

ARIZONA WESTERN COLLEGE

Vision 2026

AFIT Strategic Action Teams

August 2026 – August 2027 · Action Framework

Dr. Reetika Dhawan, President
Arizona Western College · 2026–2027

Teams at a Glance

#	Team	Team Lead
1	Team 1 — Student Success & Belonging	Dr. Michelle Sims
2	Team 2 — Academic Innovation & AI	Dr. Joann Chang
3	Team 3 — Workforce & Rural Innovation	Elaine Groggett
4	Team 4 — Strategy & Fiscal Sustainability	Dr. Kris Duke

Year-Long Action Framework

Phase 1 Aug 11 – Oct 10, 2026	Phase 2 Oct 11 – Jan 15, 2027	Phase 3 Jan 16 – May 15, 2027	Phase 4 May 16 – Aug 11, 2027
Listen & Map ~60 days	Design & Pilot ~90 days	Implement & Measure ~120 days	Sustain & Scale ~90 days

How to Read Each Team's Plan

Each team's action plan uses two tiers to distinguish non-negotiable priorities from stretch goals:

★ Must Do Non-negotiable priority — complete by phase end	◇ Aim For Stretch goal — pursue if capacity allows
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TEAM 1

Student Success & Belonging

Team Members

Dr. Michelle Sims, Renee Macaluso, Cristina Gonzales, Sandra Rodriguez, Tyler Vodehnal, Ana English

Roles & Responsibilities

Team Lead	Dr. Michelle Sims
Co-Lead	Cristina Gonzales & Ana English
Recorder	Tyler Vodehnal
Innovation	Renee Macaluso
Accountability	Sandra Rodriguez
Cabinet support	Bryan Doak , Kathy Ocampo and Lorraine Stofft

Crosswalk – AWC Excelencia Team

Aug 2026 – Aug 2027 Action Plan

Phase 1 Aug 11 – Oct 10, 2026 Listen & Map	Phase 2 Oct 11 – Jan 15, 2027 Design & Pilot	Phase 3 Jan 16 – May 15, 2027 Implement & Measure	Phase 4 May 16 – Aug 11, 2027 Sustain & Scale
★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO
Audit retention, persistence & completion data by demographic	Launch 2–3 targeted interventions based on Fall data	Scale belonging initiative campus-wide from pilot outcomes	Present year-end retention and belonging outcomes to president
Map all existing wraparound and student support services	Pilot Student Belonging Initiative (multilingual welcome, peer mentors)	Integrate basic needs supports into advising workflow	Finalize faculty/staff PD recommendations (Obj. #4 & #5)
Conduct student listening sessions — Spanish-speaking, OTA, first-gen	Implement proactive advising outreach for at-risk students	Track and report KPIs monthly against baseline	Submit full accountability report with KPI progress
Establish baseline KPIs: retention rate, persistence, advising touchpoints.	Publish mid-year findings brief for presidential team	Cross-team alignment with Teams 2, 3, and 4	
◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR
Identify top service gaps for OTA/returning students specifically	Develop faculty/staff awareness training for underserved populations	Launch targeted outreach to Spring OTA/returning student cohort	Recommend 1–2 structural changes for AY 2027–28
			Document lessons learned for institutional memory

Mission

Improve student retention, engagement, belonging, and completion outcomes while addressing student support barriers.

AWC 2028 Strategic Objectives Supported

Obj. #4	Excelencia culture — belonging, multilingualism, language-affirmative environment for all students
Obj. #5	Targeted outreach to Early College, OTA/returning, incarcerated, and Spanish-speaking students

Year-End Deliverables

★ Must deliver

- Year-end retention & persistence report submitted
- Student Belonging Initiative launched and measured
- KPI dashboard tracking all key metrics

◇ Aim to deliver

- *Basic needs & advising fully integrated*
- *Structural recommendations for AY 2027–28*
- *Faculty/staff PD plan finalized*

TEAM 2

Academic Innovation & AI

Team Members

Dr. Joann Chang
 Dr. Ye Huo
 Stuart Gibson
 Marlie Meza
 Scott Estes

Roles & Responsibilities

Team Lead	Dr. Joann Chang
Co-Lead	Dr. Ye Huo
Recorder	Marlie Meza
Innovation	Scott Estes
Accountability	Stuart Gibson
Cabinet Support	Bryan Doak & Dr. Kilani

