a license or certification, the license or certification must be current and in good standing.

**Human Resources, ITS, and the Comptroller's Office provide formal and informal training** both in-person and online to ensure access, regardless of an employee's physical location. Managers and supervisors are required to allow classified staff and service professional employees to participate in a minimum of 16 hours of career and professional development programs each fiscal year. Employees and supervisors document training and professional development in annual performance appraisals. Performance management and feedback are provided on a regular basis in accordance with documented **HR Performance Management principles and Annual Review, Promotion, and Tenure standards.**

Divisions across the institution also have tailored support and training opportunities. For example, full time and graduate assistant employees in **Student Affairs participate** in the following, as applicable: Student Affairs New Employee Orientation, Annual Professional Development Day, Mid-Level Managers Series, Leadership Workshop Series, individual and team Success Coaching, Department Consulting, and episodic trainings/workshops presented by experts within the university. Partnerships with the Office of Inclusion (Zone Training), NAU Career Development, Student Employment (supervisor training), Health Promotion (alcohol and other drug training), Housing and Residence Life (diversity, equity, and inclusion training) strengthen the scope of offerings and support Student Affairs' efforts and goals.

## Physical Infrastructure

NAU Flagstaff campus has 3,581,484 gross square feet of academic and academic support facilities, 1,414,264 gross square feet associated with auxiliary facilities, and 2,061,279 gross square feet of residence halls (includes those that are part of the NAU partnership with American Campus Communities and the Honors College). These buildings are located on 683.4 acres of total Flagstaff campus land. NAU also owns 86,379 gross square feet of academic space in Yuma, Kingman, and Phoenix. The university's square footage increased by 15,005 GSF due to the generous donation of the Historic Hat Ranch, which also came with 300 acres of forested property.

NAU is actively investing in physical infrastructure, both to increase campus square footage and to improve the existing square footage. Capital expenditures in FY21 were \$13.9 million, with \$9.4 million of those expenditures focused in on capital renewal of academic/support space, infrastructure, and life safety/code compliance items. A Capital Improvement Plan is submitted annually to ABOR: The **2023-2025** plan shows a request of \$29.2 million for Building Renewal to address aging buildings and supporting infrastructure to maintain the building's expected useful life.

As part of funding used to investment in campus physical infrastructure, in 2017, the State of Arizona passed a budget that included the most significant investment in Arizona's three state universities in more than a decade. State legislation provides for an annual appropriation for the next 25 years for critical capital investments. As part of this, NAU's appropriation has increased - starting at \$4,520,900 in FY 2019, with annual increases up to 2% each year for 25 years, depending on the annual change in the gross domestic price deflator.

The majority of NAU's statewide programs are located on community college campuses or, as is the case with the Phoenix Bioscience Core, in partnership with the University of Arizona. Facilities sharing agreements are reviewed annually to ensure the needs of students are being met, faculty have adequate classrooms that are properly maintained, and students have access to labs, computers, and libraries. For example, the North Valley campus hosts administrative staff that support many of the centralized services available to the other locations, including IT technicians that support locations statewide. These partnerships and infrastructure investments enable NAU to ensure the facilities continue to meet the needs of the students and the curriculum.

The office of **Space Management** serves as the central repository for information regarding the institution's space and as a resource for space-related decision-making that positively impacts NAU's instruction, research, and public service missions.

Each Spring semester, a classroom improvement review assesses classroom and learning space utilization and faculty/student needs. Areas are identified, and funds are invested to make improvements and upgrades. With input from faculty and academic unit leaders, NAU implemented changes to our course scheduling practices including a transition away from multiple-term enrollment after an analysis that identified no clear benefit to students, permitting additional flexibility for academic unit leaders through direct schedule modification access, and the launch of a new room assignment software system that will afford better coordination of academic and non-academic space use.

In April 2022, to effectively utilize and continually improve our physical resources to optimally deliver all aspects of our mission, NAU launched a **Sustainable Smart Campus Master Planning process**, which is a key institutional strategic priority related to Sustainable Stewardship of Resources. This initiative will draw upon data, collective stakeholder engagement from the NAU community and the surrounding Flagstaff community and be guided by a twenty-eight person steering committee comprised of representative from across the university including the key governance groups.

