

Dear colleagues,

Fundamental to our role as an institution of higher learning, ASU must be an environment where freedom of expression, vigorous debate and differences of opinion can exist with respect and civility. For the institution to remain vital and healthy, these principles must be upheld in an environment that is safe and secure, one where people can engage without fear or intimidation.

There is a natural tension in the proper execution of this responsibility, particularly when the learning opportunity occurs outside the classroom and extends to the stage of world events. One of the historical attributes of American college campuses is that they are a public square for expression in times of national unrest or world crisis.

So, it is with careful deliberation that actions are taken such as those on Friday night when students and members of the public were arrested for criminal trespass after setting up an encampment on ASU's Tempe campus. These individuals gathered early Friday morning, stayed throughout the day and into the night with the intention of remaining in tents.

After continual communication throughout the day, in accordance with university policy that prohibits public encampments and overnight events on campus, the protestors were asked to disperse by 11 p.m. Numerous warnings were given. Individuals who did not comply with this and refused to leave were taken into custody.

University leadership supports freedom of speech and protects the rights of individuals to protest and demonstrate. At the same time, we require those who do so to be respectful of the rights of others and the operations of the university. This is true at all times, but of particular importance as we close the Spring semester with final exams this week and commencement exercises next week.

We wanted you to hear from us in order to understand the actions taken and the consideration that went into them. And we ask that you join us in staying focused on supporting our students as they successfully complete the Spring 2024 semester.

Sincerely,

Nancy Gonzales

Executive Vice President,
and University Provost

Arizona State University

Morgan R. Olsen

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Treasurer and CFO

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