

# ASU reaches milestone enrollment

**After enrolling more than 200,000 students this past year, ASU continues to redefine what opportunities a public university can create**

By Kevin Kovaleski, ASU News  
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Arizona State University enrolled more than 200,000 students during the 2025–26 school year, surpassing that enrollment milestone for the first time in university history.

ASU's growth reflects more than two decades of reimagining what a public university can be and whom it can serve. As learners increasingly seek education that fits career goals and family responsibilities and prepares them for rapidly changing industries, ASU has expanded well beyond the traditional university. The result is a university that is continually adapting to meet the changing needs of students and society.

"It is clear that the mission that has guided ASU's transformation for more than two decades — measuring our success not by whom we exclude, but by whom we include and how they succeed — is an enduring model for how a top research university can be of greater service now and into the future," ASU President Michael Crow said.

## **Evolving to the changing needs of students**

The makeup of ASU's total enrollment tells the story of how higher education itself is changing.

Of the more than 200,000 students enrolled annually ASU offers multiple start dates for students, with many online students joining later sessions offered in the fall, spring and summer semesters. The university began reporting total, annual enrollment in 2024 to include all students who enroll over the course of a year., over 119,300 are pursuing degrees through ASU Online, the largest online student body in university history. During the past decade alone, online enrollment has grown from 30,000 in 2015–16 to 119,300 in 2025–26 as more working adults, parents and military-connected learners have sought flexible pathways to earning a university degree.

Today's online student reflects the changing demographics: The average ASU Online learner is 30 years old, and most balance full-time employment, family responsibilities or both while pursuing their education. And, among ASU's record 27,300 military-connected students enrolled last year, the vast majority chose to learn online.

“Learning online is a necessity for so many of our students, and we are committed to delivering classes at the same academic quality as our students enrolled on campuses,” University Dean and CEO of EdPlus Phil Regier said. “Unlike many online institutions, ASU Online is not separate from ASU. It is taught by the same faculty as in-person courses, and students receive the same degree as on-campus students. The public values and continues to seek a high-quality academic experience offered online by a top public research university.”

## Growing across Arizona and beyond

While online education has enabled ASU to reach learners wherever they live, the university has continued investing in campuses and locations that serve those seeking in-person educational experiences.

This fall, approximately 51,200 students will call the Tempe campus home, while an additional 10,800 students begin classes on the Downtown Phoenix campus.

At the West Valley campus, the [507-bed residence hall that opened in 2024](#) has reached capacity as approximately 5,200 students begin the academic year, reflecting demand for the campus and its expanding academic offerings.

On the Polytechnic campus in Mesa, more than 5,500 students will benefit from recent investments including [the state-of-the-art ISTB 12 advanced manufacturing hub](#), which opened last October. The facility provides students in majors like robotics and advanced manufacturing opportunities to gain practical, hands-on experience with the same advanced technologies used by the engineering firms and Fortune 500 companies like Intel and Honeywell that they will apply to upon graduation.

Approximately 600 students will enroll at ASU locations beyond the metro Phoenix campuses, in degree programs such as fashion and film in Los Angeles. And across the Atlantic, [ASU London](#) launches with 320 students, who will begin their experience with welcome events across London, including the [Union Jack Classic](#) on Sept. 19 as the Sun Devils face the University of Kansas at the historic Wembley Stadium.

“While ASU London is an independent, U.K.-accredited institution, it is part of ASU's growing global portfolio,” Executive Vice President and University Provost Nancy Gonzales said. “It is an example of how ASU is creating innovative new models for how university degrees and learning experiences are designed.”

Students enrolled at ASU London will complete a three-year U.K. bachelor's degree in fields such as engineering and global business, with an option of spending a fourth year in Arizona to earn an ASU master's degree.

## Preparing graduates for Arizona's future economy

ASU's evolution extends to what students now study.

As Arizona experiences rapid growth in health care, advanced manufacturing, semiconductors and other innovation-driven industries, the university continues expanding academic programs designed alongside workforce needs.

The evolution of [ASU Health](#) is poised to meet this demand. To help prepare graduates for the more than 113,000 health care jobs that Arizona is projected to add by 2034, ASU Health has rapidly expanded its degree programs. This fall, the [John Shufeldt School of Medicine and Medical Engineering](#) welcomed its inaugural class of medical students. On Aug. 7, the school celebrated its first white coat ceremony, recognizing 36 pioneering students beginning their path toward becoming a different kind of physician.

One of those students is Cody Pham, who earned a bachelor's degree in computer science from the University of California, San Diego before choosing ASU for medical school. After graduating from UCSD, Pham worked as a software engineer with Amazon, where he researched cutting-edge AI technologies.

