

# Ross-Blakley Hall

a home for **humanities**

An invitation to explore the **human adventure**  
across time, culture and place.

**ASU** The College  
of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
Arizona State University

# Honoring the open book

The story of our lives connects to the story of all human life. An awareness of this intimate and expansive enmeshment puts the humanities in a unique position among disciplines: as a foundation for all that comes next.

Ross-Blakley Hall on the ASU Tempe campus provides a physical home for the study of this foundational discipline, housing The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' flagship humanities units: the Department of English, the Humanities Lab and the Institute for Humanities Research.

Originally constructed as a law library in the early 1990s, Ross-Blakley Hall is a jewel in the university's architectural crown. The building's midcentury-esque geometry nods to its Southwest environs, combining exuberant form with function. Atlanta-based architect Merrill Elam took design cues directly from the building's site. "The Arizona desert landscape provokes mis-readings," she told *Architectural Record* magazine. "Plants look like animals, animals look like rocks, rocks look like animals, plants look like rocks, animals look like plants... eye foolers."

Ross-Blakley Hall provides some eye-foolers of its own. Inside, a landing between floors juts into nothingness at a distinct point, appearing as a ship's prow from which to overlook a sea of activity below. Outside, the west facade leans 7 degrees toward adjacent fields, softening the glare of the afternoon sun. Some observers see the resulting form as an "open book."

Whether or not these associations and images are intentioned, the humanities units at home in Ross-Blakley Hall are glad to celebrate them in place.

**The Department of English** is The College's largest humanities academic unit serving thousands of students each semester while producing original research and creative projects.

- Community spaces, like the Seminar Room, host dozens of classes, festivals, performances, lectures, research presentations, conferences, poster sessions, readings, ceremonies, film screenings, professional development, team-building, fundraising and more each academic year.
- Research spaces (Media Learning Lab, Journals Area, Audio Lab, Video Lab) include new technologies, equipment and learning platforms.
- Quiet spaces (Reading Room, Graduate Lounge, Enclaves) offer privacy and opportunity for individual and small group reading, writing and reflection.
- Neighborhoods and shared desk areas promote community and creativity.
- 90+ private offices enable faculty and staff to complete intensive research and administrative work.

**The Humanities Lab** is a research lab engaging students in integrative, hands-on work to create solutions for 'wicked' global challenges.

- The Lab classroom adapts to each team's unique needs through easily reconfigurable furniture, assorted whiteboards, rough tables and new connective media.
- Huddle Space offers faculty-student teams additional room to work.
- Shared faculty and staff Work Nooks facilitate orchestration of the Lab's vision.

**The Institute for Humanities Research (IHR)** is a site of interdisciplinary conversation fostering new humanities projects and research.

- Community spaces, like the ThinkerSpace, facilitate collaboration among faculty, students and staff.
- Conference Room hosts workshops and presentations of humanities scholarship.
- Study areas for researchers help advance interdisciplinary initiatives such as digital humanities, health humanities and desert humanities.



“The sun bursts over the horizon . . . immediately filling an enormous sky with incredible light. Textures and colors vibrate. On the ground plane and along the horizon every form takes on a hyperness, incredibly legible and overly important.”

—Merrill Elam, Ross-Blakley Hall architect, on the desert as inspiration for Ross-Blakley Hall’s design

### Who were Ross and Blakley?

John J. Ross and William C. Blakley were Phoenix attorneys and ASU College of Law alumni who were killed in an airplane crash in 1987. The Ross and Blakley families raised contributions from friends, family, colleagues and community members to name the building for the two best friends as a living memorial. It was dedicated on Nov. 5, 1993.

“I can’t think of a higher honor,” one family member told the *Jewish News of Greater Phoenix* at the time of Ross-Blakley’s dedication, “than being remembered in a center of learning.”





