



Executive Vice President and University Provost Position Profile

Northern Arizona University (NAU) seeks a dynamic and visionary leader to serve as its next Executive Vice President and University Provost (Provost). The Provost will have the extraordinary opportunity to lead the academic enterprise at NAU and serve as its primary advocate and champion.

The University

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.

NAU delivers a student-centered experience through rigorous academic programs in a supportive, inclusive, and diverse environment. The University currently serves over 20,000 students at the Flagstaff campus and approximately 7,100 students at more than 20 statewide locations and online. The Flagstaff campus is one of the largest residential campuses in the western United States. Over 66% of NAU's student body comes from the state of Arizona, with 34% from other states and countries. With its proximity to several Native American Nations, NAU hosts students from 80 tribes. The University enjoys a robust international student population totaling more than 900 students. Furthermore, 42% of the undergraduate student population are first-generation college students. The University's longstanding history of educating and partnering with diverse students and communities throughout Arizona is reflected in its strategic commitment to Indigenous Peoples and equitable access and pricing initiatives that focus on advancing prosperity and social impact, and they have been enhanced by its recent designation as a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI).

NAU's 4,600 world-renowned faculty and staff are dedicated to helping ensure students achieve academic excellence, experience personal growth, have meaningful research and experiential learning opportunities, and are positioned for personal and professional success. NAU has a Carnegie classification as a "doctoral, high research" university, with annual research expenditures totaling \$66.7 million and an endowment of over \$198 million, which has been fueled by back-to-back record fundraising years in FY22 and FY23.

Beyond the traditional college experience at the Flagstaff campus, NAU offers programs in throughout the state in satellite campuses in Phoenix, Yuma, Tucson, and Yavapai county. In addition, NAU has strong partnerships with all ten community college districts in Arizona—powered by the NAU-led [Arizona Attainment Alliance \(A++\)](#)—providing access to an NAU degree in every corner of the state through to foster opportunity for every Arizonan. With this broad reach and multitude of locations, NAU offers high-value degrees and courses to meet students' needs, place of residence, and life circumstance. In addition, NAU offers undergraduate and graduate programs through NAU Online that complement other aspects of its academic portfolio and help meet the needs of students in Arizona and around the world.

As a community-engaged engine of opportunity, NAU powers social impact and economic mobility for the students and communities it serves. Additional information about NAU and its

history, programs, and local, regional, and global impact can be found at <http://www.nau.edu> and <https://nau.edu/impact/>.

President José Luis Cruz Rivera

Since joining NAU as President in 2021, President Cruz Rivera has worked with university stakeholders to create a bold vision for a New NAU focused on the delivery of equitable postsecondary value to the students and communities of Arizona and beyond. This vision is articulated in the University's strategic roadmap, [NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence](#), and numerous impactful initiatives have been launched that advance its strategic priorities, including the [Access2Excellence](#) tuition commitment and [Admissions Pilot program](#), the [New NAU Workplace](#), a university-wide [Commitment to Sustainability](#), record public and private funding and philanthropic support to advance postsecondary access and attainment efforts, the [Seven Generations Signature Initiative](#), and the [Arizona Attainment Alliance \(A++\)](#).

Prior to joining NAU, Dr. Cruz Rivera served as President of The City University of New York's (CUNY) Herbert H. Lehman College (Bronx, NY) and as Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost of the 25-campus, 500,000-student CUNY system—the world's largest urban university. A leading national advocate for policies to broaden participation and deliver equitable educational value for all students, President Cruz Rivera is a frequent keynote speaker and writer on higher education issues. He has testified several times before the US Congress, and his work has been funded by federal, state, and philanthropic organizations including the National Science Foundation, Lumina Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the US Department of Education, among others.