"I think coming from an engineering background, I really found different problems that were not yet being solved in the tech industry," Pham said. "I wanted to blend that with my passion for medicine, and ASU was the perfect program for that. I think the school's curriculum and the way they incorporate the two disciplines (medicine and engineering) ... there really could not be a better place to go for medical school."

Growth extends across the many programs that make up ASU Health. This fall, 850 new first-year campus students enrolled in the majors offered by the [Edson College of Nursing and Health Innovation](#), sparking enrollment increases within the Edson College of 38% on the West Valley campus, 15% on the Polytechnic campus and 4% on the Downtown Phoenix campus. Additionally, enrollment in online health degrees offered by the [College of Health Solutions](#) grew by 13% year over year.

Engineering and business degree programs are also expanding to support Arizona's economy and prepare graduates for jobs of the future. This fall, enrollment in undergraduate engineering programs on the West Valley campus grew more than 40% in the recently launched [School of Integrated Engineering](#), the only engineering school in the West Valley. The school offers a fast-growing degree in engineering sciences that offers flexible concentrations in business and microelectronics, designed to support the growing tech sector in Phoenix's West Valley.

Similarly, the [W. P. Carey School of Business](#) will see a more than 40% growth in new first-year students enrolling in the undergraduate AI in business degree program, signaling growing understanding among students for the need for AI acumen in their careers.

"At ASU, a defining feature of our academic strategy is creating alignment between academic offerings and workforce demand," Gonzales said. "By working closely with employers and anticipating future workforce needs, ASU is ensuring that students gain the skills they need to succeed in a rapidly changing world and economy. These efforts are a major reason why ASU is ranked as the [No. 2 public university in the nation for employability](#)."

## **Serving learners throughout their lives**

The changing nature of higher education also means students increasingly engage with universities at multiple points throughout their lives.

For many, that means returning to complete a degree that life demands interrupted. Last year, 10,733 students returned to ASU after stepping away from their studies for at least one semester,

thanks to [expanded university efforts to reconnect former students with pathways to degree completion](#).

For others, lifelong learning meant upskilling through the [ASU Learning Enterprise](#) offerings, without pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree. More than 275,000 learners registered for nondegree credentials during the past year, including certificates in project management, financial management, marketing and a growing portfolio of artificial intelligence skills.

Together, these efforts acknowledge a necessary change that universities must make. In a world being remade by AI technologies, individuals will need access to higher education throughout their careers to complete degrees, earn new credentials and develop new skills. ASU's expanding educational portfolio is designed to support those lifelong learning journeys.

## Welcoming the next generation of Sun Devils

As move-in and [ASU Welcome events](#) begin, a projected 158,000 students are enrolled at the start of the fall 2026 semester. This fall enrollment marks a slight decline from fall 2025 (approximately 1%) due to nationwide declines of international students.

“Although the overall campus enrollment is projected to fall slightly, this is due entirely to delays and visa denials that our admitted international students have faced,” Vice President of Enrollment Matt López said.

“We continue to see strong enrollments from across the country and within Arizona. This fall, more than 9,000 Arizonans will join ASU as first-year students, a reminder that as we keep our commitment to serve the educational needs of all qualified Arizona residents, the demand for an ASU degree remains high.”

Among the students enrolled in the fall 2026 semester are a projected:

**84,600** students enrolled online

**73,400** students enrolled on ASU campuses

**38,000** students new to ASU, including first-year, transfer and graduate students

**16,000** new first-year students, including ASU Online

**9,000** Arizona first-year students, making ASU the top university choice for Arizona residents

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## Check out more back-to-school coverage

[Newest class of Sun Devils move in](#)

[The new degrees launching at ASU this fall](#)

[College starts anytime with ASU's Universal Learner Courses](#)

[Sun Devil Welcome gets first-year students hyped for their ASU journey](#)

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**69%** of ASU's first-year on-campus cohort hailing from Arizona

**2,200** new Barrett, The Honors College students with an average weighted high school GPA of **4.33**

**11,500** international students representing **174 countries**

**38%** of first-year students identifying as first-generation college students

As these newest Sun Devils begin their journeys, they join a university that continues to evolve alongside their changing needs, creating new opportunities to succeed whether they're starting college, returning to finish a degree or building new skills for the future.

"While ASU is not immune from the challenges facing higher education, the consistency of our campus enrollment is thanks to the tireless care provided by faculty and staff who year after year help students find their fit at ASU and then ensure they are successful once they become Sun Devils," López said.

*This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).*

<sup>1</sup> ASU offers multiple start dates for students, with many online students joining later sessions offered in the fall, spring and summer semesters. The university began reporting total, annual enrollment in 2024 to include all students who enroll over the course of a year.

**Main image**



On the first day of the fall 2025 semester, first-year theater students Gabby Opulskas and Milo Buagarini take a selfie with Sparky on Aug. 21, 2025. Photo by Samantha Chow/Arizona State University