## Technological Infrastructure

Networking connects over 30,000 clients (using 50,000 networked devices in any given day) to essential IT services, both local and worldwide. NAU has a 10-gigabit network backbone with high-capacity network connections to key research buildings. Connections to the Internet2 national research and education network are made through Arizona's Sun Corridor regional network—a partnership between NAU, the University of Arizona, and Arizona State University. With Sun Corridor and a high-speed campus backbone, NAU is prepared to provide the network capacity for activities ranging from big data research to online learning experiences to seamless integration of commercial cloud services. Supported with recent investments in WiFi infrastructure, mobile computing is supported through a vast campus wireless network with 802.11 service provided to every building on the campus.

To ensure exceptional support of the institutional educational purposes, NAU ITS conducts an annual survey of faculty, students, and staff assessing the computing and electronic learning environment at the institution. For example, in response to an indicated need for increased after-hour support, ITS now provides support 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Staff and faculty have direct access to appropriate applications as well. ITS provides central coordination for computer procurement, and software licensing of over 500 application titles. NAU has an IT **accessibility policy** All Information and Communication Technology (ICT) purchased, developed, maintained, or used must meet federally recognized accessibility standards (Section 508 for ICT generally, WCAG 2.0 AA for web accessibility). Software titles are available to the university community in computer labs, office computers, and through virtual delivery systems supporting nearly any personal device. All faculty, staff and students have access to Google Apps for collaborative learning and work activities. Student access to these learning and administrative tools are also available through single-sign-on services via the my.nau.edu web portal.

To support research, high-performance computing, and the School of Informatics, Computing, and Cyber Systems, NAU provides a high-performance computing cluster called “**Monsoon**,” capable of 19 trillion calculations per second with total memory of 12 trillion bytes. Monsoon has 750 TB of FDR infiniband connected storage.

**5.B.2.** Aligned with NAU's mission, **NAU's goals** are realistic in light of the university's organization, resources, and opportunities. Goal progress is carefully tracked through institutional performance measures and through ABOR Enterprise Metrics (**2008-2020** and **2025 Projections** and **ABOR Enterprise Metrics**). The 13 primary metric projections were developed by NAU after a thorough review of trend data, peer data, and a scan of external factors (e.g., K-12 pipeline.). As described in Criterion 1, in Fall 2022, NAU will revise ABOR Enterprise Metrics and Institutional metrics to align with the new NAU Strategic Roadmap.

To expand NAU's capacity to meet ambitious institutional goals, President Cruz Rivera is securing **additional revenue sources**, hiring personnel, and **addressing compensation concerns**. In February 2022, **ABOR approved** NAU's \$51 million proposal for Technology and Research Initiative Funds (TRIF) for targeted areas of research, access and workforce development programs, and a new competitive intramural process for seed funding. The new seed funding program will support and incentivize our university's teacher-scholars in the development of new and expanded workforce development programs that enable access, as well as projects that support the intersections between research and experiential learning opportunities for our diverse student population.

ABOR also approved a **special one-time \$20 million TRIF allocation** to support NAU's access and attainment goals, specifically our commitment to broaden participation, improve completion rates for all

students, reduce completion gaps among groups of students, and strengthen post-college outcomes. Additionally, the NAU Foundation approved NAU's request for \$10 million to further support achievement of these goals.

NAU systematically evaluates risk within the context of NAU being able to meet our institutional goals and fulfil our mission. The **Internal Audit department** also **evaluates risk** exposures related to NAU's governance, operations, and information systems, including effectiveness and efficiency of operations; reliability and integrity of financial and operational information; safeguarding of assets; and compliance with laws, regulations, and contracts. This information leads to the development of the **annual audit plan**.

