

Draft #2 of the Strategic Roadmap

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We encourage your feedback on Draft #2 of the Strategic Roadmap. Draft #2 builds upon the foundation of Draft #1 and the meaningful input from the NAU community. As we continue to refine the plan to drive action and accountability in the fulfillment of our mission and ultimately align our goals and objectives across all university workstreams and priorities, we look forward to your thoughtful input in advancing NAU’s work as a leader in delivering equitable postsecondary value to our students and the communities they represent.

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Strategic Roadmap Charge and Guiding Principles

The charge of the NAU Strategic Roadmap is to provide structure, organization, action, and accountability for our institutional efforts over the next three years to advance our mission, elevating NAU to become a national leader in supporting and delivering equitable postsecondary value to students and the communities they represent.

The guiding principles set forth below inform how our NAU community will approach the work of the Strategic Roadmap—they cut across all of its goals and objectives, hold true in all we do from planning to implementation, and guide our decision making, priorities, and actions.

- **Distinctive Excellence:** honoring NAU's legacy and leading into the future by leveraging our areas of distinctive excellence in all of the work we do, including centering students in our decision making, being a partner in our communities, and advancing impactful knowledge for our region.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice:** to honor and leverage the diversity of our state, our students, our workforce, and our community, we must develop equitable educational policies and institutional practices that nurture and sustain inclusive environments that contribute to a more just society.
- **Trust and Transparency:** providing clear communication, forums for exchange, and consultation and engagement with university deliberative bodies to ensure our vision for the future is informed by the individual and collective lived experiences of our internal and external NAU community.
- **Commitment to Native Americans:** building on a long history of commitment and service to Native American and Indigenous communities, NAU will redouble efforts to serve and partner with Native American and Indigenous students and communities.
- **Emerging as a Hispanic Serving Institution:** NAU's university-wide designation as a Hispanic Serving Institution in 2021 provides a unique opportunity to build on an emerging area of mission-connected strength in serving the diverse Latinx communities of our state and nation and taking on the important work to reach our full potential in all we do as an HSI.

Goal #1: Inclusive Academic Excellence

NAU will offer high-quality, inclusive academic programming – across academic levels, modalities, and locations – designed to deliver equitable postsecondary value and to promote the postgraduate success of our diverse student population, leading to upward social and economic mobility. NAU’s leading-edge academic programs and pedagogical excellence will be grounded in high-impact practices, including transformative educational opportunities that advance knowledge and develop capacities essential for professional success, informed civic engagement, and global citizenship.

Objectives/Strategies:

Learning Experience

- 1-1: Develop academic programs that recognize and draw on the full life experience of students, are responsive to student interests and societal needs, and prepare students for a variety of professional pathways in current and emerging industries.
- 1-2: Promote and support pedagogy that meets students where they are, recognizes and draws on the strengths and capacities of students from diverse backgrounds, and helps all students across all learning modalities reach their full potential.
- 1-3: Promote a student-driven signature project in each major program, so that every NAU graduate will have had a formal and sustained opportunity to engage in personalized inquiry and learning, and to connect disciplinary knowledge to personal and professional goals in ways that prepare them to excel as creators, researchers, collaborators, and problem solvers.
- 1-4: Embed high-impact practices into the graduation requirements of each major degree program, so that every NAU graduate will have participated in at least one sustained high-impact learning experience, such as internship, thesis, research, community service learning, or study abroad.
- 1-5: Develop and employ strategically high contact pedagogy into program curricula so that students in all majors experience personal connection with faculty in the context of a learning experience.

Learning Structures/Atmosphere

- 1-6: Close achievement gaps among students through routinely measuring and disseminating disaggregated data on educational outcomes across units to identify trends and barriers to student success.
- 1-7: Incorporate curriculum content and pedagogy that acknowledge diverse traditions and ways of knowing, as well as historic patterns and contemporary legacies of economic, ethnic, and racial inequality.

Focus on Career

- 1-8: Promote diverse pedagogy and professional development opportunities to equip students with the cultural competence, resiliency, and skills to build the networks necessary to secure gainful employment and contribute to a global future.
- 1-9: Systematically incorporate curricular and co-curricular learning into every degree program that engages students with career readiness and supports career success after graduation.

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Goal #2: Equitable Student Access, Momentum, Graduation, and Post-Graduation Success

NAU will provide accessible and affordable higher educational experiences coupled with tailored personalized support structures that enable degree completion. While addressing the unique needs of historically underserved, underrepresented, and marginalized communities, NAU will implement pricing policies, admissions standards, locations and learning modalities, student support systems, and educational practices that result in all students' positive academic outcomes and success in professional, personal, and communal life. To successfully execute this goal, we will always ask *what is best for students* when making decisions.

