Hi, Michael Crow here, president of ASU.

I want to welcome all of you to ASU for the start of the 2014-2015 academic year. I, and the rest of the faculty and staff, couldn’t be more excited that you are here because we exist for one reason, to help you be successful.

ASU closed the last academic year, and in the opening of this one, broke every record that we had including student achievement, graduation rates, freshman retention rates, faculty awards, and research levels that are greater than the non-medical research activities at Stanford, Harvard, Princeton or Columbia. Patents by our scientific and technological faculty members make us fourth in the world in terms of universities without medical schools: MIT, Georgia Tech, Cal Tech, and ASU. Not to mention accomplishments by our humanities and art faculty. It is great to see this knowledge enterprise called ASU achieve at such a fantastic level.

We’ve been working vigorously through the summer to prepare for you. New courses, new technology and learning platforms, Sun Devil Market at the College Avenue Commons in Tempe, new and renovated operational facilities on all campuses – it’s all for you. The key and most important thing is that we are here so that you can fulfill your dream and move forward with a great college experience.

We have been authorized by our Board to officially “charter” our university as the New American University, so you’ll be hearing more about that from me later in the semester. We’ve got our stadium renovation project for Sun Devil football underway and we are charging ahead with that, raising money and building those athletic programs. All of you in our immersion programs are paying an athletics fee that gives you access to all of our athletic events and venues, so I hope you can engage and participate.

Beyond all that, I have two messages for you.

First, you’re at one of the leading universities in the world with one of the greatest faculties that has ever been assembled. Take advantage of that every day that you are here.

Second, do not allow yourself to become discouraged without first trying to get your question answered. Raise your hand everywhere you go and get the questions that you have, whether they are financial, personal, academic, or professional, and get answers. You’ll have a better time working your way through the university and we’ll feel better time feeling good about helping you to be successful.

Again, I’m really excited about the start of the academic year. Make sure you let me know what’s going on. If you have any questions and you can’t get them answered, e-mail me at michael.crow@asu.edu and hopefully I’ll see you around.

Thanks.