### 5.B.3.

The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring its finances. The Senior Vice President for University Operations and Chief Financial Officer oversees institutional budget processes. The **annual operating budget development process** includes senior leaders who identify institutional priorities and establish a general consensus on how important the identified priorities are to the mission and health of the university. The president, in collaboration with his Cabinet, determines the best direction for the university, based on resources such as tuition/enrollment revenue and state appropriations. The budget development timeline for each fiscal year begins each Fall semester with enrollment data providing the basis for tuition revenue projections and identified investment priorities informing the fiscal year budget request. Divisional plans and prioritizing of potential investments early each year as well as consultations with ABOR helps the president finalize the fiscal year budget request. Reviewed and approved by ABOR, the fiscal budget request is due to the Governor's Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting on September 30 each year. The Arizona Legislature considers the university budget request (along with other state agencies' budgets) and through a legislative action in the following Spring semester makes a decision to appropriate state funding to NAU. After the state budget is signed by the Governor, the approved fiscal year budget goes into effect on July 1.

NAU continues to invest in its financial systems and technology infrastructure providing for efficient, cost-effective transactional processing with built-in controls to ensure compliance with university policies and procedures and external reporting requirements. In 2021, administrative service delivery teams were fully implemented to provide financial administration support to all campus units. The service delivery model aims to consolidate high volume, transactional business process and improve the consistency, efficiency, and transparency of service.

Anaplan, NAU's centralized budgeting software system, is maintained and administered by the University Budget Office (UBO). Department representatives/business managers directly enter their budgets into Anaplan each year. UBO provides training and guidance to these individuals regarding budget process guidelines and information, along with a series of All Funds Budgeting and Analysis questions for business managers to consider when developing their operating budgets. In addition, UBO monitors large budget variances in the annual budget submission process through automated Anaplan reports. The Budget Office works with units across the university to update revenue and expenditure projections each month. The Comptroller's Office periodically examines the effectiveness of its financial systems and makes changes to ensure accuracy.

Further support of strong processes for budgeting and expense monitoring is demonstrated by regular email communications sent by the Comptroller to all financial staff regarding compliance with accounting, financial, budgeting, and other related administrative responsibilities. Below are highlighted policy and procedure resources:

- **Comptroller policies**

- **Contracting and Purchasing policies (Sections 100 – 600)**
- **Purchasing Card policies (Section 800)**
- **Internal Control policies (Section 600)**
- **NAU Conduct, Ethics, Reporting, and Transparency (CERT) Program**

Continuous Control Monitoring (CCM) occurs regularly as a detective control to monitor university adherence to policy and procedures, and to detect potentially fraudulent activity.

NAU's financial results noted previously reflect the ability to adapt during the pandemic. Pages 25-27 (**Board Agenda Item**) reflect a set of Principles that informed and guided NAU's operational response which in turn impacted the financial planning. As revenue projections were made in anticipation of a sharp drop in all forms of revenue, actions were implemented to align expenditures to those revenues. Those actions included adjusting salaries of all employees, refinancing debt service, adjusting department operational budgets for reduced activities such as travel, and implementing hiring freeze. As the year progressed and activity and additional revenue opportunities became clearer, actions were taken to adjust to the new information including the elimination of the salary reduction program by mid-year.

**5.B.4.** NAU' fiscal resources are allocated to ensure our educational purposes are achieved. As documented in the **FY22 State and Local Operating Budget**, NAU's allocations reflect our educational commitment, with 72% of budgeted state expenditures devoted to instruction, academic support, and student services directly.

University fiscal accountability is detailed in **NAU's 2021 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report** which attests to the fiscal resources available to support quality educational programs and the ongoing sources and types of revenue. As represented in the 2021 financial report, NAU is in a strong financial position to support its operations. On June 30, 2021, NAU's total assets exceeded \$1.2 billion, which was \$16.8 million more than the prior fiscal year (FY). Net capital assets composed \$837 million of the nearly \$1.2 billion in assets, a similar proportion to that of June 30, 2020. Total liabilities were \$913.9 million at June 30, 2021, an decrease of \$12.2 million from the prior fiscal year. The net position of the university increased \$56.5 million or 22.5%, above the previous year to a net position at June 30, 2021, of \$307.4 million. The university's financial reporting conforms to standards of financial reporting established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). Since FY16, due to GASB 68 which addresses accounting and financial reporting for pensions, and FY 17, due to GASB 75 accounting and financial reporting by employers for postemployment benefits other than pensions, the university's net position is adjusted for these statements. Without the GASB Statement No. 68 and No. 75 adjustments, the university's net position would have increased \$52.6 million (\$3.9 million less than with adjustments) over FY20.

