Michael Crow’s 1375 word biography

Dr. Michael M. Crow is an educator, knowledge enterprise architect, science and technology policy scholar and higher education leader. He became the sixteenth president of Arizona State University in July 2002 and has spearheaded ASU’s rapid and groundbreaking transformative evolution into one of the world’s best public metropolitan research universities. As a model “New American University,” ASU simultaneously demonstrates comprehensive institutional excellence, inclusivity representative of the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of the United States, and collaborative problem-solving dedicated to consequential societal impact.

Lauded as “one of the most radical redesigns in higher education”, ASU is a student-centric, technology-enabled knowledge enterprise that tackles complex global challenges through the focused lenses of sustainability, economic competitiveness, social embeddedness, entrepreneurship and global engagement. Under Crow’s leadership, ASU has established twenty-five new transdisciplinary schools, including the School of Earth and Space Exploration, the School for the Future of Innovation in Society and the School of Human Evolution and Social Change, and launched trailblazing multidisciplinary initiatives including the Biodesign Institute, the Julie Ann Wrigley Global Futures Laboratory, and the nation’s first School of Sustainability, entities that advance research, education and business practices to address social, economic and environmental challenges at the intersection of nature and the made world; and the PLoS Alliance, a tri-university partnership spanning three continents that optimizes education and research strengths to develop real-world solutions.

A six-time U.S. News & World Report designee as the “#1 most innovative” school in the nation (2016-2022), ASU under Crow’s guidance has achieved record-breaking levels of traditional, online and international student enrollment, freshman quality and retention, research expenditures, diversity and is currently overseeing its third major research infrastructure expansion. ASU’s meteoric ascent in quality, growth and comprehensive modernization has garnered its distinct rankings as one of the top 100 most prestigious universities in the world by Times Higher Education and a top 100 designation in the 2018 Academic Ranking of World Universities.

Enrollment growth at ASU for undergraduate, graduate and professional students has risen to 128,788 in fall 2020 from 55,491 in fall 2002. More than 40,485 undergraduate students are enrolled through ASU Online. ASU awarded 29,389 campus-immersion degrees in academic year 2019–2020, and 9,817 digital immersion degrees during the same period. During the past five academic years, ASU has conferred more than 150,000 degrees.

Minority enrollment from fall 2002 through fall 2017 soared 113 percent, from 11,487 to 26,295, the latter constituting 25.4 percent of total enrollment. The number of the first-time full-time freshman class exceeded 11,500 students in fall 2017 and freshman enrollment in ASU’s digital immersion and for the first time in ASU history, the proportion of white freshmen constituted less than 50 percent of the total. Students from typically underrepresented ethnic backgrounds made up 38.1 percent of the fall 2015 first-time freshman class, which represents a 200 percent increase in minority enrollment in the entering freshman class since 2002. Overall, total minority undergraduate enrollment has increased 185 percent during this period. The number of African American students grew 40 percent, from 1,768 to 2,897; the number of Asian students grew from 2,535 to 4,696, a 45 percent increase; American Indian student enrollment more than doubled from 1,100 to 2,400, a nearly 109 percent increase; and the number of Hispanic students grew from 6,018 to 14,864, a 119 percent increase.

Under Crow’s direction, ASU has grown exponentially in size, quality and influence despite facing significant fiscal and political complexities as a state university. Rather than succumb to recession funding pressures, ASU evolved extensive private and community sector partnerships with entities similarly committed to inclusivity, achievement and improved quality of life. Through large scale, collaborative alliances with Mayo Clinic, Starbucks and Adidas, and small scale relationships with local non-profits and businesses, ASU continues to advance education, research and service opportunities
that generate tangible progress and solutions to real world issues.

As an emerging national service university dedicated to knowledge creation, ASU is the fastest growing research university in the nation among all institutions with research enterprises exceeding $100 million. Research-related expenditures have increased more than five-fold from $123 in FY 2002 to a record $660 million in FY 2020. ASU places sixth among 759 in total research expenditures among universities without a medical school in the National Science Foundation’s 2016 HERD rankings, ahead of Caltech, Carnegie Mellon and Princeton. ASU also ranked 43rd out of 916 institutions in total research expenditures, and 23rd in NSF-funded expenditures—ahead of Harvard, University of Chicago, University of Pennsylvania and Princeton—and tenth in NASA-funded expenditures—ahead of Stanford, Georgia Tech, UCLA and Columbia University. ASU was chosen to lead its first NASA mission in 2017, and will launch the first spacecraft to a metal asteroid, Psyche, in August 2022. ASU also ranked seventh in non-science and engineering disciplines, fourth in the social sciences, and fourth in the humanities.

SkySong Innovations, ASU’s technology transfer arm, has launched more than 160 startups, secured more than $833 million in investment capital, and earned 135 patents in 2020, placing ASU 12th among all universities worldwide for patents awarded—alongside of MIT, Stanford, Johns Hopkins University, Harvard and CalTech.

The inaugural recipient of the American Council on Education Award for Institutional Transformation, and one of TIME magazine’s “10 Best College Presidents” in 2010, Crow previously served as executive vice provost of Columbia University and professor of science and technology policy in the School of International and Public Affairs. As chief strategist of Columbia’s research enterprise, he led technology and innovation transfer operations, establishing Columbia Innovation Enterprises (subsequently renamed Science and Technology Ventures), the Columbia Strategic Initiative Program, and the Columbia Digital Media Initiative, as well as advancing interdisciplinary program development. He led the creation of and served as the founding director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, and in 1998, founded the Center for Science, Policy, and Outcomes (CSPO) in Washington, D.C., a consortium of scholars and policymakers dedicated to linking science and technology to optimal social, economic, and environmental outcomes. In 2003, CSPO was reconstituted at ASU as the Consortium for Science, Policy, and Outcomes, based in both Phoenix and Washington, DC.

Crow has been an advisor to the U.S. Departments of State, Commerce, and Energy, as well as defense and intelligence agencies. He serves as Chairman of the Board for In-Q-Tel, is a former member of the National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and has advised several nation-states on matters of knowledge enterprise development. An elected fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and National Academy of Public Administration, University Vice Chairman of the U.S. Council on Competitiveness, and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, he is the author of books and articles analyzing knowledge enterprises, science and technology policy, and the design of higher education institutions and systems. He coauthored Designing the New American University (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), outlining the imperative for new and creative public university models that advance both academic excellence and broad accessibility, and is finalizing his next book, The Fifth Wave: The Evolution of the American Research University. Dr. Crow received his PhD in Public Administration (Science and Technology Policy) from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

Born in 1955 in San Diego, California, Dr. Crow is married to Dr. Sybil Francis and is the father of three adult children.