Crosswalk – AWC Marketing & Communications team, Advising, Transfer

Focus Area 1: AI Integration & Academic Innovation

Phase 1 Aug 11 – Oct 10, 2026 Listen & Map	Phase 2 Oct 11 – Jan 15, 2027 Design & Pilot	Phase 3 Jan 16 – May 15, 2027 Implement & Measure	Phase 4 May 16 – Aug 11, 2027 Sustain & Scale
★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO
Inventory AI tool usage across all departments and faculty	Draft AI integration framework and faculty adoption roadmap	Launch AI-enhanced course pilots in Spring 2027	Present year-end AI readiness report
Survey faculty readiness and professional development needs	Launch first faculty AI professional development cohort (Fall)	Assess AI tool impact on student learning outcomes	Submit Center for the Future launch plan for AY 2027–28 approval
Map stackable certificate opportunities tied to AI and emerging fields			
◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR
Benchmark 5 peer institutions on AI integration in instruction	Identify 2–3 courses for AI-enhanced Spring delivery	Expand faculty PD to second cohort based on Fall outcomes	Publish faculty AI PD model for ongoing adoption
Identify Center for Emerging Technology	Present Center for Emerging Technology	Connect AI recommendations to	Recommend new stackable certificate programs

governance structure and resources	concept paper to president	Team 3 workforce pathways	
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Focus Area 2: Academic Programs & Transfer Degree Pathways

Phase 1 Aug 11 – Oct 10, 2026 Listen & Map	Phase 2 Oct 11 – Jan 15, 2027 Design & Pilot	Phase 3 Jan 16 – May 15, 2027 Implement & Measure	Phase 4 May 16 – Aug 11, 2027 Sustain & Scale
★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO
Audit all transfer degree programs (AA, AAS, AGS) for currency	Prioritize 3 transfer pathways to strengthen or create	Finalize 2–3 new or updated articulation agreements	Submit year-end transfer pathway outcomes report
Map existing articulation agreements with ASU, UA, NAU	Initiate articulation agreement renewals and new MOU conversations	Track transfer-out enrollment and destination data vs. baseline	Launch updated academic program catalog with revised pathways
Survey students on transfer intentions, barriers, and desired pathways	Launch dedicated transfer counselor advising touchpoints		
◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR
Identify transfer pathway gaps — programs with no 2+2 partner	Identify 1–2 bachelor's degree programs for on-site partnership	Present bachelor's degree partnership proposal to president & Board	Deliver bachelor's degree partnership recommendation to Board
Research bachelor's degree completion options feasible on-site	Propose new/updated AA/AAS programs to curriculum committee	Coordinate with Team 1 on transfer advising in student success model	Recommend program additions/retirements based on transfer data

Mission

Advance AI readiness, academic innovation, faculty excellence, and accessible transfer and degree pathways for all students.

AWC 2028 Strategic Objectives Supported

Obj. #1	Establish Center for the Emerging Technology— AI, data tools, and disruptive technology across all areas
Obj. #2	Entrepreneurial College — stackable certificates, experiential learning, bachelor's pathways
Obj. #5	Expand access for rural and border communities; bring experiential learning to all students

Year-End Deliverables

★ Must deliver

- Center for the Emerging Technology launch plan ready for AY 2027–28
- Faculty AI PD cohort launched and evaluated
- 2–3 articulation agreements finalized with university partners

◇ Aim to deliver

- *Bachelor's degree partnership recommendation to Board*
- *Stackable certificate proposals submitted*
- *Transfer advising integrated into student success model*

TEAM 3

Workforce & Rural Innovation

Team Members

Elaine Groggett
 Dr. Shadi Kilani
 Ken Grant
 Adam Freedman
 Cinthia Reyes
 Sarah Herman

Roles & Responsibilities

Team Lead	Elaine Groggett
Co-Lead	Adam Freedman
Recorder	Cinthia Reyes
Innovation	Ken Grant
Accountability	Sarah Herman
Cabinet Lead	Dr. Kilani & Czarina