NAU is consistently awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its ACFR by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). The most recent award for FY20 represents the **7th year in a row**.

Since the last HLC comprehensive review (i.e., the period from FY16 to FY21), the university has increased its total net position by \$25 million (from \$282.4 million to \$307.4 million) and increased total revenues by 8% (from \$531.7M to \$628.4M). Total revenues (sources) most recently increased \$21.2 million from FY20 to FY21 (from \$607.2 million to \$628.4 million). Tuition and fees accounted for 35% of total revenue in FY21, while state and capital appropriations accounted for 18%.

As of June 30, 2021, NAU had \$1.4 billion invested in capital assets, with accumulated depreciation and amortization of \$663 million for net capital assets of \$836 million. Since the last HLC comprehensive review (i.e. the period from FY16 to FY21), the university completed several major contractual commitments related to various capital projects. Examples of new buildings and building improvements funded with bonds include the Student Athletic High Performance Center (SAHPC) and the Kitt School of Music Recital Hall. NAU's SAHPC recently opened in Spring 2022. The 77,000 square foot sports center will allow NAU student athletes to train their bodies for when it is their time to step onto the field. In addition to providing space to support their success in the classroom, NAU's SAHPC increases opportunities for high altitude exercise-based research.

As of June 30, 2021, NAU's outstanding debt was \$632 million, compared to \$655 million at the end of the prior year. During May of 2021, the university utilized cash holdings to pay off the capital lease for and notes payable due to Northern Arizona Real Estate Holdings LLC (NAREH) and eliminated the higher interest rate (5.5% and 5% per annum) debt. An amount of \$17.5 million in principal payments and \$400 thousand in interest accrued through May 2021 was paid to NAREH to settle this debt. This settlement will save the university \$7.9 million in interest expense over the next 17 years. In prior years, the university refunded, in advance of maturity, a portion of the outstanding System Revenue Bonds Series 2014 by placing the bond proceeds of the new bonds in an irrevocable trust to provide for future debt service payments on the old bonds. As of June 30, 2021, the outstanding principal balance of the refunded 2014 Bonds was \$15 million which will be paid by investments held in an irrevocable trust with a fair value of \$17 million. Additionally in prior years, the university refunded, in advance of maturity, a portion of the outstanding SPEED Revenue Bonds Series 2013 by placing the bond proceeds of the new bonds in an irrevocable trust to provide for future debt service payments on the old bonds. As of June 30, 2021, the outstanding principal balance of the refunded bonds was \$32 million which will be paid by investments held in the trust with a fair value of \$34.9 million. NAU carries an institutional bond rating of A1 from **Moody's** and an A+ rating from **Standard & Poor's**.

At the end of FY21, NAU and the NAU Foundation had \$226 million in endowment funds to support the university. The funds grew significantly from the prior fiscal year, when endowment funds were reported as \$161 million. Grants and gifts increased \$31.4 million, or 30.9%, from FY 21 to FY 20 and include government Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act revenue and Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF).

NAU balances its fiscal needs with moderate tuition increases generally impacting only new and not continuing students, by leveraging public-private partnerships when possible (examples include residence halls built and operated by American Campus Communities, email outsourced to Google, food services operated by Sodexo, and High Country Conference Center that brought together NAU, City of Flagstaff, and Drury Hotels), increasing funding from external grant awards, renegotiating contracts, refinancing debt, maintaining an on-going emphasis on philanthropy, and cost-saving streamlining of operations.