The Position

The Executive Vice President and University Provost (Provost) leads NAU's academic enterprise and serves as the President's senior-most advisor and thought partner in carrying out the institution's vision and mission. The Provost serves on the President's Cabinet and University Advisory Board, and chairs and convenes the Deans' Council and Academic Leadership Collaborative, among other University-wide leadership responsibilities. The Provost is responsible for managing a budget of approximately \$200M.

The Provost is responsible for collaborating with University leaders to create a supportive environment for cultivating innovative approaches to student success; teaching excellence; research, scholarship, and creative activity across the disciplines; curriculum and program development; and interdisciplinary partnerships. In leading a broad institutional portfolio of units and initiatives that impact every dimension of the University's work, the Provost should have a sincere and demonstrated commitment to equitable postsecondary value, inclusive excellence, and shared governance, and serve as an example of collaborative, mission-driven, and ethical leadership.

The Provost provides leadership to the Academic Affairs division, which includes the University's academic colleges; the Honors College; Yuma branch campus; and Cline Library; undergraduate and graduate education; institutional and program accreditation; the Center for International Education; faculty recruitment and development; academic operations; and more. As the chief academic officer, the Provost is responsible for academic policies and academic program portfolio alignment with workforce needs, and is expected to bring an integrative and holistic perspective to this work. The Provost works with other University leaders, Deans, faculty, academic committees, and staff to ensure the quality of instruction and scholarship; administer and monitor procedures and criteria for faculty appointments, promotion, and tenure

decisions; and partner with academic and student life leaders to ensure the quality of the undergraduate and graduate student experience.

The Provost's direct reports include the following:

- Senior Vice Provost for Academic Operations
- Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs
- Vice Provost for Global Affairs
- Vice Provost for Online Education
- Vice Provost for Academic Programming and Graduate Studies
- Vice Provost for Academic and Workforce Alliances
- Associate Vice President and Chief of Staff
- Associate Vice President, Financial Oversight
- Deans of the following units:
 - College of Arts and Letters
 - College of Education
 - College of Engineering, Informatics, and Applied Sciences
 - College of the Environment, Forestry, and Natural Sciences
 - College of Health and Human Services
 - College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
 - The W.A. Franke College of Business
 - NAU Yuma campus
 - Honors College
 - Cline Library

The following are core expectations for the role of Provost:

- Support academic leaders to center equitable postsecondary value, access and attainment initiatives, and conditions for postsecondary success for all students that NAU serves.
- Partner with colleagues in Student Affairs to bolster student retention, persistence, and success.
- Champion and elevate the Teacher-Scholar model across NAU's faculty.
- Recruit, retain, develop, and lead exceptional, mission-driven faculty across the disciplines.
- Promote and sustain educational excellence throughout curricula and academic programs.
- Provide leadership in the incorporation of instructional technologies to improve student learning.
- Inspire and enhance scholarship, creative activity, and research.
- Manage and secure additional resources to advance NAU's academic enterprise.
- Support deans in development and fundraising activities.
- Develop and employ strategies to expand the donor base and strengthen alumni relations with NAU's more than 200,000 graduates.
- Engage with statewide stakeholders to represent NAU and expand its access mission throughout the state.
- Build a collaborative culture and strengthen links to other units across the University.
- Promote and advance the unique mission of NAU in Arizona and beyond.

NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence

[NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence](#) is Northern Arizona University's strategic roadmap for delivering a bold and boundless future for all. The strategic priorities described represent a robust synthesis of the NAU community's thoughtful engagement and bold aspirations for the

future, and it reflects the evolving challenges and opportunities that NAU faces as an engaged public institution of higher education. To equitably serve students and communities from all backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences, NAU's commitment to inclusive excellence is infused throughout this guiding document. NAU will capitalize on its more than 120-year history of distinctive excellence as an engine of opportunity to drive social impact and economic mobility for the people of Arizona and beyond.