Aug 2026 – Aug 2027 Action Plan

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★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO
Audit all workforce programs, apprenticeships, and partnerships, advisory committee structures/memberships	Launch apprenticeship expansion with 3 new employers	Launch new certificate/CE program(s) in Spring 2027	Present year-end workforce development outcomes
Map regional employer needs: healthcare, manufacturing, agtech, logistics	Draft 2–3 new industry partnership agreements	Formalize 2–3 industry partnership agreements	Submit industry partnership portfolio to president
Set baseline metrics for workforce pipeline and partnerships	Design certificate program aligned to top regional employer demand	Track apprenticeship and enrollment vs. baseline metrics	
◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR
Identify rural/border access gaps in educational delivery	- Pilot one rural/border innovation delivery model (hybrid or satellite) - Canvas shell enhancement/support standard shells	Expand rural delivery pilot based on Fall outcomes	Recommend apprenticeship and rural model for AY 2027–28 scale

◦ <i>Conduct outreach to 5–10 key regional industry partners</i>	◦ <i>Align workforce data with Team 1 student economic mobility work</i>	◦ <i>Coordinate with Team 4 on grant opportunities for workforce</i>	◦ <i>Document flagship rural innovation model for replication</i>
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Mission

Strengthen workforce development, industry partnerships, and rural/border innovation initiatives.

AWC 2028 Strategic Objectives Supported

Obj. #2	Entrepreneurial College — apprenticeships, internships, experiential learning, industry-sponsored education
Obj. #5	Expand access for rural and border communities; experiential learning for all students

Year-End Deliverables

★ Must deliver

- **New certificate/CE program(s) launched in Spring 2027**
- **2–3 industry partnership agreements formalized**
- **Workforce pipeline report with baseline comparison**

◇ Aim to deliver

- *Rural innovation delivery pilot completed and evaluated*
- *Apprenticeship expansion plan for AY 2027–28*
- *Rural replication model documented*

TEAM 4

Strategy & Fiscal Sustainability

Team Members

Steve Eckert
 Dr. Kris Duke
 Czarina Gallegos
 Juliana Garcia
 Kathy Ocampo
 Lorraine Stofft

Roles & Responsibilities

Team Lead	Dr. Kris Duke
Co-Lead	Juliana Garcia
Recorder	Cristina Gordon
Innovation	Steve Eckert
Accountability	Lorraine Stofft
Cabinet Support	Kathy Ocampo & Czarina

Crosswalk – AWC Leadership Advisory Board

Aug 2026 – Aug 2027 Action Plan

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★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO	★ MUST DO
Review budget landscape and identify fiscal constraints	Launch KPI dashboard (beta) for all AFIT teams by Nov 1	Publish mid-year KPI progress report to all stakeholders	Present year-end strategic and fiscal sustainability report
Inventory grants aligned to Vision 2026 objectives	Submit first grant applications aligned to Vision 2026	Advance grant pipeline — submit 2–3 additional applications	Finalize KPI dashboard for ongoing institutional use
Map KPIs to every strategic objective across all four teams	Present fiscal sustainability model to president and cabinet		Deliver Vision 2026 progress report to Board of Governors
Map current shared governance structure-committees, senate councils	Establish formal shared governance touchpoints for each AFIT teams	Facilitate mid-year shared governance review of vision 2026 progress	Present year end vision2026 outcomes to shared governance bodies

• Presidents Council structure	• Develop Presidents Council calendar aligned to phase milestones	Report cross team progress to Presidents Council	• Deliver Final Version
◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR	◇ AIM FOR
◦ Design shared institutional effectiveness dashboard framework	◦ Implement first round of operational efficiency recommendations	◦ Develop 2-year fiscal scenario planning model	◦ Submit comprehensive grant portfolio and pursuit calendar
◦ Identify 3–5 quick operational efficiency wins	◦ Establish bi-monthly cross-team check-in cadence	◦ Coordinate scheduling optimization proposal tied to Obj. #3	◦ Recommend structural budget priorities for AY 2027–28

Mission

Support institutional sustainability, operational excellence, and strategic implementation of Vision 2026.

AWC 2028 Strategic Objectives Supported

Obj. #1	Fund and sustain Center for the Future — requires fiscal strategy and grant alignment
Obj. #3	Centralized data-driven scheduling — improve access, retention, and fiscal efficiency

Year-End Deliverables

★ Must deliver

- KPI dashboard live and in use by all teams by Nov 2026
- Grant applications submitted aligned to Vision 2026
- Vision 2026 progress report delivered to Board

◇ Aim to deliver

- Fiscal sustainability roadmap with 2-year scenario model
- Operational efficiency recommendations implemented
- Scheduling optimization proposal submitted