



**AMERICAN COLLEGE
of EDUCATION®**

ACE Retreat FAQ

When is the event?

The event officially begins with a reception on Monday, December 1st at 5:00 PM. The event concludes Thursday, December 4th at 9:00 PM.

Where is the event?

Renaissance Phoenix Downtown Hotel (100 N 1st St, Phoenix, AZ 85004).

Who is invited to attend the event?

American College of Education full-time faculty and staff.

What is the registration deadline?

All FT faculty & staff should submit their registration by 11:59 PM on Wednesday, September 24th. Exceptions will only be made for faculty and staff hired after the registration deadline.

Travel & Transportation

Arrivals & Departures: Monday, December 1st and Friday, December 5th are designated travel days. If possible, employees should plan to arrive in Phoenix no later than 4:00 PM on Monday, December 1st. Employees can depart anytime on Friday, December 5.

Out of Town Employees:

Flights: Southwest is the preferred airline and will be providing discounted rates. Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport is conveniently located 4 miles from the hotel. Ground Transportation: Expenses related to ground transportation to and from the hotel will be reimbursed. Ride Share costs approximately \$20, or [Valley Metro Light Rail](#) (take the Sky Train from Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport to the 44th St/Washington Station. Travel westbound to the Washington/Central Ave Station). A one-way trip on the Light Rail is \$2.

Local Employees:

Parking on-site will be paid to the master account
Local employees may choose to travel daily to the hotel or stay on property

Real ID | Travel ID | Passport:

Individuals flying to Phoenix will require REAL ID/Travel ID or Passport. A REAL ID/Travel ID is a driver's license or identification card that meets federal security standards, allowing access to federal facilities and boarding commercial aircraft.

If you need to obtain a REAL ID/Travel ID, visit your state's driver's licensing agency website to find out exactly what documentation is required to obtain a REAL ID. At a minimum, you must provide documentation showing: 1) Full Legal Name; 2) Date of Birth; 3) Social Security Number; 4) Two Proofs of Address of Principal Residence; and 5) Lawful Status. States may impose additional requirements, so check with your state's driver's licensing agency website, before visiting them in person, for additional guidance and assistance.

The deadline for full REAL ID enforcement, when it will be required for domestic air travel and access to federal facilities, was May 7th, 2025.

Hotel Accommodations

ACE has a block of rooms reserved at the Renaissance Phoenix Downtown Hotel. Room, tax, required fees, and parking (if necessary) will be covered by ACE for the nights of December 1st, December 2nd, December 3rd, and December 4th.

Hotel Check-In/Out

Renaissance Phoenix Downtown will make every effort to have your room prepared in time for your arrival but cannot guarantee guest room access until 4:00 PM on Monday, December 1. The hotel will store appropriate luggage until your room becomes available. Guest check out is on or before 11:00 AM on Friday, December 5 unless other arrangements are made with the hotel.

Can I arrive early or extend my trip?

Yes, you can arrive early or extend your trip at your own expense. A room rate of \$219 + tax and fees will be valid 3 days pre/post conference dates based on room type and group rate availability.

Can you accommodate ADA requests?

Yes. Please contact Human Resources at acehr@ace.edu to help coordinate ADA needs onsite in Phoenix.

Will meals be provided and can dietary restrictions be accommodated?

Yes - ACE will provide heavy hors d'oeuvres on Monday during the Welcome Reception, breakfast and lunch on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and dinner on Thursday evening. For dinner on Tuesday & Wednesday, employees will have the option to select from attending pre-made dinner reservations at various restaurants in downtown Phoenix or have dinner on their own. You will be able to indicate specific dietary restrictions or allergies when you register for the event.

What will happen during the Volunteer Day on Thursday, December 4?