Institute for Humanities Research  
ThinkerSpace (197)







English TA/FA Gallery/  
Neighborhoods (101)



Humanities Lab (171)



Humanities Lab  
Huddle Space (177)



Institute for Humanities Research  
Conference Room (196)



English TA/FA Gallery/  
Neighborhoods (101)

# Ross-Blakley Hall first floor





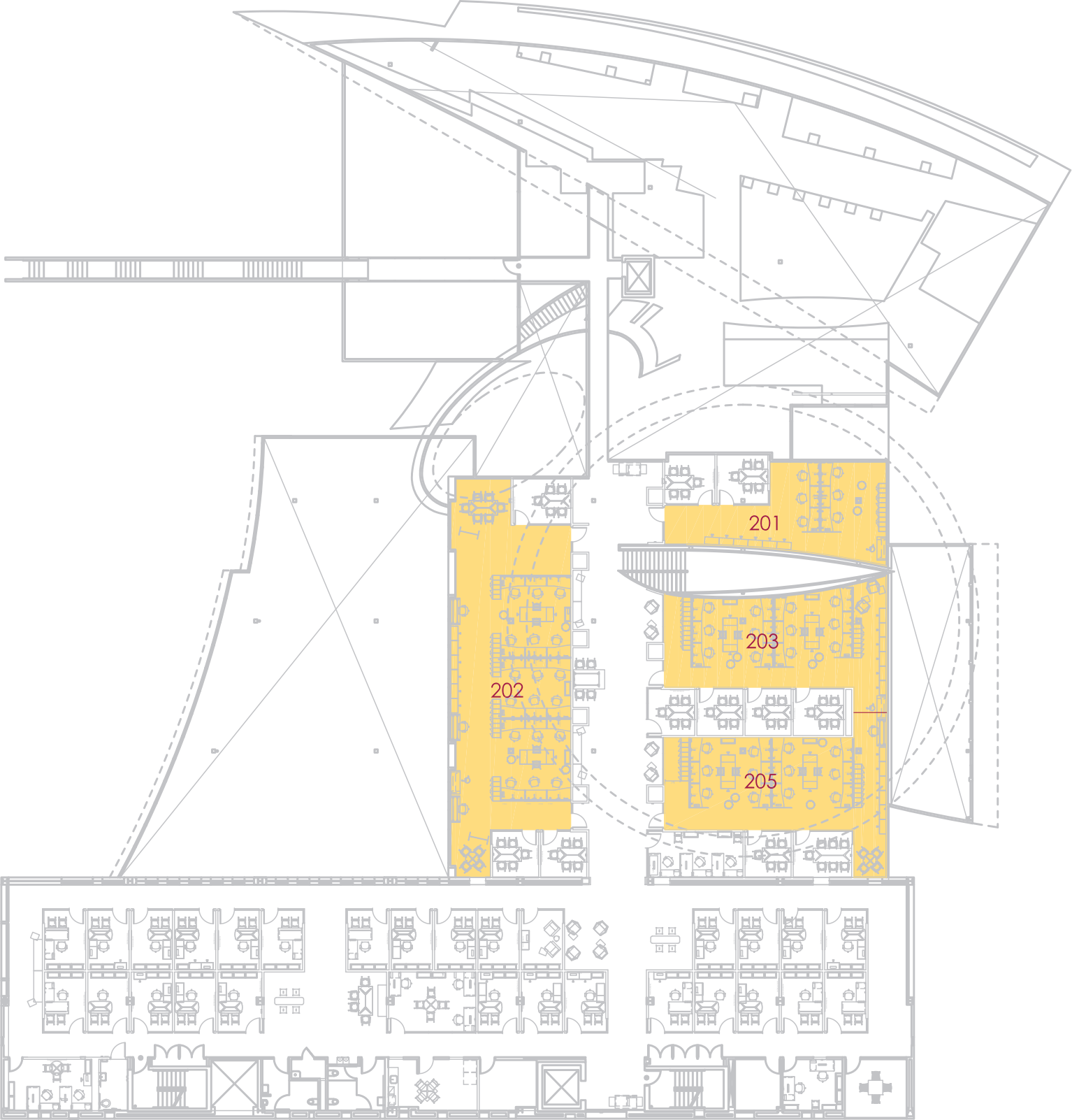
## First floor donor naming opportunities

| Ross-Blakley Hall first floor |  |             |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------|
| 101                           | English TA/FA Gallery/Neighborhoods      | \$1,500,000 |
| 168                           | English Journals Area                    | \$ 300,000  |
| 119                           | English Dining Area                      | \$ 200,000  |
| 164                           | English Graduate Student Lounge          | \$ 85,000   |
| 170H                          | English Executive Conference Rm.         | \$ 65,000   |
| var                           | English Enclaves (7)                     | \$ 35,000   |
| 144                           | English Wellness Room                    | \$ 35,000   |
| 196                           | Inst. for Humanities Res. Conference Rm. | \$ 225,000  |
| 197                           | Inst. for Humanities Res. ThinkerSpace   | \$ 175,000  |
| 171                           | Humanities Lab                           | \$ 225,000  |
| 177                           | Humanities Lab Huddle Space              | \$ 135,000  |
| 177AA/AB                      | Humanities Lab Work Nooks (2)            | \$ 25,000   |