NAU uses auxiliary enterprises as a method of ensuring units that provide supporting goods and services to students are appropriately self-sufficient and do not divert funds away from core university functions. **Auxiliary enterprise revenues** primarily represent revenues generated by athletics, the bookstore, parking services, the health center, dining, and residence life.

## Sources

- IV.5.B.1.01 Human Resources Policy Manual
- IV.5.B.1.02 Conditions of Faculty Service
- IV.5.B.1.03 Faculty Handbook

- IV.5.B.1.04 Reference and Background Checks
- IV.5.B.1.05 Human Resources
- IV.5.B.1.06 ITS
- IV.5.B.1.07 Comptroller's Office\_ formal and informal training
- IV.5.B.1.08 HR Performance Management Principles
- IV.5.B.1.09 Annual Review, Promotion and Tenure Standards <https://in.nau.edu/provost/reviews-tenure/>
- IV.5.B.1.10 Student Affairs participate
- IV.5.B.1.11 2023-2025
- IV.5.B.1.12 Space Management
- IV.5.B.1.13 Sustainable Smart Campus Master Plan
- IV.5.B.1.14 IT Accessibility Policy
- IV.5.B.1.15 Monsoon
- IV.5.B.2.01 NAU goals
- IV.5.B.2.02 ABOR metrics 2008-2020
- IV.5.B.2.03 ABOR metrics 2025 Projections
- IV.5.B.2.04 ABOR Enterprise Metrics
- IV.5.B.2.05 Additional Revenue sources
- IV.5.B.2.06 Addressing Compensation Concerns
- IV.5.B.2.07 February 2022 ABOR approved
- IV.5.B.2.08 Special One-Time 20 million TRIF allocation
- IV.5.B.2.09 Internal Audit Department
- IV.5.B.2.10 Evaluates Risk
- IV.5.B.2.11 Annual Audit Plan
- IV.5.B.3.01 Annual Operating Budget Development Process
- IV.5.B.3.02 Comptroller policies <https://nau.edu/university-policy-library/comptroller-policies/>
- IV.5.B.3.03 Contracting and Purchasing policies (Sections 100-600)
- IV.5.B.3.04 Purchasing Card policies (Section 800)
- IV.5.B.3.05 Internal Control policies (Section 600)
- IV.5.B.3.06 NAU Conduct, Ethics, Reporting, and Transparency (CERT) program
- IV.5.B.3.07 Board Agenda Item pages 25-27
- IV.5.B.4.01 FY22 State and Local Operating Budget
- IV.5.B.4.02 2021 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR)
- IV.5.B.4.03 7th year in a row
- IV.5.B.4.04 Moodys and Standard & Poors
- IV.5.B.4.05 Auxiliary enterprise revenues

## 5.C - Core Component

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5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

### Argument

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**5.C.1., 5.C.2., 5.C.3., 5.C.4., 5.C.5. and 5.C.6.** NAU's budget process ensures that budget priorities align with the mission and priorities established in the NAU strategic plan. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment. (See Criterion 5.B.3.) A key component of the University Budget Advisory Board is the **annual training and orientation** on the status of the university's budget, strategic priorities, funding sources, legislative outlooks, and other key matters that contribute to resource forecasting, prioritization, and stewardship.

As part of NAU's improved budget process, vice presidents share proposed divisional budgets, that include research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers as applicable, with the UBAB. They synthesize divisional priorities, current capacity, anticipated revenue streams with tuition and fee setting and the state's investment through the general fund appropriation to provide input and recommendations to the president on prioritizing and funding university initiatives and operational excellence. Chaired by the Senior Vice President for University Operations, the UBAB will work closely with all Cabinet members throughout the annual budget cycle, culminating in an annual public memo to the president with advisory recommendations for the coming fiscal year's priorities. After careful review of the advisory recommendations and other important considerations regarding the strategic context in which the university operates, the president will publicly respond, describing the approved budget and indicating how the recommendations from the advisory board informed the final budget. The UBAB process will be fully implemented in AY2022-2023.