ACE is partnering with United Way to facilitate four service activities on-site at the event hotel. The service activities accommodate a wide variety of skills and abilities for all faculty and staff. Those activities include:

- **Book-in-a-Bag:** Volunteers will bring a book to life by decorating the lunch bag with book-inspired characters and words of inspiration. This unique volunteer project builds home libraries for local kids.
- **Mindfulness Kits:** Volunteers will assemble the kits and write notes of encouragement for kit recipients. Kits may include items such as: Bracelet, Pencil, Crayons, Coloring sheets, and Tracing cards. These kits will be distributed throughout Maricopa County classrooms, getting into the hands (and minds) of students who need them most.
- **Pantry Pack Build:** Volunteers will assemble Pantry Packs from a set menu of "shelf-stable pantry items" that help families stretch their food dollars. United Way supplies the packs and partners with local schools, which help to identify families that have the highest need.
- **T-Shirt Dog Toy Build:** Volunteers will bring 2-3 t-shirts ready to recycle and we'll provide scissors to quickly fashion this t-shirt dog toy for the furry members of local families. Instructions will be provided on-site.

Do I need to register or complete anything for the ACE Retreat?

Yes! Please complete our [Whova Registration Form](#) to fill in your attendance selection and t-shirt size.

Am I required to attend the ACE Retreat in December?

No, the retreat is not mandatory in any way. This is simply an opportunity for ACE employees to connect in-person in Phoenix. Please know your attendance decision will not negatively reflect in any way on you, your performance or otherwise.

Do I need to book my hotel room in addition to my flights?

No, ACE already has hotel rooms reserved at Renaissance Phoenix Downtown hotel. Individual hotel room information will be provided closer to the ACE retreat.

I have found better priced flights externally, can I book them outside of Concur and expense the costs?

Yes! If you have found a better priced ticket externally through another carrier please feel free to book the flight on your own and then expense the costs through a Concur expense report.

Please note that if you do book externally, a screenshot of the Concur prices and a screenshot of the booked cost must be included in your submitted expense report for approval.

I live in a neighboring state and want to rent a car to drive to Phoenix, is this an option?

Yes! Car rental and gas may be expensed but not rental car mileage.

Please note that if you are choosing to rent a car rather than flying, it should be more economical than a flight.

I have a full course load currently, will I have time to work independently?

Yes, you will have time to work independently. Dinner on Tuesday and Wednesday evening is voluntary, and time is set aside for employees to work independently in their rooms or around the hotel.

What is the attire for the retreat?

Casual attire is recommended for the retreat; however, professional headshots will be conducted free of charge for all ACE employees. Please be sure to bring proper attire for the headshot opportunity. If you have any questions regarding ACE's dress code, please reference our [ACE Employee Handbook](#).

I see we are completing community service on Thursday, do we need to wear anything specific or bring anything?

We will be completing indoor community service on Thursday together as a college. Please plan on wearing athletic shoes to this event. Please note activities for all mobility levels will be available at this community service event.

I can't stay for the whole retreat, may I come late or leave early?

Yes! We would love to see you for the entire event but completely understand other personal and professional commitments.

Pop Tab Collection for Ronald McDonald House

In honor of ACE's 20th anniversary, we are coming together as a college to embark on a year-long, joint civic project in support of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Central and Northern Arizona's Pop Tabs for the House initiative.

All ACE departments will compete until Nov. 21st to see who can collect the most pop tabs in weight. The winning department will be recognized at the 2025 ACE Retreat closing evening ceremony and receive some fabulous prizes!

Don't have access to cans? No worries – we're accepting monetary donations toward your department's total. For every \$10 donated, we'll count one pound of pop tabs toward your tally. [Please click here to donate.](#)

Not all pop tabs are accepted by Ronald McDonald House. When collecting pop tabs, please keep the following in mind:

- Pop tabs should only be aluminum, such as from soda cans. Aluminum is not magnetic, so you can check your tabs by running a magnet over them.
- Can tops are not accepted. Only pop tabs are recyclable.

For full details on what is accepted and what is not, please visit the [Pop Tabs for the House website](#).

How to Submit Your Pop Tabs

There are two different ways to turn in your pop tabs:

- Bring your pop tabs with you to the 2025 ACE Retreat (preferred).
- Request a shipping label by emailing the HR team. Pop tabs must be shipped by Nov. 21st to be counted.