English Media Learning Lab (115)

# Ross-Blakley Hall **second floor**

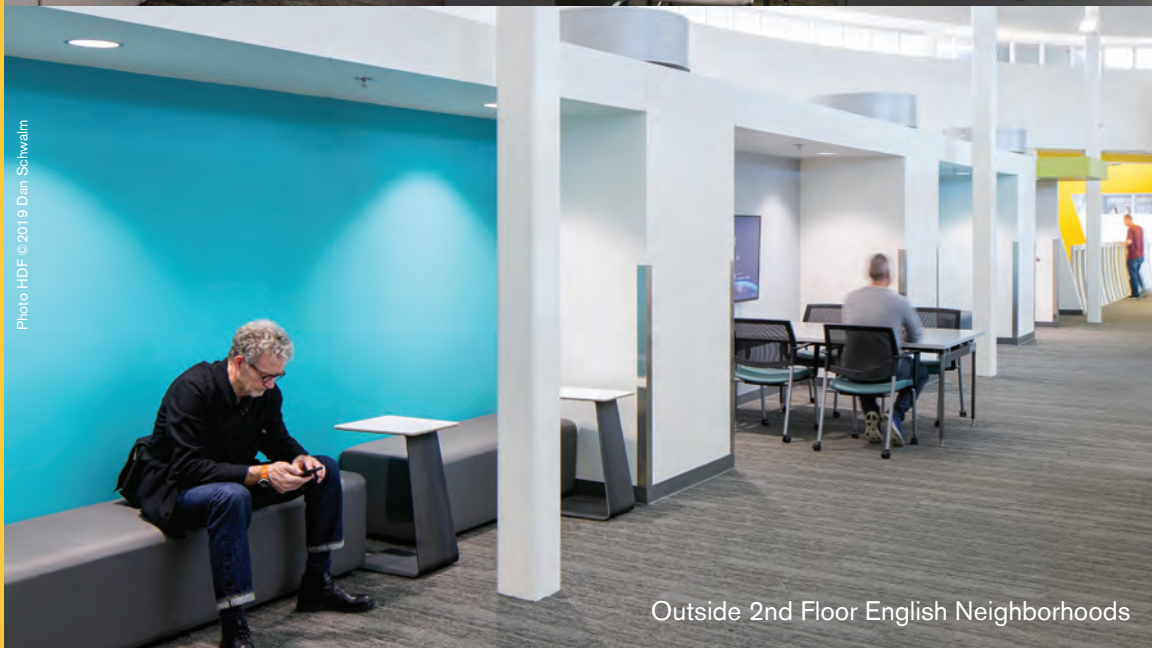




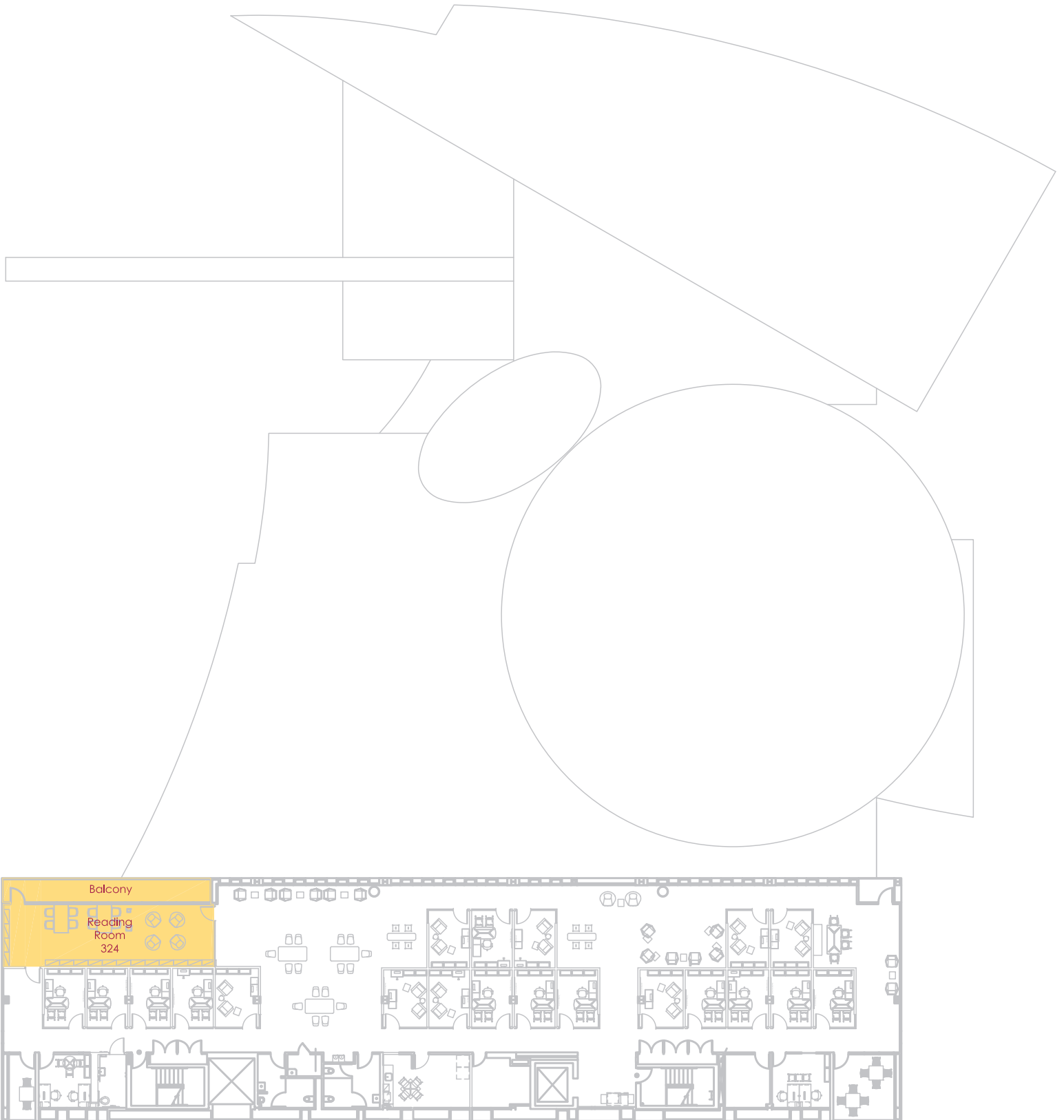
## Second floor donor naming opportunities

### Ross-Blakley Hall second floor

|     |              |            |
|-----|--------------|------------|
| 202 | Neighborhood | \$ 600,000 |
| 203 | Neighborhood | \$ 300,000 |
| 205 | Neighborhood | \$ 300,000 |