Planning at NAU is continuous and dynamic, evolving based on institutional needs, advancements, demographic shifts, and financial considerations. In addition to the comprehensive process utilized to develop the NAU Strategic Roadmap (See Criterion 1), that included internal and external groups, NAU engages in complementary planning processes that involve the institution as a whole and considers a range of perspectives. To facilitate external constituent dialogue and collaboration regarding planning and improvement efforts, NAU leadership regularly engages with NAU's **Native American Advisory Board**, **Alumni Association Board**, Northern Arizona Leadership Alliance, Greater Phoenix Leadership, to name a few. Colleges also formally seek internal and external input, through advisory and community boards (see **W.A. Franke College of Business's National Advisory Board**).

NAU links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting. For example, two complementary processes overseen by the Provost's Office, as part of program life cycle management, demonstrate this linkage within Academic Affairs and highlight the role of planning and subsequent actions.

The Provost's Office **Program and Partnership Request Process** ensures that there is a comprehensive planning and resourcing process for all new programs and educational partnerships. The website provides information, resources, templates, and guidelines to establish new academic programs and external partnerships, make substantive changes to existing academic programs, and/or establish or change organizational structures of academic units.

Required **Academic Program Review/Specialized Accreditation** processes ensure systematic and integrated planning and improvement foci for each academic program and include faculty and administration discussions about student learning assessment, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting. Internal academic unit discussions result in a Self-Study report, followed by dialogue with academic deans, prior to central administration discussions with expert external reviewers. These discussions result in an action planning document that is focused on continual improvement for student learning, faculty engagement, and unit operations. Program evaluation and assessment of student learning data are considered in light of the institution as a whole to guide operations, planning, and resource allocation.

Annual Curriculum & Assessment Reports capture accomplishments and plans for improvement in student learning outcomes by academic program. (See examples (See examples from **Public Health, Business Administration, Politics and International Affairs**.) The **Annual Assessment Fair** poster presentations represent assessment efforts carried out by faculty, staff, and students across the university. Assessment projects range from student learning to student needs and satisfaction, benchmarking studies, and to student usage of services and programs.

NAU offers a broad portfolio of high-quality academic programs with learning outcomes and perspectives that are responsive to the workforce and social needs of Arizona and beyond. Academic planning has resulted in NAU receiving nearly \$25 million of state support in FY22 for the **New Economy Initiative**, which has focused on expanding our allied health programming. NAU will continue investments in the critical area of economic, public health, and workforce need for our state in FY23, with an additional 200+ students enrolling next year.

The examples highlighted below from across the institution demonstrate that NAU develops and implements plans to systematically improve operations and student outcomes. NAU values and employs continuous improvement processes through regular and objective reporting and evaluation from both internal and external entities.

To improve student outcomes and learning, NAU engaged in an open selection process that prioritized the broadest possible degree of collaboration and consultation to select Instructure's Canvas as the institution's next Learning Management System (LMS). While this selection is a critical milestone, it is only the first step toward our adoption of this new platform. With our current Blackboard Original LMS remaining in place through Spring 2023, we will continue collaborating and openly sharing information on our implementation and migration efforts until the transition is complete. Our **information portal** will continue to be regularly updated throughout **major planned activities**.

Throughout AY2021-2022, the President's Council for Price and Positioning has been working to implement significant plans to broaden access to NAU. In April 2022, NAU announced it will provide a tuition-free college education for every Arizona resident with a household income of \$65,000 or below –

assuring tuition will be fully covered by scholarships and financial aid (Approximately 50 percent of Arizona households currently meet this financial threshold). The new NAU **Access2Excellence** initiative reflects the urgent need to broaden participation and increase educational attainment in Arizona, helping students gain knowledge and skills needed to participate in state's booming economy.

Additional improvements include:

- Focusing the majority of financial aid for students with the greatest need.
- Covering the costs for the lowest income Arizonans, in conjunction with the **Arizona Promise Program**.
- Eliminating all undergraduate course and program fees (except Honors College) in favor of a flat academic fee for each student to increase the predictability of fees for students and families.
- Eliminating the undergraduate application fee for first-year Arizona undergraduates who are planning to attend NAU at the Flagstaff campus.
- Continuing the practice of not charging for guests attending orientation with incoming students, reinforcing the university's commitment to families as a vital part of student success.
- Shifting to a per-credit tuition model for part-time students with fewer than 12 credits from the current model where full-time tuition rates apply after seven credits or more.