Objectives/Strategies:

Access

- 2-1: Assess, develop, and implement strategies to generate purposeful support of underrepresented students and vulnerable populations, with emphasis on closing access and completion gaps, regardless of learning location or modality.
- 2-2: Strengthen and sustain our investment in the academic and social engagement of Arizona's underserved, underrepresented and marginalized communities by one, designing and implementing predictable pricing and need-based financial aid to maximize access.
- 2-3: Provide timely, nimble, and unique programs and services to raise access and educational attainment at our NAU-Yuma and statewide sites in close partnership with our Arizona Community College partners, industry and community organizations and alumni.

Momentum

- 2-4: Advance a culture of care that strengthens support, well-being, and belonging for faculty, staff, and students in all parts of the university.
- 2-5: Improve the larger technology ecosystem to deliver equitable access and empower students with technology, including the efficacy of our technology tools, access to devices, internet, digital course materials, services, and resources.

Graduation and Post-Graduation Success

- 2-6: Enable lifelong student success by ensuring students are supported to achieve their intended educational objectives through graduation and into alumni engagement (including admission to graduate school, entry into the workforce, government service, community service, and economic and earnings goals).

Goal #3: Impactful Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities

NAU will promote and support collaborative and impactful research, scholarly, and creative activities that engage the diverse communities we serve, advance interdisciplinary knowledge, provide transformative learning opportunities, and contribute to solving problems of global relevance.

Objectives/Strategies:

Diversity of Scholarship

- 3-1: Recruit a more diverse faculty that reflects our communities and diverse student body, while supporting all faculty that promote excellence, equitable and ethical research, scholarship and creative endeavors.
- 3-2: Value research, scholarship and creative endeavors that value or incorporate traditional or Indigenous knowledge and community engagement.

Student Participation

- 3-3: Reduce the barriers for undergraduate and graduate students from Historically Minoritized Populations to engage with research, scholarship and creative activities.
- 3-4: Foster a culture of mentorship that enables excellence in research, scholarship and creative endeavors of students and junior colleagues.
- 3-5: Invest in opportunities for students to engage in research, scholarship and creative activities, regardless of the campus or modality of engagement.

Resources and Support for Scholarly Activities

- 3-6: Recognize excellence and equitable execution of research, scholarship and creative endeavors while evaluating merit, promotion, and workload.
- 3-7: Strategically invest in critical institutional resources, such as library assets, instrumentation, and human infrastructure that enable research, scholarship and creative activities.

Impact on Communities

- 3-8: Create and nurture partnerships with NAU's local and regional communities, including partnerships with tribal nations, to explore and support research, scholarship and creative endeavors that improve quality of lives and/or create local economic opportunities.

Goal #4: Enhanced Practices for Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing Quality, Mission-Driven, Diverse Faculty and Staff

NAU will implement strategies throughout its employment practices to support the recruitment, retention, development, and promotion of a high-quality, mission-driven workforce. This workforce will reflect the demographics and integrate the identities of the local communities, Arizona, and beyond. NAU will advance postsecondary value to students and the communities they represent by committing to and fostering an institutional workforce culture that understands Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are embedded in excellence.

Objectives/Strategies:

Recruitment, Retention, Development, and Promotion

- 4-1: Intentional and focused recruitment, retention, development, and promotion of an inclusive and diverse, high quality, and mission-driven workforce at all levels.
- 4-2: A measurable increase across all academic/nonacademic departments, units and administration in the recruitment, hiring and retention from minoritized and underrepresented communities with an emphasis on Native American/Indigenous communities.
- 4-3: Develop and offer alternative paths for educational requirements into workforce positions and career advancement.

Fostering an Inclusive and Equitable Institutional Culture

- 4-4: Instill and foster an institutional culture of shared responsibility where DEIJ initiatives are central and universally engaged across all areas through universal training, policies, practices, recognition, and value of participation toward increasing cultural competence/awareness and inclusion.
- 4-5: Incentivize Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ)-centered learning, service, and scholarship. Cultivate working environments where diverse identities and experiences are included, valued, respected, and fostered.
- 4-6: Identify and remove barriers to access for individuals with disabilities by implementing wide-scale Universal Design (UD) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approaches.

Promoting Mechanisms of Faculty and Staff Support

- 4-7: Prioritize investments in faculty and staff compensation, and enhance medical and other non-salary benefits across faculty and staff.

- 4-8: Implement and assess workload policies and practices, including a flexible workplace, that promote and support participation by faculty and staff in stress management and self-care.
- 4-9: Implement faculty and staff support programs such as campus-wide faculty and staff mentoring programs. Emphasize regular supervisor/employee engagement including a focus on support of minoritized and underrepresented faculty and staff.

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Goal #5: Strong Stewardship of Place and Demonstrated Engagement with Our Communities

NAU will engage with our local and regional communities to foster mutually beneficial relationships that enhance the value of our educational experiences and increase individual, communal, cultural, and economic vitality. NAU will work side-by-side with community leaders, governmental entities, corporations and businesses, non-profit organizations, and many other entities to offer partnership opportunities that advance our students' success, support volunteerism for public good, provide impactful services and research, and directly benefit the wellbeing of our communities.