Key Opportunities and Challenges

The Provost will have the opportunity to join a University led by a strong executive leadership team and cadre of deans who have a shared commitment to equitable postsecondary value. NAU is on a dramatic upward trajectory in pursuit of academic excellence and student success and seeks a dynamic leader who will capitalize on this momentum, collaborating with faculty and staff to provide visionary leadership and achieve the goals set forth in its strategic roadmap.

The Provost will be required to provide leadership in several critical areas, including but not limited to:

- NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence – the Provost will play a critical role in enhancing the implementation of NAU's strategic roadmap, build on the momentum and successes already registered, fulfill commitments with strategic partners, and capitalize on the synergies and high morale across NAU.
- Supporting NAU's Mission-Driven Faculty and Staff – the Provost will be responsible for implementing equitable policies and practices to recruit, retain, and promote faculty and staff in supporting NAU's mission to serve students and expanding opportunities and pathways to higher education.
- Pursuit of Academic Excellence – the Provost must be knowledgeable about current and emerging trends in higher education in order to participate in ongoing conversations and initiatives regarding general studies curriculum, career readiness, student-centered pedagogy, online education, assessment, student success, and other innovative educational programs.
- NAU Health – as part of the Arizona Board of Regents' [Arizona Healthy Tomorrow Initiative](#), the Provost will advance NAU's efforts to double the number of credentials awarded in health-related fields by 2030, with a special focus on providing training for physicians and practitioners who are well-positioned to meet the most urgent primary health care needs present in Arizona's urban, rural, and Indigenous communities.
- Expand NAU's Mission as Arizona's Access Institution and Engine of Opportunity – the Provost will help enrich NAU's statewide footprint through the development of campuses in strategic locations across the state and enhance existing and forge new partnerships with Arizona's community colleges, businesses, and public sector partners in a manner that will improve accessibility and create seamless pathways for more students to meet their full potential and thrive in the state's booming economy.
- Commitment to Indigenous Peoples – the Provost will be responsible for supporting programs, services, scholarship, and initiatives that promote educational attainment and student success for Indigenous Peoples and their communities.

- Inclusive Excellence – the Provost must embrace and be prepared to leverage NAU’s status as a Hispanic-Serving Institution in supporting members of underrepresented populations to achieve their personal and professional goals while creating the opportunity to further intellectual and emotional growth and community empowerment. It is vital that the Provost works tirelessly in addressing the needs of all students and champions inclusive excellence throughout the University community.
- Stewardship of Resources – as part of the University’s senior leadership team, the Provost will be engaged in implementing best practices to optimize the use of human and financial resources to secure a sustainable future for NAU. In addition, the Provost will work closely with deans, donors, the NAU Foundation, and external partners to diversify revenue streams, pursue grants and contracts, and expand philanthropic efforts.
- Advocacy – along with other leaders across NAU, the Provost will cultivate mutually beneficial partnerships and relationships with members of the Arizona Board of Regents, as well as local, regional, and statewide leaders and stakeholders across the public and private sectors to enhance funding sources that support students’ educational experiences, internships, applied research, and employment opportunities.

Personal Characteristics

It is desired that the Provost possess the following experiences, abilities, and skills:

- The ability to contribute to and enhance the University’s vision and strategic plan;
- A commitment to academic quality, including outstanding teaching, scholarship, and service;
- The ability to effectively inspire and lead students, faculty, and deans; the disposition to work closely and build effective alliances with faculty in an environment of shared governance that promotes a healthy organizational culture;
- An understanding and appreciation of experiential learning and its power to enhance student learning;
- The ability to develop shared strategic goals and opportunities and identify effective strategies for integrating programs and services internal and external to NAU;
- A deep appreciation for and understanding of the current issues and trends in higher education;
- The ability to mentor and support the professional development of faculty and staff;
- A consensus builder capable of making decisions in a timely manner;
- A commitment to supporting student success and retention initiatives;
- An exceptional communicator and listener; with a commitment to transparent decision-making;
- Comfortable with ambiguity and moving goalposts in advancing an ambitious agenda against an everchanging political, economic, and societal backdrop;
- The ability to maintain exceptional quality in existing operations, while simultaneously fostering an environment of innovation and experimentation;
- Demonstrated energy to work in a fast-paced environment, a high emotional intelligence, and tremendous intellectual curiosity;
- A proven and visionary leader who welcomes perspectives that differ from their own.

