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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

December 14, 2022, 7:38 a.m.



Dear Students and Colleagues,

I hope you are all doing well now that finals are in full swing. Students, remember we have many resources available such as [THINK TANK](#), if you need help preparing, or [student assistance](#) through the Dean of Students Office, if you need help coping with any stress you may experience.

If you are completing a degree program this semester, congratulations! Enjoy the [winter convocation ceremonies](#), and I hope we see all of you back for Commencement in May.

Here are a few highlights for this week.

Sustainability

Earlier this month, I participated on a panel with other leaders from AAU-member universities, discussing the importance of our institutions leading the creation and implementation of climate solutions. I was very proud to describe the leadership provided by our students, whose dedication to this issue has inspired all of us. This includes the creation of the University's Sustainability Fee, proposed by students, supported by the ASUA and GPSC, and approved by ABOR in 2021. The fee is the source for our [Campus Sustainability Fund](#), which accepts proposals from faculty, staff, and students. The Fund's 2022-2023 Annual Grant proposals are due by Jan. 15, and I encourage you to learn more if you are interested in submitting.

I also was pleased to announce the University's new Presidential Advisory Commission on the Future of Agriculture and Food Production in a Drying Climate just last week, which you can read about on the [Executive Office of the President website](#).

WSCUC Institutional Accreditation

On November 14, 2022, the Department Of Education gave the University permission to apply for accreditation from the WASC Senior College & University Commission (WSCUC). If the accreditation request is approved by WSCUC, the University will switch from the current accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

WSCUC accredits approximately 200 four-year colleges and doctoral universities, many of which are our peers. Notable examples are the institutions of the California State University system and University of California system, Stanford, and USC.

A diverse group of campus colleagues, including representatives of shared governance, have supported the effort to apply for WSCUC accreditation. On Jan. 18–19, 2023, a WSCUC peer review team will conduct a site visit at our main campus with faculty, staff, administrators, and students. The team will then provide a report for WSCUC’s review and consideration. Strategic direction is provided by the Senior Vice Provost and Academic Liaison Officer, Gail Burd, who served as Executive Lead for the HLC 2021 Affirmation of Accreditation.

I invite you to [read these accreditation FAQs](#) to learn more.

Public Health Updates and Reminders

As we prepare for the winter holidays, I want to encourage all of you to take basic public health precautions to protect yourself and those around you. Cases of respiratory illnesses are rising, including COVID-19, influenza, and RSV, and many hospitals and other health care facilities are under strain.

COVID-19 and Influenza

Pima County, home to our main campus, now has a high CDC Community Level for COVID-19, and wearing a high-quality face coverings indoors in public is recommended. If you live or work in other counties, or if you are travelling, please visit the CDC’s [COVID-19 by County page](#) to check conditions near you.

Testing for COVID-19 is always important if you have symptoms, and particularly now with the increase in cases. [Cats TakeAway Testing](#) remains available through Dec. 23 (with regular hours resuming Jan. 3). At-home tests are widely available, including through the Campus Health Pharmacy. Remember that with at-home tests, continued testing over several days may be necessary.

Please make sure you are up to date on the vaccine for COVID-19, which includes the bivalent booster released earlier this fall. Visit [vaccines.gov](#) or contact your health care provider to make an appointment.

If you have yet to get your flu shot, please consider doing so as soon as possible. The flu vaccine is widely available at community providers.

Mpox

Mpox, recently renamed from monkeypox by the World Health Organization, has been detected in [main campus wastewater samples](#). University leaders and local public health officials receive aggregate data from testing results.

While [cases](#) have dropped dramatically in the United States, mpox remains a public health concern, and the CDC has recommended vaccination if you have been exposed or are at high risk of exposure. As a reminder, mpox is spread mostly through close, intimate contact. For more information, including vaccination options at no cost to students, faculty, and staff, please visit the [Campus Health mpox page](#).

Campus Safety Update

As an update on campus safety and security, I want to thank again the nearly 1,200 campus and community members who have provided valuable input. The PAX Group LLC is continuing its independent review. Retired FBI Tucson Assistant Special Agent in Charge Steve Patterson is consulting with our Threat Assessment and Management Team and offering insightful expertise on immediate campus security needs. University programs and practices are being reviewed to identify opportunities to improve. This remains my top priority, and I look forward to updating all of you further in the new year.

University of Arizona Global Campus Update

We are making progress in the process of acquiring and incorporating UAGC into UArizona. The UA-UAGC Initiative, [launched earlier this year](#) to coordinate the operations of the two universities, has activated working groups across campus. With members from both universities, including representatives of shared governance, the working groups are addressing opportunities and challenges in five key focus areas: Academics, Student Success, Institutional Operations, Oversight and Compliance, and Continuous Improvement.

The working groups will provide recommendations and potential solutions to leadership in advance of the planned acquisition date of July 1, 2023. There is still much to do, and I truly appreciate the efforts of our dedicated faculty and staff members who are contributing their time and expertise to this important initiative.

I appreciate everyone's contributions this semester, particularly those rooted in our **Core Values** in support of one another. I wish you all Happy Holidays.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Robbins, M.D.

President
The University of Arizona

This email was sent to: all students, faculty, staff, and DCC's.

Privacy Statement

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Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O'odham and the Yaqui. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.