Since 2018, NAU has been implementing a **Strategic Enrollment Management Plan (SEMP)**, that include targeted marketing efforts, academic programming, recruitment and retention efforts, and technological improvements. However, the pandemic disrupted the SEMP process and will be replaced by the NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence (See Criterion 5.A.1. for more information on the Roadmap process.) Enrollment Management plans to re-establish their SEMP process in Fall 2022. Based on these plans, significant progress has been made in the rebalancing of our enrollment portfolio, with graduate enrollment accounting for 16%, a 4% increase since 2017. (See Criterion 1.A.2. and 1.A.3.)

Enrollment Management works closely with **Center for International Education (CIE)** to understand the changing landscape of international student enrollments. Prior to the pandemic in 2019, NAU's **international student population was 1,280**, contributing to a rich, vibrant Flagstaff campus community. CIE is charged with providing leadership in the development and execution of the university's strategic plan for the internationalization of the institution and curriculum.

In 2019, NAU reorganized the Enrollment Management and Student Affairs division into separate functional divisions to improve student outcomes. The two complementary divisions focus on the demographic cliff-induced enrollment challenges facing higher educational institutions and student support and experience-oriented programming, respectively.

Starting in 2019, NAU began implementing plans to improve operations and efficiencies with two campus-wide initiatives:

- o The **Classification and Compensation** project created 697 job profiles for the new staff classification structure. The job profiles were reviewed by subject matter experts and formed the foundation for uniform reclassifications to align position responsibilities to titles.
- o The **Organizational Growth and Effectiveness Initiative** involved the design and implementation of a Service Delivery Model to help create effective processes and improve the service experience.

NAU submits a campus master plan (**2010 campus master plan** and the **2015 Landscape Master Plan**) to ABOR every five years and annually submits a three-year capital plan for ABOR review and approval. External review of capital projects occurs through ABOR review as well as community open forums on

select projects. As appropriate, department faculty, staff, and students are engaged from the pre-planning needs assessment through implementation, steering committees are established to develop scope, and a review process includes internal and external constituents throughout the planning process.

Technological infrastructure, both in Flagstaff and statewide, is addressed by Information Technology Services (ITS) in their **2015-2019 Strategic Plan** and **final report**. Implementing technological advancements and addressing cybersecurity risk are two critical areas of continual improvement.

NAU implemented a Digital Credential project to increase security and convenience for students. Smart phone users will have digital credentials rather than a physical NAU ID card. Relatedly, ITS implemented a new smart phone-based attendance system for those faculty who choose to take attendance and/or utilize class polling exercises.

To improve operations, systematize prioritization, and ensure strategic alignment of projects with core university goals and objectives, the **Strategic Project Review and Resource Committee** quarterly reviews all new cross-divisional project requests. Resourcing and work is assigned based on priority and resource availability.

As a result of external ITS security reviews, NAU implemented several major projects including the expansion of two-factor authentication, Oracle database encryption, and moving to an MPLS network design have been initiated. In April 2022, NAU's executive leadership engaged in a security incident tabletop exercise - scenarios that simulate impacts on university operations and management responses to events that are often unpredictable and potentially catastrophic. Results will inform our practices and prepare NAU for real-world incidents that require a cross-divisional and coordinated response and contribute to how cyber insurance is structured to best support our risk management planning.

The university places an emphasis on accessibility, asset protection, and safety and emergency preparedness. The university emphasizes the importance of accessibility in its facilities and infrastructure, including accessible bus routes, universal design for physical plant, and for learning and academic imaging accessibility tools. The **Office of Emergency Management** coordinates an advisory group and various partnerships and manages the university's **Emergency Operations Plan**. This office also provides online training courses to keep the classrooms and offices as safe as possible.

