

**Contact:** Sarah Harper, (602) 402-1341, [sarah.k.harper@azregents.edu](mailto:sarah.k.harper@azregents.edu)  
Julie Newberg, (602) 686-1803, [julie.newberg@azregents.edu](mailto:julie.newberg@azregents.edu)

## **Highlights of ABOR Meeting: ASU Operational and Financial Review; student mental health discussion; NAU head football coach contract**

Tempe, Ariz. – Following are news briefs from the Arizona Board of Regents meeting Feb. 7-8 at Arizona State University. Full board materials are available [here](#).

### **Arizona State University's 2018-19 Operational and Financial Review**

Arizona State University continues to progress toward 2025 metrics defined in ABOR's strategic plan, including key metric categories for enrollment, degree attainment and research. In most categories, ASU exceeded targets for the year.

Arizona State University President Michael Crow presented a [comprehensive review of the university's operations and finances](#) to the board, updating regents on the progress and results achieved at ASU during the past year.

In addition to presenting ASU's progress, President Crow outlined key higher education needs in Arizona, including the need to increase educational attainment in the state. Arizona lags most other states in the number of people with education past high school, and Arizona's education rates are unevenly distributed by ethnicity. Job losses in the future are much more likely among those with a high school degree or less, while individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher are less likely to suffer job losses due to automation, Crow said.

Every year, ABOR conducts a thorough review of each university. Operational and financial reviews enhance accountability and transparency in university planning and performance; assess year-over-year progress; identify current and future university priorities as well as emerging opportunities and risks; and establish strategic initiatives that will be pursued in the coming years.

ASU's Operational and Financial Review includes a [background report](#) illustrating ASU's progress toward its 2025 metrics defined in ABOR's [strategic plan](#) as well as financial, capital and personnel information; and a [strategic enterprise plan](#) updating the board on the university's progress in key areas such as enrollment, access, retention and graduation rates, degree attainment and research.

“Arizona State University is truly among the best public universities in the world, recognized as a giant in innovation as well as the high-quality degrees it offers,” said ABOR Chair Ron Shoopman. “President Crow’s determination, vision and creativity have led to transformational growth for the university, excellence in rankings and new collaborations that are reshaping the landscape of access to higher education. We are proud that he continues to lead ASU.”

### **Student mental health update**

Arizona’s public universities are experiencing an uptick in demand for mental health services for issues such as depression, anxiety, relationship issues, academics, family problems and sleep difficulties, according to a briefing by university professionals to the board on current trends in student counseling services as well as resources offered to assist students.

Nationally, the rate of students seeking mental health services is increasing. According to the [Center for Collegiate Mental Health](#), data from 93 higher education institutions showed a 30 percent increase of students seeking help at counseling centers from 2009-2015.

In May of last year, [ASU was nationally-recognized with a Healthy Campus Award](#) for its work to raise awareness of mental health issues, reduce stigma and provide myriad on-campus resources to support the overall health and well-being of students. [University of Arizona Campus Health was ranked fourth in health services](#) among 384 colleges by Princeton Review in 2019 (mental health services are part of campus health at the UA).

The university reports (found here for [ASU](#), [NAU](#) and [UA](#)) detailed a myriad of trainings, services and approaches the institutions are utilizing to address the well-being of students. These range from traditional counseling to peer education that teaches students what to do if they have a friend in crisis. Training is offered to faculty members, police and staff while student organizations focus on issues such as reducing the stigma and promoting awareness of mental health.

In 2013, the Arizona Board of Regents established a student safety task force to examine and outline university protocol surrounding student safety, including mental health issues. Among its [recommendations](#) were expanded and enhanced mental health educational efforts, increased training and sustained prevention activities.

### **Approval of five-year employment contract for NAU head football coach**

The board reviewed and approved a multi-year contract for Chris Ball to serve as head football coach at Northern Arizona University.

Ball comes to NAU with more than 30 years of NCAA football coaching experience, most recently serving as the defensive coordinator at the University of Memphis. He has held coaching positions at ASU, Washington State, University of Pittsburgh, the University of

Alabama and more.

Ball's contract includes a base salary of \$230,000. Additional contract stipulations include: responsible for supervising, planning and coordinating the interests and activities of the NAU football team with integrity and in a manner that is consistent and in compliance with NAU's academic goals and all applicable laws, policies, and regulations; required to fully cooperate in investigations initiated by the NCAA and promptly disclose suspected violations of NCAA or Big Sky Conference rules; and required to fully comply with reporting requirements in accordance with Title IX.

Additional details including a comprehensive list of terms and conditions related to his contract can be viewed [here](#).

### **New academic programs approved by the board**

Three new academic programs at NAU were approved by the board for implementation in the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 academic years. Approved, new doctoral programs include mechanical engineering, applied physics and materials science, and civil and environmental engineering. University requests for new academic programs include a description and justification for the curriculum; market need; fees; and learning outcomes and assessment plans.

All academic degree programs go through multiple review and approval processes at the university before these come to the board to ensure their currency, quality and relevance. More information regarding NAU's programs is available [here](#).

In addition, the following new academic programs were approved for the UA: master's degrees in education policy and entrepreneurship; and bachelor's degrees in applied physics, emergency medical service and cyber operations. More information is [here](#).

### **Board takes positions on legislation**

The board was briefed on legislation affecting Arizona's public universities enterprise and took action to support the following bills:

- [SCR 1011](#) and [SB 1345](#) - TPT and Use Tax; Education (Senator Brophy McGee)

"The board is supportive of legislative efforts to increase funding for P-20 in Arizona and to develop a funding strategy for higher education," said Shoopman. "The board also strongly recognizes the value of TRIF funding for Arizona and is grateful for its inclusion in this legislation. The board appreciates the efforts of Senator Kate Brophy McGee and other legislators to approve increased funding for education."

- [SB 1518](#) - Appropriations; Universities; Resident Tuition (Senator Carter)

"The board has long pushed for the 50-50 funding model to create an ongoing

investment model with the state that covers half of the cost for Arizona resident students to attend one of our universities," Shoopman said. "This bill realizes the value in that model and we appreciate Senator Carter and the bi-partisan group of co-sponsors pushing this legislation to achieve this critical support of Arizona resident students.

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