Objectives/Strategies:

Partner with Community

- 5-1: Seek and encourage broad community input on university decisions that may impact areas beyond campus boundaries.
- 5-2: Adopt and provide resources to implement NAU's climate action plan goals and seek cooperation and collaboration with the community partners on climate and sustainability goals for the long-term health of our communities.

Promote Community Service

- 5-3: Encourage and develop a culture of volunteerism and service throughout the NAU campus, including students and employees, recognizing, and celebrating community engagement broadly as an important civic responsibility.
- 5-4: Maximize NAU's Flagstaff Campus location to serve as a living lab, equipping students to address broader issues of sustainability and environmental consequence and utilize the unique attributes of statewide campus locations to support similar community challenges and opportunities.
- 5-5: Seek, encourage, and expand on NAU's rich arts and cultural experiences as drivers of economic opportunity and community engagement in the region and state and provide an inviting campus atmosphere that welcomes community participation.

Serve Arizona

- 5-6: Enhance internship and clinical placement opportunities, as well as connecting graduates with employers, in Arizona to benefit both student learning objectives and employer needs, including attention to underserved communities with workforce shortages.
- 5-7: NAU will continue to advance strong academic programs and research in physical and

mental healthcare to meet workforce needs, advance social mobility of individuals with degree awards into high wage careers and provide medical advances in critical areas.

- 5-8: Expand NAU's statewide leadership by providing solutions for communities outside of metropolitan areas facing challenges including fostering student led research and creative activity, experiential and service learning, and community engagement opportunities that solve local and regional challenges and equip students to meet local, regional, and statewide needs.
- 5-9: Construct and strengthen K-12 connections by encouraging development of projects throughout the campus units and divisions, emphasizing connections with underserved populations and communities throughout Arizona with a goal of increasing equitable access to education opportunities.
- 5-10: NAU will continue to advocate for increased broadband access to remote areas of the state to improve educational opportunities and access and will partner with government and private entities to support the expansion of both access and technology preparation and support in educational institutions K-20.

Goal #6: Effective Stewardship of Financial, Physical, and Virtual Resources

NAU will effectively and efficiently utilize and maintain our physical, technological, and financial infrastructure, with a commitment to the sustainable use of environmental and financial resources. Pursuing new and innovative approaches to generate and secure necessary funding levels, NAU will develop and implement an operational framework to sustainably beautify and modernize the functional physical and virtual spaces we collectively use to teach, learn, create, and engage.

Objectives/Strategies:

Financial

- 6-1: Increase and sustain the financial strength of the university through expanding revenue generating opportunities and effective cost management to enable financial, human, and technological resources to be deployed to support strategic focus areas.
- 6-2: Develop a comprehensive budget request and review process to regularly and transparently review funding requests and recurring commitments to ensure alignment with university strategic initiatives.

Operations / Processes

- 6-3: Develop and maintain an engaged personnel infrastructure through our faculty, staff and student employees who will serve as stewards of NAU's resources.
- 6-4: Engage stakeholders in the identification and the implementation of improvements and ongoing assessment of processes that will sustainably and effectively support daily operations.
- 6-5: Create an organizational structure that fosters strong governance practices and aligns functions within divisions to enhance communication and collaboration in support of effectively advancing the university's strategic priorities.

Information Technology

- 6-6: Develop a multi-year IT project and system priority plan and associated funding plan that optimizes investment levels, IT security, standardization, accessibility and service effectiveness and efficiency to support learning, research and operational continuity, and data driven decision making.

Environmental Sustainability

- 6-7: Complete NAU's Climate Action Plan that embeds environmental sustainability and the identification of sustainable solutions within the university's operational decision making and establishes a goal for Carbon Neutrality.
- 6-8: Develop a comprehensive long term master plan that addresses land use, growth, and facility deferred maintenance and equipment needs in conjunction with safety, accessibility and environmental sustainability requirements within a framework that will inspire learning and discovery.

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Goal #7: Commitment to Native Americans

NAU aims to become the nation's leading university serving Native Americans.

Objectives/Strategies:

NOTE: Objectives below are drawn directly from NAU Strategic Plan Goal #3:

- 7-1: Increase enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of Native American/Indigenous students while providing an unparalleled combination of academic and cultural support.
- 7-2: Recruit and retain more Native American/Indigenous faculty, staff, and administrators.
- 7-3: Collaborate with Native/Indigenous nations to develop projects and programs for the direct benefit of Native American and Indigenous communities.
- 7-4: Promote appreciation and understanding of Native American/Indigenous Peoples, cultures, and nations within the university and in the broader community.
- 7-5: Strengthen the Native American Cultural Center's role as a primary point of cultural and educational engagement.