



NORTHERN
ARIZONA
UNIVERSITY



“With Personalized Learning, we are opening a new era in academic instruction at Northern Arizona University. This program is a huge step toward transforming our institution through technology.”

–John Haeger, President,
Northern Arizona University

Personalized Learning

NAU’s Newest Distance Learning Innovation

Northern Arizona University’s Personalized Learning program enables motivated students to earn a respected university degree quickly and more affordably by customizing online coursework to match each student’s learning preferences, goals, and prior experience.

NAU has been a leader in distance learning for more than 30 years. Personalized Learning builds on this tradition and extends NAU’s education mission beyond borders and social and economic boundaries. Now, motivated students and working adults everywhere have access to a rigorous university education at an affordable cost.

Empowering Independence

Personalized Learning allows students to take control of their educational experience. They can begin their customized online education at any time with an enrollment term of six months. During this time, students may work at their own pace to complete as many courses as they can at a fixed price.

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- Awarded a \$1 million Next Generation Learning Challenge grant from The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.
 - Designed to exceed the limitations of traditional online education and provide deeper, contextual learning
 - Three degrees offered at launch: Computer Information Technology, Liberal Arts, Small Business Administration
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In Personalized Learning's accelerated environment, students receive a rigorous education that is:

- **Flexible** – Students set their own timelines and decide when, how quickly, and in what format they wish to learn.
- **Competency-based** – Courses are built around concepts and learning outcomes with each student's prior experience factored into their education plan.
- **Organic** – Course sequencing and assignments are fluid, to encourage self-directed learning. Students also have access to dedicated 'social' spaces for collaborative learning.
- **Mentored** – In addition to regular access to discipline faculty, when they don't understand a concept, each student has a dedicated faculty "mentor" who will assist them to be successful.
- **Innovative** – A cutting-edge user interface allows the student to control every part of his or her online education, from course selection to tuition payment.
- **Affordable** – The tuition for a six-month term is \$2,500 with no fees, textbooks or extra costs.

NAU's Difference: Commitment

Some universities are experimenting with personalized learning, relying on "canned" technology solutions or unproven providers. Not NAU.

That's because, unlike the online offerings of other schools, NAU's Personalized Learning courses are rigorous, contextual, and expansive, with one competency (course) counting for as many as 12 credit hours. To support this innovative model, NAU created—with

the help of Pearson Learning Solutions—a dynamic user interface and powerful online platform unlike anything else in distance learning. Lessons draw on a wealth of information sources, from open educational resources (OER) to publisher materials and Cline Library resources, and are to be delivered via video, text, simulations, games and other modalities tailored to today's learners.

"For most of [my online students], the choice was not between an online course and a traditional university. It was ... 'a choice between online class versus no class.'"

—Prof. Mitchell Duneier, Princeton University, commentary on online learning, *The Chronicle Of Higher Education*, Sept. 3, 2012

Assessment: Real World Success

The success of Personalized Learning will be based on how well we've prepared students for success. One measure will be the employment rate of graduates in their field of choice. Another will be the regular collection of assessments from students and from their employers for three years following graduation. We will also seek methods to track whether students continue to pursue optional learning opportunities and if they've received skills necessary for lifelong learning.

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