Qualifications

NAU seeks a Provost with exemplary academic achievements, together with strategic leadership ability; outstanding interpersonal and communication skills; and commitment to

support the mission of the University. The successful candidate will bring many of the following skills and qualities:

- An earned terminal degree and academic qualifications appropriate for appointment as a tenured full Professor at NAU in one of the University's academic departments;
- A strong record of excellent teaching and distinguished research, scholarship or creative activity that exhibit a commitment to academic excellence;
- Developed strategic planning skills, a strong knowledge of budgets, and the ability to prioritize fiscal resources accordingly; demonstrated experience in aligning academic and budgetary priorities and an aptitude for entrepreneurship;
- A record of substantial administrative achievement, with a proven ability to recruit, retain, and mentor faculty from diverse academic disciplines;

The following are preferred qualifications for the Provost:

- Experience in or disposition to engage in fundraising efforts; the ability to contribute to and lead development efforts and other extramural funding activities, including strengthening alumni relations and building relationships with external partners;
- A demonstrated commitment to promoting inclusive excellence and the proven ability to enhance belonging among students, faculty, staff, and leadership;
- Experience in faculty development and a proven track record for leadership in formulating, implementing and assessing academic policies, programs, and scholarly activities;
- A record of success supporting the development of innovative credit and non-credit bearing educational opportunities (including in-person, hybrid, and online modalities) to meet the needs of today's learners;
- A track record of engaging internal and external constituents, stakeholders, and community partners and a commitment to access and career readiness;
- Demonstrated experience in external relations and governmental advocacy efforts to build robust communities of support for an institution that expand available resources and opportunities.

Living in the Area

Located on the Colorado Plateau, in one of the highest-ranked college towns in the country, the NAU Flagstaff Mountain Campus is truly a jewel of the Southwest.

With a population of 70,000, Flagstaff is perfect for those looking for a city with a small-town feel. NAU and the Flagstaff community offer rich cultural opportunities and visible connections to the arts. Surrounded by mountains, desert, and ponderosa pine forests, Flagstaff is a gateway to the San Francisco Peaks, home to Arizona's tallest mountain (Humphreys Peak).

Flagstaff is close to the mountains, forests, and has four seasons. For those who enjoy hiking, skiing, mountain biking, and camping, Flagstaff has several opportunities for outdoor activities. The higher altitude and shade of the thick forests makes Flagstaff significantly cooler than many other Arizona cities. Living in Flagstaff allows driving distance access to metropolitan areas of Phoenix, Las Vegas, and Albuquerque, which offer professional sports, music, theatre, and museums.

Only minutes away from a regional airport and serving as an entry for the Grand Canyon National Park, Flagstaff enjoys a bustling downtown scene and a close-knit surrounding community.

Application/Nomination Process

The Search Committee will begin reviewing applications in mid-October and will continue to accept applications and nominations until the position is filled. Applicants must submit a current curriculum vitae and a letter of interest describing relevant experience and interest in the position. Submission of materials via e-mail is strongly encouraged. Nomination letters should include contact information for the nominee. All nominations and applications will be handled in confidence.

Applications and letters of nomination should be submitted to:



Alberto Pimentel, Managing Partner
Emy Cruz, Partner
6512 Painter Avenue, Whittier, CA 90601
562-360-1353 (FAX)

Email: apsearch@spaexec.com
Refer to code "NAU Provost" in subject line

Northern Arizona University is a committed Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution. Women, minorities, veterans and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply. NAU is responsive to the needs of dual career couples.