



President's Updates

October 5, 2026, Faculty Senate

- This year's incoming class brings stronger academic preparation and expanded access for Arizona students. We shared [a video message](#) with campus, explaining how our enrollment strategy is working, as well as [a fact sheet](#) that contains the detailed Fall 2026 numbers. Both a [message to campus](#) and a public [news release](#) were distributed as well.
- We celebrated the [launch of a new integrated business and engineering program](#), thanks to the generosity of Felipe and Mary Rodriguez. Gov. Hobbs, Sen. Kelly, Mayor Romero, and Rep. Hernandez [attended the celebration](#).
- We cut the ribbon on [our new Wildcat Welcome Center](#) alongside Rep. Ciscomani, Rep. Grijalva, and Mayor Romero. This center will help us create an exceptional experience for our students from the earliest interaction with the U of A.
- We marked a milestone with the "[Topping out](#)"—the placement of final structural steel element—of our Medical Innovations Building in Phoenix on September 30.
- The Department of Energy's Office of Critical Minerals and Energy Innovation [awarded \\$20M to enhance our San Xavier Mine](#), which will ensure one of our oldest legacy strengths continues to be a national model for future generations.
- [NASA Administrator Jared Isaacman](#) and the NASA Inspiration Tour visited campus on Sept. 23. U of A students, alongside students from Tucson-area high schools, Pima Community College, and Tohono O'odham Community College attended the event.
- I published this [op-ed in the Hechinger Report](#) to express my belief that higher education must do a better job of controlling costs.
- Arizona Athletics has opened the 2026-27 year with strong ticket-sales momentum. Football season-ticket renewals increased 20%, while men's and women's basketball sales are pacing ahead of last year. The new Cats Corner premium seating area at Casino Del Sol Stadium has created an additional premium experience and revenue opportunity. Arizona Soccer also set a new program attendance record during its home match against North Carolina.
- The Arizona Board of Regents approved [our offer to Desireé Reed-Francois](#) to extend her contract as our R. Ken Coit Director of Athletics through 2032.
- Ten teams pitched for the Big Idea Challenge for Health – a joint effort between Banner Health and the University of Arizona. [Four teams were selected for funding](#) up to \$250,000 over two years. Each of the six remaining teams will receive a \$5,000 capacity building grant and consult with members of the ORP team, e.g., Tech Launch Arizona, Research Development, Research Communications, etc.
- Seventeen Catalyst Grants are in the process of being awarded, including two instrumentation awards, six innovation & collaboration awards, seven early career research acceleration awards,



and two creative scholarship awards, each aligned with the strategic research initiatives or TRIF portfolios.

- A total of [20 AZPM projects](#) were nominated for Emmy® consideration by the Rocky Mountain Southwest chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.
- In Fall 2026, Arizona Online launched a required training in Edge Learning for all instructors teaching courses on Arizona Online. The training was developed along with the University Center Assessment, Teaching, and Technology (UCATT) and ensures online instructors will have consistent best practices for online instruction and know how to utilize resources available for their courses.
- The U of A placed well in a number of rankings that were released this month, including being [No. 1 in the Southwest](#), among the top 20 among public U.S. universities for [international research collaboration](#), [No. 23 among public universities](#) for Best Colleges for Research, and our Management Information Systems program [as number one in the nation](#) among public universities. The U of A was also [named a “Best Value,”](#) according to the Princeton Review.
- We were among the inaugural cohort for the [Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability](#), in recognition of our efforts to embed sustainability into our academic mission.