**To accelerate action, President Cruz Rivera declared a climate emergency** at NAU and committed to heightened investments of the university community's time, talents, effort, and resources to securing the conditions needed to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. NAU models environmentally responsible and sustainable operations and education. The **Green NAU Sustainability Action Plan** was created and implemented in 2015 (update expected in 2022) and addresses water, recycling and waste management, transportation, operations, procurement, energy and climate, and academics and research. **Sustainability and environmental curricula and research** are part of a variety of undergraduate majors and graduate programs.

NAU annually reports to ABOR on progress the university is making on ABOR goals and the NAU Strategic Plan, through the **Operational and Financial Review (OFR)**. The OFR is accompanied by a summary of university performance on key performance measures. Further, the president provides an updated strategic business and academic plan, which considers opportunities and challenges of the university along with the resources needed to achieve the plan. NAU's plans align with the **ABOR's statewide university enterprise plan** which is used to establish goals and outcomes for the system.

Similarly, NAU's Strategic Plan Performance Measures are used to assess progress toward institutional goals. A **President's Cabinet Report** is presented monthly as a way to evaluate and question any and all

aspects of the institution. Progress is also monitored through **reports** or revised planning documents. Institutional Research provides a wide variety of data to the general public through its website and participation in national and international surveys to ensure transparency and accountability.

## Sources

- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.01 Annual Training and Orientation
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.02 Native American Advisory Board
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.03 Alumni Association Board
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.04 W.A. Franke College of Business Advisory Board
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.05 Program and Partnership Request Process
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.06 Academic Program Review\_Specialized Accreditation
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.07 Public Health
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.08 Business Administration
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.09 Politics and International Affairs
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.10 Annual Assessment Fair
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.11 New Economy Initiative
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.12 Information Portal
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.13 Major Planned Activities
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.14 Access2Excellence
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.15 Arizona Promise Program
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.16 Draft Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2019-2025
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- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.20 Organizational Growth and Effectiveness Initiative <https://in.nau.edu/ogei/>
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.21 Campus Master Plan
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.21.1 2015 NAU Landscape Master Plan
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.22 ITS 2015-2019 Strategic Plan
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.23 ITS Final Plan
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.24 Strategic Project Review and Resource Committee
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.25 Office of Emergency Management
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.26 Emergency Operations Plan
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.27 Declared a Climate Emergency
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.28 Green NAU Sustainability Action Plan
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.29 Sustainability and Environmental Curricula and Research
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.30 Operational and Final Review
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.31 ABORs statewide university enterprise plan
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.32 Presidents Cabinet Report
- IV.5.C.1.2.3.4.5.6.33 Reports

## 5.S - Criterion 5 - Summary

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The institution's resources, structures, processes and planning are sufficient to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational offerings, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

### **Summary**

Under President José Luis Cruz Rivera's leadership since June 2021, Northern Arizona University has made significant strides in the areas of shared governance and improved communication, collaboration, and engagement between administration, faculty, staff, and students. Rebuilding trust and increasing transparency through consultative leadership, collaborative processes and substantive communication approaches has led to redesigned deliberative structures, processes, and practices.

NAU's resources, structures, and processes are monitored and guided by a strong framework of management and strategic planning efforts to ensure fulfillment of mission and a cycle of continuous improvement. Data-informed decision-making guides our operations. A robust network and culture of leadership spans the university, providing direction and oversight for fiscal, capital, and human resource management and resulting in resource allocation principles that align with NAU's overall mission and priorities. A series of enterprise metric targets approved by ABOR for the university, along with a set of key performance indicators aligned with NAU's strategic plan, assure a thorough and regular review of institutional goals and progress. Budget planning includes engagement with a diverse array of stakeholders from Faculty Senate, undergraduate and graduate student leaders, and staff councils, with ultimate oversight from ABOR. NAU's inclusive culture allows the institution to develop sustainable practices, anticipate emerging factors, and be responsive to the university environment. These resources allow the university to sufficiently and effectively meet the needs of its stakeholders and to address institutional priorities identified in the strategic plan.

### **Sources**

*There are no sources.*