| 201 | Neighborhood | \$ 200,000 |



# Ross-Blakley Hall **third floor**





## Third floor donor naming opportunities

### Ross-Blakley Hall third floor

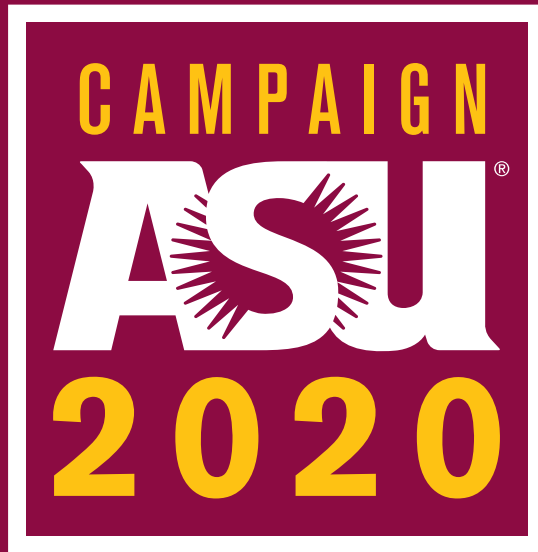
324

Reading Room

\$ 200,000



English Reading Room (324)



[thecollege.asu.edu](http://thecollege.asu.edu)

For more information contact us at  
**480-727-0742**



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