

How We Lead

Leadership Commitments at the University of Arizona



The University of Arizona exists to create opportunity, advance knowledge, and serve society. As Arizona's flagship land-grant university, we are called to be a force for good for our state, our nation, and the world. In a rapidly changing world, leaders must be collaborative, curious, adaptable, accountable, ethical, and prepared to act with urgency and purpose. These commitments define how we lead, how we work together, and the culture we will build to deliver on our promise as the University FOR Arizona.

1. Put Students at the Center of Every Decision

Student success is our North Star.

Every major decision should be evaluated through two questions:

- ◆ How does this improve outcomes and opportunities for students?
- ◆ How does this strengthen the university and expand its impact?

We must continually improve the student experience, remove barriers to success, expand affordability and access, underline excellence, and prepare students to thrive in a changing world. Supporting students as learners, thinkers, innovators, and leaders is everyone's responsibility—not the responsibility of a single unit.

Every leader is responsible for student success.

2. Think and Act as One University

The University of Arizona is strongest when we operate as One U of A.

This requires that we:

- ◆ Collaborate and share information openly across colleges, divisions, and disciplines.
- ◆ Treat colleagues with respect, professionalism, and integrity.
- ◆ Recognize the contributions of others, share credit generously, and prioritize institutional success over individual interests.

Leadership means thinking beyond your own unit and building partnerships that advance the university as a whole.

When the university succeeds, we all succeed.

3. Lead with Preparation, Urgency, and Purpose

Leadership requires thoughtful preparation and decisive action.

The challenges facing higher education demand both. Leaders must come prepared, exercise sound judgment, and act with urgency in service of the university's highest priorities.

- ◆ Know the facts, understand the data, anticipate questions, and come prepared with recommendations.
- ◆ Respect the time of others through preparation, clear agendas, purposeful meetings, and effective use of pre-read materials and post-meeting summaries.
- ◆ Simplify where others complicate and remove barriers to progress.
- ◆ Focus on the university's highest priorities and strategic imperatives.

Preparation enables good decisions. Urgency turns good decisions into results.

4. Bring Solutions, Not Just Problems

Leaders take ownership.

- ◆ Clearly define the issue, gather the relevant information, and assess options.
- ◆ Address problems early, before they require escalation.
- ◆ Recommend a path forward when issues must be elevated.

Leadership is measured by the solutions we create.

5. *Communicate Early and Often*

Communication is a leadership responsibility.

- ◆ Share information early, especially when issues may affect others.
- ◆ Listen actively and create space for different perspectives.
- ◆ Set clear expectations for next steps and timing.
- ◆ Communicate consistently with stakeholders and confirm shared understanding.

Clear communication builds trust. Timely communication sustains it.

6. *Deliver on Commitments*

Trust is earned through reliability and follow-through.

- ◆ Meet deadlines and follow through on commitments.
- ◆ Communicate proactively when circumstances change.
- ◆ Hold yourself and your team accountable for results.

Consistent execution builds trust.

7. *Use Data to Drive Decisions and Improvement*

Good decisions begin with good information.

- ◆ Understand key metrics and measure progress.
- ◆ Ensure data are accurate and reliable.
- ◆ Challenge assumptions and use evidence to guide decisions and investments.

Data should inform judgment, not replace it.

8. *Steward Resources Responsibly*

The university's resources are entrusted to us by students, donors, taxpayers, and the people of Arizona.

- ◆ Operate efficiently with fiscal discipline and eliminate waste and unnecessary duplication.
- ◆ Continually seek revenue generation opportunities and invest strategically in areas that advance our mission.

Stewardship today creates opportunity tomorrow.

9. *Embrace Curiosity, Innovation, and Change*

Great universities never stand still. Great leaders never stop learning.

- ◆ Challenge assumptions and seek better ways of working.
- ◆ Thoughtfully adopt emerging technologies that advance our mission.
- ◆ Encourage experimentation, responsible innovation, and continuous learning.
- ◆ Help shape the future of higher education and ensure the University of Arizona remains at the forefront of discovery, innovation, and student success.

Curiosity drives discovery. Discovery drives impact.

The Leaders We Aspire to Be

Leadership is defined not only by what we accomplish, but by how we accomplish it and how we treat one another. Kindness, compassion, humility, integrity, and presence are not separate from excellence—they make excellence possible. They build trust, strengthen collaboration, and create an environment where colleagues and students can thrive.

The University of Arizona benefits when leaders are humble, courageous, ethical, accountable, clear in communication, optimistic, and committed to service.

Together, let us lead with purpose, work as One University, and deliver on our promise as a force for good.

